



Education Department

David Ayres
HEAD OF SCHOOL ORGANISATION

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Mrs Lin Smit
Chairman of Governors
Great Kingshill Church of England School
Cryers Hill Road
Great Kingshill
High Wycombe
HP15 6JP

CONTACT: Tony Hitchman
DIRECT LINE: (01296) 382905
E-MAIL: thitchman@buckscc.gov.uk
YOUR REF:
MY REF: TH.LV
DATE: 23 March 2001

Dear Mrs Smit,

PROPOSED CHANGE IN STANDARD NUMBER

Thank you for your letter of 15 March 2001 in which you respond to the concerns of the Governors and the Acting Headteacher of Hughenden First School regarding the proposed changes in standard numbers at Great Kingshill Church of England School.

Arrangements will be made for the contents of your letter to be reported to the School Organisation Committee when it considers the matter at its meeting on 25 April 2001. You will receive a reply shortly afterwards.

Yours sincerely,

Tony Hitchman
Assistant Education Officer (Capital Programme)

Cc. David Ayres
Debbie Munday
Peter Scott
Danny O'Sullivan – Oxford Diocese



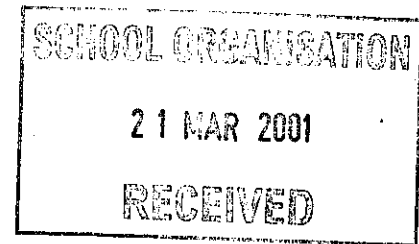
**GREAT KINGSHILL
CHURCH OF ENGLAND
COMBINED SCHOOL**

Cryers Hill Road Great Kingshill
High Wycombe Bucks HP15 6JP
Tel: 01494 713159 Fax: 01494 718239

Headteacher: Mr R A Dodds

Our ref: 9620301

15 March 2001



Mr A Hitchman

Assistant Education Officer (Capital Programme)
County Hall
Aylesbury
Bucks HP20 1UZ

Dear Mr Hitchman

Proposed Change in Standard Numbers

We have received a copy of the letter sent to you recently by Mrs Lally, Acting Headteacher at Hughenden First School and wish to answer the points Mrs Lally makes.

We are pleased to know that Hughenden continues to be a successful school. However, on recent statistics, we do not think it realistic to assume that the predicted intake of 27+ for Reception 2001 will all come from the Hughenden/Kinghill Reserved Area. Indeed, we have studied the geographical distribution of 7+ transfers from Hughenden First over the last five years. The number of Reserved Area children has never exceeded 18. This would account for 90% of our planned 7+ intake and so we would continue to ensure that all Hughenden First's Reserved Area children were guaranteed a place at Great Kingshill.

Mrs Lally states that up to 50% of their intake come from outside Hughenden's Reserved Area and is asking us to guarantee places at our school for children who do not meet our Admissions criteria. This we consider to be unfair, both for our School which has never been consulted over Hugheden's Admissions arrangements and increases, and more particularly for those families who wish to send their children to Great Kingshill and do not meet the key admissions criteria (Reserved Area, Siblings and Church School preference) but have not sought a place at Hughenden First. To guarantee all Hughenden First's children a place at Great Kingshill, regardless of where they live becomes, in effect, a 'back door' into Great Kingshill.

Over at least the last eight years, the Governing Body has continually expressed a wish to be able to offer some places to children from families who have a preference for a church-based education. 'Guaranteeing' places for all the Hughenden First children would deny us any opportunity whatsoever for fulfilling (at least in part) this wish.

Parental preference gives parents the opportunity to express a preference for a particular school. Parents are fully aware (through the Hughenden First School Prospectus) that for out-of-reserved area children there is no automatic guarantee of a place at Great Kingshill at 7+. Many are still prepared to transport their children a considerable distance for the benefits of a good, caring village school to give the best start they can to their children's education. Many of the children currently at Hughenden First will already be travelling some miles to and from school each day.

With regard to the statement about a 'possible breakdown of a comfortable and mutually supportive relationship between the two schools', we remain committed to Hughenden First as our Feeder School and our responsibilities to its Reserved Area children. However, we must point out that over the past few years Hughenden has modified its admissions number and policy with absolutely no consultation whatsoever with its 'sister' school. We have naturally been disappointed at this state of affairs, but have accepted that a school's admissions policy was its own prerogative.

Our decision to apply for an increase in Rising 5 admission number was an economic one. Under the current climate of reduction in KS1 class sizes, 33 was an uneconomic number. To remain at 33 would have meant vertical grouping of classes - which we consider to be prejudicial to the efficient education of our children. To reduce the number to 30 would have totally changed the ethos of the school (and taken places out of a Church School, so going against the Government's stated aims of increasing these places). We therefore felt our only option was to apply for an increase to a number sufficiently large to be able to support two KS1 classes. However, we were mindful that we did not want to change the size or character of our school and so felt that by reducing our KS2 intake from 30 to 20 we could fulfil our obligation to Hughenden First's Reserved Area children whilst maintaining the size of the school.

In considering Hughenden First's comments, we hope you will also accept the 'other side of the coin'.

Yours sincerely



LIN SMIT
Chairman of Governors

cc: Mr D Ayres
Ms D Munday
Mr P Scott
Mr D Sullivan



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HEAD OF SCHOOL ORGANISATION

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Mrs D. H. Lally
Acting Headteacher
Hughenden First School
Spring Valley Drive
Hughenden Valley
High Wycombe
HP14 4LR

CONTACT: Tony Hitchman
DIRECT LINE: (01296) 382905
E-MAIL: thitchman@buckscc.gov.uk
YOUR REF:
MY REF: TH.LV
DATE: 23 March 2001

Dear Mrs Lally,

PROPOSED CHANGE IN STANDARD NUMBERS

Thank you for your letter received on 15 February 2001 in which you express concern regarding the proposed change of admission numbers at Great Kingshill Combined School.

Arrangements will be made for the contents of your letter to be reported to the School Organisation Committee at its meeting on 25 April 2001 and you will receive a reply subsequently.

Yours sincerely,

Tony Hitchman
Assistant Education Officer (Capital Programme)

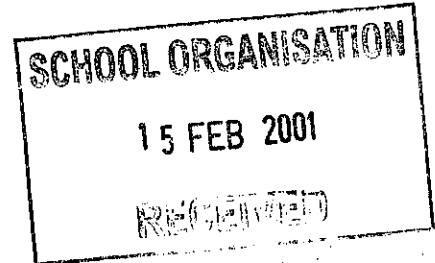
Cc. David Ayres



Hughenden First School
Spring Valley Drive, Hughenden Valley,
High Wycombe, Bucks HP14 4LR
Telephone 01494 562501

Acting Headteacher: Mrs. Daphne Lally

Mr. Tony Hitchman
Assistant Education Officer (Capital Programme)
County Hall
Aylesbury
HP20 1UZ



Dear Mr. Hitchman,

Proposed Change in Standard Numbers

Thank you for your letter of 25th January, outlining the proposed changes in standard numbers Great Kingshill CE Combined School.

I see from the data that the new standard number of 20 for children at 7+ is based on the September 2000 figure of 21. Mr. Dodds has assured us that he will continue to honour his acceptance of children from Hughenden who are in the catchment area, which is reassuring, but does not really address our anxieties.

The governors and I would like to express our concerns at this change in standard numbers for the following reasons:

The numbers in the school are beginning to increase, such that our current reception class is 30, and our predicted intake for reception 2001 is 27+. This will make it very difficult for up to a third of the children to find a nearby school for transfer at 7+ - and this is assuming that all the children are within the Hughenden/Kingshill catchment area.

Up to 50% of our intake are from out of the Hughenden/ Kingshill catchment area, which means that half our children cannot be guaranteed a "follow on" to Kingshill. This could easily result in reception aged children going to other schools which can ensure a smooth transfer at 7+. Thus very young children may have to make a long journey at each end of the school day.

Our current co-hort of parents have already expressed their concern at this possible break down of a comfortable and mutually supportive relationship between the two schools. This lack of confidence in the "one-ness" of our two schools could well result on parents looking further afield -resulting in both school losing numbers.

I hope that you will take these concerns on board when you consider the change in standard numbers for Great Kingshill, and when any other planning decisions are made within the Hughenden area.

Yours sincerely

Mrs. D.H. Lally

cc A Dodds