

NATIONAL UNION OF TEACHERS

FAIR PAY FOR TEACHERS

A message for parents and the public from Christine Blower, Acting General Secretary of the National Union of Teachers

Dear parents, carers and members of the public

The National Union of Teachers (NUT) is campaigning for higher teachers' pay. This leaflet explains why this campaign, including our strike action on 24 April, is so important for state education as a whole.

Pay cuts for teachers

Since 2004, teachers' pay has gone up by less than inflation each year. The real value of teachers' pay has therefore decreased. In January 2008, the Government decided that teachers' increases would be restricted for at least another three years until 2011. This means up to six years of cuts in teachers' living standards. **At the moment, inflation is over 4 per cent. Teachers have been told their pay will go up this year by only 2.45 per cent.** The NUT thinks teachers deserve better.

How this affects education

The Government says it wants the best people to become teachers. Unless they pay teachers properly, this will not happen. Graduates are increasingly turning away from teacher training for better paid jobs. Many of those who do enter teaching leave after only 2 or 3 years. This means schools are always having to look for new teachers. This is not good for the education of your children.

Bad for your children

We know that when teachers' pay goes down, schools find it more difficult to get the staff they need to provide a good quality education for your child. It may mean that class sizes go up or that specialist teachers can't be found.

Not just teachers

Teachers are not the only workers whose pay is being held down by the Government. Other public sector workers providing vital public services have all had their pay restricted to below the rate of inflation. The private sector is not subject to these pay restrictions. Private sector pay deals are at or around inflation. We believe public employees should not be treated less favourably.

But why take strike action?

We know that our strike action on 24 April disrupted your child's education for the day. We regret that – but we have tried every other avenue and the Government won't listen. Strike action is always a last resort for teachers but we have had no other option. The alternative is a return to teacher shortages and classes without teachers.

Please support us

We would welcome your support for our campaign. Read more on our website www.teachers.org.uk/fairpay If you support us, tell your child's teacher; tell your MP; tell your friends and tell your local paper.