

**Monday 17 January 2005**

**'EXTERNAL SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS TO ASSIST YOUNGSTERS WHO SELF-HARM IS WELCOME' SAYS NASUWT**

Commenting on reports of the findings of the national inquiry into Self Harm Among Young People, **Chris Keates, General Secretary of NASUWT**, the largest union representing teachers and headteachers throughout the UK said:

"This report raises a number of important issues which merit further detailed consideration.

"I welcome the fact that it not only highlights concerns about the support available for vulnerable young people in schools but also recognises the pressures educational professionals already face in carrying out their responsibilities.

"With the best will in the world teachers cannot be expected to have the level of psychiatric awareness that would ensure that vulnerable young people, intent on self harm, are given the level of support that might prevent it taking place and the report duly recognises this.

I, therefore, support the call for the Government to draw on external sources to assist and support schools in reducing the prevalence of self-harm. This is entirely consistent with the provisions of the National Agreement on remodelling the school workforce and the aims of the Children's Services agenda. It will ensure that appropriately trained and qualified staff are at the heart of the vital task of ensuring the physical and mental well being of young people."