

Education in Lincolnshire: what does the future hold?

A free conference for parents, governors and teachers
**Sponsored by: Centre for Educational Research and Development,
University of Lincoln**

Education reforms, nationally and locally, are making huge changes to schooling in Lincolnshire. What is driving these changes? Are the arguments educational or economic? What's in it for the County's children?

If you don't know the answers to these questions . . . if you want to engage in serious, open debate about the future of the County's schools . . . then this event is for you.

The questions are important to get right – the answers are too important to get wrong.

Programme:

Keynote speaker: Melissa Benn
(author of *School Wars: the Battle for Britain's Education*)

Workshops – on Curriculum, Governance, Finance, Employment Issues
(see overleaf)

Expert panel Q &A
(Governors, Councillors, Union Officers answer your questions)

Details:

2-5 pm
Saturday 3rd March
EMMTEC Auditorium
University of Lincoln, Brayford Campus
(Close to bus and rail links, ample car parking)

Plus:

Book Launch and wine reception (5pm): *Towards Teaching in Public: Reshaping the Modern University* (Continuum Press). Edited by Professors Mike Neary, Les Bell and Howard Stevenson with contributions from colleagues at the Centre for Educational Research and Development.

Evening Social (8pm-midnight) at The Platform, Lincoln Students' Union.
Join us for an evening of music with live bands to support UN millennium development goals for promoting girls' education in Africa and to celebrate International Women's Day.

Admission free – collection for *Rwanda Girls' Initiative* - supporting girls' education in Rwanda.

Workshop sessions:

Academies: what's in it for the children?

Government claims that the drive to Academies is intended to raise standards. What is the evidence, from England and internationally, that these type of school reforms result in improved outcomes for children? What is the impact of such reforms on 'achievement gaps' between students from different socio-economic groups, or children from different ethnic backgrounds? How does increasing competition between schools impact on children with special educational needs and school exclusions?

Workshop leaders: Howard Stevenson (CERD) and Sarah Dodds (Teacher/Parent)

Governance: who controls our schools?

The rapid drive to Academies has raised important questions about who controls our schools. How are Academy schools accountable to the community and where is the democracy? What are the consequences for community control of a drive towards Academies? How are corporate sponsors, accountable to the local community? Who supports the governors if things go wrong?

Workshop leaders: Alasdair Smith (Anti-Academies Alliance), Darren Dodds (Governor)

School funding: who is getting the money?

New changes to school organisation have made funding arrangements increasingly complex. Many schools feel compelled to consider Academy conversion because they believe improved funding will follow. What do we really know about the funding for LA and Academy schools? Is the promise of 'new money' myth or reality? Does anybody gain? Who loses?

Workshop leader: Peter Downes (ex-Principal, Cambridgeshire Councillor, national authority on school finance issues)

Employment issues: safe in their hands?

Current education reforms provide employers with considerable flexibility to vary pay and conditions of service. When considering Academy conversion employees are often assured that 'nothing will change' – pay, pensions and conditions of service will be protected. What are the 'new flexibilities'? How secure are national pay and conditions for current and new staff? What is the evidence from Academy schools that national pay and conditions are being protected? This session will focus on issues facing both teaching and support staff.

Workshop leaders: representatives from Bernie Pardon (NASUWT Exec), Ken Rustidge (NUT Exec) and Unison (invited).