

The Newsletter for UNISON members working in Southampton schools

## PAY UP NOW

For seven years now, public sector workers – including local authority controlled school staff – have not had a pay rise. In each of those years, they either got no increase at all or saw their pay rise by just **1%**.

The problem is, while it may seem that the 1% pay increase was a pay rise, it wasn't. And the reason is inflation. Inflation – when the cost of goods go up – means that, effectively, public sector workers' pay is worth less. And prices have been rising by a lot.

Between 2010 and 2016 the cost of rent went up by **17%**; the cost of electricity went up by **28%**; the cost of sending a child to nursery school went up by **21%** and the cost of holidays in the UK went up by **27%**.

According to ONS (Office for National Statistics) data sourced by UNISON, the average teaching assistant wage was **£18,560** in 2016. If your wage had risen in line with inflation between 2010 and 2016, your wage would be **£21,914.16**, a loss of **£3,354.16**. That's the kind of sum that could be the holiday of a lifetime, or a new second-hand car.

As it stands the Tory government is looking to relax the cap—but only for police officers and prison staff. This leaves millions of public sector staff, including school staff, lumped with a real terms pay cut for the foreseeable future.

There are murmurs that the cap could be lifted for all public sector staff, but if it is increased for schools, where would the money come from? We are all too aware that schools are operating on shoestring budgets and redundancies are unfortunately common. If the cap is lifted without increased government education funding, it could make an already bad situation worse.

To find out more about UNISON's **Pay Up Now!** campaign, and to calculate just how the pay cap has affected you, head to [www.unison.org.uk/our-campaigns/pay-up-now](http://www.unison.org.uk/our-campaigns/pay-up-now).

### VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS:

**This summer** we sent a survey to all school staff in the branch, asking about your experiences of violence in the workplace, and how you would like UNISON to help.

The results of the survey make for uncomfortable reading. **44%** of respondents say they have experienced violence at work in the last year, with **54%** witnessing a colleague experiencing physical violence. **66%** experienced and **76%** witnessed verbal violence over the same period.

In response to this, we have created a leaflet on your rights, and management's responsibilities in the aftermath of violence in schools. You will find one included with this newsletter and digital copies are available. If you would like more physical copies to distribute to colleagues please email [ben.martin@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:ben.martin@southampton.gov.uk).

### STAR STEWARD: MARY RADFORD

UNISON Southampton District would like to thank Mary Radford, steward at Ludlow Junior School, for her 15 years of dedicated service to the branch and her members.

Branch Secretary, Hayley Garner said: "Mary has been proactive at Ludlow Junior School, recruiting new members, liaising with the branch and making sure her members know their rights at work. Mary is an example of the difference a trained and active steward can make to a workplace. We would like to wish Mary all the best in her retirement and this award is in recognition of all the hard work she has put in over the years."

### Recruit a new member and get a £25 reward

For every new member recruited, you will get a £25 reward. Application forms and further information are available from the UNISON office.

