

IMMEDIATE

Wednesday 15 September 2004

NASUWT: TUC MOTION ON EVERY CHILD MATTERS – CHILDREN’S SERVICES

Speaking in support of the TUC motion on Every Child Matters – Children’s Services, **Chris Keates**, Acting General Secretary of NASUWT, the largest union representing teachers throughout the UK, said:

“The Government’s strategy at the heart of Every Child Matters is to protect those children at risk of harm or neglect whilst ensuring better services for all. It is also about tackling the disparities in income and opportunity for young people and families throughout their lives. Few could disagree with these aims.

“The strategy highlights the adverse impact of poverty and low income on the progress, achievements and life chances of children and young people. Appropriate funding, parental involvement and strategies to tackle deprivation and inequality are essential components of success.

“There are a number of difficult areas which require careful consideration, including ensuring schools make an effective contribution to the children’s agenda while not diverting teachers from their core function, support for unaccompanied asylum seeker children and developing an appropriate leadership structure for extended schools.

“It is right to seek to address the problems of a fragmented provision of children’s services but this has occurred by policies such as privatisation, contracting out, local financial management and deregulation of pay and conditions.

“These undermine institutional co-operation, collaboration and information sharing. They impact adversely on the ability of schools, social services and the health sector to recruit and retain staff and they breed insecurity, expose staff to poor management and seriously undermine moral. These must be addressed and recognised.

“The crucial and determining factor in the successful implementation of this important and welcome Government strategy will be the involvement of the trade unions representing the staff in these services in the genuine social partnership, building on the good practice developed through the school workforce National Agreement: Raising Standards and Tackling Workload.”

ENDS

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