

Immediate Release

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Labour Manifesto for Education

Commenting on reports of Labour's Education Manifesto, Steve Sinnott, General Secretary of the National Union of Teachers, said:

"I am extremely concerned about reports of Labour's Education Manifesto which I understand is to be launched next week.

"The Labour Party needs to remember its priorities on embedding education in all communities and on tackling the effects of poverty and social class on children's life chances. I call on the Labour Party to think again, even at this late stage, and to re-examine its priorities for a third term.

"I want the Labour Party to concentrate on developing policies which support teaching and learning in schools and which encourage parental engagement in education.

"The potential for disruption of education by giving powers to parents to change the management of schools and to close and open them is immense. There is no justification in evidence for such an approach.

"Instead of encouraging partnerships between parents and teachers in which the teaching and learning of young people can be supported, the Labour Party seems obsessed with following the twin mirages of parent power and privatisation.

"Parents want to know that their children are happy at school and learning to the best of their abilities.

"The effect of the Government's proposals will be simply to divide parents from parents and parents from teachers. Those parents that have the time and capacity could exercise their power of choice to detriment of other parents and to the detriment of the community of schools.

"I would direct the same appeal to other parties who may be contemplating similar damaging proposals."

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