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## **TEACHERS UNION CRITICISED FOR “SCAREMONGERING”**

Teaching union NASUWT has been accused of “misguided scaremongering”, following its reported advice to teachers last weekend not to take pupils on school trips.

Colin Ettinger, president of the 5,000-strong Association of Personal Injury Lawyers (APIL), said teachers are being scared unnecessarily into staying indoors because of the union’s constant failure to recognise that ‘compensation culture’ is a myth.

“It is ludicrous that despite clear evidence which shows accident claims have decreased by almost ten per cent in the last year\*, the NASUWT is spreading the myth that society is “increasingly litigious” and doesn’t understand the idea of a “genuine accident”.

“The reality – as APIL has pointed out many, many times, is that a genuine accident does not result in a compensation claim and a teacher cannot be sued unless negligence has taken place,” said Ettinger. “The general secretary’s reported comments to union members amount to scaremongering and it is wholly irresponsible to fuel teachers’ fears in this way while blatantly ignoring the facts.

“As OFSTED pointed out in a recent report, provided proper risk assessments are carried out, and health and safety guidelines are followed, teachers have nothing to

fear. It is a lack of understanding – not helped by hysteria about the compensation culture - which leads teachers to believe they can be sued for anything. There is absolutely no need to stop school trips provided steps are taken to ensure pupils are safe.

“We have asked several times for a meeting with NASUWT to discuss this - it is disappointing that the union has chosen instead to continue fuelling the myth.”

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**Note to editors:**

*\*Statistics from the Government's Compensation Recovery Unit show that accident claims have decreased by almost ten per cent in the last year*

For further information, please contact:

Lorraine Gwinnutt  
Head of Legal & Public Affairs  
APIL  
11 Castle Quay  
Nottingham  
NG7 1FW  
Tel: 0115 958 0585  
Fax: 0115 924 3485  
email: lorraine@apil.com

or

Lisa Wardle  
Press & PR Officer  
APIL  
Tel: 0115 958 0585  
Fax: 0115 924 3485  
email: lisa@apil.com