

Your Autumn Survival Guide

Welcome to the first term of the 2018-19 school year. If you are new to teaching or to Nottinghamshire, welcome to the Nottinghamshire NEU. Teaching is a fantastic job but it is hard work and is made all the more challenging by underfunding and by national policies which put the measurement of schools above the needs of children. Whether experienced or new, everyone needs all the help they can to thrive. In this bulletin we try to provide a few helpful hints to survival for this term and beyond. For more information on any of them please contact our Nottinghamshire NEU office.

NQTs and Newly-appointed Staff: If you are not already a member, join the NEU. You can join by calling 0845 300 1669 or 020 7380 6369. If you are an NQT, membership is just £1.

School Reps: Introduce yourself to all newly-appointed teachers as the rep. Let them know who you are and how to contact you and welcome them to your school and our Union.

Temporary Contracts: If you have been appointed on a temporary contract or have had a previous temporary contract renewed, ask why. Why is your post temporary? Unless there are very specific reasons it may be that you are entitled to be on a permanent contract, making your position much more secure. Our advice is that you ask about this now rather than wait until the end of the year. In the event of any problems or

questions contact us at our Nottinghamshire NEU office.

Your Pay (1): Your first pay slip of the new school year will be issued on September 22, for both teachers support staff, if you are employed in a local authority school. Staff working in an academy will have different pay date arrangements. The teacher's annual pay award is decided by the Secretary of State following a report from the School Teachers Review Body. The Secretary of State failed to announce a decision in time for any pay award to be put in place this month. It is likely to be October before we see any increase in teachers' pay.

Your Pay (2): By October 31 schools should have made decisions about pay progression for teachers on the main and upper pay ranges. Unless you are on UPS3 then you are very likely to be eligible for pay progression. If you have been denied pay progression we advise at least two responses: First talk to us and submit an appeal. The more teachers appeal (no matter how strong their case) the less easy it becomes for schools to deny progression. Second, talk to the rep and colleagues to suggest a union meeting at school to consider a collective response to the issue of pay progression.

Involvement with Nottinghamshire NEU: You will gain a lot from meeting like-minded colleagues and sharing ideas, experiences and information. The best way to do this is to come to the General Meetings

Notts NEU - NUT Section
General Members' Meeting

Wednesday
Sept 26

5.00pm Hilton DoubleTree
Hotel, Nottingham NG8 6AZ



of Nottinghamshire NEU which take place at least twice a term, with a third meeting devoted purely to advising members about school based concerns. Our next meeting is on Wednesday, September 26 at the **DoubleTree Hotel on Nuthall Road, near the Pheonix Park Tram Stop**. The meetings always start with food at 5pm with discussion beginning at 5.30pm and concluding no later than 7pm. Our meetings are friendly and welcoming and we encourage members to attend. You can claim childcare and transport costs if required.

Directed Time

Teachers are contracted to be "available for work" 195 days a year – 190 school days plus 5 INSET days. Directed Time describes all the

hours where you can be “directed” by the head. This includes the school day, break times, after school meetings, parents meetings and so on. **Your school should produce a calendar and directed time budget of 1265 hours “directed time” showing how this time is allocated.** Reps are encouraged to request this from school management. Teachers cannot be directed to work during their lunch-time, PPA time, weekends or holidays.

PPA time

All teachers are entitled to have 10% of their weekly timetable allocated as PPA time. This must be in blocks of at least 30 minutes and it is up to the teacher how to use it. You cannot be directed to carry out any specific work during your PPA time.

Cover

Under the terms of their contract teachers cannot be expected to cover for absent colleagues unless there is an absolute emergency or they are specifically employed to do so. Teachers can be expected to cover ‘only rarely **and** only in circumstances that are not foreseeable’. Your school should

have an agreed cover policy that reflects this.

Part-time work

If you work part-time you cannot be expected to attend work on any day when you are not normally employed to work. If you are asked to attend training days or staff meetings on days when you do not work, your attendance must be voluntary **and** paid for.

Leave of Absence

There are a number of reasons for which your head can grant you paid time off work: these include: moving house, religious observance, jury service, death or illness in the family, marriages. For other reasons your head may decide to grant you time off but unpaid. You should always be clear whether any time off is paid or unpaid. Again just check with our office if you are not sure about anything.

Learn To Say No: too many demands on teachers’ time are of no benefit to children. The NEU has clear advice on excessive workload. We are also expecting the DfE to send a Workload Toolkit to all schools in September to be used to start a whole-school discussion on reducing workload. As always there

LOCAL UNION CONTACTS

Our local office is in Nottingham The phone number is 0115 786 6464. The office is not permanently staffed so, though a message can be left, it is better to first call the Union Advice Line on [020 3006 6266](tel:02030066266).

If you need emergency assistance call one of our main casework officers below.

Jane Crich, Joint Secretary, on [07872 509787](tel:07872509787)

Rob Illingworth, Joint Secretary, on [07816 846861](tel:07816846861)

Gareth Jones, Deputy Secretary, on [07903 892327](tel:07903892327)

is strength in numbers and you are more likely to feel confident resisting unreasonable demands when it is done collectively with colleagues.

Have a break: From October 26th, when half-term starts, have a proper break. Go away, try not to think about work and switch off. The Autumn term is long (and dark). It can’t be survived without a rest!

BBC Panorama exposes academisation scams!

On Monday, September 10, BBC Panorama exposed the scam that is the academisation of schools. The cases exposed are not the tip of an iceberg but part of a sequence of academy scams. Nevertheless, some of the details about the Bright Tribe Academy Trust are truly shocking.

Bright Tribe received £566,000 in government funding to rebuild the walls of a sports hall and ensure it was safe to use. Instead they did a botch job for £60,000 and pocketed the rest, whilst falsely telling the Government that the work had been completed.

The Trust failed to carry out essential fire protection work, for which it received £255,000 for the fire-stopping of a ceiling void and 100 new fire doors. School staff warned that the work had not been done and that the building was unsafe. In an email staff said, “if there is a fire this will spread throughout the building.”

Despite these failings Bright Tribe received a grant of £1 million to set up a northern hub for academies, then pulled out of the project, failing to return a penny of the money to the Government. The Trust said that money had been spent on the salaries of staff working on the project, but when Panorama questioned those staff, several said that they had never worked on the northern hub project.

One of the major political parties has to tackle the academies issue. The obvious party is Labour, but at present it is saying nothing about academies. This is a case of politicians fiddling whilst Rome burns. The whole Academy disaster show has to go. The Government, even if it wanted to, does not have the capacity to hold these independent trusts to account, and there are no accountability structures below to hold them to account. They are literally a law unto themselves. They should be scrapped!