

Nominate SIMON MURCH for NEU NEC District 2

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The union's response to the Covid crisis

The last year has been extremely challenging for everyone, not least for students and school staff. I believe the NEU, both nationally and locally, has provided an excellent response to this crisis, and I have been active in shaping and helping to lead the union's actions in the Yorkshire and Humber region.

I played a key role in organising the large meeting called by South and West Yorkshire Districts before the start of term when it was obvious to all but the government that something had to be done in schools. This began to build confidence and, alongside the massive national NEU meeting at the start of January, helped to force a government U-turn and the closure of most schools for most students.

The fight continues...for nursery, Early Years, Special and PRU settings

We must fight to stop the government's reckless policy to keep nurseries, Special Schools and PRUs fully open. I have supported colleagues in these settings as they have organised in recent weeks and will continue to fight unsafe practice.

Organising at the base of the union

I firmly believe that school level organising, with reps and activists taking charge of shaping the union, is the key to making the NEU even more effective. We have made great progress in the last year in very difficult circumstances with over twenty thousand new members since January and hundreds of new reps doing brilliant work.

I consider I have played a positive role in encouraging and leading that here in Sheffield, across the region and through my role on the NEU Executive.

Education in the lockdown

Lockdown is hugely stressful for pupils, their parents and our members. It is vital that we as a union engage with what our students, their families and our members deserve and that we work to support our them where the government has failed.

I will continue to campaign on wider issues such as anti-racism and the Black Lives Matter Movement, and climate crisis, but also believe we need to be on the front foot over child poverty - taking up issues such as free school meals and the provision of laptops and access to broadband for disadvantaged students.

No return to the exam factory

We need to campaign to ensure that when we return fully to school it is to a different kind of education and not the dead regime of SATs, GCSE and A Levels which has turned too many schools into soulless exam factories.

The future

If re-elected, I will continue to campaign for:

- better pay and conditions for all staff, including supply and support staff
- the end to exam factories, high stakes assessments and OFSTED
- all equalities groups and members with protected characteristics
- proper funding for all nurseries, schools and colleges
- an inclusive education system and curriculum, which celebrates diversity and is relevant to all learners

I am happy to speak at local meetings and answer members' questions. We have achieved much, but there is much still to fight. I ask for your nomination and support in District 2.