

**IMMEDIATE  
21 June 2004**

**“ENFORCING SCHOOL UNIFORM POLICY IS FRAUGHT WITH DIFFICULTY” –  
SAYS NASUWT**

Commenting on the decision of a Suffolk school to ban girls from wearing skirts as a school uniform option, **Chris Keates, Acting General Secretary of NASUWT**, (the union representing 223,500 serving teachers), said:

“Maintaining and enforcing a school uniform policy takes hours of staff time and is fraught with difficulty.

“Some parents, despite the fact they have either chosen a school for their child in full knowledge of the dress code or have been consulted on it, fail to support the school in applying it.

“The reasons for this can be complex, ranging from indifference to the policy to lack of availability of affordable clothing which meets a school’s requirements.

“Since time immemorial pupils have sought to vary school dress codes and to use this to challenge authority.

“Taking all these factors into account, schools have the unenviable task of being the arbiters of what is appropriate.

“Before rushing to condemn the decisions of schools in these matters it is worth remembering that the prime motivation is normally to maintain high standards of behaviour and to create an appropriate learning environment.

“It is highly regrettable that the pursuit of such important objectives often attracts widespread criticism and makes schools vulnerable to legal challenge.”

**...ENDS...**

**Further:**

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