



# POLICY

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**ULSTER TEACHERS' UNION**

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OUR LEGAL SERVICE  
IS **YOUR** PROTECTION

**FREE  
MEMBERSHIP**

FOR STUDENTS AND  
NEWLY-QUALIFIED TEACHERS

### **EDUCATION FUNDING**

The UTU is aware of the current pressures on school finances and is campaigning to promote the protection of services to children that are provided by schools.

### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The UTU is calling on the GTC to promote on-going Professional Development opportunities for teachers beyond EPD. The UTU notes with anger the proposed cuts to the Education Budget and believes these proposals will significantly affect the EPD training and employment opportunities of those entering the teaching profession. The UTU will oppose strenuously any diminution of the already reduced opportunities which newly-qualified teachers experience.

### **CAREER PROGRESSION**

The UTU deplors the lack of career progression available to recently appointed teachers and notes that there is a lack of training opportunities and very few teaching allowance posts available. The UTU is concerned that with a restricted budget allocation this situation will further deteriorate. The UTU is calling on the Employing Authorities to review the employment opportunities of these teachers.

### **INCAs**

The UTU is calling on the government to abolish the ill-fated INCAs tests and deplors the additional workload placed on teachers in facilitating these tests. The Central Executive Committee intends to promote through the NITC a ballot of all primary teachers in Northern Ireland for industrial action to boycott INCAs testing.

### **REVISED CURRICULUM**

The UTU is urging the Department of Education to investigate the mismatch between the skills-based curriculum in place and the actual expected outcomes of the content-based assessment tools.

### **SELECTION**

The UTU is firmly opposed to selection at 11. The UTU is calling for the cessation of the unregulated tests set by the grammar schools as a matter of priority. The UTU is proposing that meaningful talks take place between post-primary schools and their feeder primary schools.

### **LEARNING COMMUNITIES**

The UTU is calling on the Department of Education to continue the funding of Learning Communities in order to maintain the progress already made towards meeting the requirements of the Entitlement Framework.

### **NURSERY EDUCATION**

The UTU is demanding that all children in Northern Ireland should have the opportunity to access full-time places in statutory nursery schools which are led by professionally qualified teachers. The UTU believes that nursery education should be included within the Foundation Stage of Education. The UTU is concerned that an increase in funding to the private sector was announced prior to the extended closing date of the Draft 0-6 Strategy.

### **CYBER-BULLYING OF TEACHING STAFF**

The UTU regrets the continued harassment of teachers through social networking sites. The UTU is calling on the employing authorities to ensure that model guidelines and advice are developed in consultation with the teaching unions to protect the human rights of teachers.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN)**

The UTU has serious concerns about the impact of the education cuts on teachers dealing with SEN. The UTU is calling on the Department of Education to ensure that the systems in place for Inclusion deliver appropriate educational provision for children with SEN and take into account the importance of proper support to guarantee teachers' safety and well-being.

### **CHILD PROTECTION**

The UTU is concerned about the recent number of child protection cases that have involved spurious allegations against school staff. The UTU is calling on the Department of Education to include the teachers' unions in a review of the current practice to ensure fair treatment of teachers in all sectors and areas within Northern Ireland.

### **ESA**

The UTU is appalled at the continued wasted resources that results from the on-going lack of progress over the establishment of ESA. The UTU is calling on the existing employing authorities to ensure that there is no further diminution of support to schools.

### **CLASS SIZE**

The UTU is committed to campaigning along with all the other teaching unions within the NITC for class sizes no greater than:

- 18 in Foundation and Key Stage 1
- 24 in Key Stage 2
- 20 in Key Stage 3

The UTU is calling on the Department of Education to issue guidance to schools on class sizes in composite classes and in classes containing pupils with statements of special educational needs.

### **WORKLOAD**

The UTU is fully engaged in working towards a reduction in workload for teachers and an implementation of guaranteed Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time within the teacher's timetabled day.

### **PENSIONS**

The UTU is to participate in a joint campaign of action, along with sister organisations, in defence of public pensions. The UTU is to conduct a ballot for industrial action, up to and including strike action, as appropriate.

### **SHARED EDUCATION**

The UTU welcomes initiatives to promote greater sharing in education through cross-sectoral school collaboration and believes this will support raising standards and reconciliation. The UTU is calling on the Department of Education to promote shared education more widely across the system.