

OFSTED report on inclusion – NUT reaction

Commenting on today's OFSTED report on inclusion of children with special needs in mainstream schools, Steve Sinnott, NUT General Secretary, said:

“OFSTED's report shows the enormous efforts schools have made to include children with special educational needs and their willingness to be seen as inclusive.

“But I am concerned about aspects of the report. Schools cannot be expected to include children with severe behavioural difficulties if teachers have tried and not been able to overcome the problems. Teachers have to have regard for the education of all other children in the school. Their education must not be disrupted by the behaviour of children with special needs. David Bell should have said that special school and unit provision should be available in all local authorities.

“He should also have warned that SEN support services, so vital for inclusion, are under threat from Government pressure on authorities to delegate more and more of their budgets to individual schools.

“We are still not there yet in achieving access to all school buildings for children with disabilities. Only a minority of schools have lifts allowing access to all floors for children with mobility difficulties. The Government should reinstate additional and specific fundings for making school buildings more accessible.”