

Carolyn Banks
Clerk to the Schools Forum

15th January 2013

Dear Carolyn,

I would be very grateful if you could circulate our response on Appendix F to schools forum members in time for Thursday's meeting.

Many thanks,



Julie Davies

NUT Comment on Appendix F

The NUT believes that Option A offers union members in Haringey schools the most cost effective and consistent representation.

1. There are legal duties on employers to release employees who are elected representatives of recognised trade unions for the purposes of casework and negotiation.
2. Union reps are elected annually by the membership. The NUT has 2200 members in Haringey.
3. Option B proposes that school reps, in effect, undertake casework and that schools receive funding to cover this.

4. There are ten Haringey schools where there is no NUT rep. Some schools appoint rather than elect reps and in some schools the role is undertaken reluctantly or confined to roles such as recruitment or opening the mail.
5. Not all Haringey teachers and headteachers belong to the NUT. It is entirely possible that a school might need to fund release time for other unions. There will be occasions, for example grievances, where more than one rep is needed.
6. Releasing reps in school to represent members means that cover has to be provided for both the rep and the teacher attending the meeting. Time would also have to be made available for reps to prepare and discuss cases, attend training courses.
7. School reps would need to be accredited to ensure that cases are handled competently. This entails attendance on an initial five day residential course where reps learn how to handle grievance, sickness, disciplinary and capability cases. There is an annual refresher course of two days. These courses take place in school time.
8. Areas such as redundancies and TUPE are highly specialised and would require additional training.
9. Many school reps do not want to take on casework at school level. They feel uncomfortable about sharing confidential details about performance, health, conduct or workplace clashes and difficulties.
10. Many of our members would prefer their cases to be handled by somebody from outside the school.
11. Negotiations at borough level for teachers in voluntary aided and community schools take place through the Haringey Teachers' Panel which has representatives from all recognised unions. It is not clear how school reps would deal with collective bargaining on terms and conditions and model policies.
12. The joint secretary of the panel, who coordinates input from all unions is funded at 0.2 which is included in the NUT allocation in Appendix F. The NUT actually has 1.0 FTE shared between two officers.