

SOUTHERN REGION SCHOOLS COMMITTEE

17th March Online Meeting – Chessington

Chaired & hosted by Kim Marshall

Introduction – Kim

Kim welcomed all to the meeting.

Election of delegate to National Schools Committee

2 Nominations

Donna wanted to give a update. Christine did a fantastic job and is the outgoing candidate. We are an action committee, and we put suggestions out to regions and they feed actions in and out our Regional and National meeting. All in person and need people that can attend these meetings. Expectation that whoever is elected can attend 4 times a year. And ideally someone with an FYFS background as we have a lack of support there and they can have EYFS voice heard. May 12th is next meeting in Euston (3 in Euston and 1 in region) this year in Belfast

Nick – we have 2 nominations Emma Fair and Cornelius. ND has had statements from both candidates. Emma read her statement. Cornelious spoke and decided to withdraw his application as he felt Emma was better placed to represent the sector and congratulated Emma.

Nick thanked Cornelius for his kind words and Emma will need the support from everyone on the meeting and congratulated Emma.

Emma is looking forward to the challenge and pushing the agenda. Emma is elected unopposed.

Update on Regional Schools Event on the 21/3/26

Kim, Katie and Nick introduced themselves

The reason this meeting is short we usually have guest speakers and they are attending on Saturday. Kim asked if the event will be recorded. Nick will clarify. Woburn House, near Euston . If you would still like to attend contact Tom Cowin – email in chat and you can attend.

Registration from 9:30

H&S in school

Contracts

Campaigning in Schools

NEU

First time we have had a regional schools event in our Region and good to network with people – we also have goodies for attendees. Looking forward to seeing you all in person. Expense will be covered. Food and Drink available. Child care provision is available. Katie very excited about the event and looking forward to continuing these moving forward.

Ava wanted to say that it is great that we are doing the conference she has lots of information on the NEU.

Any presentation that we get we will share presentations and share feedback on the event.

We need to have feedback to make sure we get it right for our members at the next meeting.

National Schools Event 18th April 2026

The deadline for applying for this was Monday. We had to send information out from National. We have been asked to hold back on Names. The possible venue is Leeds and we will cover expenses. Stacy wants to cover in detail information about pay. You can still put yourself forward. We will share more information as it becomes available and will update as appropriate.

Alison - Focus will be around the NEU and collecting information and be able to present and overview of our feeling nationally. Later in the year we are also looking at doing a National event later in the year.

Nick – our members are keen to make sure our members views are heard and Mark Wilkinson will be attending on Saturday to make sure our views are heard

Requests for future speakers

Nick talked about why we have guest speakers Hillary suggested Socialist Education, Kim - Bridget Phillipson, White paper SEND Reform specialist., Academisation, someone one from DfE.

Emma hears about campaigns of other Reps/activists in other areas have been successful at another Lay member to chat about it. We need to spread the word about our successes.

SSSNB Update

2 bodies that meet regularly. New body that is going though government that will replace the NJC

Officers meeting – Update on passage of bill, Three recognised Unions Unite, GMB, Unison. Still an old constitution floating around. GMB has grown membership a lot and we should have more

seats. Unlikely that Unison will reduce. There will be a body of 30 people. Other working parties going on, Barbara Plant sitting on some of these committees.

Alison – Academies being involved has slowed down the process. But we will get there.

Kim feels we are likely to run out of time.

Alison – We will not get all the things we want it to be, but we are hoping we get something.

Paula – In terms of the academies – are they trying to dilute some of the job descriptions. What angle are they coming from – standards for support staff.

Alison – Academies have got their muscles out and we can influence those in Parliament.

Paula – SSNB is brilliant but feels we will have to concede to some items to allow us to achieve something. We need to get it right and make it difficult to the next government to abolish anything.

Sheryl – from here perspective this has been dragged out for so long and we don't know the end result.

Nick – The bill has now got further ahead and has faith that it will happen. Academies are but in barriers about National Pay and are paying below NJC. Nick is trying to remain optimistic.

Corneilius – does not doubt the work the GMB have done to support school staff. Academies has done damage to the education sector. We need to outline to our members what we are doing to support them and be more proactive in telling members how exploited TAs are. We should take a much more active stand in outlining the unacceptable treatment of support staff in the classroom. We need to stand up and represent our members and not give the academies an inch.

Nick – totally understand Cornelius and the GMB will fully support our members and we need to give the tools to our activists to stand up in the workplace and be present in the workplace and be the conduits.

Zoey – if all schools become academies which is what the government want. GMB know this is not the way forward. We need to resist

Alison – Corneluis you are a breath of fresh air – we need you at our meeting in April. We need a National Education Officer to support the support staff. Bottom-up staff need more support, and our officers need more support to support us. Let us know what training is needed. Make communications more streamlined.

Sarah – New Rep reason for becoming a Rep was not having a connection with the GMB. Only recently seen the GMB and wanted to make sure members know what was happening in a safe environment and can support members as they are not ware of what is happening at a National level – TA's are ready to strike – our members are passionate and we need information.

Cheryl – personal view that SSSNB is a smokescreen, people are joining the NEU. GMB need to look at the bigger picture.

Orla – Grassroots – members need to act. As a rep your regional and local representative are more supportive. We need toolkits on the GMB site as we need specifics. We need a Blueprint.

NEU are good at spreading propaganda and have good toolkits. We want to show GMB have these. We can build on this and have a toolkit for all our policies. New Reps would strengthen. GMB is one of the best unions in our country for our support staff – but we need to let the general public know about SSSNB to get the message across we need to educate them. Parents have no idea about the SSSNB and we should campaign

Cornelius – GMB are not to blame for the failure, It is important that we need movement from the ground up but Unions need to say why GMB is important and the reasons members need to take action. Members know they are being ripped off but the GMB need to shout out more about what we can do. TAs are not just babysitters, but worried about the next government and what they will do. Our members are demoralised and we need to fight for them. We need to be aggressive towards the NEU

Nick – pleased that the SSNB is causing discussion. Bottom-up support is agreed. We need to make sure we have information for our Reps. Discussions nationally about what information is available to our school reps and we will support this. We know our members are tired and we need to target the information sent out and ensure it is more targeted. We want to do better and we have some great campaigns going on in the region and we need to shout out about this more and work together. We are open to listening about what needs to happen moving forward.

Katies – National event is now cancelled. We may have another meeting soon to discuss NJC pay.

Nick – Data Cleanse your membership – all reps to do housekeeping.

Kim thanked everyone for attending and looks forward to seeing everyone on Saturday

AOB

Next Meeting – will link to NJC pay.