

IMMEDIATE

Wednesday 29 September 2004

NASUWT RESPONSE TO CHARLES CLARKE'S SPEECH

Commenting at the Labour Party Conference on the Secretary of State for Education's speech, **Chris Keates**, Acting General Secretary of NASUWT, the largest union representing teachers throughout the UK, said:

"Charles Clarke gave a robust address setting out an impressive record of achievement. I welcome the fact that he acknowledged there was still much more to do.

"NASUWT supports the Government's view that schools should be at the heart of their community.

"NASUWT has no problem with the concept of extended schools, particularly as there is no expectation that teachers will work extra hours or be diverted from their core function. The same must also apply to headteachers and other members of the school workforce.

"Schools should commission the extended provision from the many organisations which currently offer these services to schools and not attempt 'in-house' solutions.

Chris Keates continued:

"There is no doubt that the Government's proposals for City Academies are problematic. It will be essential that the Government works with NASUWT and other social partners to learn lessons from the existing academies and build in appropriate safeguards on admissions, curriculum content and teachers' pay and conditions.

"I welcome the commitment to addressing the 14-19 agenda and giving serious consideration to the review being undertaken by former HMCI Mike Tomlinson.

"NASUWT is looking to the Tomlinson review to provide recommendations on ensuring much-needed parity of esteem between vocational and academic courses."

ENDS

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