

Conservative education plans

Commenting today on Conservative education policy on Teachers' TV, Steve Sinnott, General Secretary of the National Union of Teachers, said:

"Low level pupil disruption is undermining the education of the majority and the work of our teachers. A consensus needs to be developed on pupil behaviour by the political parties all of which have highlighted the issues in their manifestos.

"The Conservative Party's ideas on choice and reinventing grant maintained schools will not be welcomed by parents nor teachers. They are looking to a failed policy from the past. The Conservative's talks about choice in the same sentence as they insist that all schools become grant maintained. Grant maintained schools were rejected by parents and teachers. They would be rejected again if the Conservatives win the General Election.

"The idea of a slimmed down national curriculum is welcome. It is something we have long called for.

"A review carried out by Chris Woodhead would not be welcomed by the NUT. The Conservative's policy on pupil passports would benefit Chris Woodhead's plans to become the largest private school provider in the UK. Any curriculum review should be independent and could not be if carried out by Chris Woodhead. .

"The reintroduction of selection is the danger underlying Conservative Party Policy on admissions. Schools would end up picking out those pupils who would be likely to produce the best test results and rejecting those who would not. . This would create a category of the unwanted child. This is anathema to the ethos needed in our schools.

"Tim Collins, Shadow Education Secretary says he wants to build 20,000 academies. Their proposals are uncoded. It costs £13m to build an "ordinary" school compared with £20m for an academy. Where are the additional funds to come from? It is not an appropriate or sensible use of limited resources for education."

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