



Dundee EIS
#StopFaculties
Campaign Guide

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Scotland's largest
education trade union



#StopFaculties

Why we're taking strike action to StopFaculties

Lower attainment

We think every young person deserves a quality education and a qualified and experienced teacher. Dundee is one of the most deprived areas in Scotland. And one in five young people leave school without any qualification at National 5 level.

The best way to improve the attainment gap and make sure every young person has what they need to succeed at school is to put more resources into schools, not less. The council has admitted that, after ten years, these changes will mean an annual cut of £135,263 from the school budget. That's money that our schools desperately need to do the important work of improving the attainment gap.

Higher workload and work pressures

Principal teachers currently play a vital role in delivering subject specialist support to other teachers in their departments. Without principal teachers there to provide support and leadership to the department, workload will significantly increase for teachers. That means less time to offer extra one-to-one support and guidance to young people who need it most.

After the hard work and constant changes to ways of working during the last two years of the pandemic, we know that teachers in Dundee are at breaking point.

In a recent EIS survey, nearly a quarter of teachers in Dundee said they have had to seek professional help to manage stress at work, and nearly three quarters of teachers said that inadequate staffing levels were a major cause of additional workload. This chaotic restructure will only make things worse for teachers.

Fewer career opportunities

We want every teacher to have the opportunity to develop their leadership skills and find great career opportunities in Dundee. But these changes will mean fewer development opportunities for classroom teachers and will only make the profession less attractive to newly qualified teachers.



Disempowered schools

Every teacher deserves a say in how their school is run. The council agreed to consult schools about this restructuring proposal but they didn't like what we had to say. Now, they're trying to impose a model that has been roundly rejected by our membership in three different ballots.

Secondary teachers are almost unanimously against these proposals.

It's time to stand up and defend our schools from this chaotic restructure and mismanagement.

The best way to win this campaign and to #StopFaculties once and for all is for every member across Dundee secondary schools to take part in positive and successful collective action.

“The effects of faculties are ongoing and need to be continually challenged. With waves of cuts, faculties have become bigger and more common. The workload implications are huge but often undocumented, as colleagues feel they need to just get on with it. To manage this, standards have inevitably slipped in other areas such as learning and teaching and colleagues' health and well-being.

“The concept of faculties devalues the teaching profession in an attempt to see teachers as managers instead of subject specialists and leaders in education. And we all know unpromoted staff end up doing the role of a principal teacher unpaid and without management time.”

Class teacher and EIS rep in North Lanarkshire, a local authority with the faculties model



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Timeline of the dispute

February 2019 – Dundee City Council proposed the introduction of faculties to the Children and Families Committee, in a bid to make savings from the education budget. The EIS strongly opposes the proposals.

2019 - Dundee City Council take the proposal to Policy and Resources Committee, without EIS representatives present. The proposals to move to a faculty model by the 20/21 session are passed.

May 2019 – In an EIS poll, 92% of teachers reject the proposals, on a 72 per cent turnout.

January 2020 - Dundee City Council and trade unions release a joint statement in support of school empowerment and partnership working. The EIS agrees to support the introduction of faculties where the council can find support in a school – however, no majority support can be found in any school.

March 2020 - The Scottish Government announces closure of schools due to the coronavirus pandemic and the faculty proposal is put on hold.

December 2021 – Dundee City Council re-introduces the proposals to move to a faculties model to the EIS, despite the huge changes to schools during the pandemic.

January 2022 - In an EIS ballot, 97% of secondary teachers said they opposed the introduction of faculties. And asked if the proposals would raise attainment, as the council claims, 96% said they would not.

March 2022 – 88% of secondary teachers vote to take strike action over the introduction of faculties, in a 73% turnout.

May 2022 – 88% of secondary teachers vote to take strike action in a statutory ballot, in a 61% turnout. Dundee EIS sends notice of industrial action to the council.



Frequently Asked Questions

What happens on the day of a strike?

Taking strike action means not attending nor doing any work on a day notified to members and the employer(s) by the union. The union will have a legal mandate by holding a successful industrial action statutory ballot to issue such notification.

You'll be invited to attend a picket line at your usual place of work (see below for further guidance on picket lines).

All EIS members are invited to attend a rally on 22nd June in Queens Hotel, 160 Nethergate, Dundee DD1 4DU. (All members if after school day, affected members if during strike day).

Who should take strike action?

All EIS members who are based in the eight schools affected by the introduction of faculties i.e. Harris Academy, St John's RC High School, St. Pauls RC Academy, Baldragon Academy, Morgan Academy, Craigie High School, Grove Academy, and Braeview Academy.

Instrumental music teachers and supply teachers who are not based at the above schools are not included in the strike action.

What are the announced dates for strike action?

So far, the EIS has announced dates for 22 June and 30 August 2022.

Can we announce further dates of strike action?

If the dispute remains unresolved then further dates could be announced with two weeks' notice as long as they are before the mandate expires i.e. six months after the date of the statutory ballot.

In the event that further strike dates were necessary beyond this six-month period then we would need to conduct a further ballot of members.



Can my employer refuse to pay me for days that I take strike action?

Strike action is a breach of contract which will lead to salary deductions in line with the days you have taken strike action. You will likely lose a day's pay for every day of action.

Furthermore, your employers will not make pension contributions for those individual days out on strike.

Can I join the EIS today and still take part in strike action?

Yes, if you are eligible (as above) and if your fully completed application form and direct debit mandate has been received by the EIS prior to you beginning to take action. You can join the EIS at www.eis.org.uk/join

Can my employer sack me for taking part in industrial action?

If your employer dismisses you for taking part in industrial action which complies with legislation (within 12 weeks of the start of the action), this would be unfair dismissal and the EIS would support you.

What is the legal standing of industrial action?

In Britain, the right to strike is effectively governed by statute and common law. The EIS strikes in pursuit of the dispute with Dundee City Council is lawful and has not been challenged by Dundee City Council.

There is statutory protection for trade union members who take industrial action.

Should I tell my employer that I am going to take strike action?

No. The EIS has already notified the employer (Dundee City Council) that our members will take strike action. Individuals are not required to do so, or so confirm any arrangements with line managers. The EIS does not share a membership list or a list of names, simply the number of staff per school (i.e. workplace). You have no obligation to inform your employer of your intention to take part in the industrial action – even if you are asked in advance for planning purposes by your school.



Are any members exempt from taking part in the strike action?

Exemptions are normally only granted in exceptional circumstances, for example in the case of a pregnant teacher whose maternity pay would be adversely affected by taking strike action.

What if I am scheduled to be on annual/maternity/paternity/family leave on strike days?

As you are on leave you cannot take part in the industrial action.

Does strike action count as a break in my employment?

No, it does not break the service of any employee, including employees on temporary contracts.

The Employment Rights Act 1999 provides that continuity of employment is not broken by industrial action (s.216 (1) and (2)). Contractual rights which are unaffected by industrial action are salary placement rules, qualifying periods for maternity and adoptive leave, sick pay entitlement, and service to acquire permanence and service for compulsory transfer purposes (as agreed locally).

Can the EIS offer any financial support to those in hardship?

The EIS has a strike hardship fund.. The Hardship Fund is to support members who are disproportionately affected by the strike action – a part-time worker who loses most of his/her weekly pay due to one day of strike action.

Can I talk to my pupils about industrial action?

Teachers can answer pupils' questions by providing factual information on the dispute and strike action. EIS reps will liaise with parents' councils and forums about the dispute.

Can another group of workers go on strike in support of your dispute?

According to the law, a sympathy strike i.e. industrial action taken by workers where the real dispute is not between themselves and their own employer is not permitted.



Will striking affect my pension? What if I am about to retire?

Being on strike action for 1 day will mean that your total pensionable service would be 1 day less. It would not meaningfully affect the pensionable salary on which benefits are calculated.

Members in their last year of teaching before retirement should contact the EIS for advice regarding the impact of their strike action.

Will striking invalidate any voluntary early retirement deal made?

There should be no impact on anyone striking, i.e. the offer if it has been made would not be withdrawn because of taking lawful strike action.

How do I find out more information?

If you have any further questions, please get in touch with your school rep or your LA secretary, David Baxter at dundeela@eis.org.uk or EIS Organiser Amy Moran at AMoran@eis.org.uk



Guide to picket lines

The Code of Practice for Picketing may be found at www.eis.org.uk/Campaigns/Dundee

It is guidance and not legally binding in of itself.

Picket lines (or ‘picketing’) are an effective way of raising awareness of the dispute and help persuade other EIS members to take part in industrial action. Picket lines are groups of workers and are usually placed at entrances to workplace ahead of the start of the working day.

- Make sure you start your picket early before the start of the working day, e.g. 7.30am until 10.30am.
- There is no legal size limit on the size of your picket. You should not, however, be on the property of the employer.
- Make it an event: breakfast, food, flags, banners, singing, and dancing are all great ways to create a sociable and welcoming atmosphere.
- Talk to passing members of the public about the dispute and raise awareness about the issues you are experiencing at work.
- Take pictures and share them on Twitter and Facebook – remember the #StopFaculties hashtag.
- There may be some EIS members who, unfortunately, decide to cross the picket line. Don’t be disheartened and remember it’s not just about today, it’s about convincing them to join the strike next time.
- There is more than one teaching union in Dundee City Schools. Picket lines are not meant to stop these staff (or even strike-breaking EIS members) from accessing their workplace. Pickets discuss the dispute with people who pass them, and are a visible reminder of the dispute to those who drive past.

Non-EIS colleagues who haven’t been balloted could visit the picket line to show support and gives people time to talk about the dispute. They could come out at lunchtime to show support or workers, e.g. sharing tea or coffee.







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