

minutes



Meeting EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING SELECT COMMITTEE

Date Tuesday, 22 February 2005 (commencing at 2.00 pm)

Membership

Persons absent are marked with 'A'

COUNCILLORS

Stella Smedley (Chair)

A M Suthers OBE (Vice-Chair)

	Colin Bromfield	A	Mrs Nellie Smedley
	Yvonne Davidson	A	Richard Robinson
A	Stan Heptinstall MBE		Brian Smith
	E Llewellyn-Jones		Andy Stewart
	Tom Pettengell		Yvonne Woodhead
	Peter D Prebble		

Statutory Added Members

Mr K Daly
Mr D Richards JP
Ms P Burbidge (Parent Governor)
Ms L Wooding (Parent Governor)

Non-Voting Co-optees

	Mr L Jefferies	(Teacher Trades Unions)
	Mrs G Lane	(School Governors)
A	Mr N Lewis	(F E sector)
A	Mr A McAllister	(Ethnic Minority Communities)
	Dr B Ramsey	(School Governors)
A	Ms L Regan	(Teacher Trades Unions)
	Mr A Ross	(Teacher Trades Unions)
A	Mr J Wilson	(Head Teachers)
	Vacancy	(Head Teachers)

Others invited to attend

A Ms T Carnachan (Support Staff Unions)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor Martin Brandon-Bravo
Mr J Cocking

MINUTES

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 11 January 2005 having been circulated were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from:-

Councillor Mrs N Smedley (on other County Council business)
“ Richard Robinson
“ Martin Suthers

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

None.

POST-OFSTED INSPECTION ACTION PLAN: PROGRESS REPORT

Councillor Smedley introduced the report, pointing out that some of the action points had been overtaken by national events. Councillor Prebble was impressed by the work being undertaken to prepare for the Children Act. It was agreed to note the report.

REVIEW OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE IN FORMER NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COALFIELD AREAS

Councillor Yvonne Davidson, Chair of the study group, introduced the report, which summarised the findings and recommendations of the study group on performance in former coalfield areas. She drew attention to the recommendations for further areas of study, and indicated that the study group would like the report to be circulated to schools.

Councillor Smedley referred to one head teacher's comments that the report did not reflect the good performance of some former coalfield schools. She observed that it had not been the study group's intention to blanket schools. In reply to a question from Councillor Brandon-Bravo, Kris Sharma, Advisory and Inspection Service, explained that "standards" were national benchmarks, while "achievements" represented progress being made by a school.

Councillor Woodhead believed that differing academic and practical aptitudes of pupils were worth exploring. Councillor Smedley pointed out that most schools had adopted a 14-19 curriculum which addressed this issue. In response to Councillor Prebble, Councillor Davidson explained that the question of the International Baccalaureate as against A Levels had not been in the study group's remit. Councillor Llewellyn-Jones pointed out that the

Baccalaureate was still academic in nature, and the study group had recognised the need for more practical material. Mr Daly agreed that schools were looking for more variety in the Key Stage 4 curriculum.

Councillor Smedley thanked the members and officers who had contributed to the study group. It was agreed to present the study group's final report to the Cabinet for consideration.

ANNUAL REPORT ON THE EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICE

Brian Isham, Principal Education Welfare Officer, introduced the report on the work of the Education Welfare Service (EWS). Councillor Prebble observed that unauthorised absences were still common, and was pleased to see the EWS using its new powers. Councillor Stewart wondered if more press coverage of court cases might act as a deterrent. Mr Isham stated that they did try to encourage press interest.

Councillor Llewellyn-Jones asked about the removal of children from school during term time by their parents. Mr Isham replied that the DfES was working with the travel trade for cheaper holidays during school holidays. Details would be circulated to schools shortly. He emphasised that parents had no right to remove their child from school for 10 days, and must seek approval from the head teacher and governors. Dr Ramsey said that as a governor, he could not recall seeing such a request. He saw a need to bring out a link between absence and achievement. Councillor Smedley pointed out that requests for absence were considered seriously, and were refused in the GCSE year for example. Mr Richards commented that absence during SATs could have a huge impact.

It was agreed to note the report.

EXCLUSION DATA: AUTUMN TERM 2004

John Bradley, Head of Social Inclusion/Principal Educational Psychologist, introduced the report, referring to the continued rise in the number of exclusions both locally and nationally. He drew attention to the local exclusion agreements in Bassetlaw, Mansfield and Newark, and to the proposed extension of the concept to the rest of the county.

Dr Ramsey questioned the usefulness of the figures in preventing exclusions. Mr Bradley replied that the data was useful for identifying schools with higher than average exclusion rates, and link inspectors would then work with such schools on this issue. In reply to Councillor Prebble, he indicated that approximately one third of excluded pupils were placed in another Nottinghamshire mainstream school, with alternative arrangements being made for the rest. Councillor Davison wondered about the impact of random drug and alcohol testing, and the support given. Mr Daly referred to the useful work on drug and alcohol issues by Police liaison officers.

It was agreed to note the report.

The meeting closed at 3.00 pm.

CHAIR

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