



## The News

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*by Emma Phillips*

François Bayrou has accused opponents of using the “mechanics of scandal” in the Bétharram case for political ends. The prime minister continues to insist that he was not aware of the physical and sexual assaults alleged to have taken place at the Catholic school Notre-Dame-de-Bétharram in the Pyrénées-Atlantiques region during the period 1957 until 2004. Meanwhile, Elisabeth Borne said this morning that she finds it difficult to understand why action was not taken sooner to address the accusations of violence and sexual assaults at the school. The minister of education said that she felt that the State had failed to act and that she wants inspections to be carried out in 40% of France’s private schools within the next two years.

Elisabeth Borne has also confirmed that unannounced searches of pupils’ bags will be introduced in schools from the spring onwards. The measure is in order to combat violence in schools by confiscating any knives found as incidents involving bladed weapons have become increasingly widespread. The searches will be carried out by law enforcement officers, as educational staff are not authorised to do so.

A 17-year-old suspect has been arrested in Isère in connection to the grenade attack that took place in a bar in Grenoble eight days ago. The teenager said that he blamed himself for the attack, which left 15 people injured and is suspected to have come as part of a settling of scores linked to the trafficking of tobacco.

And finally, to football and earlier today the draw took place for the Champions League round of 16. Paris Saint Germain will play be playing Liverpool, who are currently at the top of the UK premier league and Lille will play Germany’s Borussia Dortmund. The first leg matches will be played on March 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>.