



Frank exchange: Mr Cameron is questioned over his schools policy by Jonathan Bartley and his son Samuel, seven, in London Picture: Getty/WPA

Father of disabled boy attacks 'bias'

DAVID CAMERON yesterday denied planning to force disabled children out of mainstream schools after a confrontation with the parent of a wheelchair user.

The Conservative leader came under fire from Jonathan Bartley over his party's plans to 'end the bias towards the inclusion of children with special needs in mainstream schools'.

He told Mr Cameron he had struggled for two years to get his son, Samuel, seven, who suffers from spina bifida, into his local school. He said the existing system was already biased against disa-

By **Fred Attewill**

bled children being educated alongside their able-bodied peers.

'You talk about the broken society. It nearly broke up our family getting our son into school,' he told Mr Cameron after he gave a campaign speech in south London.

'It is the wrong way to go. You are not representing the needs of children in mainstream education. You want to segregate disabled children,' Mr Bartley, 39, added.

As he was the parent of a disabled child, Mr Cameron insisted he was 'passionate' about helping

them get the right education and would not do anything to make it more difficult for them.

The Tory leader said his experiences with his son Ivan, who died last year aged six, had led him to personally pen the relevant section of the Conservative manifesto.

The Tory policy states: 'The most vulnerable children deserve the very highest quality of care, so we will call a moratorium on the ideologically-driven closure of special schools.'

'We will end the bias towards the inclusion of children with special needs in mainstream schools.'

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