



Education Department

David Ayres
HEAD OF SCHOOL ORGANISATION

County Hall, Aylesbury, Bucks HP20 1UZ
Telephone: (01296) 383527 Fax: (01296) 382373
e-mail: dayres@buckscc.gov.uk



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Mrs S Coomber
Eastaff Cottage
Pound Hill
Great Brickhill
Milton Keynes
MK17 9AS

CONTACT: David Ayres
DIRECT LINE: (01296) 383527
E-MAIL: dayres@buckscc.gov.uk
YOUR REF:
MY REF: DA-PH
DATE: 3 April 2001

Dear Mrs Coomber

HIGH ASH SCHOOL - APPLICATION FOR INCREASE IN STANDARD NUMBER

I am writing to thank you for your letter of 12 March 2001 in which you register your concerns about the increase in standard number at High Ash CE Combined School.

My understanding of this situation, which was initiated by a request from the Governing Body and Headteacher, is to do with assisting class organisation and with putting the school on a more secure financial basis. If it is possible, for example, to run with classes of approximately 30 pupils, then classes can be organised on a horizontal, single year grouped basis and, in addition, there is sufficient funding in the budget for the school to be able to afford the appropriate levels of staffing. If admissions are held at 22, then the school is restricted in the level of staff it can employ and would be obliged to operate with mixed year classes.

While your point about the potential environmental impact of any significant expansion of the school is noted, I would also observe that there is considerable demand for places at High Ash and that the Government requires educational authorities and schools to operate in such a way as to enable the expression of parental preference to be satisfied.

Yours sincerely

DAVID AYRES

School Organisation Committee
County Hall
Aylesbury
Bucks
HP20 1UZ

Eastaff Cottage
Pound Hill
Great Brickhill
Milton Keynes
MK17 9AS

12 March 2001

Dear Sir/Madam,

Ref: High Ash School application for increase in standard number

Further to the above application, we wish to register our concerns about the increase in standard class numbers for 4-year-olds, and would also be interested to know the reason behind the application.

This increase would be justified if the application is due to a greater number of children within the catchment area, as every child should have a right to a place at their local school. However, it would be reassuring to know what extra provision of staff would be made to cope with these very young children who are coming into the school system for the very first time. Not all children settle in well and it only takes a couple of badly upset ones to completely fill the hands of the teacher and assistant – a situation that can be repeated for many weeks until such children adapt to the routine.

However, if the increase is to take in more children from out of the catchment area, the only apparent benefit is that of increased revenue to the school. If this is the case then the environmental aspect should also be considered, as many children are already driven in every day from up to eight miles away.

Our eldest daughter currently attends the reception class at High Ash and has settled in extremely well. Her teacher is doing a fantastic job and the school in general appears very happy, efficient and well-run. It would be sad if children starting on the first rung of the school ladder were not given quite such a good start.

Yours faithfully,



Mrs S. Coomber.

