**14-19 SECONDARY EDUCATION**

Conference reaffirms its commitment to the establishment of a comprehensive education system for all young people.

Conference believes that a coherent 14-19 system of education is incompatible with the Government’s concept of diversification and competition between schools and institutions.

Conference believes that reforms to the 14-19 education system should be based on the need to secure equality of access for all young people and that this can only be achieved with sufficient funding to meet all educational need. Conference reaffirms its belief that school performance tables of examination results have obscured the success of many young people and have skewed resources and the curriculum towards achieving Government targets at the expense of many young people.

Conference condemns the decision by the Government to introduce performance tables at Key Stage 3 and urges the Government to rescind this decision.

Conference believes that school performance tables for GCSE and post-16 public examinations should be abolished.

Conference believes that a 14-19 education system must reward and acknowledge the significant achievement of children who have worked hard to fulfill their potential but have been unable to achieve high academic success.

Conference welcomes the conclusion of the House of Commons’ Education and Skills Committee report on ‘Secondary Education: Pupil Achievement’ that, “performance tables can be damaging to morale in schools which appear to be low achieving, but which are performing well in relation to their pupil intake”.

Conference recognises the enormous achievements of comprehensive education, including year-on-year increases in:

1. student staying on rates;
2. students entering higher education;
3. GCSE and A level pass rates; and
4. the provision of skills training.

Conference reaffirms its support for non-selective education and urges the Government to take on board the findings of OECD’s PISA report which demonstrate that high achievement is a product of non-selective systems of education.

Conference notes with concern the role of local Learning and Skills Councils in restructuring post-16 education at local level, which particularly impacts on the viability of school sixth forms both in urban and rural settings.

Conference believes that any changes to post-16 provision at local level should be undertaken with proper consultation with teachers and their representative and should be determined solely by Schools Organisation Committees.

Conference urges the Government, therefore, to review the role of the Learning and Skills Councils, both at local and national level and evaluate their effectiveness in terms of local democratic accountability.

Conference instructs the Executive to:

i. press the Government to abandon national target setting and the publication of performance tables;

ii. seek agreement with the national Learning and Skills Council that reorganisation of post-16 provision at local level should be undertaken within the parameters of local democratic accountability;

iii. publicise a statement for 14-19 education which reaffirms the Union’s commitment to the 14-19 system of education and supports and promotes comprehensive education;

iv. strengthen links with organisations campaigning for comprehensive education, such as CASE and similar organisations.

v. press for a coherent, non-selective 14-19 phase of education based on sufficient funding for schools and sixth form colleges; and

vi. press for the continuation of school sixth forms and sixth form colleges as central to the provision of 14-19 education.