



meeting	SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND SUPPORT SELECT COMMITTEE	
date	28 July 2008	agenda item number

Report of the Chair of the School Attendance and Support Select Committee

Draft Final Report

Purpose of the report

1. To provide the Select Committee with an opportunity to consider and agree the draft final report

Background

2. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on February 18 2008 commissioned a Select Committee to examine levels of school absence and exclusion in Nottinghamshire and the policies and procedures that exist to support school attendance.
3. At the initial meeting on the 7 April the Select Committee considered levels of attendance in Nottinghamshire schools. It considered levels of absence for the last three years, persistent absence secondary schools and actions taken to enforce attendance.
4. The Select Committee focused on schools exclusions at the second meeting on 28 April. Members examined data which included the number of, and reasons for, fixed period and permanent exclusions; actions taken to reduce secondary school exclusions; arrangements for the provision of alternative arrangements and processes used to return pupils to mainstream schools.

5. At the third meeting on the 2 June the Select Committee heard evidence from a representative from the Department for Children, Schools and Families who works with a number of authorities to improve strategies for behaviour and attendance. Senior practitioners who are leading and managing improvements in identified persistent absence schools outlined the strategies used and the advances made to decrease absence. Members also received additional data they had previously requested concerning school absence and exclusion plus information relating to secondary schools serving the 20% most deprived communities.
6. The final evidence gathering meeting on the 7 July considered information from agencies who work with young people at risk of or who have been excluded. This included presentations by the Youth Offending Service, Youth Offending Team, Nottinghamshire Police plus departmental offices from Children and Young Peoples.

Issues

7. The Select Committee decide whether or not the issue of interventions for pupils in the early stages of persistent absence, and the measures schools undertake to resolve absence issues prior to referral to the Education Welfare Service, have been investigated sufficiently. If the committee accepts the case for further investigation this will require a further select committee to be convened.
8. The Select Committee is asked to consider all the issues that have been discussed and the evidence that has been gathered during the course of the review and to agree a final report.

Recommendations

9. It is recommended that
 - the School Attendance and Support Select Committee consider and comment on the draft final report

- the Overview and Scrutiny Committee convene a select committee to consider evidence regarding early interventions taken by schools to resolve absence prior to referrals to the Education Welfare Officer
- the report of the Schools Absence and Support Select Committee be presented to the executive alongside the report on early interventions
- the minutes of the School Attendance and Support Select Committee on the 28 July be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Select Committee.

Councillor Edward-Llewellyn Jones

Chair of the School Attendance and Support Committee

Background papers: nil.