



meeting COUNTY COUNCIL

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REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION

Short Notice Inspections

Ofsted has decided to pilot a new inspection framework; the short notice inspection. Nottinghamshire has been invited to participate in the pilot. The new inspection is intended to complement and make more use of the school self-evaluation. The new inspections will be much less time consuming and will eliminate the stress during the current six week notice period.

It is proposed that the lighter touch inspections will take place every three years as opposed to the current six years between inspections for successful schools. The reports will be much shorter and will be produced much quicker. In addition, the grading system will be simplified and schools will be required to complete a self-evaluation form on an annual basis.

Nottinghamshire schools due to be inspected during the Summer and Autumn terms have been invited to volunteer for short notice inspections and some have done so. These pilot inspections are now being carried out and the feedback from early experience suggests the new format is a great improvement.

If the pilot is successful the new framework will come into general use in September 2005 and will represent a substantial move towards the external validation of continuous school self-review and evaluation, which many educationalists believe is a worthwhile goal.

Teenage Pregnancy Termination

My reports are usually less contentious than this subject, but I believe that there is a need to set the record straight. Despite newspaper reports to the contrary no member of the teaching staff at Brunts was aware of the pregnancy until the matter was printed in the press. The pupil in question correctly approached the school nurse, an employee of Mansfield Primary Care Trust, who correctly referred her to the Young Persons Community Health Service. Two doctors, as is required, agreed to the termination of the pregnancy.

The pupil was advised at all stages to talk to her mother. She declined to do so. The right to her confidentiality is enshrined in law because otherwise

young people with difficult problems will not approach medical authorities and it is better for their health and safety if they do so. Few cases of this kind come to the notice of the media because most often young people are persuaded to share their problems with their parents.

A more serious issue is the decision of a national newspaper to print the name of the pupil, to publish photographs of her, including one in school uniform, and to name her school despite it not having had any role in the matter. Quite apart from the willingness of the pupil's mother to reveal her name, for serious child protection reasons the newspaper should have taken a different decision. The good name and standards of journalism have been undermined by their action and this pupil, who is now known to have been sexually active, is put at risk.

Presentation of 100% attendance certificates

For a number of years the County Council has made a presentation to those young people who have achieved 100% attendance throughout their five years of secondary education.

It is a remarkable achievement for any young person to have attended school every day over a five year period. The County Council recognises the commitment shown by the young people and their parents/carers; and the support provided by their schools.

At the time of writing this report, eight young people have been identified by schools and the Education Welfare Service. It is possible that this number may increase as we are still awaiting returns from several schools. All young people identified with a 100% attendance record together with their parents/carers will be invited to a presentation event on 6 July when the Chairman of the County Council, the Director of Education and myself will present certificates.

COUNCILLOR MICHAEL STOREY
Cabinet Member for Education

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