

Remind Parents of their Responsibilities as well as Rights, Says SHA

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The government should emphasise parental responsibilities as well as rights if it is serious about improving schools, the Secondary Heads Association will say at its annual conference today.

Addressing delegates at the conference, SHA General Secretary John Dunford * will say:

SHA members try to establish a good working partnership with parents, but there is the awkward fact that some parents make our job much more difficult - parents who don't support school discipline, parents who believe that their child is always right, parents who are aggressive towards teachers.

The vast majority of parents are helpful and supportive, but it would be of enormous benefit to school leaders if politicians spent as long talking about the responsibilities of parents to the school as they do their rights.

He will also say that the emphasis on giving parents a choice of schools is misdirected. Rather, parents want a good local school offering diverse provision to cater for the needs of individual children.

In his speech, John Dunford will also warn the government that schools will by-pass the general diploma set out in the 14-19 white paper because universities will not ask for it. He will say:

Universities will continue to ask only for A level grades, schools will focus their efforts of getting students the grades they need. School that want depth for the brighter students will adopt the international baccalaureate.

He will also say that government has demonstrated a lack of confidence in teachers over its refusal to adopt the recommendation for chartered assessors.