

9 May 1984

MR BARCLAY

SCHOOL GOVERNMENT: GREEN PAPER

Keith Joseph's Green paper admirably fulfils the remit agreed by the Prime Minister in December.

The most important change is:

- (i) to give parents majority control over the governing bodies of 'county' schools, and near-control of 'controlled' schools (paras 11-16).

The paper also proposes to enshrine and enhance the powers of such governing bodies and their head teachers by:

- (ii) giving governors and head teachers statutory power over the curriculum, subject to consultation with the LEAs (43);
- (iii) giving head teachers statutory power over discipline, subject to general advice from governors and to LEA powers in extremis (53);
- (iv) giving governors a statutory right to veto on appointments of head teachers (58);
- (v) giving governors and head teachers effective powers over the appointment of other teachers, except in special cases (60);
- (vi) requiring LEAs to give governors both an itemised statement of all expenditure on the school, and their own discretionary budget for books and equipment (72);
- (vii) giving governors statutory power over use of school premises outside school hours (77);
- (viii) requiring governors to report annually to parents, and to invite parents to an "annual general meeting" (86,88);
- (ix) giving LEAs a duty to provide governors with proper information and training (92-95);
- (x) giving LEAs the duty to alter the articles and instruments of government for schools in accordance with the new statutes (104-109);
- (xi) allowing voluntary-controlled schools to increase their independence by becoming voluntary-aided, subject to approval by the Secretary of State (110-116).

LASAAP

These proposals should, together, give parent-governors substantially more control over schools than they have so far enjoyed.

Oliver Letwin

OLIVER LETWIN



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

14 May, 1984

Green Paper on School Government

The Prime Minister was grateful for your Secretary of State's minute of 9 May, with which he enclosed a draft Green Paper on a New Framework for School Government.

Subject to the views of colleagues, the Prime Minister is content for your Secretary of State to proceed with publication of the Green Paper as drafted on 22 May.

DAVID BARCLAY

Miss C. E. Hodkinson,
Department of Education and Science

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*With the Parliamentary Clerk's
Compliments*

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

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*tomorrow, Friday
25 May.*

*Grant Hampson
24/5/04*

*Tim
I understand
that it has now been
agreed that this statement
will be given at 11:00am*

Se Press
O. Letwin

THE GREEN PAPER "PARENTAL INFLUENCE AT SCHOOL"

1. With permission, Mr Speaker, I wish to make a statement about the Government's proposals for the governing bodies of maintained schools in England and Wales. The proposals are set out in a Green Paper which my rt hon Friend the Secretary of State for Wales and I published on Wednesday. Copies are available in the Vote Office.

2. The aim of the proposals is to raise standards. Since the Education Act of 1944 established the present basis of our decentralised school system much has been achieved by our maintained schools. The local education authorities, the voluntary bodies, and the teachers have each contributed as partners to that achievement. The Government now proposes to expand this partnership. We mean to give parents an increased role within it. Parents too are partners in education. They bring to this task unique responsibilities, a close knowledge of the children and a personal dedication to the full development of their qualities and talents. Our proposals build on the reforms initiated by my predecessor, my rt hon and learned Friend the Member for Warrington South.

3. We now propose that parents elected by their fellow parents should have the right to form the majority on the governing bodies of the 20,000 county schools and maintained special schools, and, together with the foundation governors, to form the majority on the governing bodies of the 3,500 voluntary controlled schools.

4. We also propose that, subject to the fundamental functions of the LEA, the governing bodies thus reconstituted should be assured of a powerful voice in the affairs of these schools. We plan to redefine the allocation of certain responsibilities for the curriculum and conduct of the school, the appointment and dismissal of staff, the management of its finances and the use of its premises. We intend that the local education authority,

the governing body and the teachers should each have adequate scope to contribute to the good education of the pupils in cooperation with each other. Governors would receive training for the effective discharge of their responsibilities.

5. Local Education Authorities have a long and proud record. Our proposals are deliberately designed to leave untouched the duty of each local education authority to secure the provision of sufficient and efficient schools for its area, and preserve those powers which it needs to discharge that duty. It will continue to be responsible for the character and pattern of the school system in its area; for formulating a curricular policy for its schools in the light of national policies and local needs; for employing the teachers and other staff and for managing them in the interest of all its schools; and for providing the necessary resources and deploying them effectively. On many important matters affecting the schools the local education authority will, as now, have the final say.

6. Our proposals protect the professional freedom of teachers, and in particular give a more secure foundation to the authority of the headteacher to manage the professional business of the school.

7. Our proposals seek to strengthen the dual system of county and voluntary schools which continues to serve the country well and to offer diversity and choice to parents. We shall retain the present arrangements for the composition of the governing bodies of voluntary aided and special agreement schools. We also propose to maintain those features of the system which give these schools a substantial measure of independence and to make certain changes designed to enhance the position of voluntary schools.

8. But a good school is more than an outpost of county or town hall, and more than a place where teachers go about their business. A good school develops its own identity and sense of purpose and serves its local community. We propose to achieve these ends by giving to every governing body, and to parents, an influence

over the life of the school which does justice to their commitment to the standard of education in their locality, and gives them scope to improve that standard.

9. My rt hon Friend and I will now consult widely and thoroughly on the proposals in the Green Paper. In this complex matter we are anxious to profit from the knowledge and experience of our education partners and of all others who are concerned to raise standards in our maintained schools. In the light of these consultations we intend in due course to bring before this House legislation to give effect to the Government's proposals.