



BANK OF ENGLAND

News release

Press Office

Threadneedle Street

London EC2R 8AH

T 020 7601 4411

F 020 7601 5460

press@bankofengland.co.uk

www.bankofengland.co.uk

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Target 2 Point 5 - The Blackpool Sixth Form College Wins National 'Challenge'

The Blackpool Sixth Form College has won the national final of the Bank of England/Times Interest Rate 'Challenge' which took place today at the Bank in Threadneedle Street, London. Sir Edward George, the Governor of the Bank of England and Chairman of the Bank's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), presented the winners with the Interest Rate 'Challenge' trophy and a prize of £10,000 for their college. "I have been really impressed with the standard of the competition today", Sir Edward said. "I am delighted with the level of commitment and enthusiasm that the Target 2.5 'Challenge' has generated. All of the teams should be congratulated."

Each of the six teams in today's final took on the role of the MPC, which sets the UK's interest rate, and made a presentation to a panel of judges chaired by Mervyn King, the Deputy Governor responsible for monetary policy. Two other MPC members, Charlie Bean and Kate Barker, and Anatole Kaletsky of 'The Times' were on the judging panel. Each team of four students assessed economic conditions and the outlook for inflation, and decided what level of interest rate they would like to set to meet the Government's inflation target of 2.5%. The chairman of the judges, Mervyn King said, "We were greatly impressed by the high standard of the presentations we saw today, which must have involved each of the teams in a lot of hard work. I hope they all found taking part a valuable experience. The array of talent on display today augurs well for the future of economic policy in this country."

The winning team recommended an interest rate of 4% (the same as the Bank of England's official rate of 4.00%, set by the MPC on 7 March 2002). The team from The Perse School in Cambridge were second. They recommended an interest rate of 4.25%. They received a prize of £5,000 for their school. The team from Wolverhampton Girls' High School in Wolverhampton were third. They recommended an interest rate of 4%. They received a prize of £2,000 for their school. The other schools participating in today's final were Eton College from Windsor, Highgate School from London and Nottingham High School for Girls from Nottingham.

Note to Editors

If you are interested in taking a photograph of the team from your area, or in interviewing team members, please contact the Bank of England Press Office (020 7601 4411) for contact details.