

NUT reaction to Queen's Speech

Commenting on the education proposals outlined in the Queen's Speech, Steve Sinnott, NUT General Secretary, said:

“The government is going ahead with its plans to increase the number of academies across the country. Yet no evaluation of the existing academies' performance has been published and exposed to public scrutiny.

“What we do know is that two have been inspected. One has been told it is ‘improving’ whilst the other, according to the press, is a failing school. Yet the government trumpets academy status as the answer to the problems of our inner cities.

“I want the Government to move speedily into its new listening mode: it should heed the select committee's call for the programme to be halted until the existing academies have been evaluated and their impact on surrounding schools examined.

“Teachers welcome parents involvement in their children's education but the suggestion of giving them more effective ways of bringing about change sounds ominous. Teachers will fear that unrepresentative groups kicking up a fuss at the school gates could have too much influence over a school to the detriment of all the children.

“Parents have a vital role but for Government they either rule the roost or are reduced to simply being consulted on whether their school should become a foundation school. Parents will be unable to prevent a small group of governors altering radically the position of the school for all time without present or future parents having a right to decide.

“The extension of foundation status to primary schools is neither wanted nor necessary. Foundation status undermines productive co-operation between schools and local authorities.”

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