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JACQUI SMITH MP
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State

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Dear Julia

I would like to thank the Council for Science and Technology for publishing its report on supporting and developing the profession of science teaching earlier this year.

Science is a core subject in the National Curriculum, reflecting the importance of both producing future scientists and also ensuring that all young people are confident in engaging with the scientific issues that affect their every day lives. For our young people to receive the science education that they require, we need teachers that have the finest and most up-to-date tools to do their job. This means supporting individual teachers, whole schools and the whole profession in a partnership of commitment to inclusive, high quality professional development. Professional development can take place in a variety of settings and can take many forms. What matters is that it is of high quality and focused on teaching and learning. We want to help teachers to share their expertise in and out of the classroom, and to become the learning managers of the future.

The report raises a number of interesting issues which are very much in line with evidence that we have received from other sources. Many of your recommendations are reflected in policies already in place or under development and others we hope to be able to take forward in the future.



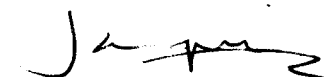
INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



I would like to thank you for representing the Council at our conference on 1st November 2000, where science teachers were given an opportunity to comment on the findings of the Council's report and to discuss their needs in relation to continuing professional development. We were pleased that both the General Teaching Council and the Association for Science Education were closely involved with the conference, as we believe that both of these organisations have the potential to offer substantial support to science teachers' professional development.

We are actively considering how to take forward the Council's recommendations in the light of the discussions at the conference and this paper outlines our thinking to date, under the six headings used in the report. The report's recommendations are attached as an annex.

Yours



JACQUI SMITH