

# John Roan teachers

## Defending education and respect at work

The John Roan NUT is pleased to announce that we voted unanimously yesterday to suspend strike action over proposed redundancies and restructuring at the John Roan School. NUT members along with NASUWT and GMB members have been in dispute with Nadine Powrie, Headteacher and the Governing Body over proposals to cut jobs, courses and increase staff workload. We can now report that our campaign action, up to and including strike action has successfully secured the following for our school:

- Reinstatement of courses including RE and Psychology GCSE and Drama and posts in Science, PE, RE/Psychology, Drama, and the reinstatement of our Site Supervisors.
- Reinstatement of daily tutor time as an important part of our pastoral provision.
- The avoidance of compulsory redundancies and the limit of Voluntary Redundancies to 4 posts from the original 17 posts identified for redundancy.
- Agreement that our maximum teaching contact remains 21 hours a week for all teachers and a 'no detriment' for post-holders in terms of management time and teaching loadings. This means that our Heads of Department (HODs) and Guidance and Achievement Leaders (GALs) as well as Assistant and Deputy Heads will have time to carry out their non-teaching duties.
- No redundancies for our admin staff, help with a skills audit and support with interviews for new job descriptions and posts within the school.
- The establishment of a working party, agreed by the Unions with the remit to look at curriculum and timetabling for the next academic year 2016/17. However, we will maintain our current school day to ensure continuity and stability for staff and students over the coming year.

It would be true to say that it has been a difficult year for the John Roan School community. We have found ourselves as teachers and staff members in opposition to a number of proposals from marking polices and learning walks which would have led to increased workload with no educational gain, to the threat to convert our school to an academy and the latest threats to jobs, courses and staff workload.

### **Our commitment to comprehensive education**

We would like to reaffirm our commitment as teachers to providing a safe, happy environment so that all our students at The John Roan can achieve. We believe that we have taken action in the interests of the whole John Roan community and while there has been disruption this year, we hope that protecting jobs and courses will make the John Roan a school that students want to study in and staff want to work in.

We are proud of our comprehensive traditions and the community ethos at the heart of our school. We will continue to celebrate our fantastic school that has so much to offer all of our young people who study with us.

However, it must be said that this disruption could have been avoided. We maintain that the rationale for the restructuring has been based on a misrepresentation of the facts. There was *no loss of income* of £400,000 due to a fall in sixth form roll as there was no fall from the predicted numbers that the Local Authority used to calculate the funding allocated.



The staffing expenditure is in line with similar schools to ours, so suggesting that staffing was excessive is misleading. This is a serious issue - the school community and parents have been misled and the facts need to be stated clearly to resolve this confusion.

## **The School finances**

We now have evidence that the current deficit that the school currently faces could have been avoided if Ms Powrie had not committed the school to various non-essential expenditure (CCTV, ICT, consultancy fees, school development programmes etc.). We still need an explanation as to why the off-site provision (for students who need support outside of school) has increased significantly along with the renovation of the roof at Maze Hill (from £32K to £250K).

A full audit of the accounts is essential to help the school in understanding where we are in terms of our financial stability over the coming years and to enable the working party to move forward on what curriculum we can offer in 2017.

Unfortunately, the unnecessary and acute stress that this restructuring process has created has led to a breakdown in trust and confidence in the current management and direction of the school. This could have been avoided and serious lessons must be learnt. We hope that confidence and trust can be rebuilt in the coming months and we will be working towards this goal.

We would like to register our disappointment with the way in which industrial relations have been conducted in our school since September 2015 after the appointment of Nadine Powrie. Policies have been imposed without proper or meaningful negotiation. Our three NUT representatives (including our Health & Safety rep) have been investigated under the school's disciplinary policy for what we maintain to be based on spurious grounds. In order to avoid further industrial disputes of this nature, we have suggested that we draw up some protocols on how we can all move forward and improve our industrial relations in the future.

## **Moving Forward**

Finally, we would like to thank parents and students at the John Roan, and NUT members far and wide, along with our community for the support and encouragement we have received to stand up for education and respect at work. We hope we can all move forward in the interests of our school community.

Over the coming year, schools are going to see cuts in funding and increased costs and we will be campaigning nationally to stop this. The education of our young people should be an absolute priority and the NUT will continue our campaign to make sure our schools can offer the very best for all our students.