



NAPE

**National Association for Primary
Education**

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Media Release

Forced Primary Academies

The government has ignored the clear evidence that the great majority of primary school communities have no wish to become academies. 85% have refused to accept the incentives offered to them.

This association is concerned that important and successful aspects of primary education will be threatened by the enforced change. The primary sector has distinctive characteristics which include a close link with parents and the local community together with a focus upon the needs of individual children. The schools are by no means small versions of secondary schools, they are organised differently and often have different priorities.

Parents are very largely excluded from the management of academies. Attainment targets become even more important and the danger is that parents are treated as consumers rather than partners in children's learning. This weakens one of the greatest strengths of the primary school. In the competitive world of the academy it is too often the case that accountability is to the management of the school or the chain rather than to the parent of the individual pupil. Decisive action by government will be necessary to protect this aspect of primary teaching which has such profound implications for educational progress.

Primary schools are relatively small communities and this is a powerful factor in enabling children's successful learning. When additional resources both human and material are required to broaden the children's experience the primary school turns to neighbouring schools which serve the same community. Partnerships are formed and expertise is shared rather than considered a competitive asset.

Partnership groups of primary schools exist in most communities, they have been facilitated by local authorities but these are soon to be removed from their work in education. **Government must provide support for the groups otherwise schools will be left in the vacuum which academisation will create.** Regional Commissioners are not the answer, their function will die away over the next four years and they cannot offer the support which primary schools deserve.

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