

# **A Personal Rant: the state of education**

**Sandra Mahaffey**

Having been in Primary School Education for 42 years .....almost 20 of those spent abroad and all of them in the classroom I have come to the following conclusions:

I totally agree with the article written by John Coe. We put our children under far too much pressure and have ended up with a lot of younger folk who find education "Boring"!!! I am still tutoring and love it but a lot of my year 6 pupils say that they find school boring and they are "sick" of tests!!! Why is it that the government does not listen?.....well as far as this Tory Government goes most of their children are going to very expensive private schools, as they themselves did, so they have no idea what goes on in an inner city school in a poor socio-economic area... nor do they care.....proven by giving themselves a pay rise and having subsidised meals in Westminster whilst voting against providing free school meals in the school holidays!!!.....I hope you have all seen and hopefully signed the petitions on the NAPE website.

Parents are being told that their children are failing in reception.....which beggars belief. There is far too much emphasis on the teaching of phonics which is often delivered by TAs some of whom have no idea what they are doing....I speak from vast experience!! Some children need all the help they can get to learn to read. Others take to it like "ducks to water" but our education system seems hell bent on getting these children to read sounding like robots as they are told to decode every word so fluency goes out the window!!! I have been asked to go and sort quite a few of these readers out by very worried parents. No wonder our children are not happy at school. We continually push them to run before they have conquered walking so they end up demoralised and uninterested and BORED!!!! Unforgivable!!!

We need to take a long hard look at what is happening in our schools which are under-funded and make government accountable. I taught in a school for 10 years which was predominantly Muslim and 93% non-speaking English. We cannot deliver the same syllabus to these children as we can do to children from leafy suburbia with both parents speaking English..... but sadly that is the government's deluded expectation.....I lobbied my MP for years on this when I worked there but it fell on very deaf ears.

I will end my rant here but hopefully together we can make a difference.... I would be interested in any comments....good or bad!!

Sandra Mahaffey

