

This is the first issue of the UNISON newsletter for School Support Staff.

Please take the time to read it and stay up to date with any workplace issues, the latest learning and training opportunities, your local UNISON Representatives and national events and campaigns.

Stars in our Schools 2014

Last year's event saw the 2 winning schools Richard Clarke First School and Churnet View Middle School each receive a cash prize of £300 to be used on an environmental project for the children, and each winning member of staff nominated by the head teacher, also won a cash prize in recognition for all their hard work.

Last month we re-visited both schools to see how the money had helped them.

Lynda Farrington from Richard Clarke showed us how they had used the money towards their 'Dyslexia Friendly' program enabling them to purchase sets of magnetic white boards for each class, Reading rulers, Pencil grips and numeracy and literacy books.

We heard how winner Jason Burgess from Churnet View, used the money to help fund the farm they have at school, helping them to secure the opportunity to have bees for the children to sell the honey, an orchard to sell the fruit and make fresh juice and towards the running costs of the farm.

Both were great examples of how we could help to recognise the great work School Support Staff do, those unsung heroes who often get forgotten!

Stars in our Schools 2015

Following on from last year's success to celebrate the fantastic work that school support staff do, we are delighted to announce that we will be running the same campaign this November, further details to follow....

Staying in touch

Please note this newsletter will only be sent electronically and will be published on our website. If your colleagues do not receive this, please ask them to contact the branch to check their details.



SEN Workshop Training

We are thrilled to be able to work alongside the Open University to put on a SEN Workshop here at our Branch Office in Stafford. This workshop will take place on Thursday 16th July 2015. Due to such high demand we are now fully booked, but we hope to receive feedback on any other training our members feel would benefit them in their roles and look to put further training on in the future. If you have any suggestions please email us at schools@staffsunison.org.uk



UNISON Personal Learning Development Grants

We know how difficult it is to afford training to improve job prospects due to the huge increases in course fees and withdrawal by many Employers of financial support for career development.

To help you get on at work and develop your career, UNISON is offering Personal Learning Development Grants for School Support Staff. **10 awards of up to £300 each** are being offered to help pay for course fees.

Applications must be returned by **Monday 24th August 2015** to be considered, please email schools@staffsunison.org.uk for an application form.

Want to become more involved?

Being a steward opens up many opportunities including:

- Time off for training
 - Representing members in grievance/sickness absence/disciplinary hearings
 - Recruiting & Organising Opportunities
 - Being involved in how your branch is run
- If you wish to become a steward in your workplace and would like more information please contact us.

School Uniform Grant

UNISON is once again launching a scheme to help members on low incomes deal with the cost of school uniforms. You have until **Wednesday 15th July 2015** to apply, please email for further details

schools@staffsunison.org.uk

Dates for your diary...



Film Club:

The next Film showing will be 'Selma' on **Thursday 30th July at 7 pm**. Film Club is free for all UNISON members. Sign up now, send your details to stephen@staffsunison.org.uk

LGBT:

The next meeting of the LGBT Self-Organised Group is on **Thursday 30th July 5:30pm – 6:30pm** at the Branch Office. The group will be looking at possible attendance at Pride events, subsidised trips, evening socials, theatre trips and a suggestion to arrange a visit to the Downton Abbey set. Sign up for further details lgbt@staffsunison.org.uk



Have your say...

Public consultation: submit your views by midnight on Wednesday 2nd September 2015

A few words from your Reps...

For most of our members in schools, this year has been very difficult and demanding. As we all know, schools have been cutting back to meet shortfalls in funding and next year isn't going to be any different.

It's great news that our UNISON members have been credited for their excellent work by Ofsted and loyalty to their schools and their communities, so well done team.

Have a good break and come back refreshed!

Wade Rogers & Nigel Brindley

Your UNISON Branch

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