



Academies campaign makes its mark

Within a week of announcing his flagship policy to fast-track 'outstanding' schools to academy status, Education Minister, Michael Gove, was claiming in Parliament that "over 1,100 schools had applied". Yet eight weeks later, on 23 July, his Department for Education (DfE) published a list of just 153 schools that had applied to convert. And subsequent answers provided by his ministers in Parliament suggested that very few, if any, of these schools will have opened as academies this September.

This represents a significant victory for our campaign to ensure that school governing bodies did not rush the decision to become an academy without full and proper consultation, information and facts.

Our campaign has also made its mark by helping to force the government into making a number of concessionary amendments to its Academies Bill, including:

Consultation: a new clause has been added to the Bill to ensure that the governing body of a maintained school carries out a consultation exercise with "those persons whom they think appropriate" on whether the school should convert to academy status. According to a written parliamentary answer provided by Schools Minister, Nick Gibb, "schools will not be able to open as an academy unless a consultation exercise has been carried out."

ATL believes that staff, parents and the community are all 'appropriate persons', and that meaningful consultation must be undertaken *before* a governing body votes on a change in status.

In terms of consulting with unions and staff, ATL does not believe that TUPE consultation alone will be sufficient to meet these new requirements. Nor does ATL believe that a 'consultation' meeting with the union rep, the day before the school signs the funding agreement, would suffice.

Special educational needs (SEN): academies will now need to comply with the same SEN legislation as maintained schools, although ATL still believes that the loss of local authority support around a whole range of special needs will hold back the achievements and inhibit the life chances of disadvantaged and vulnerable children.

Academies' performance: the government will now be required to produce an annual report on the performance of academies. Having exempted 'outstanding' schools from Ofsted's inspection regime, it will be interesting to see on what evidence the government bases such a report.

The decision to switch to academy status is the most important decision your school may ever make. Once a school has become an academy, there is no way back. It could have serious ramifications for you and your colleagues, not least by putting at risk everything union members have negotiated in recent years: guaranteed planning, preparation and assessment time, removal of admin tasks from teacher duties, model job descriptions for support staff, limits on working time, entitlements to continuing professional development (CPD) and a nationally agreed salary structure.

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For more information:

- For the DfE guidance on the academy approval process visit www.education.gov.uk/academies, and for the latest DfE lists of schools that have applied to convert or expressed an interest, visit www.education.gov.uk/academies/schools-registering-interest.
- For information about what it means if your school is an academy, see www.atl.org.uk/academies and read the article in the latest issue of ATL's *Report* magazine (September 2010).
- For up-to-date information on the campaign and to download resources, including frequently asked questions, see www.atl.org.uk/academiescampaign.

And look out for the petition-postcard we will be mailing to all reps later in September.



What you can do:

If your school is thinking about becoming an academy or is in the process of becoming an academy:

- If your school is on the list the DfE says has applied to convert, were you aware that a vote had been taken at your school's governing body? Were parents and the wider community consulted before the governors voted? Has any consultation, TUPE or otherwise, been undertaken with staff? **If you answer 'no' to any of these questions, contact your ATL branch secretary urgently or email academies@atl.org.uk.**
- If your school is considering academy status, you could:
 - hold a joint union meeting to discuss the situation and agree how to move forward
 - write to governors raising members' concerns
 - use the campaign resources, including a model resolution for governors, available from the campaign page www.atl.org.uk/academiescampaign.
- If your school has registered an interest, ask your headteacher for more information. Is the governing body being asked to or is it planning to take a vote? If/how will the school consult with staff, unions and parents before a vote is taken?
- ATL will continue to support you if your school converts to an academy – we have a checklist for ATL reps in academies to help during the transfer process and guidance regarding TUPE consultations – see www.atl.org.uk/reps-toolbox/academy-reps.asp.
- Keep ATL informed as and when your school progresses through the academy approval process, such as votes by governors, the TUPE consultation, the academy's start date – or, indeed, if your school reaches a decision not to apply for academy status. Email academies@atl.org.uk.
- Provide ATL with your email address. Those reps we have email addresses for were sent regular and detailed ebulletins on our academy campaign throughout last term. Don't miss out – contact membership@atl.org.uk with your name, membership number and email address to make sure we can keep you in the loop too!

If your school is an existing academy:

ATL works to support members in existing academies around the country:

- We have secured recognition agreements with Absolute Return for Kids, Edutrust Academies Charitable Trust, Harris Federation, OASIS Community Learning and the United Learning Trust, which between them manage 54 academies. ATL continually works to improve pay and conditions for members in academies in these sponsor groups. If you would like further information on the policies and procedures with these sponsors, contact Usman Gbajabiamila at ugbajabiamila@atl.org.uk.
- ATL produces a dedicated newsletter for members in academies, *Academy news*, which contains the latest news and advice for members in academies. We also have a network of reps in academies. ATL supports academy reps with specialised training sessions and resources. If you want to join our reps' network or have suggestions for our newsletter, please email academiesnetwork@atl.org.uk.

Spending cuts hit FE

FE colleges are facing pressures on a number of fronts, particularly with the economy on a downturn. Their funding for adult provision has been reduced, as has the funding per learner or 'learner rate' for 16-18 year olds; the funding for HE courses is complicated by restrictions on student volume on maximum and minimum numbers, and apprenticeships or 'work-based learning' for FE colleges are not easy to quickly develop though the preferred choice of government.

Expect more mergers and takeovers

Pensions

PENSION NEWS

The coalition government announced, in the budget delivered on 22 June 2010, its intention to change the method by which public service pensions are index-linked. The government proposes to change the method of index linking from the Retail Price Index to the Consumer Price Index, effective from April 2011. This change will affect the way teachers' pensions are increased in payment from April 2011. It will also affect how preserved pensions are increased from the same date and may affect how a teacher's final salary is calculated at retirement. Over the medium and longer term, this is likely to mean a reduction in the amount of pension paid and ATL is working with its partners at the TUC to challenge the government's decision. When more information is available, ATL will put details in the 'help and advice' section of its website.

The triennial actuarial review of the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) is currently under way and ATL eagerly awaits its publication. This will report on the health of the scheme and recommend any changes to contribution rates, as appropriate. Currently, employers pay 14.1% and employees 6.4% of pensionable salary. However, a cap on employers' future contributions of 14 per cent was agreed under the 2007 reforms to the TPS and this, along with other factors, may mean an increase to the employees' contribution is needed.

ATL considers that the benefits of the TPS represent very good value for money but we would consider any recommendation in light of the information the actuarial review brings up.

A huge caveat to that, however, is the more wide-ranging Independent Public Sector Pensions Commission (IPSPC) review taking place, led by John Hutton, dealing with all public sector pension schemes and their costs. This is due to make an interim report in September 2010 with a final report in time for the 2011 Budget. The IPSPC's terms of reference are of some concern to staff organisations as they seem to be drawing conclusions ahead of the commission's work. The staff side of the Teachers' Superannuation Working Party will submit a joint response to the IPSPC by the end of July 2011.

ATL is working closely with other TUC partners, both in the education and wider public sector, to develop lobbying positions and dialogue with government on any changes proposed.



This all means that colleges will continually seek efficiency savings that will affect members in specialist provision, A-levels, HE work and adult learning. Also the growth in autonomy will mean that the more aggressive colleges will be seeking further takeovers and expansion of their provision in national, rather than regional, terms. Expect more mergers and takeovers.

Local campaigning will be a key tactic in arguing for preserving such provision, and therefore the local community and media will be essential to the campaign, as will be making the governing body aware of the implications of cuts. Such campaigns will need to be clear, quick off the mark and high profile in order to convince.



What you can do:

- For further support contact ATL's national official for the post-16 sector, Norman Crowther, at ncrowther@atl.org.uk.

Teachers' pay (England and Wales)

The DfE has confirmed that teachers in England and Wales will receive a 2.3% increase in their salaries as of 1 September 2010. This is the final year of the three-year pay settlement.

We expect that the two-year pay freeze announced in the emergency budget will apply for the academic years 2011-12 and 2012-13. Pay progression on the main, upper, leadership and advanced skills teacher pay scales are unaffected by the pay freeze.

Any pay freeze would apply only to those staff earning the equivalent of a full-time salary above £21,000. This is all qualified teachers in England and Wales. Some unqualified teachers who earn below this figure should receive an increase in excess of £250 per annum, details of which will be determined nearer the time that the pay freeze is implemented.

Support staff pay (England, Wales and Northern Ireland)

In January 2010, the Local Government Employers announced a pay freeze for the current pay year (2010-11) for all employees, including support staff in maintained schools.

The two-year public sector pay freeze announced in the emergency Budget will apply except for those earning a full-time equivalent salary of £21,000 or less, who will receive an increase of at least £250 per annum. Details of this will be determined nearer the time.



Update on ISA and GTCE

On 15 June the Home Secretary, Theresa May, announced that the commencement of voluntary registration with the new Vetting and Barring Scheme in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, which was due to begin on 26 July, was to be brought to a halt with immediate effect. The government will maintain the current arrangements under which the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) is able to bar those considered unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults from "regulated activities", and appropriate cases will continue to be referred to them. ATL will, of course, keep members updated about any further developments.

On 2 June the Education Secretary, Michael Gove, announced his intention to abolish the General Teaching Council for England (GTCE). It is not known who or what will take over the GTCE's role but ATL will update members once further information is released. In the interim, those teaching in the maintained sector in England should continue to register as normal until advised otherwise. ATL members in Scotland and Wales should continue to register with the GTCs and GTCW, both of which will function as normal for the time being.

Pre-existing issues: ATL's guidance for reps and contacts

It is ATL's policy not to assist members with problems that arose before they joined. School/college reps may occasionally be tempted to assist members with pre-existing problems on an unofficial basis as a workplace colleague. This could prove problematic. Specifically, the member could, if dissatisfied with the assistance provided, pursue a legal claim against the rep and argue that, in retrospect, s/he had acted in an official capacity. **In such circumstances the rep has no indemnity cover from ATL.** We therefore advise that any rep attending a meeting as a colleague makes it clear that s/he is not doing so in an ATL capacity. It is essential that this position is made equally clear in the minutes of the meeting.

Latest publications from ATL

ATL has been working hard over the summer to produce lots of new publications that you may find useful as a reference or wish to pass on to your members.

New advice factsheets: on the whys and wherefores of class size, guidance on time off for CPD and dos and don'ts on using social media, such as Facebook (see www.atl.org.uk/factsheets).

We have also produced a newly revised edition of *Industrial action*, which offers a concise explanation of ATL's policy and approach to industrial action, the legal requirements, procedures and what to do when other unions are taking industrial action in which ATL members are not participating. For this and other ATL publications, see www.atl.org.uk/publications.

ATL-NUT joint position paper: *Making assessment measure up* – a useful discussion document that members might like to download and debate with colleagues. The paper calls for urgent reform of the assessment regime and outlines what we think could take its place. For this and more of ATL's position statements, see www.atl.org.uk/policies.

What's in it for me? 10 benefits of membership – sent to all members earlier this year. The publication – recently commended at the TUC communications awards – clearly articulates the benefits and services available to ATL members. Download or order a hard copy as a helpful reference when recruiting new members, or order extra copies to hand out to potential or new members (search for 'What's in it for me' at www.atl.org.uk).



What you can do:

- Order a copy of each publication and place them in your staffroom for members and potential members to browse. All publications can be downloaded from the 'publications and resources' section of www.atl.org.uk, or ordered by telephone on 0845 4500 009.

Recruitment – its as easy as ABC!

According to TUC research, the principal reason that many workers don't join a union is simply because they have never been asked.



What you can do:

- September is the ideal time to start a recruitment push in school. You may have new staff starting, you may have NQs joining your school and you will most likely start getting students on placements. No matter who you are targeting, the plan is the same – talk to them and remember your ABC...

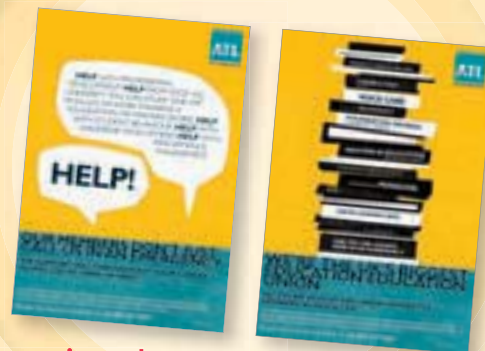
Get their **attention** – make sure you plan your discussion at a time that is going to be convenient – you don't want to be rushing.

Be **bold** – don't be afraid to talk about why they should join ATL rather than another union. Give them a form and ask them to fill it in there and then.

Close the deal – it is important to close the deal by getting the signed form back or getting them signed up online; if there isn't time during your discussion make sure you follow up at a later date.

As always, ATL has a range of resources available to support you with recruitment, including:

- a range of publications (for example, the *Induction* or *Probation* booklets and *Ready steady teach!* and *Into the classroom* for new teachers)
- a range of membership forms
- easy online joining form
- posters and flyers.



Share your experience!

As an ATL member you will be very aware of the reasons for joining – when talking to potential members, don't forget to talk about why you joined and what ATL has done for you personally.

Don't forget ATL Future!

It is vital that we recruit as many new teachers as possible. ATL Future provides a voice, support, training and networking opportunities for new teachers, both nationally and regionally. As soon as you recruit a new teacher they will be able to join in with ATL Future events specifically focused on new teacher issues, so do make sure they know about this. More information about ATL Future can be found at www.atl.org.uk/atlfuture or by emailing atlfuture@atl.org.uk.

Don't forget our great offers too!

- Standard membership is half price for one year
- Student membership is completely free
- If a NQ qualifies in 2010, membership is free until 2012 and then half price until 2013.

So remember, be a proud member of ATL and get talking to non-members – get their **attention**, be **bold** and **close** the deal to boost ATL membership in your school.

Going the extra mile – ATL rep awards

Do you know an ATL rep that goes the extra mile? Or an individual who has led a campaign to improve conditions in your workplace? Perhaps a young activist who has helped build ATL membership?

To reward the work done by ATL reps across the country, in April next year, ATL will hold its first annual rep awards. The categories are for those individuals who represent the best aspects of each of these roles:

- outstanding workplace rep
- outstanding ATL Future activist (works closely with student and NQ members)
- outstanding health and safety rep
- outstanding ULR.

ATL members can make a nomination by logging onto www.atl.org.uk/repawards. Closing date for nominations is **Monday 10 January 2011**. Winners will be invited to attend ATL's annual conference dinner in Liverpool on the evening of Tuesday 19 April (all expenses paid). All winners will be notified after the closing date.

LGBT equality in education conference

From Section 28 to active promotion: A one-day conference on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) equality in education

ATL, NASUWT, NUT and Unison, together with the TUC, are hosting a conference for trade union activists and negotiators to learn about and share good practice in the promotion of LGBT equality in schools and post-school education. Speakers include equality practitioners, trade unionists and educationalists with specialist expertise in LGBT equality issues. The day will be complemented by a range of workshops covering training, campaigning, organising and supporting, and practical tools and resources to promote LGBT equality in education.

The event will be held on Saturday, 9 October 2010, from 10am to 4pm, at Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, London WC1H 0XG. Lunch will be provided and attendance is free of charge.

Please register your attendance as soon as possible, but no later than Friday, 1 October, by emailing your name, union, institution and any access requirements to out@unison.co.uk.





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**BETTER
MAINTENANCE
MAKES
WORK SAFER**

ATL urges educational establishments to mark the Healthy Workplaces European Campaign's safety week, which runs from 25-29 October. In some European countries, as many as one fifth of workplace accidents are connected with maintenance, and an estimated 10-15% of work-related deaths are attributable to maintenance operations. In Belgium, 41% of accidents in the education sector are maintenance-related. The aims of the campaign are to raise awareness of the importance of ensuring that workplaces are properly maintained and to reduce the number of people who are injured or killed in work-related accidents.

Educational establishments need to take steps to carry out regular maintenance work of premises and equipment. In creating a safe environment for staff, students and other visitors, such as parents/carers, they must have good management systems in place to ensure maintenance is coordinated, scheduled and properly completed. Equipment should be safe to use, with defective items taken out of use immediately and either repaired or disposed of.

In ATL's experience, too many of our members have been injured because their workplaces have been inadequately maintained. Cases include a member who slipped and fell on water which accumulated as a result of a leaking pipe, one who was injured when a window blind in her classroom fell on her, another who tripped over loose wires which were trailing across the classroom floor and another who was injured when she stepped into a pothole. Let's not forget the members who have slipped on floors shortly after they have been recently mopped or cleaned. Many of these accidents are avoidable.

For example, accidents can be prevented by undertaking a comprehensive inspection of the workplace involving safety reps, governors and student representatives. Beforehand, an agreed checklist should be drawn up to cover a wide range of areas of risk, including:

- lighting in all internal and external areas, such as footpaths
- access to and around buildings
- flooring, in particular trip hazards, such as frayed carpets or loose tiles
- services such as electricity, water, or heating
- building structure, for example ceilings, windows and their fittings, doors, floors, or asbestos
- electrical equipment, including whether visual checks are carried out on a regular basis
- maintenance and repair of equipment and machinery
- transport vehicles, such as minibuses

- storage arrangements, in particular for rubbish and dangerous substances – for instance, the use of high shelves for storage may increase the risk of an accident occurring
- exposure to dust or chemicals
- fittings, for example chairs, desks, shelving or cupboards
- air quality.

Safety inspections are preventative measures – they identify and remove existing hazards and help to prevent risks. Educational establishments should do all they can to ensure that accidents, dangerous situations and health problems are not caused by lack of or inadequate maintenance of the workplace.

What you can do:



- urge your school or college to carry out a special event to mark the Healthy Workplaces European Campaign.

For more information:



- The TUC has produced a guide for unions and their health and safety reps, *Maintenance in the workplace*, to promote the campaign safety week. It advises that every organisation should have a maintenance schedule in which work is planned and risk-assessed, and includes a checklist. You can download the guide from www.tuc.org.uk.
- The Healthy Workplaces European Campaign is coordinated by the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work and its partners in the 27 EU member states. Download further information from the campaign's website, at <http://osha.europa.eu/en/campaigns/hw2010>.



Keep the bugs at bay

THE PANDEMIC FLU OF LAST WINTER HIGHLIGHTED THE NEED FOR EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS TO HAVE MEASURES IN PLACE TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF INFECTION TO BOTH PUPILS AND STAFF, SUCH AS ENCOURAGING HIGH STANDARDS OF PERSONAL HYGIENE – PARTICULARLY HAND-WASHING AND TO MAINTAIN A CLEAN ENVIRONMENT.

The Health Protection Agency has produced the publication, *Guidance on infection control in schools and other childcare settings*, in which it recommends periods for which children infected with the most common infectious diseases should be kept away from schools or nurseries. For example, in cases of measles, chicken pox and German measles (rubella), it is recommended that pupils stay away for four, five and six days respectively, from the outset of the rash. On the other hand, it is recommended that those with head lice need not be kept away. Schools should inform their local health protection unit if an outbreak of infectious disease is suspected.

The guidance confirms that if a pregnant member of staff develops a rash or is in direct contact with someone with a potentially serious rash, she should consult her doctor immediately. It also advises that chicken pox, shingles, German measles, slapped cheek and measles can adversely affect pregnancy. All members of staff should ensure that they are up-to-date with their immunisations.



Animals in school, whether permanent or visiting, are covered in the guidance. It advises that children should not play unsupervised with animals and that, as animals carry infections, hands must be washed after handling them. Children should not have access to litter boxes and animal waste must be disposed of at regular intervals.

The guidance advises on the necessity to frequently clean the environment, including toys and equipment. Information on the cleaning of blood and body fluid spillages is also available.



What you can do:

- Download the guidance, discuss appropriate measures with your head and display it on your union noticeboard. The document is available from the HPA website at www.hpa.org.uk.

Family-friendly is also work-friendly

The TUC has published a guide for union representatives, entitled, *Family-friendly rights – transforming Britain's workplaces*, which confirms that flexible, family-friendly working practices benefit both employers and employees. In recent years there has been an increase in the number of employees who need to work flexibly in order to take care of, or spend more time with, their children or with elderly or disabled relatives. This document provides practical guidance to union reps in assisting their colleagues who wish to achieve a better balance between their work and their home lives.



For more information:

- Download TUC advice on the right to request flexible working and the various legal entitlements to paid and unpaid time off work as well as bargaining tips from www.tuc.org.uk/extras/familyfriendlyguide.pdf.
- Order ATL's publication *Family, work and you*, which also provides guidance on working flexibly and on maternity/paternity/parental adoption leave, free to members, from the 'legal and employment advice' section of the 'publications and resources' area of ATL's website.



New guidance on disability and health and safety

The Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) guidance, *Health and Safety for disabled people and their employers*, provides advice on disability discrimination and health and safety law. Advice for those during health and safety risk assessments is also available.

It is unlawful for employers to discriminate against employees on the grounds of disability. Employers are required to take positive action to remove certain disadvantages to disabled people posed by their working practices, such as adjusting work duties, the physical features of the premises and hours of work. Risk assessments assist employers in carrying out their duty to make these reasonable adjustments.



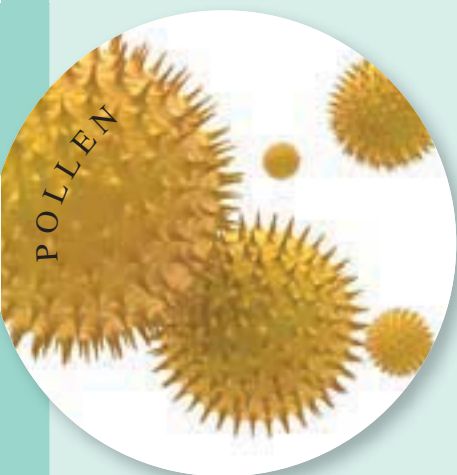
For more information:

- Download the *HSE guidance* from www.hse.gov.uk/disability/largeprint.pdf.



Breathe more easily with asthma policy

One of the most common ailments is asthma, affecting 1.1 million under-15s in the UK.



In many educational establishments it is not unusual to find students who have long- or short-term medical needs. One of the most common ailments is asthma, affecting 1.1 million under-15s in the UK.

Asthma is caused by the airways to the lungs becoming inflamed. As inflamed airways are very sensitive, they tend to react strongly to 'triggers' such as dust mites, pollen and fumes. They become narrowed due to the swelling and squeezing of the small muscles around them. As a result, less air can get in or out of the lungs, causing coughing, wheezing, chest tightness and shortness of breath. Asthma triggers and symptoms vary from one person to another and can be mild or life-threatening. About one in 10 children have asthma in the UK.

It is not unusual for a member of staff in a school or college to be asthmatic. Indeed, according to Asthma UK, over 12.7 million working days are lost to asthma each year. The HSE has confirmed that each year 3,000 people develop occupational asthma, which can be caused by breathing in certain vapours, dusts and gases in the workplace. ATL's personal injury solicitors, Morrish, have assisted members who have developed

asthma symptoms as a result of dust created by the regular cutting of wood or MDF, in an environment lacking adequate extraction equipment to ensure that the workplace is properly ventilated. In the main, the members have been teachers of design and technology.



What you can do:

- Advise all ATL members and their families, who consider that they have developed asthma symptoms or other ill-health, either as a result of their working environment or outside their workplace, to contact Morrish, either by calling **0800 083 7285** or by completing an online enquiry form at www.atlinjuryclaims.org.uk.

Generally speaking, there is a strict three-year time limit for commencing legal proceedings, which starts from the date on which the health problem is known to the person suffering ill-health.

Occupational asthma is avoidable. Preventable measures are laid down in the Approved Code of Practice on Occupational Asthma and in the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002. Under these regulations, employers must:

- assess the risks and decide what precautions are needed
- prevent or control exposure by elimination or substitution, or, where this is not possible, use mechanical control such as extraction equipment
- as a last resort, use respiratory protective equipment.

As asthma appears to be increasingly prevalent, schools and colleges should have a written asthma policy to ensure that students and staff who have asthma receive proper care and support. ATL is concerned by the results of a survey of 1,600 teachers earlier this year, which found that three quarters of them did not feel comfortable about knowing what to do if a child suffered an asthma

attack. Asthma policies should be clearly understood by students, staff and parents.



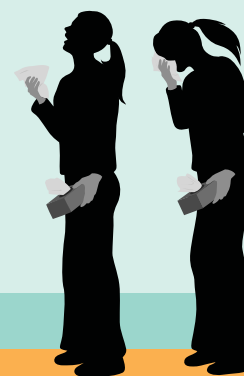
What you can do:

- Ensure your school or college has an asthma policy in place.

All staff, especially PE teachers, should have annual training and information, so that they can gain confidence about recognising worsening symptoms of asthma, and know what to do if someone has an asthma attack. The asthma policy should therefore cover:

- a clear statement on parental responsibilities in respect of their child's medical needs
- the need for prior written agreement from parents for any medicines to be given to a pupil/student
- procedures for managing medication during the school/college day and on trips and outings
- children carrying and taking their medicines themselves
- safe storage of medicine
- record keeping
- staff training
- emergency procedures.

Asthma causes deaths amounting to the equivalent of a large classroom of children each year. The importance of educational establishments having formal systems and procedures in place, to support those with asthma and to reduce the risk of staff contracting occupational asthma, should not be under-estimated.



You learn

Further news for union learning reps

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Nikki Clarke, from Emersons Green Primary School, Bristol, taking part in Learning at Work day at Go Ape, Lydney, supported by Unionlearn.



Angela Knight, from Emersons Green Primary School, Bristol, taking part in Learning at Work day at Go Ape, Lydney, supported by Unionlearn.



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unionlearn

ATL ULRs help members to learn at work

Learning at Work day is the biggest annual celebration of workplace learning. It aims to draw attention to the importance of learning at work and has been part of ATL ULRs' calendar of activities for the last three years.

This year a number of ATL ULRs across the South West successfully bid for funding from Unionlearn, and ran a number of learning events for members.

Angela Knight, a South Gloucestershire ULR from Emerson Green Primary School, organised a day at Go Ape. Angela explained: "As we work in a school that has a resource base attached for children with physical disabilities, our work is very stressful and challenging. This activity day will give us confidence to tackle mental and physical challenges, strengthen team work to improve morale, and enhance workplace skills while building on the performance of the individual and the team."

Carolyn Dutton and the Avon ULR network organised their second event at the Tobacco Factory in Bristol; this year the day was made up of four different workshops and the aim of the day was to look at stress and to show ways of helping reduce the effects. The stress workshop by Lucy Rowe of the Teacher Support Network started off the day, and then in the afternoon there was a choice of photography, pilates or African drumming.

Martine Carthew, Devon ULR at Coombeshead College, invited staff to a voice care session with a difference – where they learned breathing techniques and how best to look after their voice, and then onto singing together as a group.

Florence Farahani, ULR at Barnwood Girls School Gloucestershire, organised a whole-day jewellery-making workshop which was very well attended by staff. Florence said: "everyone enjoyed the day and asked when there would be another jewellery workshop, and felt that they had learned a new skill that they could pass on in the workplace. Those that attended came from different schools and enjoyed discussing and sharing good practices and experiences."

Sandra Berry, learning organiser, organised an event at Torre Abbey in Torquay. Sandra lives just 10 minutes walk from the abbey and, on an off chance, decided to ask whether they worked with local schools. They were excited that at last they could tap into schools through ATL members and offered a free tour, as well as a go at brass rubbing. "While we had a cream tea," says Sandra, "Dee Martin, the abbey education coordinator, explained about how the abbey can be used by schools as part of students' studies, such as history, religion, and art, and colleagues were very keen to pass this on when they returned to school."

This year the ULRs were particularly interested in making use of the plethora of local facilities and opportunities. They each looked at tutors, venues and opportunities on their doorstep, with brilliant results.

Kate scores a hat trick in the Midlands

Staffordshire branch secretary and ULR, Kate Brandrick, has scored a winner not only with her local football team, Stoke City, but also with her members and the children they teach.

In a ground-breaking venture, Kate is working on a long-term project with the club, having organised an event attended by 40 people, and also having an opportunity to see behind the scenes at the club. Following the event, one special school has joined forces with the club and the children at the school will be taking part in activities promoting health and well-being as well as showing racism the red card.

ATL general secretary, Mary Bousted, could not resist an opportunity to also take a peek behind the scenes at the club when she visited the branch recently. *"This is a fantastic venture," said Mary. "Another example of the valuable role that ATL learning reps play within the branches and workplaces."*

A big congratulations to 12 ATL members from the South West who are the first to complete a Level 2 ITQ qualification.

Global education in London

ATL members in London gathered on Saturday 19 June for London Wide, the termly learning forum for London-based members.

London Wide provides members and students with the opportunity to engage in a broad range of professional issues in education and schools. The June programme included a session, 'Working with looked-after children', by Paul Adams from the British Association for Adoption and Fostering, and 'Global dimensions in education' by Joseph O'Reilly, ATL's international development project worker.

Joint secretary of London Wide, Diana Manville, said: *"London Wide has built a core of London-based members who not only recognise the power and value of learning but feel that they belong. The diverse programme has created a forum in which members are safe to tap into a range of professional issues that are simply not on offer in the workplace."*

The next London Wide is in the autumn term of 2010 – why not get involved by attending? For more information, email tbrooks@atl.org.uk.

ATL publishes new course programme

ATL's *Professional development programme 2010-2011* was sent to all members with their June/July issue of *Report* magazine. This year we are running more courses than ever before, including new courses on differentiation, creativity in the classroom and building your teaching skills, as well as old favourites on behaviour management and assertiveness skills. We've also got new leadership courses. All courses are free to members (excluding Preparing for retirement).



What you can do:

- Place a copy of ATL's *Professional development programme* in your staffroom, for members and potential members to look at.
- Remind members to book their place on a course as soon as possible – places are limited and courses fill up quickly. Places can be booked at www.atl.org.uk/training.

ATL learning organisers' changing of the guard

ATL's bid for two further years of Union Learning Fund finance from the government was successful, which means that we have been able to increase our complement of field-based learning organisers to five.

We are happy to welcome three new learning organisers to work with ULRs and branches to ensure that learning is promoted at a local level:

- Vicki Lang – Midlands region: vlang@atl.org.uk
- Laura Boyd – North West region: lboyd@atl.org.uk
- Lorraine Fisher – Yorkshire and Humberside and the northern region: lfisher@atl.org.uk.

Tim Brooks (tbrooks@atl.org.uk) continues to work across London and the South East, and Sandra Berry (sberry@atl.org.uk) across the South West.

If you would like more information on becoming a ULR, accessing the support of a ULR, or just what learning opportunities are available in your area, please contact your local learning organiser.





New ULRs

A new cohort of ULRs completed their ATL training in June.

ATL ULRs reflect the union's breadth of members across the education sector and include teachers and support staff from the maintained sector (primary and secondary), independent schools and colleges, academies and further education.

ULR training aims to establish reps that can capture the collective learning and development needs in the workplace, engage staff in having a voice in their own personal and professional development and provide information and advice on the most appropriate pathways.

Christopher Beesley-Reynolds, a FE college-based ULR from Leicestershire, says: *"I enjoyed every minute of the training. It was a learning curve in itself. As a working ULR I will now have the opportunity to provide training opportunities for ATL members rather than forced CPD tick-box events."*

Trained ULRs work in partnership with schools and colleges to build a genuine picture of the training and development needs in the workplace. ATL ULRs organise learning events that complement professional development or provide alternatives such as well-being or informal adult learning. Croydon-based ULR Mary Auguiste-Ernest, says: *"I became a ULR to uplift the spirit of educationalists by enabling them to enhance their professional knowledge and skills."*



What you can do:

- If you or any other member are interested in taking up the role of ATL ULR in your school, college or branch, please email ulr@atl.org.uk. Details of our ULR one-day training courses are on the back page of this newsletter.



Well-being in the North West

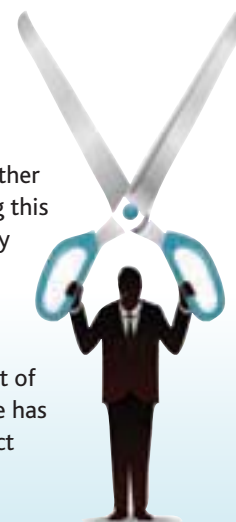
ULRs and branches in the North West have been working with members to improve their well-being, through a series of events, including a Clarins' skincare event, Tai Chi and an introduction to the Alexander technique and yoga for children.



Cuts hit the TDA

The Training and Development Agency for schools (TDA), like all public sector bodies, is facing a spending squeeze. At the time of going to press we have yet to learn the full extent of these; there are, however, a number of funding decisions which have already been made which will impact on schools, school staff and their professional development:

- The Workforce Modernisation and Development Grant will end at the end of November 2010. Consequently, schools and local authorities will need to identify if, and in which areas, social partnership added most value, and, if needed, how they will sustain local social partnership working.
- With TDA's role on extended services ending at the end of November 2010, there is an emphasis on schools identifying which aspects of extended services have had the greatest impact on improving outcomes for children. There will be a strong emphasis on embedding the key services in schools and ensuring their sustainability. However, with the coalition's policy direction that takes state education further away from local authority control, establishing this sustainability will provide a challenge for many schools and communities.
- The Support Staff Training and Qualifications Grant will no longer be funded. This will have a direct impact on the training and assessment of higher level teaching assistants. No alternative has been announced and this will have a big impact on workforce remodelling and on the career progression opportunities for support staff.



Reps' training

As an ATL rep, you were recently surveyed to explore the training opportunities you would like and how best to access them. A clear preference emerged for attending one-day regional events on topics such as helping colleagues in the workplace and tackling workplaces issues, as well as networking with other reps and finding out more about what you could do in your role.

Accordingly, we are going to be holding one-day reps' training events in your region during the autumn term.

Bespoke training courses for ULRs, health and safety reps and reps in independent schools will also be run from next term (details below).



What you can do:

- To register your interest for a one-day regional event, or to book a place on one of the courses below, please email training@atl.org.uk with your name, branch and local authority details.
- More information about all the reps' roles can be found on ATL's website at www.atl.org.uk (just click on 'reps' toolbox' at the top of the page).

Being an ATL rep in the independent sector

Autumn 2010

19-20 November Manchester

Spring 2011

4-5 March London

ULRs

ATL ULRs are trained to work directly with employers, staff and members on identifying the learning and professional needs in the workplace (see pages 9-11). We are holding one-day regional ULR training events during the autumn term.



Reps attend the training course 'Being an ATL Rep in Post-16' in June 2010.



Being an ATL ULR

Autumn 2010

11	November	Midlands
12	November	North West
12	November	London and the South East
25	November	South West
26	November	Yorkshire, Humberside and the North East

Health and safety reps

As a health and safety rep you can make your workplace a better, safer and healthier place to work (see pages six-eight). Reps must attend all three stages of the course – a total of six days.

Health and safety I

Autumn 2010

14-15	October	London and Manchester
11-12	November	Bristol

Health and safety II

Spring 2011

17-18	March	London and Manchester
31 March-1 April		Bristol

Health and safety III

Summer 2011

16-17	June	London and Manchester
30 June-1 July		Bristol

Help and advice

If you need help with matters related to your role as a school or college rep, your first point of contact should be your local branch. If they are unable to help, contact ATL using the details opposite. If your status has changed and you are either the new ATL rep at your school, or you are no longer the rep, please inform us by emailing us at membership@atl.org.uk.

General enquiries

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August 2010. ATL Product Code: BUL05