The journal of the Ulster Teachers’ Union

Spring 2016

Building Blocks of the Future

Bush Primary and Windmill Primary squaring the circle on Shared Education

See page 17
Married, have savings or pay tax?

We know teaching can be stressful......and so is tax if you don’t know enough about it!

New initiatives from HMRC mean you could easily have paid or be paying too much tax. In fact, UTU members are almost twice as likely to be have paid too much tax than ordinary taxpayers! It’s not too late to get your money back off HMRC, but you must do it before the deadline.

UTU members and their immediate family are entitled to a professional tax code review every 4 years through the UTU’s tax review service. Better still, the review is FREE.

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✓ 69% of UTU members find they are owed money by HMRC
✓ If HMRC has given you the wrong codes and it’s cost you too much tax, you will get your money back
✓ You’re GUARANTEED to get the biggest possible refund or The Tax Refund Company will pay you double the difference (T&C’s apply)
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*You will NOT have to pay a fee in relation to any refund you receive directly through your salary or any money you save in the future as a result of your increased tax code. If your review results in HMRC issuing a refund payment, the fee is £38 where the refund is up to £100 or 38p for each £1 when it is over £100. If you do refund receive a refund then you will have to pay.

The Resilient Teacher’s Survival Kit

At Carecall, we know that teaching is both a hugely rewarding and challenging profession, in the midst of the hectic school year it’s easy to forget about your emotional health and what tools you’ll need to stay positive in both your professional and personal life. We are here to keep you on the road to resilience...

Our Top Tips:

● Get the right work/life balance
● Strengthen your work relationships
● Check up on your emotional health
● Be realistic with expectations
● Make time for yourself outside of class

When you feel like things might be getting on top of you at work, or at home, call us free and in confidence on 0808 800 0002

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A VALUABLE EXPERIENCE

It only seems a short time ago that I commenced my Presidential year with the UTU. It certainly has been an extremely busy year and I would like to thank the UTU members for the privilege of representing you as your President over the last 12 months. It was lovely to end my Presidential year with our 97th Annual Conference, held once again in the beautiful Slieve Donard Hotel.

Our conference theme this year was ‘Valuing Education’. Following on from last year’s call to stakeholders within the Education system to ‘Stop, Look and Listen’, this year’s theme was asking the question, ‘What are we currently valuing in Education?’

For me, if something is valuable, it should be appreciated, cherished, looked after and kept safe. Often too, we think of valourous as being an investment, and what better investment for the future than an exemplary, adequately financed education system, well placed to give our future generations an education to be proud of. But is this reflected in our Education system currently?

Members within our union are only too aware of the increasing challenges to be met within our schools. There is much headshaking and disbelief that anyone could think we are promoting a quality, valuable education system when our schools are operating with less money, less support, larger class sizes and yet greater demands placed upon an already over-stretched teacher workforce.

In my role as President this year, I have gained an understanding of how, in a situation of continued financial pressures, the value of an Education system can easily become skewed. In an attempt to show ‘value for money’, there has been an increasing shift in focus away from the young people in our care towards an apparent obsession with accountability and a need for copious amounts of data and statistics in an attempt to ‘measure’ the learning taking place within our classrooms.

With an emphasis on ‘business plans’ and ‘strategic target setting’, I fear that many of the stakeholders steering the future of Education within Northern Ireland have forgotten the intrinsic values of an Education system which should focus on the holistic educational development of young people in our care, realised through the provision of high-quality support, training and resources within schools.

This is why we, as teachers and Principals, continue to appreciate the efforts of our Teacher Union – to project our voice and echo our concerns to the Department of Education, the Education Authority, the Inspectorate and our politicians.

The past 12 months within the UTU have been understandably busy. With the continued cuts to the Education Budget, further staff redundancies within schools, concerns over the current End of Key Stage Assessment arrangements, workload issues and the inevitable impact upon teacher health and well-being, the UTU, along with our colleagues in other teacher unions and the wider trade union movement, took the advice of members to ballot for industrial action.

Our members voted in favour of industrial action short of strike, action which has been ongoing from 30th March 2015. This action was not taken lightly but is a reflection of how strongly our members are concerned about the unrealistic pressures placed upon schools, and the staff within them, to constantly improve standards and meet targets in increasingly more challenging environments. At the Joint Working Party of Management side and Teachers side, negotiations have continued around the key issues affecting teachers within our Unions.

As President this year, I have been privileged to have been given an insight into how our Union officials work alongside other stakeholders, to negotiate on our behalf and help shape the future of education in Northern Ireland. With continued financial pressures, it is clear that the next few years will continue to prove challenging within the Education sector.

However, Northern Ireland has hard-working and dedicated teachers and Principals who strive to put the interests of the pupils they teach at the forefront of all they do within schools. The UTU motto, ‘For Teachers, For Pupils’ reflects our desire and commitment to work together to campaign for a better future for all.

As my presidential year reaches an end, I would like to take the opportunity to put on record my sincere thanks to all those at the UTU HQ who have supported and encouraged me during my time as UTU President.

Anyone who has contacted our Headquarters will be fully aware of how welcoming and helpful our UTU Office staff truly are. Karen, Annette, Lindsay, Tony, Meriel, Denise and Heather – I thank you for all your kindness, help and encouragement over the last 12 months.

To our Deputy General Secretary, Jackie and our Field Officers, Lewis and Leigh, I am grateful for the opportunity to see for myself the fantastic support, information and service you provide for our members.

To Audrey, I wish you all the best in your retirement and once again say ‘Thank you’ on behalf of our members for all the advice and support you have given over the last 8 years as UTU Field Officer.

Last, but certainly not least, I thank our General Secretary, Avril Hall-Callaghan. Avril’s integrity, knowledge and wisdom is very much evident, not only in her role within the UTU, but as chair of the NITC, in NIC ICTU and in the wider teacher trade union movements throughout the UK, Ireland and Europe. Avril’s support and encouragement has been invaluable to me personally throughout my time on the CEC and, in particular, during this year as President and I am grateful for the opportunity to work alongside such a respected and knowledgeable leader within the field of Education.

Finally, I would like to wish our new President, Mark Creelman, the very best wishes as he begins his Presidential year within our Union. Mark is hard-working, intelligent and principled and I know that he will be an excellent representative and ambassador for the Ulster Teachers’ Union.

Julie Orr BA (Hons) PGCE MA (Cantab) President UTU 2015-2016
FIT members explore Progression in the Teaching Profession

On Friday, February 5, the FIT group hosted another very successful youth conference at the Malone Lodge Hotel – the theme of the conference this year being Progression in the Teaching Profession.

On the Friday night we were joined by guest speakers Mr. David Thompson, Mrs Susan Thompson, Mrs Audrey Stewart and Mr Greig Savage, who gave some invaluable advice to those in attendance.

The following morning, the group met to discuss the issues that are affecting them at the various stages in their careers. The outstanding issue which arose from the discussions was the Investing in the Teaching Workforce Scheme. Our students and young teachers will be paying close attention to this issue as the finer details are revealed in the coming months by the Department of Education.

We were delighted to have the UTU President Julie Orr in attendance to support the extremely valuable work of the FIT group and would like to congratulate her on a very successful year as President.

Our special thanks also went to Mrs Audrey Stewart who has recently retired. Audrey has been on the end of the phone to support many of the FIT group, even in the early stages of their career, and for that we would like to express our thanks.

To find out more about upcoming FIT events, check out our FIT section on the UTU website: http://www.utu.edu/fit/fit-home/

Aaron Davidson, Chair of the FIT group.

As we entered our final semester of our four Bachelor of Education degree at Stranmillis University College Belfast, we had the opportunity to participate in a two week alternative placement. We were fortunate enough to spend our time at the Ulster Teachers’ Union (UTU). We chose the union environment as we were intrigued to discover the effect that a teachers’ union has on the position of education in today’s rapidly changing society.

During our time at the UTU, we had a range of opportunities to attend a variety of meetings, based around current educational matters. The highlight of our visit was a trip to Stormont, where we were able to observe the discussion around the new legislation on Anti-Bullying in schools in Northern Ireland. It was clear that the teachers’ union was going to have a great influence on the outcome of this.

As student teachers, we were unclear of the type of support that was provided by a teachers’ union. However, it is clear after our time shadowing various members of the team that a teaching union is an integral part of the education system in Northern Ireland.

The staff and other officials at the UTU were very welcoming and provided an open and enjoyable atmosphere. It was a pleasure to have spent two weeks at the UTU and we are grateful for the opportunities provided to us and we hope to be increasingly involved in the union in years to come.

Many thanks, Richard Elliott and Hollie Heaney.

Congratulations to David Kearney, winner of the Conference raffle to raise money in support of the Buddy Bear Trust, http://www.buddybeartrust.com/websitepublisher/
Ballydown Primary is one of 10,000 UK schools taking part in a UK-wide live science experiment this Summer, which will contribute to Scientists’ knowledge of growing plants in space. Pupils will take part in a class-room experiment during May and June 2016 and will then be asked to enter their results in a bespoke microsite so that results from schools across the nation can be collated and analysed by professional bio-statisticians.

Two kilograms of rocket (Eruca sativa) seeds were launched on Soyuz 44S on 02 September 2015 with European Space Agency (ESA) astronaut Andreas Mogensen and his crew, arriving on the International Space Station (ISS) two days later. British ESA astronaut Tim Peake then took charge of the seeds while on the ISS for his Principia mission which started in December.

At 04:26am on Tuesday 2nd March, Commander Scott Kelly of NASA and Russian cosmonauts Mikhail Kornienko and Sergey Volkov of Roscosmos landed safely back on Earth in Kazakhstan, bringing the seeds safely back with them.

The seeds then travelled with Scott Kelly to NASA in Houston on a charter flight from Moscow, Russia and returned to the UK on Thursday 4th March. Now that the seeds have returned they will then be distributed after Easter to the schools who have signed up to the project.

Each participating school will receive 100 seeds that have been on the ISS and 100 seeds that have remained on Earth. The seed packets will be colour coded, however schools will not be told which packet contains which seeds until national results have been published.

The Eco-club at Ballydown Primary School can’t wait to see whether being in Space has any effect on the growth of these seeds! Watch this space!

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Early Bird Offer Extended till the end of March 2016
40% off prices on our website using promo code ‘PSTT40′ Ts&Cs apply Prices start from £60!

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KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Prof. Alice Roberts
Dr. Stuart Brown
Prof. Danielle George
Dr. Maggie Aderin-Pocock MBE

THURSDAY 9TH JUNE  FRIDAY 10TH JUNE  FRIDAY 10TH JUNE  SATURDAY 11TH JUNE

Tickets on sale at: www.primaryscienceconference.org/tickets

BURSARIES AVAILABLE
See website for details.
Not all change is bad, but it must be accompanied by sufficient resources to ensure change works out smoothly.

Unfortunately – and once again due to the government’s austerity agenda – the Education Authority has emerged into a barren landscape where we have seen huge numbers of the existing personnel within the Service disappear.

Schools have lost the support they used to depend on from Board Of

icers because they are no longer in post. A huge amount of experience has been lost in the past year and schools are reeling from it. The great-

est casualty has been the CASS service which has reduces to a mere

skeleton of its former self with its functions amalgamated with RTU to

form the new School Support Service.

Even more of concern is the leadership within the Education Author-

ity. Most of the new Director posts have, we believe, been given to

individuals from outside the existing system. We understand that one

of the new Directors has come from an English Authority - which is wor-

rying given what is going on there. Two others have apparently come

from the Health Service. We in the teacher unions have yet to be invited

to meet these new Directors who will influence the future conditions of

work for the people we represent!

The third major influence during the past year has been the effect of the “Accountability Agenda” on schools. Teachers have seen increasing bureaucracy over recent years but this year it reached new heights with members raising concerns about the amount of paperwork expected for an inspection and also the amount of pupil’s work required for portfolios as part of the assessment procedure.

These two major stressors were dealt with through the Union’s Industrial Action which allowed members to avoid both! A long term solution to this problem is required, however, and we have been in fruitful discus-

sion, directly with the Minister for Education regarding Assessment and with the Permanent Secretary and senior DE Officials about Inspections.

Thus far I have concentrated on the negatives, but I would like to finish on a more positive note.

The united action on Assessment is one of the real positives from the past year. I would like to sincerely thank our members, and particularly our active mem-

bers – school representatives, Branch and Area Officials, CEC members - for your solidarity on this issue.

Those of you who followed the advice not to comply with a flawed teacher-led regime.

It is this kind of united action on something which the vast majority of teachers felt strongly was wrong which allows us, as your representa-
tives, to press for change. It showed the power of collective action and I think it restored teachers’ belief in their own professionalism. Rather than having a flawed system imposed, you were prepared to stand up and fight for what you believed in.

Another plus this year has been the more positive working relationships between all the recognised teacher unions in the NITC. This has been particularly necessary at a time when we are faced with such adversity.

Finally, I hope you will take time to read the Annual Report, available in the conference section on our website. It gives more detail on the work that has been carried out during 2015/16.
Audrey Stewart has worked for the Union as Field Officer for the past eight years, decided to retire at the end of 2015.

Audrey was a former Principal and as such was a great support for our principal members, many of whom she knew from her days in teaching or from her involvement in the world of music.

She will be greatly missed by both colleagues in UTU who depended on her wise counsel and amongst the membership, many of whom she had supported through lengthy legal cases.

Our best wishes go with Audrey, a former UTU President, as she moves to the next phase of her life, which she will no doubt attack with same capability, enthusiasm and positive spirit as she has shown during her time working for UTU.
**HOPE SPRINGS ETERNAL FOR CHARITY FUTURE**

Hope and a Future is a small N.I charity based in Randalstown Co.Antrim. The charity was formed by Kevin and Christine Keenan following a trip to the town of Shashemene in the south of Ethiopia.

Kevin and Christine were struck by the high level of poverty and the lack of education for some of the poorest children. Many of these children worked from as young as 5-6 years of age or made a living by begging on the streets. The Hope and a Future was formed as a charity in 2007 and is overseen by a committee of local people from Randalstown. The aim at that time was to provide education for some of the poorest children in the town of Shashemene.

From a very small beginning of a small rented building with 150 children the charity has now grown to the extent that we now have two schools. The first and main school was purpose built. The charity had local people from Randalstown working alongside the people of Shashemene on the building of this school.

This school is called “Schools for Humanity” and currently provides education for up to 360 children.

The second school is called Tesfa it is a rented property providing education for over 175 children from the river bank area. The river bank is the poorest area of Shashemene with the families living in shack homes made of muck and sticks with tin roofs, there is no electricity or running water, the river is used for washing, cooking water etc.

The charity has provided toilets and shower blocks in both schools. Each child receives a weekly shower, water supply permitting. We provide soap and shampoo and this along with a handwashing programme has greatly improved the children’s health.

Each child receives a nutritious daily meal, fresh drinking water and health care. The children are provided with school uniforms and for many of the children it is the only clothing they have for those in greatest need we provide underwear and shoes.

All teachers and support staff are employed locally and the charity are employing more than 50 staff.

Since 2007 there have been teams of volunteers from Northern Ireland travelling to Ethiopia to work in a practical way with the charity.

In 2015 the Hope and a Future charity began work in building a Therapeutic Centre for children with a disability and a Youth Centre in Shashemene.

Currently there is no provision for children with a disability with many of these children living in isolation in their shack houses. They have no access to education, therapeutic interventions, healthcare or opportunities for socialization with their peers.

We hope to address these issues and give these children and their families the help and support they need.

The Youth centre will provide local children with somewhere to meet and socialise. They will have access to a library and a place to study and complete homeworks. The children will have the opportunity to learn and play table top games, music, art, drama as well as outdoor sporting activities.

Over the past 2 years the charity has also become involved with a leprosy community. These people and their families are isolated from the rest of the local community due to the stigma and fear of leprosy.

The families would make a living out of begging on the streets and they lived in unbelievable poverty. Hope and a Future has helped the community by purchasing cattle which they rear and sell at the meat market and then buy more increasing their herd slowly.

The have also started growing vegetable some of which they sell at market and some for their own use.

The children from the community of school age now attend either of our two schools. These children do not have leprosy and because they now have a better diet, improved hygiene, access to healthcare and their parents have medication provided by the government they will not be infected.

Since the small beginnings in 2007 the Hope and a Future charity has made amazing differences to the lives of so many children and their families in Shashemene.

The provision of education will enable these children to have a more positive future not only for themselves but also their families and their community.
THE ‘NEW KIDS’ ON THE UTU BLOCK...

Meet President, MARK CREELMAN

Mark is originally from Coleraine, but today lives in Ballymoney with his wife, Louise, step-daughter, Bella and six month old daughter, Hannah.

He studied at the University of Ulster in Coleraine where he completed a BA (Hons) in English with a minor in French before going on to complete a PGCE in Primary Education at the same university, graduating with QTS in 2003.

Mark currently teaches Primary 3 in Bushvalley Primary School in Stranocum and it was here that met his wife.

As a young teacher, Mark decided to get more involved with the Union to help him understand his rights as an employee and as a professional and he remains passionate about ensuring that young teachers know the support and protection available to them via their teacher union.

He is a member of the Causeway Branch and was nominated on to the Central Executive Committee through this Branch 7 years ago. Mark’s Presidential year will start on 1st April 2016 and we wish him every success for the year ahead. We know that he will be an excellent ambassador for the UTU members. All the best, Mark!

**DID YOU KNOW?** Mark is also the designer of the new UTU logo.

Meet your new Field Officer, LEIGH COOPER

Leigh Cooper has been a qualified teacher for over 20 years, with experience in all sectors – from Early Years to Secondary level and also in Adult Education.

Leigh has a background in theatre and drama and has used this in her work as Education Officer on the ‘Kids on the Block’ project which delivered a Disability Awareness puppet show in schools and community organisations throughout the province.

She is a mother of five and has a keen interest in football. Leigh is currently a joint coach of her youngest son’s football team in her home town of Ballyclare.

Leigh joined the staff in the UTU Headquarters in February 2014 as the UTU Organising Officer. Following the retirement of the UTU Field Officer, Audrey Stewart at the end of December 2015, Leigh transferred over from her post as Organising Officer through redeployment at the beginning of January 2016.

This ensures a seamless continuity of service to members as Leigh, who is now in her third year of employment with UTU, has been gaining qualifications in Employment Law and gaining important practical experience in advising members.

Leigh has visited many members in schools in her recruitment role and we know that she will continue to be a fantastic support for members in her new role as Field Officer.

Meet Vice-President, DAVID THOMPSON

David Thompson grew up with his parents, two brothers and two sisters on a farm in the rural setting of Pomeroy, Co.Tyrone.

He studied at Stanmillis University College between 1994 – 1998. His specialist subject was Music and he was President of the Music Society at Stranmillis.

After graduation from Stranmillis he began his teaching career in Londonderry Primary School in Newtownards before moving closer to his home and accepting a teaching post in Howard Primary School, Dungannon.

Following this, David also taught in Riverdale Primary School, Lisburn before taking up the post of Vice-Principal in Fivemiletown Primary School.

It was during this time at Fivemiletown Primary School that his Principal, former President of this Union, Miss Melanie Houston, introduced David to the Ulster Teachers’ Union. David was elected onto the Central Executive Committee in 2010 and has enjoyed contributing to the discussions at our monthly CEC meetings.

In September 2013 David was appointed as Principal of Dungannon Primary School and currently remains in this post.

Music takes up a great deal of David’s time as he has been organist and choir master of St.Anne’s Church, Dungannon for almost 16 years. However, he makes every effort to spend time with his wife Susan (also a member of CEC) and his beautiful daughter Nicole, pictured right.

Meet President, MARK CREELMAN

Meet your new Field Officer, LEIGH COOPER

Meet Vice-President, DAVID THOMPSON
The UTU Conference 2016 in pics

CHAIN OF OFFICE Outgoing President Julie Orr, new President Mark Creelman and Vice-President David Thompson with the Senator

LISTEN UP Gavin Boyd takes to the podium

WE'RE WITH YOU ON THAT The Belfast Branch use their vote

VOICING HER OPINION Jacquie Reid

BEEN THERE Past President Stephen McCord

SPEECH President Julie Orr addresses Conference

INFLUENTIAL General Secretary Avril-Hall Callaghan, outgoing President, Julie Orr with the Education Minister

IT'S LIKE THIS... David Thompson offers the Minister some advice
MUSIC TO OUR EARS Children from the Ballydown Primary School choir brought their very welcome angelic singing to soothe the body and mind of UTU members who attended the 97th Annual UTU Conference at the Slieve Donard Hotel to enjoy an occasion which, as always, was both productive and enjoyable... here's to next year.
1. EARLY INTERVENTION
Conference is concerned about the lack of resources provided to ensure that children with SEN are identified as early as possible. Conference reiterates its commitment to children being educated in Nursery Schools with qualified teachers. Conference further calls on the Education Authority to ensure that support measures for such teachers are strengthened.

2. ETI
Conference notes with concern that the NITC meetings with the ETI have to date not been productive. Conference regrets that the full implementation of the Education Committee’s recommendations, as a result of their enquiry, has not taken place. Conference has grave concerns regarding the strategic direction of the ETI and the effects its policies are having on schools. Conference calls on the Minister to reconsider the recommendations of the Education Committee, to immediately address the workload issues surrounding inspections and to immediately implement an Independent Appeals mechanism outside the ETI, and to review the current Complaints Procedure.

3. LACK OF PARENTAL SUPPORT
Conference appreciates the positive input the vast majority of parents make in supporting the education of their children. Conference acknowledges, however, that there are a number of parents who do not provide an adequate level of support, and indeed sometimes hinder the work of the school. Conference calls on the Minister to continue his efforts to raise awareness among parents of the importance of positive support for the work of schools.

4. EAL
During the past 10 to 15 years schools are dealing with an increasing number of Newcomer children, many of whom present with little or no understanding of the English language. Some children present with difficulties when mastering their native language needs. Therefore children are not accurately assessed for their progress that is made. Conference demands that the Education Minister urgently reviews the assessment procedures currently in place to ensure pupil progress is accurately measured.

5. MODERN LANGUAGES
Since Spring 2015 children in mainstream primary education have been disadvantaged in relation to opportunities for further developing knowledge of another language. This allowed our children to acquire the necessary skills at an earlier age, with a demand of a variety of European languages, all of which are necessary for post primary education and adult working life. Conference demands a reintroduction of the languages programme in primary education once again.

6. CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR TEACHERS OF PUPILS WITH ADD/ADHD.
The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) in their guidance (2008) describe Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) as the most common neurodevelopmental condition affecting children’s learning, and that children with ADHD are more likely to underachieve than children without this condition. Conference is supportive of the measures, including funding, being put in place to encourage shared education. Conference is however concerned about the measures being used to assess the outcomes of the Shared Education Programme. Conference calls on the Minister to review the assessment measures used, particularly those related to levels, and put in place a more effective system.

7. SOCIAL MEDIA
Conference understands that while a subgroup was set up to consider the issue of guidance on social media, management side of the JWP has not engaged in recent months. Conference calls on the Employing Authority to provide feedback on their engagement with the teachers’ unions as a matter of urgency.

8. NEGOTIATING MECHANISMS
Conference is concerned about the lack of progress on legitimate claims made by NITC to the teacher’s negotiating forum, the TNC. Conference calls on the representatives of employing authorities to engage in real negotiations, particularly at a time when the reduction in school budgets is putting pressure on teachers to raise standards despite the reducing resources. Conference demands that Employing Authority give due consideration to the pressure these unrealistic demands put on the health and wellbeing of teachers for whom they have a duty of care.

9. WORKLOAD
Conference has serious and on-going concerns about the amount of paperwork required from teachers which have no immediate impact on the teaching and learning in the classroom. Conference urges the Minister to raise the awareness and understanding of the Workload Agreement with all parties who contribute to this unnecessary increase in bureaucracy and to show recognition in a practical way that such pressure serves only to increase stress levels of teachers and does not actually improve the academic performance of our children.

10. WORKLOAD TRAINING FOR SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAMS
School leaders play an important role in managing the workload of their staff. Conference calls on the Education Minister and the Education Authority to provide adequate training in this area. It further calls on EA to support our school leaders in ensuring the health and well-being of all staff is handled in a sensitive and caring manner.

11. SHARED EDUCATION
Conference is supportive of the measures, including funding, being put in place to encourage shared education. Conference is however concerned about the measures being used to assess the outcomes of the Shared Education Programme. Conference calls on the Minister to review the assessment measures used, particularly those related to levels, and put in place a more effective system.

12. MATERNITY, PATERNITY, ADOPTION, ASSISTED PREGNANCY
Conference notes with concern that the current Maternity, Paternity, Adoption, Assisted Pregnancy Schemes are the poorest in the public sector. Conference calls on the Employing Authorities to enter into meaningful negotiation (if necessary beyond the current pay remit limitations) to ensure that teachers are treated fairly in terms of the Public Sector when availing of these schemes.

13. LGBT
Conference is aware that LGBT issues may impact on school policies. Conference calls on the Education Authority to set up consultative committees in each region, to include representatives of teachers, to discuss what policies need to be put in place to ensure that schools are compliant with best practice in terms of equality.

14. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS
Conference believes in equality of educational opportunity for every child. Conference therefore desirers at the ever-dwindling pot of resources in real terms which are made available to address the issues of the children in our schools with SEN. In the interests of all children, and the health and wellbeing of teachers, Conference urges the Minister for Education to recognise the necessity of proper resourcing to enable children with SEN to access the curriculum effectively, and to provide appropriate funding and support to teachers in mainstream classrooms, learning support classrooms and special schools in line with the particular requirements of the individual children in their care.

15. CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE AREAS OF CAREERS GUIDANCE
Conference calls on the Education Minister and the Education Authority to provide adequate training in this area. It further calls on EA to support our school leaders in ensuring the health and well-being of all staff is handled in a sensitive and caring manner.
Conference calls on the Minister for Education and the Education Authority to provide Careers teachers with an opportunity to gain a relevant, up-to-date accredited professional qualification to ensure high quality careers advice and information is given to our young people.

16. EDUCATION AUTHORITY
Conference has no confidence in an Education Authority which to date has been financially profligate, organisationally ineffective and which fails to have placed learning and teaching at its very core. Conference calls on the Minister to reconsider the current administrative arrangements and their delivery in consultation with the teachers' unions.

17. CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
Conference has grave concerns about the future of CPD for teachers and the increasing move towards privatisation in what is a key element in the development of skills and professionalism within a public service. Conference calls on the Minister for Education to ensure that the opportunities for CPD are not only maintained but extended, and that CPD is not ‘bought in’ but rather is provided and delivered within the education sector by practitioners with practical and meaningful experience in their field.

18. GTC
Conference notes that GTC is currently revising the teacher competencies with a view to making them part of professional development recognition for teachers. Conference calls on the GTC to consult fully with teachers before these are implemented.

19. AREA PLANNING
Conference notes that while the Education Authority consults with the teacher unions regarding changes to schools estate, they are not fully involving the representatives of teachers in the planning process. Conference calls on the Education Authority to have meaningful discussions at an early stage with the teacher unions regarding any further proposals they may have to change the profile of a region.

20. SALARIES
Conference is shocked at the derisory 1% offer made to teachers recently through the TNC. Conference notes that in order to receive this cost of living increase teachers were to accept a contractual change which would mean they would give up the right to automatic incremental progression. Conference calls on the Minister which requires the EA to review this decision. Conference urges EA to reconsider carefully the need for such a change to be made and calls on EA to involve representatives of teachers in this review process.

21. SPECIAL NEEDS
Conference condemns the recent announcement made by the EA that they intend to reduce the school day for pre-school children in special schools to 2½ hours. Conference further welcomes the intervention of the Minister which requires the EA to review this decision. Conference urges EA to reconsider carefully the need for such a change to be made and calls on EA to involve representatives of teachers in this review process.
Ray of Hope, UNESCO Youth Ambassador for the Culture of Peace, is always delighted, and very grateful, to receive the support from Ulster Teachers’ Union. It was 70 days ago, December 14, 2015, or thereabouts, that Daniel (our project director in Uganda) and I got wrapped up in a period of madness. Encouraged by each other, an emotional mutual symbiosis or “the blind leading the blind”, we decided to involve ourselves in the most adventurous of initiatives. We kept it secret, maybe because of the fear of failure.

Our primary school would soon (in maybe three years!), demand an “add on” for our students at secondary level, and also a community was discovered that needed the educational institution: we therefore decided to venture upon a new path.

The first premises perused, although suitable, did not have all of the attributes needed – that site was soon replaced in our focus, by a more appropriate location.

The new site had six classroom size rooms, plus a storage area and office space. The journey had started.

As the weeks progressed, with positive steps every day, we aimed for the possible opening date as 22nd February. The buildings were scrubbed – and then painted. The demands by young adults for self improvement determined the nature of the resource and name, “Hermitage Community Secondary School and Vocational Centre.” A management committee was formed, with representatives from various stake holding groups, teachers advertised for, interviewed, and tested. Potential students were spoken to, and a strategy was determined for enrolment.

Furniture was needed, also textbooks stationary and other educational expendables.

The Ulster Teachers’ Union, always wonderful in their generosity, provided the difference between opening and not. As it is important for every child to have a midday meal, so equally essential for our students. It seemed natural, aware that a kitchen was needed, that our friends in Classic Kitchens, Aghalee would assist, and on the day of the school opening the kitchen was completed.

So 70 days from conception, the school doors were unlatched for the first 13 students, quickly followed by 17 more and five vocational students. On Day three, 24th February, there was an enrolment of 35 pupils including vocational. Plans for the future include hairdressing and fashion design, and of course a school badge and uniforms. Only a dream away, and with support like that of UTU and Classic Kitchens the reality is around the corner.
DEFIED SCHOOL
are opened after only 70 days

ACHIEVEMENT
Every picture tells the amazing story of how Ray of Hope completed their challenge of a new school in 70 days
David Allen, former General Secretary of the Ulster Teachers’ Union, passed away following a sudden stroke on 13th December, 2011, at the age of 74. He held the post of General Secretary for 20 years and retired following a serious road traffic accident in 1997.

David Allen was a complex, interesting and entertaining character with a huge commitment to the teaching profession and the Education Service as a whole. He was motivated by his strongly held belief in fairness and he connected with teachers at a personal level, often spending hours well beyond those for which he was contracted in resolving teachers’ problems or supporting them through difficult times. One of the down sides of living in Headquarters – a condition of the job in his day – was the ability to work practically 24/7, and David could regularly be found phoning members at midnight!

In 1957 David went to Stranmillis College to train as a teacher and this was where he developed his skills as a negotiator, both in Stranmillis, as President of the Student’s Representative Council, and in the wider student union movement, attending and speaking at Conferences of both the National Union of Students and the Union of Students in Ireland.

David took up his first post in Harryville Primary School in his home town of Ballymena and after 5 years he moved to Ballykeel Primary School where he became Vice-Principal and then Acting Principal. He was clearly a well-loved and successful teacher. He treasured a card that two former pupils had given him with a poem describing their thoughts on this young man who had so clearly inspired them. The title on the front of the card is “The Man who made a Difference” – and that really defines what David Allen was. He made a difference to so many lives, both within UTU and beyond.

David was a very talented strategist and while he loved the world of education and the children he taught, he also needed to fulfil his ambition of making a difference on a wider stage. He was elected to Ballymena Borough Council in 1973 and at the same time he was nominated to represent teachers on the North Eastern Education and Library Board, sitting on the Board of Governors of 12 different schools and 6 sub-committees of the NE Board. David’s energy and stamina were incredible and he maintained that level of commitment throughout his working life.

If times had been different it is very possible that David Allen would have become a politician and he started out on that path when he was elected to represent the North-Antrim Constituency in the Northern Ireland Convention, the fore-runner of the Assembly. He was the right-hand man of Bill Craig in the Vanguard Party.

David had been an active member of the Ulster Teachers’ Union from as far back as his student days and sat on the Central Executive Committee from 1968 onwards. When the opportunity arose he applied for the post of General Secretary and was appointed in 1978 to a job that he was absolutely suited to, where he could combine his political nature with his desire to help others. The UTU was fortunate to have had such an able leader for the 20 years he was at its helm.

During that time he increased the membership, took UTU onto the world stage through the World Confederation of Organisations in the Teaching Profession (now Education International), speaking as far afield as Prague and Montreux, Switzerland, and participated in all the local negotiating structures at the highest level, including Chairing the Teachers’ Side of the Salaries and Conditions of Service Committee from 1991 to 1997. David Allen was known far and wide as the defender of teachers’ and pupils interests.

He was a very able media performer and he used this talent well to highlight the causes that he held dear. Some of his notable successes were the Petition on “Children Under Threat in Schools” which was delivered to the Prime Minister at 10 Downing Street in 1982 and the very successful lobby of Westminster in 1985 on Teachers’ Salaries. Perhaps David became best known for his stance on the leaked 11-plus papers scandal where he was widely reported in the press for his criticism of what he believed had been unprofessional conduct by a principal teacher. The Belfast Telegraph named him the “children’s champion” and that title was well-deserved and one which stuck with him for many years.

David Allen led the UTU through some of the most difficult times of the troubles and through swing cuts to the education budget – not unlike those we are experiencing now – which led to massive redundancies of teachers. David helped to ensure that those reductions were managed in such a way that teachers were able to exit on a voluntary basis with enhanced pension packages through the premature retirement scheme which he, along with Brendan McConville of the SELB, devised and persuaded the Department of Education to fund – no mean feat!

As General Secretary of UTU David lived his job 24 hours a day. He was always there for a member in distress and his personal intervention and support, particularly in legal cases, ensured that the teachers involved felt fully supported. He knew a very large proportion of the UTU membership personally, having encountered them through visits to schools, branches and area associations and there were very few people within the entire Education Service who did not know and admire David Allen. He did this at a cost to his own personal time and interests and it was entirely fitting that on his retirement he was awarded the MBE by the Queen.

By the time he was receiving this honour his mobility had been compromised due to having suffered a stroke and he was walking with the aid of two sticks. On the day of the Awards ceremony, however, he abandoned his sticks and walked proudly up to Her Majesty unaided to receive his MBE. The determination that had always been so much a part of David was clearly in evidence that day.

David was made an Honorary Vice-President of the UTU and after his retirement still remained a very important part of the organisation, continuing to take great interest in the work that was going on and attending Annual Conferences to contribute to the debate.

In recognition of David’s life-long service to Education and the Ulster Teachers’ Union, the UTU Central Executive Committee agreed last Spring to create a memorial in the grounds of the UTU Headquarters. A fountain was dedicated in David’s memory and will be a constant reminder of David’s vibrant and bubbling personality – and his constant banter!
**IZAK9 HELPS PUPILS COME TOGETHER**

Bush Primary, Dungannon and Windmill Integrated Primary School, Dungannon are currently working together in a Shared Education Programme. The project that the P7 class are undertaking is called, Building Bridges, and they are currently being supported by the AmmA Centre to develop the concepts of Green Screening and iPad use within the classroom through the topic of Bridges.

As a way of helping to ‘break the ice’ between pupils, these schools have been using a new and innovative maths concept called Izak9. In 2014 we purchased two maths cubes and teachers have been using them with their classes ever since. Izak9 offers an engaging way to stimulate and involve children in mathematical concepts without them even realising that it’s maths they are doing! The tasks allow children to plan, do and review their answers and the discussion that they help generate is invaluable. Children are encouraged to talk about how they found the solutions and share their experiences with others in the group. Bush and Windmill have used Izak9 to great effect for this purpose and it has also been a vehicle through which children have got to know each other and become good friends.

Barbara McKenzie (Bush PS) Kevin Campbell (Windmill IPS)

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**NUMBER GAMES** Pupils from Bush Primary and Windmill Integrated Primary at work with their Izak9 maths cubes

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Members putting their best foot forward for MENCAP

This year on Bank holiday Monday, 2nd May, representatives from UTU will be “Taking a Big Step Forward for MENCAP” as we run, walk and relay our way through the Deep River Rock Belfast City Marathon 2016.

Our team will be participating in various ways. We have 2 runners who will compete in the full 26 mile marathon, a team of 4 who will take on the 26 miles in a relay, 2 “wannabe” runners who will tackle the 5K Fun Run and a group of walkers ready and able for the 8 mile “dander”.

We are asking for sponsorship to raise money to assist MENCAP in their role of helping children and young people with a learning disability in Northern Ireland.

Anyone wishing to donate to our fund or sponsor our volunteers, please contact HQ on 02890662216 or see our website for further details.

Why don’t you come and join us on the day to fly the flag for our UTU team? We will update you on how the day goes and also on how our runners feel after they have given their all representing UTU as we support this worthy cause. #doit4mencap
JENGANA FEEDING THE MIND AND BODY OF CHILDREN IN KENYA

Jengana is a Christian charity, based in Northern Ireland that exists to alleviate some of the suffering associated with extreme poverty for individuals and their families in Kenya.

Jengana became a registered charity in 2008 and since then there has been a lot of work that goes on throughout the year such as running a feeding programme in Mukuru kwa Njenga slum for 200 children every day, sponsoring kids in the same slum and in Kibera and paying school fees.

The name ‘Jengana’ comes from the Swahili word ‘Jenga’ which means ‘to build’.

Jengana means ‘building each other’, describing our two fold work which includes the life-changing effect that our work in Kenya can have on individuals from here at home as well as the massive impact that our projects have for those who we work with in Kenya. Each year, a team from Northern Ireland travels to Kenya to see and work with the Jengana projects.

Our vision, which was born out of a desire to ‘give back’ started when Fransuer Mukula who himself was a street child in Nairobi, came to Northern Ireland to live.

Now Fransuer (who teaches in Campbell College, Belfast) and his wife Rachel along with the Jengana board run the charity with a desire to see the vision come to fruition.

The vision is to have a centre where we will have a children’s home, guest accommodation and possibly primary school for kids from the slums. We would also like to have a small farm which will support the projects.

This will all depend on funding and we plan to move gradually as we feel God is leading us. We were blessed to find six acres of land approximately 45 minutes from Nairobi city in 2012 and building has now started on our children’s home All of these plans need much prayer and financial support.

March 2015 saw the arrival of our first toddler into Kipepeo, our home for abandoned babies. We now have seven babies/toddlers in our care who have been rescued from terrible situations.

Kipepeo means ‘butterfly’. The name comes from the idea of an insignificant caterpillar entering the chrysalis and after being protected and nourished, it emerges as a beautiful, independent butterfly.

We desire to provide this kind of sanctuary to these little ones who due to extreme poverty have ended up with no family even at such a young age. Abandoned babies are common in Kenya with many being found in pit latrine toilets, in rubbish dumps and at the side of the road.

Good Samaritans, or the police, find these babies and bring them to Kipepeo for rescue and to provide a loving and safe home. A lot of homes exist in Kenya for older children, however, it is more difficult to find a well resourced home which can cater for abandoned newborns and babies. This is why our intended age range for admission to Kipepeo is newborn – one-year-old. We have had exceptions in emergency cases when we’ve had space.

Education is another important part of our work as in Kenya you have to pay to go to school and it is a privilege many do not get.

The standard of schools also varies greatly and if you cannot afford a good school you may not be able to sit your government exam at the end of primary school. This means that you cannot be accepted into secondary school. The sad result of this is that a lot of people only are educated to primary school level.

Jengana sees this as a huge problem as, if people have only completed primary school, they have very little chance of ever achieving a career that gives an escape from the cycle of poverty.

We take promising kids from two slum-based primary schools and admit them to reputable boarding schools, which gives them a chance of bettering themselves. We also pay for school fees for several children in Kibera and Mukuru slums who would not be able to attend school without this help. Many children stay at home in the slums as their parents cannot afford to send them to school.

Our feeding programme was started in a slum school when teachers noticed the kids had no energy and were falling asleep as they had not eaten breakfast, and, in a lot of cases, even going without dinner the previous evening.

Jengana now provides a break and lunch which has made a huge difference in the school.

With the kind and generous donation from the Ulster Teacher’s Union we can ensure that our school fee sponsorship can continue for as many kids as possible.

The more donations we receive, the more kids we can rescue from this terrible cycle of poverty and slum living.

Many thanks.
UTU Crossword No.2

All completed entries should be returned to ‘UTU Competition’, 94 Malone Road, Belfast, BT9 5HP by Friday May 6, and should include a contact name and an email address.

ACROSS
1. Mark --------------, UTU President 2016-17 (8)
4. Form a estimate of (5)
8. Sympathetic, kind; have a knowledge of (13)
10. Move away from a place into another direction (2)
12. Getting older (3)
13. As much as necessary (6)
14. The sum of nine and one (3)
16. Move gently or carefully (4)
19. Clearly evident; unmistakable (8)
20. Sudden violent discharge of steam and volcanic material (8)
23. Treasure of unknown ownership found hidden (usually in the earth) (5)
24. Ornament used to hold flowers (4)
25. At this point in time (3)
27. A set of three similar items considered as a unit (5)

DOWN
1. Bravery (7)
2. Tiresomely long, seemingly without end (7)
3. Bigger than something else (6)
5. Standard of measurement (4)
6. Tending to imply, implicate (10)
7. A word or phrase spelled by rearranging letters of another word (7)
9. David -------------, UTU Vice-President 2016-2017 (6)
11. Opposite of off (2)
15. Put into a new order (9)
17. Radiant light drawn around the head of a saint (4)
18. Considered likely to happen or arrive (8)
20. Expel or eject (5)
21. Objective case of ‘we’ (2)
22. Famous, acclaimed (5)

Name:............................................Email............................................................................................

ANNUAL COMPETITION
FOR SCHOOLS

CLOSING DATE: WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 2016

This year, our UTU competition is linked to the summer Olympics, taking place in Rio, Brazil in August this year.
The Olympics is a wonderful international event that allows people from all over the world to come together to celebrate their sporting skills.
Who knows, we might have some future Olympic athletes in our schools at the moment!

ENTRIES SHOULD BE SENT TO:
UTU Competition for Schools,
UTU Headquarters, 94 Malone Road, Belfast, BT9 5HP

A variety of Merit Prizes will be awarded within each Key Stage.
Winners’ schools will be notified by telephone and prizes will be delivered in the Summer term.

Winning entries will also be featured in the next edition of the UTU News and on the UTU Website www.utu.edu

Nursery
Class, Group or Individual Entry – ‘My/Our favourite sports’ – Any medium up to A2 size. Templates available online for individual entries.

Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1
Rio in Brazil is famous for its carnivals!
Individual entry - Design a festival mask.
Schools may use template provided or create their own and pupils can use any medium.

Key Stage 2
Individual entry – Any type of poem related to sport. Poems can be handwritten or word processed. Poems can also be decorated. Templates are available online if preferred.

Key Stages 3 and 4
Digital Presentation (e.g. Powerpoint, Movie maker, I-movie, Garage Band) – Individual entry – ‘any theme relating to Olympics or Brazil’. Entries can be emailed to office@utu.edu or sent on a USB pen.

Special Education
Class, Group or Individual Entry – ‘Our favourite sports’ – Any medium up to A2 size. Templates available online for individual entries.
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