

**IMMEDIATE**  
**28 June 2004**

**NASUWT WELCOMES PLEDGE TO ABOLISH EXCLUSION APPEAL PANELS**

Commenting on the announcement by the Conservative Party of its policy to abolish Independent Appeal Panels, **Chris Keates**, Acting General Secretary of NASUWT (the teachers' union with 223,500 members), said:

"NASUWT has campaigned for years for the abolition of these panels.

"Their perverse decisions have resulted in the reinstatement of pupils involved in serious incidents back into the schools from which they were excluded and have undermined schools' efforts to maintain good order and discipline.

"The procedures under which they operate place a heavily bureaucratic, time-consuming burden on schools.

"The training, selection and decision-making process of the panels is shrouded in mystery.

"Pupils and their parents already have the right to appeal against exclusion to the school's governing body. The rationale for a second appeal to an external panel has always been dubious.

"The Labour Government has made significant and welcome amendments to the guidance and procedures under which the panels operate. However, the problems still persist and the case for abolition remains strong."

**...Ends...**

**Further**

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