IMMEDIATE

Tuesday 21 September 2004

SELECT COMMITTEE PROPOSALS ARE DEPRESSING AND UNIMAGINATIVE SAYS NASUWT

Commenting on the proposals from the House of Commons Education and Skills Select Committee for more flexibility in recruiting staff and setting pay levels, **Chris Keates,** Acting General Secretary of NASUWT, the largest union representing teachers throughout the UK, said:

"The Select Committee's proposals are depressing and unimaginative and simply amount to old ideas recycled.

"The suggestions are ill-defined and fail to acknowledge the clear evidence of the ineffectiveness of the considerable number of existing flexibilities in the current pay structure.

"Attempts have been made over the years to solve the problems of recruitment and retention by introducing more local pay discretion and yet the problems in some areas persist.

"The level of discretion available to schools already causes significant problems. It makes the pay structure more opaque and prone to inequity. It reduces the value national pay arrangements have in attracting teachers and alienates existing teachers who feel unfairly treated.

"Pay flexibility encourages schools to poach staff and leads to schools in difficult circumstances or with budgetary problems being disadvantaged still further.

"I find it difficult to see any merit in the proposal for an army of super-teachers to work in the most difficult schools. It is an inherently divisive and impractical suggestion which I hope no one will take seriously."