

Monday 1 November 2004

## **NASUWT TO GIVE EVIDENCE TO THE SELECT COMMITTEE INQUIRY ON EDUCATION OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM**

Outlining NASUWT's position ahead of the House of Commons Education and Skills Select Committee oral evidence session due to take place today, **Chris Keates, General Secretary** of NASUWT, the largest union representing teachers throughout the UK, said:

"I welcome the opportunity to provide oral evidence to the Select Committee on this issue.

"I will reiterate NASUWT's position of strongly advising members not to participate in educational visits but will also take the opportunity to explain the reasons for that advice.

"The Union's extensive experience of supporting members who have found themselves the subject of legal action, despite following all available guidance, has led us to conclude that society is increasingly litigious and no longer appears to accept the concept of a genuine accident.

"It also fails to understand that perfect judgement, total attentiveness and faultless foresight are beyond human capacity. In the best ordered of activities things will occasionally go wrong.

"I will seek to emphasise the heightened risks to teachers and pupils of the growing tendency for some schools to organise increasingly adventurous activities and exotic locations to visit.

"The introduction of a system for checking the educational validity of a visit and an examination of what types of activity should be undertaken by schools is long overdue.

"The Government has already recognised the legitimacy of NASUWT's concerns.

"Following the commitment given by the Secretary of State, Charles Clarke, at the NASUWT Annual Conference a considerable amount of work has already been undertaken by the DfES to examine in detail our concerns.

"The oral evidence session will enable us to expand upon the written evidence NASUWT has provided and explain in more detail the work in progress."