



Press release immediate: 24 January 2008

CaSE PR 08/01

Funding for STEM Subjects in Schools

Campaign for Science & Engineering (CaSE) today welcomed the Schools Minister's announcement for £140 million to support Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects in schools.

Commenting on the announcement Nick Dusic, CaSE's Director, said: "It is a good sign that the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) is funding a number of initiatives to improve the state of science, engineering and mathematics in schools. However, it will take sustained commitment and funding from the Government to ensure that every student has the opportunity to excel at science and mathematics."

Commenting on **recruitment and retention of teachers**, Nick Dusic said: "There are severe shortages of specialist teachers in maths, physics and chemistry, which recruiting new teachers would help to rectify. There needs to be specific targets for recruiting physics and chemistry teachers. At the moment there is only an overall target for science teachers.

"An equally important issue is retention, which is only 50% after five years for science teachers. The financial incentives provided in today's announcement may go some way in solving retention problems, but there are other issues at play, which include high workload and poor pupil behaviour. We look forward to clarification on how the DCSF will improve non-financial aspects to teacher retention.

"The shortage in STEM teachers is most acute in the lowest-attaining schools and those serving areas of socio-economic deprivation. There is no point in training new science teachers if they don't end up where there are needed most. The DCSF has had to put mechanisms in place to ensure that they go where there are needed."

Commenting on funding for **continuing professional development (CPD)**, Nick Dusic said "It is very good news that the DCSF had included funding for supply cover within the package as it can be a barrier for teachers doing CPD."

CaSE welcomed the Government's commitment to enable more students to take **three separate GCSEs** in physics, biology and chemistry. Nick Dusic said "It is really important that all students in every school have an opportunity to take three separate science GCSEs. Making this a reality will be a challenge before September this year. Hopefully £9 million is enough to ensure that students at three-quarters of comprehensive schools which do not offer three separate GCSEs are provided for.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

1. For further information, please contact Nick Dusic, Director of the Campaign for Science & Engineering, on 07749 953041.

29-30 Tavistock Square
London WC1H 9QU
Tel: 020 7679 4995 Fax: 020 7916 8528
info@sciencecampaign.org.uk
www.sciencecampaign.org.uk

Campaign for
Science and
Engineering
in the UK



2. The Campaign for Science & Engineering (CaSE) is a pressure group aiming to improve the scientific and engineering health of the UK. Our objective is to communicate to Parliament and the nation as a whole the economic and cultural importance of science and engineering, and the vital need for its funding by government and industry. CaSE is supported by its members, which includes individuals, corporations, universities and learned societies. Further information on CaSE can be found at:
<http://www.sciencecampaign.org.uk>
3. Information on the DCSF announcement can be found at:
http://www.dfes.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2008_0017