

PRIME MINISTER

INTERVIEW FOR "WOMAN" MAGAZINE

You are to give an interview to "Woman" magazine at 9am on Wednesday 13 April. The interviewer will be Joe Steeples and there will be photographs in the White Room before.

The questions will be based on education as this particular area is of great interest to the magazine's readers.

Joe Steeples will ask you about:

- your own school experience and the differences between education then and now
- how involved parents should be in their children's education and why their involvement is so important
- what lessons schools should be teaching young people today in order to equip them for life
- how you feel about the behaviour of children and the influence that their education has on that behaviour
- the changes proposed in the Education Reform Bill

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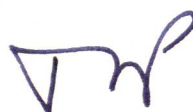
1. photographs to be taken in the White Room?
2. the interview to take place in the Study?



Terry J Perks
11 April 1988

PRIME MINISTER

When you are interviewed by "Woman" magazine tomorrow morning you might find the brief notes below a useful reminder of the main proposals in the Education Reform Bill which is now in the House of Lords.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'TJP', written in a cursive style.

TERRY J PERKS
Deputy Press Secretary

12 April 1988

1. National Curriculum -

Since 1979 the Government's objective has been to raise the standards attained by pupils in all maintained schools by securing a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum matched to children's differing abilities. Progress towards that objective on a voluntary basis has not been fast enough for the children's or the nation's needs. The National Curriculum will make such a curriculum requirement for all pupils, so that they all have the opportunity to achieve their potential and prepare for the responsibilities and challenges of adult life.

All pupils will study RE, English, Maths and Science - the core subjects - plus seven foundation subjects.

2. Periodic Testing -

Assessment, including testing, should be an integral part of good teaching, and help to raise standards. Teachers and parents must be able systematically to find out what individual children know, understand and can do, so that they can discover what stage the children have reached, identify strengths and weaknesses and plan their next educational steps.

And those concerned have a right to clear and fair information on how schools are performing. The Task Group on Assessment and Testing has endorsed these principles. The Government has welcomed the broad framework proposed by the Task Group, and will be considering its detailed recommendations in the light of public reaction and of further advice awaited from the Group.

2.

Children will be tested at 7, 11, 14 and 16 so that parents know how they are doing compared with others of the same age.

3. More Open enrolment - Ends artificial entry limits for popular schools.
4. Financial delegation - School governors and heads could run the school budget and take on more responsibility for running the school. They will have the freedom to target resources, particularly their most vital resource - their teachers - in accordance with their own school's needs and priorities. Pilot schemes of financial delegation are already operating in about a quarter of all LEAs and their experience shows the benefits to be real and extensive: better management means better education.
5. Grant Maintained Schools - Governors and parents will be able to opt out of local authority control and run the school themselves with direct grant from central government. Schools will opt out only where parents and governors want it. A grant-maintained school will provide free education and will be funded no more and no less generously than it would have been, had it remained in local authority control.
6. City Technology Colleges - New type of school with direct business investment and involvement and a strong technological bias.
7. Charging - Law brought into line with practice to allow charging for 'extras' outside normal school hours.
8. Polytechnics and Big Colleges - Independent from LEAs funded by new central body PCFC.

9. Universities - UGC replaced by UFC with greater representations of businessmen. End of academic tenure.
10. Further Education Colleges - Budgets delegated to governors also with greater business representation.
11. ILEA - Education responsibilities transferred to inner London Councils. ILEA has a unique combination of extravagant spending and poor results. When it became clear that several boroughs were actively preparing to leave ILEA, the case for transferring education responsibilities to all boroughs in an orderly way became very strong. The Government believes that borough level LEAs will be more responsive to parents' wishes than a remote County Hall; we are building safeguards into our legislation to ensure that the transfer of responsibility takes place with no disruption to schools and colleges.