

Immediate Release

29 April 2004

Teacher numbers and class sizes – Government release

Commenting on Charles Clarke's announcement, Doug McAvoy, General Secretary of the National Union of Teachers, said:

“The release of these figures is being spun as a success story but it conceals some disturbing facts. The Government's decision to allow teacher numbers in primary and nursery to decline bodes ill for the future.

“Instead of taking advantage of falling rolls to reduce class sizes in primary there will be schools facing decreased budgets and redundancies. This policy means that teacher numbers will not return to 1979 levels when the Labour Party was last in power.

“The figures conceal the fact that unqualified teachers are counted in the increase. On this evidence this means that the Government will not hit its target of 10,000 more qualified teachers by the end of this Parliament.

“I am deeply concerned that the number of class sizes over 30 in secondary schools have risen. This trend must be reversed. Secondary schools face increasing demands such as reorganisation of 14-19 qualifications.”

E N D S

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