

CALL FOR MORE PROTECTION FOR TEACHERS FROM MALICIOUS ALLEGATIONS

More needs to be done to address the issue of malicious allegations being made by pupils against teachers, teachers at the Annual Conference of **NASUWT-The Teachers' Union**, have asserted.

Teachers at the Conference in Birmingham have called on Governments and administrations across the UK to review their procedures for dealing with allegations against teachers in the light of concerns about the incidence of malicious claims being made by pupils.

The NASUWT's own figures show that in 2017 out of the 119 members asked to attend a police interview because of a criminal allegation arising out of their employment, the Police/Crown Prosecution Service found that in 83 cases there was 'no case to answer' or no further action required. Of the remainder, no members were convicted at court, two members were acquitted at court and no members accepted a caution. The rest of the cases were ongoing.

Chris Keates, General Secretary of the NASUWT, said:

"The NASUWT is clear that allegations made against a teacher must be taken seriously and investigated. However, our concerns continue about the failure of those in authority to distinguish false and malicious allegations at an early stage in the process and before the careers and family lives of accused teachers are destroyed.

"Even if the teacher is eventually exonerated, their career may be permanently blighted by the fact that the allegation remains on record. Some have also seen the breakdown of family relationships.

"Increasingly teachers are being subject to allegations by parents on social media, often before the parent has raised any concerns with the school.

"This year alone we have had a member falsely accused of raping a fifteen year old and another member accused of physically abusing a pupil.

"In these cases neither of the pupils had raised any complaint with the parent or the school and the teachers were exonerated, but not before they had faced trial by social media and their health and careers were in jeopardy.

"The robust child protection procedures must be maintained but there must be severe legal consequences for those who make demonstrably false and malicious allegations"