City Educationalist



December 2020

Newsletter of Leicester City District of the NEU

https://www.leicesterneu.org.uk/





City of Leicester NEU officers would like to say a huge thank you to all workplace reps for the hard work they continue to do on behalf of members – you are the heart of our union.

Join The National Education Union at: www.neu.org.uk/join or call: 0345 811 8111

VOTE FOR CAMILLE LONDON-MIYO

BLACK CONSTITUENCY SEAT NATIONAL EXECUTIVE 2020-21







NOW, MORE THAN EVER WE NEED A NEU BLACK EDUCATORS CONSTITUENCY SEAT HOLDER THAT:

- Understands the reality of lived experiences for Black educators in communities, schools and the union;
- Commits to radical activism, national collaboration and international solidarity;
- Builds collaborative and self-organised educator networks to sustain antiracism and social justice;
- Proven leadership in Black community activism, Black curriculum and education, and Black educator representation;

IF ELECTED in 2020/21, I WILL:

- Be an advocate for and support Black Educators to self organise through building networks, collective action and activism and building community alliances.
- Build accessible and available Black Pedagogy, Curriculum, Resources and Guides.
- Fight for equitable recruitment, retention and representation for Black Educators - Increasing participation at every level.
- Work with LGBT+ and Disability Equality Seat Holders; Women's Network and Climate Network to develop radical and Intersectional Engagement.
- Connect the ally-ship and activism of Black Educators with our Communities,
 Educators and Trade Unions, Nationally and Internationally.

VOTE CAMILLE LONDON-MIYO

REPRESENTING OUR VOICE, OUR EXPERIENCES

camillelondonmiyo@gmail.com

Becoming an NEU Health & Safety (H&S) rep

This is just to let you know that further dates for **Becoming a NEU H&S Rep** - the 3 Part online course - are now on the website. This course is for all new H&S Reps and anyone considering taking on the role, workplace reps who want to get an understanding of H&S, Branch and District H&S Officers who want a refresher, and any other Branch and District Officers who want to know more about H&S.

There are also dates for the online training, **Work-Related Stress as a Collective Issue**, which is for all those who have completed either face-to-face or online H&S Rep training.

You can find out more and register here:

https://neu.org.uk/national-training-programme

Forthcoming Events

Committee meeting – January 13th	District meeting – January 27th
Committee meeting – February 10th	AGM (followed by district meeting) – February 24th
Committee meeting – March 17th	District meeting – April 21st
Committee meeting – May 12th	District meeting – May 26th
Committee meeting – June 16th	District meeting – June 23 rd TBC

Meetings usually start at 7.30pm, but this can vary. Due to ongoing restrictions connected to Covid-19, meetings will be virtual. If you are subscribed to NEU emails, you will receive information nearer each meeting. Meetings are open to all Leicester City members of the NEU.

Please let us know if you'd like to receive City Educationalist in a larger font, or if you need any support or adjustments to make it possible for you to attend district meetings.

If you would like to submit an article or letter, or have any suggestions about how to improve City Educationalist, please email jessica.edmonds@neu.org.uk

If you need help:

1) Ask your school rep. Don't have one? Hold a meeting and elect one! Reps have access to training and support in their role, and are backed by local officers and the national NEU.

- 2) If it's a new query, try looking on the NEU website first. There is a wealth of useful information there, especially for Covid-19: https://neu.org.uk/
- 3) If you can't find the answer, email adviceline@neu.org.uk or phone 0345 811 8111
- 4) If you are already being supported by a local officer, please contact them. Please do not contact a different officer as it causes confusion with casework. Please note that the NEU office in Leicester remains closed due to Covid-19, so please use email.

Local officers and the days they work:

Monday & Tuesday:

Jenny, jennifer.day@neu.org.uk

Wednesday:

Jenny, jennifer.day@neu.org.uk

Joseph, joseph.wyglendacz@neu.org.uk

Jessica, jessica.edmonds@neu.org.uk (PM only)

Thursday:

Joseph, joseph.wyglendacz@neu.org.uk

Jessica, jessica.edmonds@neu.org.uk

Andy, andrew.haynes@neu.org.uk

Minaz, minaz.shaffi@neu.org.uk

Friday:

Joseph, joseph.wyglendacz@neu.org.uk

Jessica, jessica.edmonds@neu.org.uk

Samina, samina.randall@neu.org.uk

Minaz, minaz.shaffi@neu.org.uk

Update your membership details

Visit my.neu.org.uk

It's vital that the NEU has up to date details for all its members. You may also be eligible for reduced subscriptions: for example, if you work part time, are about to retire, or take maternity leave. Have you moved? Tell us your new home or workplace address. It is also important to update your equalities information.

Thousands of members have already signed up for myNEU, the new online portal to manage your membership and access the many benefits which come with being a part of Europe's largest education union. To register, to my.neu.org.uk and follow the prompts. myNEU is also a portal to accessing hundreds of exclusive discounts available to members through NEU Rewards. From savings on your weekly shop to holidays and special treats, you could save up to £1000 a year. For more information visit neu.org.uk/neu-rewards

You can also update your details by calling 0345 811 8111 or emailing membership@neu.org.uk

Claiming tax relief on your union subscriptions

Did you know you can claim tax relief on membership of professional bodies? Your NEU subscription is counted as a professional body. It's quick and easy to do through the government website. All you need is the letter from the NEU that says how much you pay each year. You can claim up to five years back. https://www.gov.uk/tax-relief-for-employees/professional-fees-and-subscriptions

"To all the kids out there, dream the impossible."



This is the quote my pupils saw on the screen as they walked into class on the Monday after Lewis Hamilton won his seventh World Title. Lewis proudly said these words as he crossed the finish line at the Turkish Grand Prix. It made me wonder, why did he use these words within seconds of becoming the greatest of all time?

During Black History Month, no doubt many schools across Leicester and the country looked at prominent Black figures, both from the past and living today. Lewis was one who students in my class came across and instantly made the connection between his childhood and this quote.

Later that same week, some of my pupils and I were invited onto BBC Radio Leicester. The station was doing a piece on *dreams and aspirations*. For the past few years, my school has been working alongside researchers at De Montfort University, studying the change in aspirations of children as they progress through

their education (a really interesting project, with eye-opening findings). The children were asked about their dreams and what jobs they would like to pursue in later lifeto my surprise many wanted to be teachers. We must be doing something right! Then in typical local radio fashion, the presenter asked what I dreamt of becoming at that age. My knee-jerk response was, "A Formula One driver, but the closest I ever got to realising that dream was when I got three penalty points for speeding last year."

That very evening, our union's annual Black Educators Conference was taking place. It was the first one I have attended, which was mainly down to the fact that it was virtual. Having been to other union conferences in the past, nothing can compare to meeting fellow educators in person and the experience of face to face workshops. However, there are many benefits of providing access to members virtually and it would be amazing if organisers could accommodate a hybrid of the two ways of attending in future events. There was a good selection of high quality workshops and speakers across the three days. My only disappointment of the conference was finishing way, way down in the quiz. I was adamant that '7 days' was Craig David's first number one hit; little did I remember that 'Fill Me In' was released a few months earlier to top the charts. It was back in the year 2000 and I was experiencing the many joys of being in Year 8.

Saturday evening saw the conference come to an end, but before it did, we were joined on Zoom by a special guest speaker, Lewis Hamilton. THE man of the moment, and strangely of my week too. My knowledge of Lewis was at the same level as the children in my class: successful sportsman, has been devoted to racing from a young age, and has spearheaded the Black Lives Matter movement within Formula One. Little did I expect just what he would be sharing with us. He looked back at his childhood and stated that school was the worst part of his life. That many of his teachers did not have any expectations of him. That he, along with the only other two black children at his school, would be frequently reprimanded and sent to the Headteacher's office, who would presume they were guilty and not allow them their say. I went to school at the same time as Lewis. My educational experience was completely different to his, so this came to me as a great shock that this type of institutional racism was going on at the same time. Thankfully Lewis did come across someone who believed in him as a person, a Physics teacher at college, who was the first person that showed the faith he had cruelly missed out on in his education up until that point. Lewis stressed the power that is generated by having faith in our students. That having teachers who reflect society, and therefore our pupils, inspire the next generation. He certainly inspired me that week.

To the tune of Craig David's second UK number 1:

Saw him win the title on Sunday

Spoke to kids about him on Monday

Did a load of teacher stuff on Tuesday and Wednesday and Thursday* Radio Friday; Met him on zoom that Saturday

*The teacher stuff spanned most of the week.

Minaz Shaffi, Young Educators' Officer



NEU H&S Month

In November the NEU held our first ever Health and Safety Month. This consisted of a series of well attended webinars as well as virtual training sessions that catered for members with all levels of experience. A wide range of subjects were addressed including those that people might not associate with H&S, like domestic abuse and climate change. More traditional topics covered included a talk from the chief inspector of the HSE and the director of CLEAPS talking about the impact of Covid on school practical work.

Recordings of most of the webinars will be made available on the NEU website as soon as possible.

Predictably, Covid featured heavily in several of the sessions. It's fair to say that opinions are divided even amongst experts, but having read and heard a great deal of material over the past months a clear picture is emerging of how the virus really spreads and what is most important to prevent it. Perhaps of equal importance is knowing what doesn't make much difference.

Transmitting Covid

There are three basic methods of transmission; a direct hit from a droplet expelled from an infected person when they cough, sneeze or speak, by touching a surface that has been contaminated with the virus or by inhaling very small aerosol particles that have been exhaled and contain the virus.

Touching a contaminated surface is comparatively rare and only a very few people are known to have contracted Covid by this means. Hand washing and disinfecting surfaces is the main way to prevent it.

The further you are from a person the less likely you are to suffer a direct hit which is where the idea of distancing comes from. Droplets are unlikely to travel more than

2m by this method. A mask or visor will help prevent both receiving droplets and producing them.

Scientists are becoming more of the opinion that aerosol particles, which can float around in the air for hours, are the main source of infection. The closer you are to an infected person, the more likely you are to be contaminated. However, distance is not really a preventative: if you are in the same room for any length of time, the microscopic droplets will travel around the room and the concentration will build up in the air. Both parties wearing masks that filter the air helps **but visors and solid plastic face coverings that the air passes round are not going to be effective**. The only real preventative measure that can be taken is to properly ventilate the room with fresh air.

Fans do not help. They might make infection more likely because they help the aerosol move round the room.

Air conditioning systems need to be of the type that brings fresh air in from outside the building, although there are systems that filter particles out of the air, and these are suitable.

Opening windows is the simplest, most effective thing to do but this is a problem when the outside temperature is low and it's not acceptable for the room to become too cold. A compromise between ventilation and temperature may need to be found. This might include:

- Only opening high windows
- Opening windows a small amount
- Fully ventilating the room between lessons but closing the window during lessons
- Having shorter lessons to allow for more frequent ventilation

Moving seating away from open windows.

Windows will need to be left open after the end of the school day for a long enough period to allow for thorough ventilation. If there is a suitable mechanical ventilation system, it should be left running at low power throughout the night.

Rooms that have poor ventilation should not be used for teaching and should only be occupied by a small number of people at any time.

Amending the school dress code to allow warmer clothing will help cope with low temperatures.

Andy Haynes, H&S Officer

Election for Deputy General Secretary

Next year, there will be an election process for the Deputy General Secretary of the NEU (nationally). One candidate who has declared their bid is Gawain Little. You can find out more about his campaign here: www.together4change.education



Coronavirus: our commitment

Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, education professionals, teachers, leaders and support staff have worked tirelessly to educate pupils – whether in school or at home.

The challenges education professionals face keeping schools and colleges as safe as possible

They are on the front line, keeping schools and colleges running and pupils engaged with learning.

But without enough support from Government, school and college leaders, teachers and support staff are becoming increasingly exhausted. The current situation in too many schools and colleges is becoming more challenging and unsustainable as the weeks pass and as more staff colleagues isolate.

The challenges of running a Covid-secure educational establishment are huge. Staff are working hard to implement new practices and procedures – staggered start and end times for school days, staggered lunch times, one-way circulation systems, managing pupil 'bubbles', overseeing the extra hygiene requirements and much more.

School and college leaders and staff are under enormous stress, keeping their schools open, their school community safe and responding to parents' concerns about the safety and welfare of their children.

Teachers and support staff are working in new ways. Often, they are much more isolated than they were pre-Covid as they are unable to engage with their colleagues face-to-face. Many are required to travel around their school to work in different locations throughout the school day. They are teaching and supporting groups of pupils in a confined space, with little or no PPE and often with no social distancing. In some settings, this also involves having to teach in very different ways, from the front of the class and not being able to work directly with children.

In most cases staff are unable to maintain social distancing, in particular when working with pupils who need extra help with their learning on a one-to-one, or small group basis. In addition, many are being asked to undertake additional tasks, including cleaning in between lessons.

Every education professional knows how important schools and colleges are to keep pupils safe, support their emotional development, educate them and support the economy, allowing parents to return to work. But schools and colleges are under huge and increasing strain and urgently need more support from Government if they are to continue their essential work.

For information on the below areas, please see https://neu.org.uk/coronavirus-our-commitment

Workload | Remote/blended learning | Primary assessment | Secondary assessment | Ofsted | Staff management

Amíca

Staff counselling and psychological support services

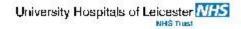
If you have a problem or concern at work or at home which could be helped by talking to someone, contact Amica in confidence.



Support is only a phone call away

0116 254 4388

8.30am to 8.30pm • 365 days a year This service for Leicester City Council employees is free





Primary assessment

More than 1,000 educators and parents have emailed their MP asking them to help put a stop to Government primary tests this school year. Please encourage everyone to <u>visit the More Than A Score website</u> to sign the DropSATs2021 petition and email their MP.

No Child Left Behind

Watch and share the latest No Child Left Behind video, which calls for an extension of the Free School Meals (FSM) scheme to include children from families in receipt of Universal Credit, many of whom are living on less then £20.50 per day but aren't eligible for FSM. Please encourage everyone to add their voice to our petition, calling on the Prime Minister to extend FSM provision so no child is left behind. We will be sharing both these actions with MPs in the coming weeks to ask for their support. We'd also love for members to get in touch to tell us their stories of teaching in communities where poverty puts up barriers to learning, and how they've been working to break them down.

UK Disability History Month - 18 Nov-18 Dec

The theme of this year's UK Disability History Month is 'Access: How far have we come and how far do we have to go?' Information about events taking place during the month and resources to use in school can be found <a href="https://example.com/here.com/h

SEND Virtual Reference Group

Members who work in special schools or have an interest in SEND in mainstream (eg SENDCOs/LSAs) are invited to join the NEU SEND Virtual Reference Group (VRG). Please register your interest by emailing us at send-team@neu.org.uk giving your name, membership number, school type, position and region.

Members of the VRG will:

- receive regular updates about NEU special school and SEND work
- be asked to provide comment on DfE SEND and special school advice
- be asked to share experiences from the SEND/special school sector

Belonging, Behaviour and Learning Outcomes - Research and practical activities for schools

This week we launched joint research with UCL/IoE on creating a sense of belonging and pupil well-being and its role in positive learning and behaviour. For case studies, practical activities for schools and report downloads click here. There will be a launch event with Dr Kathryn Riley and a school leader from the project sharing their experience on 4th December. Link to register will follow (check website).

Khaleem Smith (Khaleem The Speaker)

Public speaker, motivational speaker, black activist

On Wednesday 4th November the guest speaker at Leicester NEU's district meeting was Khaleem Smith, aka KhaleemTheSpeaker.



Khaleem is now a mentor and teaching assistant (TA) at The City of Leicester College. Khaleem was a former student at The City of Leicester College and Gateway College. He was a basketball player for Leicester Warriors and Nottingham Hoods.

Khaleem spoke about a lack of positive black, male role models in school. He is now one of three black male staff at TCOLC.

Khaleem talked about only learning about slavery in school. His experience of watching Roots just before the Summer holidays left him bewildered and angry with lots of unanswered questions.

He talked about learning about Malcolm X and Mansa Mussa after leaving school. He called for the curriculum to include more black role models and more Black History, not just slavery. Recently he led on the Black History Month assembly at TCOLC.

Khaleem was a keynote speaker at the recent Leicester BLM protest at the Clock Tower. The City of Leicester NEU listened attentively to Khaleem's experiences.

Julie Walter-Nisbett, Vice President

Domestic abuse and the workplace

Recently, the NEU launched a new model policy toolkit aimed at supporting our education workers suffering from domestic abuse to stay in work. The toolkit provides a model policy document, a checklist for school and college leaders, a checklist for reps and guidance on how to meaningfully adopt the policy in your workplace. All resources can be found here: https://neu.org.uk/domestic-abuse-and-workplace A recording of the webinar will be available on the NEU YouTube channel soon: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC4ZSFzDrHd-LlwUhaVc0q8A/videos

Covid-19 and pregnancy **Dos and Don'ts**



Risk assessments



po ensure that you've had a separate, individual risk assessment that takes into account your pregnancy. Covid-safety measures in your workplace and the prevalence of the virus in your local area. Pregnant women at all stages of pregnancy are classed as clinically vulnerable.

DON'T accept that individual risk assessments are set in stone – they must be revised to take into account the stage of your pregnancy, other circumstances at work and the prevalence of the virus in your local area.

Maternity leave

DO exercise your maternity rights and work out when is best for you to start your maternity leave. Read our guide and FAQs on Pregnancy and Maternity



DON'T start your maternity leave earlier than you have to. Your employer is responsible for keeping you safe at work and should medically suspend you on full pay if your workplace is not safe for you. Your NEU rep can help you to explain that you do not want to start your leave until it is right for you.

The third trimester



DO inform your employer of the increased risks to pregnant women in their third trimester. It is reasonable to ask your manager to work from home or for you to be suspended on full pay. The NEU recommends all women in their third trimester work from home.

DON'T agree to come into work if it is unsafe. Size of classes makes social distancing difficult and pregnant women in this trimester must be allowed to work from home or redeployed onto duties that can be completed from home such as co-ordinating remote learning.

Pay



DO get in touch with your workplace rep if you have concerns about pay progression. Consider requesting an adjustment to your objectives. Read about our fair pay for all advice.

DON'T accept pay progression denials because you have been on maternity leave. This is maternity discrimination.

These are minimum standards for keeping everyone safe and ensuring reasonable working conditions. If you and members are concerned about what is happening in your workplace, use our escalation guidance available on the link below.



Did you know that members on maternity leave, shared parental leave, or adoption leave do not have to pay membership fees?

To find out more visit neu.org.uk/neu-membership-rates

neu.org.uk/coronavirus-reps

November 2020

U2065/3124



NEU members experiencing domestic abuse can seek advice here: neu.org.uk/advice/domestic-violence-coronavirus

SUPPLY TEACHERS



Have You Got an AWR* Claim?

In the last 6 months, have you worked in the same LA schools or academy group without a break of 6 weeks in term time?

If you have, contact Advice Line ASAP

adviceline@neu.org.uk

0345 811 8111

You only have 3 months to make a claim



*Agency Workers Regulations

The Back Page

My favourite easy after-work dinner



Pasta with green beans & pesto

Serves 2

Ingredients

salt

150g pasta

2-3 handfuls green beans, topped & tailed and cut into bite-size pieces

Ready-made pesto (or make your own by blitzing a pack of fresh basil with a chunk of Parmesan, a handful or two of pine nuts, a clove or two of garlic, some salt, and extra virgin olive oil until it's the consistency/taste you want)

Parmesan, grated, to serve

Method

- 1. Bring a large pan of well-salted water to the boil and add the pasta.
- 2. Five minutes before the pasta is done, add the green beans.
- 3. Drain the pasta/beans and tip back in the pan.
- 4. Mix the pesto through the pasta/beans.
- 5. Divide between two serving bowls and top with Parmesan. Voila!

Leftovers also re-heat well the next day, so could become your packed lunch very easily ©