



Aberdeen EIS News

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Welcome to the first issue of Aberdeen L. A. Newsletter. This publication is one of a range of initiatives which the Executive have agreed to introduce in an effort to increase the level of participation in the EIS.

At regional level the EIS negotiating role has been of growing importance recently and it looks likely that this trend will continue. An increasing number of important matters, affecting your conditions in school, are being negotiated locally by your EIS representatives on the Union Management Forum and other committees. Presently we are very fortunate to have a team of experienced negotiators who have been actively involved in Union issues for a number of years and who are able to represent your interests professionally and efficiently. However, the average age of the membership of the Executive is rising annually and talk of retirement often dominates the lunch time discussions.

There are concerns that in a few years time there will be no individuals ready to take and willing to carry out these important tasks. It is therefore very essential that we get more people involved in the Local Association and we would welcome suggestions from our membership on how we can successfully achieve this.

The recent Reps training course was well attended and the

feedback seemed to be very positive. Hopefully the interest generated by the course will be reflected in the number of people attending the Local Association meetings. Several special meetings have been arranged for this session and the Presidents visit scheduled in February is now free to any member attending.

We are very optimistic that the prospect of stimulating conversation and free booze will bring the hordes flocking in from all over Aberdeen. I look forward to a good turn out at all of our events and welcome any ideas you may have in increasing the participation in the EIS.

Lynda Carnie

SECRETARY'S REPORT

For this first Newsletter I would like to concentrate on the School Reps. They are the backbone of the EIS, which would be unable to function without them. Aberdeen Local Association Executive cannot thank enough those Reps who willingly give up their time to represent the membership in their schools. Having been an EIS Rep in both Primary and Secondary schools I know what a thankless job that it is. There are no perks, only brickbats. In those many schools which have excellent hard-working Reps I would ask the membership in these schools to show your appreciation, even if it

is only a "whip round" for a bottle of whisky at Christmas time. I would also ask the membership in these schools not to take your Rep for granted, and if he/she has been the Rep for a number of years and feels like a break, surely it should not be too difficult for someone to fill the breach. The Local Association run regular training courses and we are hoping to establish ASG contacts in all ASGs beginning next session.

Having already stated that being an EIS Rep is a thankless job you may well be wondering, "If that is the case then why on earth should I even consider it, taking into account my already over-burdened workload?" The only answer I can give is "Because it is a very important position and it is vital that the membership in all schools are properly represented at all levels". Quite a few schools have an EIS Committee and the work is shared out. If your school is having difficulty in getting a Rep then this may be the option for you.

Aberdeen LA Executive would like to see a lot more "young blood" coming up through the ranks and becoming more involved at Executive level. It would not be giving away too many secrets to say that the majority of your officials are long past the "springtime" of their lives. We are, hopefully, about to change the LA constitution to increase the number of ordinary Executive members from seven to ten. We would very much like to see these vacancies being filled with a few under forties, or even

BEHAVIOUR

''Your Union Needs You''

If anyone would like to learn more about becoming more involved please don't hesitate to telephone me.

I would like to close by wishing all EIS members in Aberdeen a very happy and prosperous 1998.

W.A.Ross

The Equal Opportunities Committee is responsible for EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

EIS strategy on Equal Opportunities. Training events are taking place and eventually the aim is that someone in every local association will have a more detailed knowledge about equal opportunities issues, policies, casework and legislation.

Since taking on the role of Equal Opportunities Officer I have attended a conference in Glasgow and a training weekend in Perth. In the new year I hope to participate in other events and would encourage others members to do so also if the opportunity arises.

Sheila Maher and I attended the conference organised by the EIS and EOC in May. The timing of the conference was important, with Brian Wilson the newly appointed Minister for Education addressing the meeting. The theme of the conference was to set the Equal Opportunities Agenda for the millennium and I believe this was achieved with many high quality speakers and interesting workshops.

Hopefully the areas of discrimination most often associated with the Equal Opportunities debate have not merely

been identified but will actually be addressed.

Val Ray and I attended the STUC Women's Weekend School in Perth on "Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace." The programme was well thought out and enjoyable, with an appropriate mix of information giving, workshop sessions, case studies and discussion. A variety of trade unions were represented, with delegates from all over Scotland participating.

If equal opportunities policies are to be implemented fully then a firm commitment needs to be made, both in resolution and also in resources. It is to be hoped that by establishing a Scottish Parliament equal opportunities will be promoted at all levels and that those who receive unequal treatment or are disadvantaged will have the opportunity to influence decision making and that equality of opportunity will transfer from policy into practice.

I would be happy to hear the concerns of members on equal opportunities issues and look forward to developing my role in the new year.

Jennifer J Clark



issues take up a considerable amount of time at Executive meetings and without doubt generate the greatest

SEN ISSUES

sometimes relate mainly to a specific sector, business is not always easy to process. Consequently an SEN sub group consisting of Grant Bruce, Mary Dagleish, Sheila Maher, Mary Mathieson, Jim Merrilees, Bill Ross and myself has been set up to assist the Executive Committee process SEN issues.

The main function of the sub group is to formulate draft policies or responses to SEN consultation documents for further consideration at Executive meetings. Recently we have responded to :-

- Criteria for SEN Admissions
- Admissions Panels and Committees 1997/8
- Support for Learning Review
- ESL Review
- Why We need A Whole School Behaviour Policy
-

The EIS is currently represented on several working groups set up by Aberdeen City Education Department, namely:-

Behaviour Support Group - Jennifer Clark, Bill Ross.

Early Intervention - Grant Bruce, Jennifer Clark, Mary Dagleish

Any feedback from members on SEN related issues would be most welcome.

SEN *Jennifer Clark, SEN Convenor*

upils who consistently behave badly in the classroom situation still present the greatest difficulty for both primary and secondary teachers. Given

Aberdeen City's Education policy on Inclusion, this problem is likely to be exacerbated. The operational principle of the Inclusion policy is based on an initial assumption that normally each child will be educated in their local school and also implies the minimal use of expulsion. This means that more local schools will be accommodating more pupils with S.E.N., including pupils with S.E.B.D.

The increase in the number of S.E.N. bases implies that pupils with S.E.N. may well be integrated for part of the school day with mainstream classes for specific subjects or areas of the curriculum.

The Support For Learning policy consistently emphasises the fact that **all** teachers must be able to respond to a wide range of pupil needs, including those pupils with S.E.B.D.

What does this mean for mainstream teachers? It means an increase in the number of pupils with S.E.B.D. and possibly associated L.D. in the mainstream system, at a time when there is a lack of both human and physical resources which are required for the effective implementation of these policies. It will almost certainly mean an increase in workload if teachers are expected to further differentiate individual work packages for individual pupils. Specialist training for mainstream teachers must be balanced against the amount of time required for such training.

Mary Dalgleish

FINANCE MATTERS

When an Aberdeen EIS newsletter was mentioned at an Executive meeting last year, it seemed like a good idea at the time. Then it was suggested that the LA Treasurer should be given a regular slot and I began to change my mind. The problem was what should I write about?

- should I be reproducing articles from the Financial Times?
- should I be telling you about what's on offer from EIS Financial Services?
- should I be speculating as to why a New Labour government is cutting £17 million from the Aberdeen City Council 1998/99 budget when "Education cubed" is apparently Mr Blair's priority?

Once I considered my job as LA Treasurer, I soon realised that the answer to each of the above questions was NO! My role as Treasurer is to ensure that the LA "kitty" is healthy enough so that our Local Officials and EIS Representatives can carry out their function of protecting the pay and conditions of Scottish teachers.

As I reported at the LA Financial SGM on 17/11/97, we currently have over £33,000 in the bank with computer assets and office equipment taking our current LA funds over the £38,000 mark. Thus for the sixth year in a row I recommended that there should be no increase in the **Local Association Levy** from its current level of £8.40 per year. Below I list examples of expenditure that can be claimed back from me.

School Photocopying

- EIS reps should photocopy as required any national or local

correspondence that is sent to



your school

- EIS reps should attempt to get their school office to agree to bill them once or twice a year which avoids me having to write too many cheques for very small amounts
- if you then pay the bill and pass on the receipt to me at a Local Association meeting or send it to me at Dyce Academy, I shall give you a cheque
- alternately, get your school office to bill me at Dyce Academy.

Postage and Telephones

Please keep a note of any postage or telephone expenses which you incur whilst carrying out EIS duties and pass these to me for payment.

Child Care

The LA agreed four years ago to cover the costs of child care for EIS members so that they can attend evening Local Association meetings. If EIS members need to pay a baby-sitter in order to attend evening LA meetings, then I can give them a cheque at the end of the meeting.

I look forward to hearing from you!

Grant Bruce

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Please contact me if you have any
HEALTH & SAFETY
 resolved at school level.

Feeling stressed? One of the recommendations from a committee set up to produce a stress management policy was that directors of all depts. should have appropriate training so that they were made aware of the problems stress brings. It can be difficult to get help or sympathy.

The agreed council policy sets out procedures to help staff at all levels who are suffering due to possible stress problems.

(There have been a number of H&S initiatives recently and all staff shall be receiving an information sheet highlighting these in the near future.)

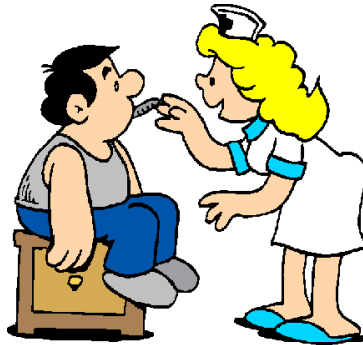
Some stress can be due to not knowing how to deal with problems when they arise. (Equally, we can be overwhelmed by having too much information!) To deal effectively with H&S problems in school it is vital that all staff know who has the management responsibility for these. Make sure that issues of concern are raised and dealt with.

Related to this, courses in risk assessment have been arranged for management in all schools (and for departmental heads in secondaries). These should ensure that all schools are aware of their responsibilities and can safely and competently assess risks to staff and pupils (Help will be given by the H&S dept. based at St. Nicholas House).

A matter of some concern in Aberdeen secondary schools is the lack of adequate maintenance over many years in the technical depts. The Education Dept. has agreed that this is a major problem and is currently looking into ways to fund a

proper rolling programme of maintenance and training for staff.

Because the content of the curriculum in technical subjects has changed radically there will need to be some rationalisation of provision.



Aberdeen City Council is keen to demonstrate that it takes the health of its staff seriously. It has joined the Health @ Work Scheme and is about to apply for a bronze award. For the application to be successful the council has to fulfil a number of requirements. To this end there will be a number of Health Roadshows to promote healthy lifestyles. The first of these is scheduled for 5 Feb. 1998 in the Town and County Hall, Town House from 9.30a.m. to 8.00 p.m. Please go if you can as fun and information are guaranteed.

(Alan McLean, Principal Personnel Officer based at St Nicholas House, is responsible for the success of the scheme. He is keen to raise the profile of H&S issues in any way he can. There is a H&S section in the staff newsletter 'City Lights'. If you have any items for this please send to Alan or to me.)

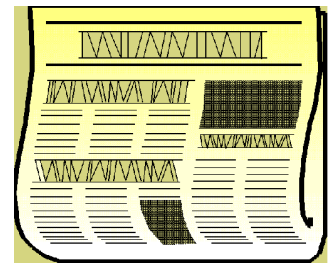
Rob Peaker

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We hope that you found this first newsletter of use.

We hope to produce one each term and would welcome comments from members about :

- this edition
- what you would like us to include in future issues
- other ways of communicating with members



We would also welcome contributions for inclusion in future issues.

Please get in touch with

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