



October 2012

NATIONAL UNION OF TEACHERS HEADQUARTERS

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General Secretary Christine Blower
Deputy General Secretary Kevin Courtney

Dear colleague

Campaign to defend pupil referral units

I have taken the opportunity to write to you as I am keen that you know that the Union is aware of the challenging circumstances teachers in pupil referral units are facing. We have called the work that we are doing to protect and promote PRUs 'Nobody Does It Better'. I believe that nobody can better teach the children and young people in PRUs, better plan for their re-integration into mainstream - where appropriate - and better stand up for their interests, than the qualified teachers in PRUs. You work exceptionally hard to support your students' families and the local authority budget cuts are impacting on the services on which your students' families rely. PRUs need stability and your students need continuity.

In June, we invited NUT members who work in PRUs to attend a Roundtable in London to discuss the new Ofsted framework, school funding, the changes to local authority structures and academy status. To read the report, visit <http://www.teachers.org.uk/taxonomy/term/1853>

Alternative Provision Academies

You may have heard that the Government, on the advice of its now-departed 'Behaviour Tsar' Charlie Taylor, has said that all PRUs should consider leaving the local authority family and becoming Alternative Provision (AP) Academies. Newly established PRUs will have no choice but to be AP Academies. Existing PRUs, however, can remain local authority maintained PRUs and do not have to become AP Academies.

We believe that there are compelling reasons why PRUs should remain within local authority oversight. In a survey of PRU teachers who are NUT members, 92% felt that PRUs should remain within the local authority families of schools and services. We have explained the NUT's reservations to the Government in our response to the consultation on the reform of Alternative Provision, and I wrote personally to Charlie Taylor in response to his report on Alternative Provision. You can find both these documents on the PRU page of the NUT website <http://www.teachers.org.uk/taxonomy/term/1853>. If you think your PRU is considering conversion to an AP Academy please contact your local NUT division secretary.

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Funding control

This term is crucial in terms of management and funding. Local authorities will be giving PRUs delegated control of their budgets from April 2013; and the system for funding schools and PRUs for high cost pupils is changing as well. Decisions on funding will be taken this term by every local authority's Schools Forum. It is essential that the voice of PRUs is heard so that adequate funding is allocated to meet the needs of current and future pupils and to support the continued provision of outreach and support services to local schools. Every Schools Forum should include one representative of PRUs and most, if not all, also include representation from the teacher unions. They can help you ensure that your views are represented at this meeting.

I am pleased to enclose two copies of the NUT's 'Nobody Does It Better' leaflet in the hope that you will be able to display it on your staff notice board and pass the other to a colleague or show it to your Management Committee.

I would like to thank you for your continued membership of the NUT and I hope that you will join me in London on 20 October for the Future That Works march.

With best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christine Blower". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

CHRISTINE BLOWER
General Secretary