

Budget – NUT reaction

Commenting on the increased spending for education in today's Budget announcement, Doug McAvoy, NUT General Secretary, said:

“The Chancellor appears to have responded to the needs of the education service. But in the past, what looked like an increase resulted in schools continuing to be underfunded.

“I welcome the Chancellor's commitment to education and the increased investment. But the increases are applied to a woefully inadequate base. The 4.4 per cent increase is unlikely to make good the deficit and at the same time equip schools adequately to enable them to meet the demands made on them.

“We will monitor carefully how the Government intends the money to be spent.

“While I welcome the Chancellor's emphasis on early education and childcare, I must question Charles Clarke's approach to so-called reforms of the teaching profession.

“The Chancellor committed himself to rising numbers of teachers and teaching assistants. This is in direct contrast to the consequences of the Government's remodeling agenda.

“The Prime Minister must back his Chancellor's commitment to retaining and increasing the number of teachers which isn't mirrored by Charles Clarke's approach to reform of the teaching profession. The pay settlement imposed until 2006 gives teachers inflation only increases which will not recruit and retain the necessary staff.

“His commitment to increasing capital funding is welcome but the promise of new secondary school buildings is dependent upon such schools having spaces for teaching 120 pupils in the same class: hardly a positive reform.”

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