

**Conservative plans would ghettoize children**

Commenting on Opposition Leader Michael Howard's plans to deal with disruptive children, Steve Sinnott, General Secretary of the National Union of Teachers, said:

"The Conservative Leader identifies the right issue but offers the wrong solution. Teachers and the vast majority of young people do not want to see their lessons disrupted by unacceptable behaviour by a minority.

"But the proposal for privatised 'turnaround' schools could mean children were labeled for life. No child should be written off in this way.

"It assumes that one size fits all when that is clearly not the case.

"It is only local authorities that can co-ordinate and provide a wide range of support in dealing with behavioural problems. What is needed is a wide range of provision from education authorities including help in mainstream schools with disruptive children and extending to pupil referral units and special schools.

"Currently when children are expelled, they are frequently admitted to another school. This change alone can often have the desired effect of turning their behaviour round. It does not result in the child being stigmatized nor in bureaucratic obstacles being placed in the way of their return to mainstream education."

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