

Conservative's savings plan put children's education under threat, says NUT

Commenting on the Conservative Party's plans for savings in Government spending should they win the general election, Steve Sinnott, General Secretary of Britain's biggest teachers' union, the NUT, said:

"The Conservative's plans to make every school grant maintained and downgrade local authority involvement ignores their own history and the needs of children.

"When last in government, despite huge financial bribes, parents, when given the choice, voted in around only 5 per cent of schools for grant maintained status. They valued and needed the support local authorities provide.

"Wiping out the support schools need in combating truancy and dealing with pupil behaviour would leave children vulnerable and teachers and their pupils under threat. Children who are already vulnerable would be left without the crucial support local authorities provide.

"Too many teachers already cite poor pupil behaviour as a basic reason for leaving the profession.

"Without local authority support in dealing with problems of truancy and pupil behaviour, schools would have to look elsewhere for help. This would not come cheap. The savings the Conservatives hope to make in these areas would soon be eliminated by the extra costs of buying in help and the costs to society of picking up the pieces.

"The Conservatives should look at the evidence of history, not ignore it.

"They also ignore the training the NUT, for one, provides to teachers with the help of the Union Learning Fund. Without this input, more teachers would leave the profession because, for example, they do not have access to key areas of training including ICT."

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