

National New Heads Conference 2008

Highlights from Jim Knight's speech – video transcript

Our goal is to improve the lives of children and families by building a world class education system and children's services, eliminating the barriers holding young people back and helping them achieve all that they're capable of. And as leaders of our schools, you of course are driving forward that ambition. And you're doing so in a climate of change that seems to get faster and faster as our technological capability increases.

We need a more dynamic education and school system that can adapt and you, as leaders in our schools, will be leading that change. Going forward we will see greater collaboration with other services so that parents can access help and support more easily with outstanding leadership, judged partly on system-wide leadership, not just individual school leadership. Again and again evidence tells us that parents' engagements with their own child's learning is one of probably the most important influence on their achievement and their wellbeing.

Every teacher should be a leader in their own right with responsibilities and opportunities that challenge and develop them to help them achieve all that they're capable of and make their schools a success. Investing in our workforce through succession planning will secure the next generation of leaders for the next generation of young people. But there's also a real opportunity for other teachers to step up, for new leaders to challenge existing systems and ask the all important question are we doing things this way because it's right or because it's the way we've always done them. By investing time and energy in our teachers, you're investing in future leaders and by investing in our pupils, you are investing in future prosperity, in individual success, in a world-class education system for generations to come. Thank you very much.