

Join the NUT and NAHT campaign to:

# End SATs and League Tables



*"Abolish SATs –  
they're utterly useless."*

**Michael Rosen**



# What's the NUT's alternative to SATs?

Some accuse the NUT of being afraid of accountability and of wanting to deprive parents of information. Nothing could be further from the truth. Our alternative plans would give good information to all concerned – without the negative consequences of SATs and league tables.

The NUT's and NAHT's dispute on SATs could be resolved by the Secretary of State, Ed Balls, lifting the statutory requirement for tests in English and mathematics in year 6 and introducing a national sampling system.

## **Government would still receive information about national standards:**

Data to provide information about national standards would be provided by sampling – as the Government itself is doing for Key Stage 2 science and the Key Stage 3 core subjects this year. These results would be used to give a national picture of achievement and wouldn't identify individual schools or children.

### **Assessment would benefit teachers and pupils:**

The most important use of assessment is to improve teaching and learning. SATs don't help with this at all. All the money currently wasted on SATs should be ploughed back into increased resourcing and training for assessment for learning – assessment that comes out of regular teaching activities, rather than additional work.

### **Parents will still find out how their child is progressing:**

Reports to parents should come from teacher assessment, as is currently done in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Schools could decide for themselves which system to use. Academics agree with us that teacher assessment is more accurate than SATs.

### **What about accountability?**

Under our proposals, moderation, properly funded so that it could be carried out during the school day, would ensure consistency and support children's learning. League tables are not about genuine accountability because they are so unfair. They should be abandoned – as they have been in Wales.

# Public support for the campaign

We have powerful voices who agree with our arguments:

**Politicians** – The powerful House of Commons' Children, Schools and Families Select Committee said in January 2010:

“Schools feel so constrained by the fear of failure according to the narrow criteria of the performance tables that they resort to measures such as teaching to the test, narrowing the curriculum and an inappropriate focusing of resources on borderline candidates ...”

The Select Committee also said: “The chances of engaging children’s interest in learning are low with an approach that stifles creativity and focuses on assessment output.”

**Parents** – Many parents have signed our petition to end SATs and the campaigning organisation *Parents Outloud* has given its support to our campaign. Justine Roberts, the managing director of the popular website *Mumsnet*, recently said: “Parents are broadly supportive of a boycott... There is a lot of anecdotal evidence that in the weeks running up to the tests, school work becomes one-dimensional and only about the SATs.”

**Academics** – Research by leading academics Paul Black and Dylan William of Kings College says that SATs are “useless as a measure of educational progress ... the inherent unreliability of the tests stems from the limited knowledge and skills tested ... and variations in individuals’ performance on the day of the test.”

## **Industrial action ballot**

**We’re balloting our leadership members because they have a contractual requirement to administer the tests and need the protection of a ballot to refuse. The trade dispute relates to the effect that SATs have on the working lives and conditions of service of those members.**

- Please tell your head teacher and leadership colleagues that you would fully support their action to not administer SATs in 2010 (they are being balloted on this because of the damaging effect SATs have on their terms and conditions of employment).
- Please remind your head teacher that classroom teachers cannot routinely be expected to invigilate exams or administer SATs.

## **High profile authors have added their weight to the campaign.**

“They should be put away at once. Children, their teachers, their schools and society itself will all eventually feel the benefit.”

**Philip Pullman**

“SATs have a disastrous effect on children’s education.”

**Alan Gibbons**

“Abolish SATs – they’re utterly useless.”

**Michael Rosen**

# **Our campaign is gathering lots of influential support – but we need your involvement to win**

## **Please do what you can to help our campaign against SATs and league tables**

- 1.** Ask parents and your colleagues to sign our petition – 30,000 already have. They can sign up online at [www.teachers.org.uk/assessment](http://www.teachers.org.uk/assessment) and you can download copies from there.
- 2.** Go to [www.teachers.org.uk/assessment](http://www.teachers.org.uk/assessment) to write to your MP to complain about the SATs regime. You will also find information about how to contact candidates who are standing for election in your constituency.
- 3.** Organise a meeting for parents to explain why the NUT and NAHT believe that SATs must go.
- 4.** Ask your school representative to hold a meeting in school to discuss the campaign. Talk about how you could celebrate SATs not taking place. Could you get a theatre group or storyteller into school during SATs week? Could you organise an arts week or other event to celebrate the breadth of children's learning?
- 5.** Download copies of our leaflet for parents at [www.teachers.org.uk/assessment](http://www.teachers.org.uk/assessment) and talk to your head teacher about giving them out to parents.

**[www.teachers.org.uk](http://www.teachers.org.uk)**

