

[Sign In](#) [Folder Preferences](#) [Help](#)

MAINE SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL

1 of 1 [Result List](#) | [Refine Search](#)

View:  [Citation](#) [HTML Full Text](#) [Print](#) [E-mail](#) [Save](#) [Add to folder](#)

Title: *Parents may lose right to opt children out of sex education*

Authors: [Kathleen Nutt](#)

Source: [Sunday Times, The](#); 06/19/2005

Accession Number: 7EH2835007955

Persistent link to this record: <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nfh&AN=7EH2835007955&site=src-live>

Database: Newspaper Source

Parents may lose right to opt children out of sex education

Section: Home news, pg. 5 - Scotland News

PARENTS will lose the right to withdraw their children from sex education classes under plans being considered by Scotland's largest local authority.

Glasgow city council is expected to scrap the opt-out in an attempt to tackle teenage pregnancy rates in the city, which are among the highest in Europe.

The move, which has been condemned as "arrogant" and "outrageous" by the Catholic church and parents' groups, is backed by the council's lawyers. They have ruled that it is obliged to provide sex education to all pupils.

Parents at 46 primary schools and nine secondary schools in the city have successfully vetoed sex education lessons for their children. Across Scotland, hundreds of parents veto the classes. If Glasgow scraps the opt-out, other local authorities are likely to follow suit.

The plan is revealed in minutes of a private meeting of Glasgow Healthy City Partnership (GHCP), a group formed of council and health board officials, published under the Freedom of Information Act.

"There are minimal times when parents can intervene in the work of the school, although there is obviously a need for an ongoing pastoral relationship in order for schools to function well," the minutes state. "Legal advice suggests that opting out from sex education lessons should be treated no differently from seeking to opt out from any other part of the curriculum."

Councillor Jim Coleman, chairman of the council's community health and safety committee and of the GHCP's teenage pregnancy steering group, said: "As a local authority we have to go by the legal advice. Glasgow has got a terrible record on teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases and we are trying to come up with the new policies because the existing one clearly doesn't work."

Coleman added that a final decision on the policy would be made later this year.

Eileen McCloy, who runs a *parents'* campaign group Not With My Child, withdrew her 10-year-old son from *sex education* classes last year because she considered some of the material too explicit. "I am Catholic, and the Catholic church recognises that I am the principal teacher of my child. So I should be able to decide what is *right*, and what is not *right* for my child," she said.

"They shouldn't be allowed to take my *right* as a parent away from me. I think it's very patronising. A mother knows best what stage her child is at and what is appropriate. I don't want to have a say in what they are taught in English or maths, but in this most sensitive of areas, I certainly do."

Lynn Murray, of the group *Parents for Consultation*, who withdrew two of her *children* from *sex education* classes, also criticised the council's decision to review the *opt-out*. "*Parents* are the major partner in their *children's* education and should have a say about what their *children* are taught," she said.

Peter Kearney, spokesman for the Catholic church in Scotland, said the proposal showed "outrageous ignorance" and "arrogant disregard for the *rights* of Catholic *parents*".

"In the main, Catholic *parents* choose Catholic schools in order to avoid the worst excesses of the sexual health zealots in our health boards and in our councils who have done nothing over the past 20 years but make Scotland's sexual health record one of the worst in Europe," he said.

Dr Nanette Milne, Tory health spokesman in the Scottish parliament, said *parents* should have the *right* to remove their *children* from *sex education* classes. "If *parents* feel strongly about withdrawing their *children*, then I think they should have a *right* to do so," she said. "This is another example of the politically correct world we live in where one size has to fit all."

Last night a Scottish executive spokesman said it did not agree with the legal advice received by Glasgow and that it expected local authorities to continue to offer the *opt-out*.

Copyright (C) The Sunday Times, 2005

Source: Sunday Times, The, Jun 19, 2005

Item: 7EH2835007955

View:  Citation [HTML Full Text](#) [Print](#) [E-mail](#) [Save](#) [Add to folder](#)

◀ 1 of 1 ▶ [Result List](#) | [Refine Search](#)

[Top of Page](#)

The *Student Research Center*™ is designed especially for youth in grades 6-12 - powered by EBSCOhost®



[EBSCO Support Site](#)

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms of Use](#) | [Copyright](#)

© 2006 EBSCO Industries, Inc. All rights reserved.

