

# What next for education?

**The election result on 12th December and the lack of any new educational policy announcement suggests that we can expect more of the same over the next few years in Hackney.**

The government did announce in the run up to the election an increase in education funding of £7.1 billion by 2022-23, but the Institute of Fiscal Studies has already pointed out that this amounts to just £4.3 billion in real terms. Furthermore, this funding will be weighted towards constituencies outside of London so we should expect to see more pressure on school budgets in Hackney over the next few years.

The government has floated a number of other ideas around education that were not present in the Queen's Speech but may very well become part of their policies over the next few years. These include accelerating the academisation process, slashing the number of teaching assistants and pushing ever-more draconian behaviour policies.

However, it is clear from the leaked memo that contained these suggestions the government is wary of public opinion on education and the intervention of the NEU during the election has helped to keep education at the top of the political agenda. By the end of the

election campaign education was the third most important issue for voters behind Brexit and the NHS.

The NEU's election campaign was key in ensuring that this was the case;

- One million leaflets ordered via the website.
- 350,000 ordered for Super Saturdays.
- 850 leaflets sent to parents in key targets.
- 1.3 million leaflets sent to members.
- An estimated 20% of members distributed leaflets in some way.
- On social media 'School Cuts' reached four million people.

This gives us a platform for future campaigning over the key issues facing us and we can't afford to wait five years until the next election.

This is why we are demanding the government does the following:

- End school cuts and invest in education.
- End child poverty.
- Replace Ofsted with a fair way of evaluating schools.
- End high-stakes primary testing.
- Address the teacher retention and recruitment crisis.

However, we cannot rely on vague electoral promises to ensure that our concerns are dealt with. We will have to continue to organise and campaign. In order to be effective, we will need to build NEU organisation and strength in schools. The final demand on the government of addressing the teacher retention and recruitment crisis will mean the main reasons teachers are leaving the profession; namely workload, pay and excessive scrutiny and monitoring need to be tackled.

In order to do this we will need to organise within schools to combat the constant drive to increase workload and the undermining of our professionalism as well as campaigning over national education issues.

**Come along to our general meeting on Monday 27th January (see advert left) to discuss what needs to be done.**




## General meeting

**Hackney branch of the NEU**

### What next after the election?

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**Andrew Baisley**, NEU Campaigns Data Analyst, will address the meeting on the government's plans for education and the campaigning strategy of the NEU



**Monday 27<sup>th</sup> January @5pm**

The Urswick School Paragon Rd, E9 6NR  
Crèche available/childcare paid  
Cab fares will be paid

## NEU reps training



## Wise words of advice

Hackney NEU held a very successful school representatives' training event at the end of last term.

Sessions, which ran throughout the day, included discussions on pay, terms and conditions; the work of the union in the general election; and how to organise NEU members in schools. There were informative presentations on what we can demand around

reasonable adjustments and one on the dangers of asbestos in school buildings. In the morning reps took part in 'advice alley' – an activity which looks like speed dating but actually involves reps sharing their problems and providing advice and support for each other.

One rep commented: "I found it really helpful to spend time with fellow

reps and hear about their experiences and receive wise words of advice."

The most popular activity in the day was a role play designed to help to develop our negotiating skills. Some reps prepared how to put forward key issues and demands to their school management, whilst others took on the role of the managers in the negotiating meetings. It was noted by one of the

## Black Educators Conference

## Inspiring and empowering

"I felt empowered."

"As a result of the weekend, I would like to work closer with the union to protect great teaching staff already in the profession by passing on information of meetings and encouraging young black prospective teachers into the profession."

"It a rare safe space for teachers to connect and network, but it is also a great opportunity to develop pedagogy and receive workshops and seminars from leading practitioners."

"Walking away from this workshop I had an urge to want to find out more, to do more and ensure that children within my care are provided with the best schooling experience possible."

Around 310 Black delegates attended this very successful Black Educators Conference in November in Manchester. As usual Hackney NEU sent a strong delegation.

There were 20 workshops held over



the three-day event covering such topics as Empowering yourself in the workplace; Tackling criminalisation; International solidarity; Black teachers and mental health; Becoming a school rep; Inclusion, not exclusion; and R E in primary schools.

Delegates spoke of being inspired by speakers, of feeling empowered to go back and organise and feeling supported by the wider organisation of the NEU.

What was wonderful was that the leadership of the conference were absolutely supportive not just of black educators but also of the work LGBTQ+ educators had been doing which made me more optimistic about the progress made at the event.

An award for international work was made in memory of Claire Gray, a Hackney NEU member who died on 26th February 2019.

## LGBTQ+ Conference

## 'An exceptional energy'

"I can't explain how transformative the conference was for me."

"It was a privilege to be part of the Hackney District group at the NEU LGBTQ+ Educators Conference."

"Every single workshop has given me things to take away and consider for our school."

"The conference has inspired me to be proactive with preparation and promotion for the new SRE curriculum to ensure pupils are supported both in the delivery of a robust and diverse SRE curriculum, and support that promotes acceptance and equality for all."

The LGBTQ+ Conference, held in Blackpool at the end of November and beginning of December, had a very welcoming atmosphere and an exceptional energy which started with a quiz on the Friday evening and continued through some amazing workshops, debate and celebrations which inspired delegates and gave individuals the confidence to continue the work back in their districts.

Camille Kumar and Gendered Intelligence ran excellent workshops on Decolonising of Gender and Gender Diversity. Kacey de Groot gave a passionate and personal speech about transphobia in the wider world and within the union itself.

Conference voted overwhelmingly to

reps participating that "some were rather too convincing in their role as head teachers!"

It was great to see that of the 23 reps who attended the training eight were new reps and 12 were young teachers. It is very positive to see new people becoming involved in the union. Also notable was that fact that 17 of the reps who attended had never attended training by the union before. This reminds us how vital our reps training is to ensure that all our NEU reps in school feel confident across a wide range of issues.

Reps training usually takes place twice a year and we try to organise one event in the Autumn term and another later in the year. All reps are entitled to time out of school to attend training.



And if your rep cannot attend, another NEU member can come in their place.

If you are interested in attending the next Hackney NEU Reps training or would like information about other training provided by the NEU, please visit our website or contact the Hackney NEU office on 020 8985 2056.



put forward a Trans and Non-Binary motion to NEU National Conference with the hope that other motions discussed will also be put forward by districts.

The Black LGBTQ+ caucus won an award for being the most inspiring intersectional network. The Black LGBT network were very present at conference and the promotion of issues of intersectionality were important within workshops and discussions. The different caucuses, which included Trans and Non-Binary, Disabled LGBT+, and Bi and Pansexual, provided a great network of contacts for knowledge sharing and support.

The thoughtfulness around provision of safe spaces was important in empowering individuals and groups and giving voice to members who often feel unheard and vulnerable in the

workplace. Some delegates had met through virtual networks and this was the first opportunity to meet with others face to face. It was beautiful to see some new allies take to the stage who had been moved to voice their support through things they had learned over the weekend through the workshops and personal stories. There was much opportunity to build support, organise events for the future and plan activities for school, district and wider. This is evidenced by numerous conversations, reports, pictures on the London LGBTQ+ WhatsApp group which continues to support individuals and celebrate successes.

The Hackney delegation managed to meet with each other and with neighbours in London, and we've got a really great group of colleagues we hope to meet with in the future.

## Sixth Form strikes



# 'We will not stand by and do nothing'

**National Education Union members working in Sixth Form Colleges, including BSix in Hackney, took three days of strike action before Christmas over pay and funding.**

The action escalated as more colleges joined in on the third strike day. The NEU are demanding more funding for their students and their colleges. There is currently an overall £700 million shortfall in funding for Post-16 Education. Teaching staff numbers and support staff posts have

fallen significantly due to the real-terms cuts, while at the same time student numbers have risen. This is putting the future of Sixth Form Colleges under serious threat.

Sixth Form teachers earn 15% less in real terms now than in 2010 and the promised pay parity with school teachers has been lost through successive meagre pay offers.

Jamie Duff, the NEU rep at BSix college, said: 'We are looking to escalate the action and expand the campaign

more broadly to raise awareness about cuts to education. We want to send a clear signal to this government that we will not stand by and do nothing as they continue to attack education and the communities we serve'.

## WE CAN'T AFFORD LONDON

**Meeting to discuss a London pay campaign: Saturday 8th February**

Redbridge NEU are seeking to draw together activists from across London to find common ground on a platform that can unite us in pursuing a campaign on London pay.

We hope to see a campaign in the coming months strong enough to reach a point where we can put a

London-wide ballot on the agenda. We seek a substantial increase in London pay for all London educators, and a link with wider political demands on London costs – especially housing.

We aim to hold the meeting on the morning of Saturday 8th February at a central London venue, and will go ahead if enough interest is indicated. From there we hope to set up a campaign Facebook page and suggest strategies for building a campaign.

We would like to see a London delegate meeting called in the run-up to the mayoral elections to further widen the campaign, firm up strategy and agree on precise demands.

If you are interested, please email [ben.morris@neu.org.uk](mailto:ben.morris@neu.org.uk) at Rebridge NEU or [david.davies@neu.org.uk](mailto:david.davies@neu.org.uk)



## NEVER AGAIN!

**Holocaust Memorial Day Public Meeting and film**

**Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> January, at 2-5pm**

St Paul's Church, 182 Stoke Newington Road N16 7UY

Speaker: **David Rosenberg** (Jewish Socialist Group) plus a report from the visit to Auschwitz

Organised by Hackney and Islington Stand Up To Racism



## NEU Exec elections

The national elections for Treasurer and two Vice Presidents will open on Monday 3rd February 2020. Treasurer and Membership & Equalities Officer will be in post from 1st September 2020 to 31st August 2024. Vice Presidents will be in post from 1st September 2020 to 31st August 2024.

Louise Regan has been elected unopposed as Membership & Equalities Officer.

Hackney NEU nominated the following at the General Meeting in October: ● Treasurer: Alyson Dermody Palmer ● Vice Presidents: Daniel Kebede and Kauser Jan.

**Please use your vote**



**Hackney**

### How to contact Hackney NEU

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All social media is currently being updated

Write to us: 2nd Floor,

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