



ABERDEEN EIS NEWSLETTER

JANUARY

The Aberdeen Local Association Website can be found at: www.eis-aberdeen.org.uk

INSIDE

<i>Equal Opportunities Report</i>	<i>This Page</i>
<i>Verbal and Physical Abuse Against School Staff</i>	<i>Pages 2 and 3</i>
<i>Health and Safety Report</i>	<i>Page 4</i>
<i>Dates for your Diary</i>	<i>Page 5</i>
<i>INCLUSION of SEBD Pupils: The REAL Cost</i>	<i>Pages 6 and 7</i>
<i>CONTACT NUMBERS and WEBSITE</i>	<i>Page 8</i>



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES REPORT

**by Lynda Carnie,
EIS Equal Opportunities Officer**

Aberdeen Local Association hosted a Women's Training Day in September. The tutor was Veronica Rankin, EIS National Equal Opportunities Officer, and the theme of the day was 'Negotiation and Communication Training'. In total there were seventeen local delegates which were a mixture of primary, secondary and special schools colleagues. The morning session opened with a presentation from Veronica on theories of negotiation and examining successful styles of negotiation. The delegates then moved on to consider their own communication styles and consider how they could enhance their techniques to get their message across more effectively. The majority of the afternoon session consisted of a role-

play exercise, which the delegates participated in with great enthusiasm- sometimes scarily so for those taking the role of management!

The evaluations completed at the end of the day were extremely positive- the only negatives raised were a lack of tea break in the morning and requests for 2 days instead of one- and indicated that the day was very worthwhile and should be offered again in the future. I have listed below some of the comments from the evaluations and hope that these will inspire you to put yourself forward when the next course is advertised.

'I feel I learned a lot and will be more willing to speak up in future'

'Highly informative and lots of fun'

'Tutor was lively and kept my attention throughout the day'

'Role play at a negotiating meeting was most useful'

'Relaxing atmosphere'

'Had time to reflect and analyse situations'

'I am taking away strategies that I can use'

'Food was good!'

VERBAL and PHYSICAL ABUSE against SCHOOL STAFF

Dear Colleague

I wish to return this term to a subject which still seems to be causing some confusion, Physical or Verbal Abuse Against School Staff. It is a requirement of the Authority that when a member of staff in a school is verbally or physically abused by a pupil, parent, guardian etc. he/she is required to complete the Incident Reporting Form. Teachers have no choice in the matter; these forms must be completed and in serious cases time should be given to the teacher immediately after the incident to complete the form.

A copy of the form must be returned to the teacher within ten days of it being handed in clearly

M O T I O N S F O R 2 0 0 2 A G M

* That this A G M , whilst reaffirming its support for properly resourced inclusion of SEN pupils in mainstream schools, recognises that the inclusion of SEBD pupils in mainstream classes can be detrimental to the effective learning of the majority of pupils and to the working conditions of teachers. It therefore instructs Executive Council to re-examine EIS policy on the inclusion of SEBD pupils with a view to maintaining sufficient off-site provision.

* That this A G M instruct the Executive Council to adopt, as policy, EIS support for regaining a linkage between music instructors' and teachers' salaries.

* That this A G M instruct the Executive Council to continue to seek matching pay increases for music instructors in the event of teacher pay rises.

stating the action taken by the Headteacher. If the teacher is not satisfied with the action taken by

the Headteacher he/she should contact me immediately. If the verbal or physical abuse was carried out by a pupil a copy of the form should remain in that pupil's file. The forms are sent to Summerhill where they are used to provide statistical information to the Scottish Executive. It is because of this that Jack McConnell set up the Disciplinary Task Group to report on the situation in schools and make recommendations.

The Convenor of the Education and Leisure Committee and the Director of Education have both made it clear that they will not tolerate acts of physical and verbal abuse being perpetrated against school staff. In the vast majority of cases pupils who carry out these acts should be excluded. If this is not happening then I should be contacted.

The EIS along with the Authority was extremely angry at the local media for naming schools with high records of reporting incidents without looking at the possible reasons underlying this. I wrote a very strong letter of complaint to the Evening Express, part of which was published. The EIS

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

welcomes the decision of the Scottish Executive not to publish figures on either a school by school or council by council basis as this inevitably leads to a “league table” scenario which is not helpful.

All staff are entitled to rely on the protection provided by a number of statutory provisions, in particular, the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the related Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (as amended). Any employer failing to provide adequate protection for its employees could be prosecuted and can be sued by an individual who has suffered any loss or detriment as a direct result the employer’s failure.

There is, in addition, a statutory body (The Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority) which can award compensation to anyone injured as a result of a criminal act. The fact that the assaults on teachers usually take place in the workplace makes no difference and a number of teachers have secured quite sizable CICA awards as a consequence of assaults.

As citizens teachers have an absolute entitlement to make a formal complaint to the police about any criminal activity which has had a direct affect on them personally and the EIS would advise all members who have been subject to physical assault, serious verbal

abuse or threatened violence to report the incident in question to the police. As well as the fact that CICA claims are very difficult to process if the matter has not, first, been reported to the police there is a very real danger that violence can become perceived as a “normal” part of the job. This is totally unacceptable.

In concluding therefore I would urge that all teachers complete the Incident Reporting Forms as a matter of course and if not satisfied at the action taken by the Headteacher, then contact me immediately. Make sure also that all incidents of physical assault, serious verbal abuse or threatened violence are reported to the police. Only if we all work together can something be done about this unacceptable situation, which seems more and more prevalent in the society of today.

Bill Ross

Aberdeen Local Association Secretary

4 HEALTH & SAFETY REPORT

by Rob Peaker, EIS Health & Safety Officer

Hazards, Risk and Anthrax

‘Hazards’ may do you harm.

‘Risk’ is the *chance* of the hazard doing you harm.

The chance of any teacher in Aberdeen being harmed by anthrax is close to ‘nil’. Can I offer the following advice?

- Inhale deeply before opening any mail
- Open the payslip and check the details
- Open no other letters!

Slips and Trips

These are more realistic hazards and, unless you have staff with co-ordination and balance problems, can be almost completely eliminated quite easily. Simply get the head teacher to agree to put a memo to staff asking them to identify slip and trip hazards. Collate the returns (you will find they consist almost entirely of broken floor tiles and curled up carpets). Ask the janitor to fix them or employ a tradesman.

Easy!

“Teachers Don’t Work Long Hours”

The new Education Minister, Ms Jamieson, addressed a meeting of the EIS on 1st Dec. The speech was OK, but set the antennae twitching on a couple of occasions, especially when she uttered those words...‘long hours’. I hate it when anyone mentions ‘long hours’. ‘Long hours’ can mean stress, broken sleep, increased alcohol intake, declining sexual performance, depression and losing the will to live – but enough of my problems. We have to confront anyone who mentions ‘long hours’. ‘Long hours’ are the refuge of the educationally insane.

“I work ‘long hours’, you know. Last week I worked 65. I’m nearly dead by Xmas. I take 3 weeks of my summer holiday to recover”, they say. A recent radio programme about teachers in England had a headteacher patronisingly praise her staff by saying, *“They were all on their knees by the end of term, bless ‘em”*. ‘Bollocks!’, I say

I know that many people do work ‘long hours’, but no-one should admit to it. ‘Long hours’ are stupidly worn like medals, badges of honour. From now on we should tell anyone who mentions ‘long hours’ to ‘Shut up’. We all work 35 hours. Some of us secretly volunteer to do more.

The trouble with **mentioning** ‘long hours’ is that it becomes an expectation. We are trying to escape from other people’s expectations of teachers. We should be reassessing all our tasks to shorten our hours.

Say it with pride, “Teachers don’t work long hours”.

DATES for your DIARY⁵

Training for School Reps

Training for reps as appropriate to their new role in collegiate negotiations has been organised and will take place on Wednesdays 6th, 13th, 20th and 27th March. Details will be sent to schools.

This training is designed to give school reps the skills for negotiating McCrone agreements at school level.

Aberdeen Local Association AGM

The Annual General Meeting of Aberdeen Local Association will be held on **Monday 25th February** at 7.15pm in the **Station Hotel**.

All members are encouraged to come along and maybe get a little more involved in the work of the EIS at local level.

We need to involve new people interested in educational issues across all sectors.

PRESIDENT'S VISIT

The **National President** of the EIS, Sandy Fowler, will visit Aberdeen on Tuesday 19th March 2002.

Details of the evening meeting and free buffet will be sent to schools.

INCLUSION

The REAL Cost of integrating pupils with S.E.B.D.

PLUS

- The general population in schools will be exposed to and made aware of the needs of others.
- Pupils with S.E.B.D. will be exposed to positive role models in school.
- Pupils with S.E.B.D. will be able to benefit from the full range of subjects taught in school.
- Families of S.E.B.D. children may appreciate the effort to integrate into mainstream school.
- The Education Authority may save money by closure of free standing institutions. Long term savings on maintenance of buildings and promoted staff salaries. Short term gain from the sale of redundant buildings.

MINUS

- The general school population will find school stressful because of the extreme behaviour of some of their classmates.
- Ordinary pupils will witness extremely negative role models; e.g., exposure to language and behaviour not permitted at home.
- All pupils will experience a limited curriculum because of the inability of some pupils to cope with “challenging” subjects.
- Families of S.E.B.D. children may feel helpless and pressurised when confronted by the consequences of their child’s behaviour; e.g., pressure from community, meetings in school.
- Authority will need to fund support staff on a greater ratio than before to ensure success, otherwise other agencies (social services, Children’s Panel, the courts, health services, the prison system) will have to pick up the pieces.

Even in an era when family life is often difficult, most children come to school ready to learn. Parents have effectively socialised their children—they can take turns, look and listen, interact and empathise with others. School can build on this.

We all know that education is not just about acquiring knowledge. Children need social skills, not only to effectively access education, but also so that they can effectively negotiate with and get along with others as adults.

Children with S.E.B.D. also need these skills. Early reporting of problems should, in a perfect world, bring an immediate inter-

vention in order to build in the skills needed to get along with others and access education. To offer anything less is not only to deny these individuals their basic human rights (Article 26), but also to impair the quality of education for everyone.

By
A Classroom Teacher

SCHOOL REPS

Please photocopy any part of this newsletter which might be useful for the EIS members in your school.

If any member would like to write an article for possible inclusion in the next newsletter, please contact the assistant secretary. Contact numbers are on the back page.

CAN WE HELP?

If you require assistance you should in the first instance contact your school EIS Representative. If she/he is unable to answer your enquiry you should contact the LA secretary, Bill Ross (who may wish to contact the local area officer for further advice.) If he is unavailable please do not hesitate to contact any of the officials listed below. We are always pleased to help with advice, support and information.

Secretary: Bill Ross

Tel: EIS 486168

Home: 315127

Email BRossEIS@aol.com

~

Assistant Secretary: Evelyn Provatos

Tel: School 633363

Home: 593591

Email evelyn.provatos@talk21.com

~

Treasurer: Grant Bruce

Tel: 725118

Home: 316158

Email GBruceEIS@aol.com

~

Health & Safety Officer: Rob Peaker

Tel: School 310184

Home: 01569 731197

Email RPeakerEIS@aol.com

~

Equal Opportunities Officer: Lynda Carnie

Tel: School 820887

We hope that you found this newsletter of use. We intend to produce one each term and would welcome comments from members about issues raised in this edition, what you would like us to include in future issues and ideas about other ways of communicating with members

We would also welcome contributions for inclusion in future issues.

Please contact any of the LA officials listed if you require more information on any of the issues addressed in this newsletter.

***The Aberdeen Local Association Website
can be found at:***

www.eis-aberdeen.org.uk