

**IMMEDIATE**

**Wednesday 21 July 2004**

**Education select committee report on school admissions**

Commenting on the Education Select Committee's Report into school admissions, **Chris Keates**, Acting General Secretary of NASUWT (the teachers' union with 223,500 members), said:

"The current admissions process is stacked against parents and pupils from low socioeconomic backgrounds. It lacks clarity and is frustrating, non-inclusive and inequitable.

"NASUWT welcomes the Select Committee's recommendation for revised and strengthened regulations to bring coherence to the system, with particular regard to removing the discriminatory practice of interviewing prospective pupils and their parents.

"The Committee is entirely justified in asking the Government to explain the contradiction between its aim of creating a fair and equal education system for all with the continued development of an elitist system.

"There are serious problems with the Select Committee's recommendation for schools to be offered financial incentives to admit 'hard-to-teach' pupils. Bribing schools is not the way to tackle pupil need. Pupils may be excluded from a range of educational opportunities by virtue of being included in a mainstream school which is unable to meet their specific needs.

"Every child is entitled to be included in the education service but this may not mean a mainstream place for all. The introduction of financial incentives could detract from careful assessment of the needs of the individual child which should be the first consideration."

**...ENDS...**

**Further:**

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