

Verbal Question from Michael Miller to Cllr Alan Charles at Derbyshire County Council Meeting on Wednesday 1st November

Costs per pupil at Derbyshire schools, re Stoney Middleton CE(C) Primary School

In his report to Cabinet, at its meeting on 17th October (the Minutes of which will be before the Council at item 4 of today's Agenda) Councillor Alan Charles proposed that consultation be started with the view to closing Stoney Middleton Church of England Primary School; he stated that the cost of education per pupil at Stoney Middleton School is £5,678, against an average per pupil across the whole of Derbyshire of £2,640.

The more relevant comparison to be made is against the costs per pupil at the schools which are put forward as alternatives for Stoney Middleton children, namely Curbar and also Eyam and Grindleford Primary Schools. May I please be informed of the costs per pupil at each of these three schools, and may I also be informed of the highest cost per pupil at any Primary School in Derbyshire?"

Verbal answers from Cllr Charles

Curbar at present = £3554 – with pupils from Stoney Middleton = £2990

Eyam at present = £3476 – with pupils from Stoney Middleton = £2931

Grindleford at present = £3518 – with pupils from Stoney Middleton = £2963

Highest cost school in the county = £6261

Supplementary Question

Thank you Councillor Charles for that information.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr Gordon Brown, said in his Budget speech this year that he aims to increase school funding for State schools from £5,000 to £8,000 per pupil. By 2008 spending per pupil will already have increased to £5,750.

The Council's Improvement and Scrutiny Committee - School Planning and Support/Children's Services has acknowledged, at its meeting of 22 March this year, that: - "The budget settlement had resulted in a healthy increase for schools and **this was anticipated again next year**". It does appear however that Derbyshire is spending only **half** the National average for each State school pupil.

If we are to understand the concern expressed to Cabinet by Councillor Charles about funding and value for money for Derbyshire schools we need to know his estimate of the amount he reckons might be saved by depriving Stoney Middleton children of their own village school. Will he please inform us of that amount?