

Police patrols not linked to child snatch

Parents are being reassured that police patrols outside schools are not linked to an attempted abduction two weeks ago.

Schools and parents have been on red alert since a nine-year-old schoolgirl was snatched in St James's Church Yard, Hampton Hill, while she was walking to school with her mother on March 14.

Social media sites reported a second abduction may have taken place at Hampton Infant School or Hampton Junior School yesterday, after a man wearing a hooded top and balaclava was spotted behaving suspiciously.

Richmond police confirmed no other allegations of abduction have been reported and said their presence near schools this week was unrelated.

A police spokesman said: "There is no link to any other investigation. All safer neighbourhood teams are patrolling their local schools on the borough in the run-up to the Easter break and again this is not related to any incidents or investigations."

Anyone with information should call officers on 020 8247 7187 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.



Hats off to originality

Birthday boozing led to driving ban

A salesman has been banned from driving after he got behind the wheel after birthday celebrations.

Graeme Chard, 38, of Alton Gardens, Twickenham, was more than three times the legal alcohol limit when he got in his car on February 4, his birthday.

He appeared at South Western Magistrates' Court

on March 27 and was banned for 23 months and ordered to pay almost £2,000.

The court heard that a driving ban would seriously affect Chard's work because he often had to travel.

However, chairman of magistrates Ginny Curry said when Chard was arrested on February 4 he had consumed "a very high level of alcohol"

and that drink driving was "a very stupid and dangerous thing to do".

Chard was fined £1,700, ordered to pay £85 costs, a £170 victim surcharge and banned from driving for 24 months.

He can reduce his ban by 23 weeks if he completes a drink-driver awareness course by July 2014.

Beautiful bonnets: Pupils got into the spirit of Easter at an annual bonnet parade. Every child at Hampton Hill Junior School designed and made an Easter hat adorned with colourful bunnies, flowers, eggs and chicks which they then wore for a parade around the school

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Education leaflets 'a waste of money'

By Clare Buchanan

cbuchanan@london.newsquest.co.uk

Richmond Council spent more than £7,000 of taxpayers' money on a leaflet critics claimed contained inaccuracies and little useful information about education.

The eight-page glossy brochure, put through every door in the borough, promotes the work the council has done to improve education.

The pamphlet does not give specific information about how to apply for school places or any services, but does include GCSE results for the past four years.

It has been attacked as misleading propaganda at taxpayers' expense by leader of the opposition Councillor Stephen Knight.

He said: "The Conservatives have actually cut education

services for young people in the borough in the past few years, including a 50 per cent cut in the number of school improvement advisers.

"Instead of wasting taxpayers' money on misleading propaganda, the council should reverse cuts to school improvement work and actively help schools improve results for our young people."

Coun Knight criticised the council for including factual inaccuracies in the exam results, which he said misled and painted a more flattering picture of the council's performance.

The percentage of Richmond pupils achieving five or more A* to C grades was rounded up to show sustained results of 63 per cent, but the figure fell last year from 63.2 per cent to 62.6 per cent.

The national rise in results was rounded down to show a flat

picture across the country, rather than the slight rise from 58.2 per cent to 59 per cent.

Conservative Councillor Geoffrey Samuel defended the £7,400 forked out by the council to design, print and distribute the leaflet, and said the difference in the figures presented was trivial.

He said: "One does round up or down as long as you abide by the normal rules. Everyone buys into that. I see no problem in that."

"There is no political content in this factual publication. To suggest otherwise is a disreputable slur when it is signed by the director of education, a public servant of impeccable integrity."

Coun Samuel said cuts were irrelevant because schools reserves had risen from more than £7m to £14m in less than three years and schools were now saving for the future benefit of their pupils.

Woman gagged and assaulted during burglary

Richmond police are re-appealing for information on an aggravated burglary in Hampton.

Two men forced their way into a flat in White Hart House in

Hampton and bound, gagged and assaulted a 40-year-old woman on January 29, between 7.45pm and 8pm. The pair left with jewellery.

Another burglary took place at

the same flat on February 3 where further items were stolen.

Call Detective Constable Hinchliffe at Richmond CID on 020 8247 7247.

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