

RESOURCES
Legal & Administrative Services
MEMORANDUM



FROM: Raj Popat

TO: Kim Hart-Head of Early Years Development & Childcare.The Friary.Rickfords Hill.

YOUR REF:
MY REF: E 3/33 RP

TELEPHONE: 3636
DATE: 1 June 2004

PROPOSED ALTERATIONS TO BOURTON MEADOW SCHOOL

You may be aware that the Governing Body of Bourton Meadow School have recently published proposals to lower the school's age range from 4 to 11 to 3 to 11 and to establish a foundation class for three year olds from September 2004.

Please see attached copy letters received from parents/prospective parents in connection with the school's proposals. These letters, together with any responses from the school, will be passed to the School Organisation Committee to consider at their meeting of 21 July 2004.

I note that the relevant DfES guidance provides that the school should have consulted with the LEA and the Early Years Development and Child Care Partnership, amongst others, prior to publication of proposals.

I would be grateful if you could confirm whether or not you were consulted by the school and would invite you to let me have any objections/comments you may have on the proposals so that these may be considered by the School Organisation Committee together with any response from the school.

I have wrote in similar terms to Paul Holmes-Group Manager, School Organisation.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Raj Popat
Solicitor

Enc
CB5

RESOURCES
Legal & Administrative Services
MEMORANDUM



FROM: Raj Papat
TO: PAUL HOLMES, GROUP MANAGER, SCHOOL ORGANISATION, TOWER BLOCK,
AYLESBURY

YOUR REF:
MY REF: E 3/33 RP

TELEPHONE: 3636
DATE: 1 June 2004

PROPOSED ALTERATIONS TO BOURTON MEADOW SCHOOL

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I have sent a similar memo to Kim Hart Head of Early Years & Childcare.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Raj Papat
Solicitor

Enc



Buckinghamshire County Council

Head of Early Years Development and Childcare Kim Hart

The Friary • Rickfords Hill • Aylesbury • Buckinghamshire • HP20 2RT

www.buckscc.gov.uk

Raj Popat,
Legal & Administration Services
Buckinghamshire County Council

Ref JN/EY.Jane.Itrrpopat
Contact Jane Nicholls
Direct line 01296 387147/07764203627
Fax 01296 338962
E-mail jnicholls@buckscc.gov.uk
Date 7th June 2004

Dear Raj,

PROPOSED ALTERATIONS TO BOURTON MEADOW SCHOOL

I have met with Mrs Race and given advice about the proposed changes, although we cannot confirm whether this advice has been followed.

The EYDCS would encourage the school not to insist that all children attend five educational sessions per week as this should be a matter for parental choice. Currently schools are funded for 5 sessions per child regardless of attendance, where as non-maintained schemes are funded for up to 5 sessions per child. If a child takes up fewer places than their entitlement in a non-maintained scheme, the funding is reduced proportionately.

I have received several phone calls from the management committee of Buckingham Pre-school Playgroup. They have called an EGM to discuss the future of their service. The school has reduced the availability of the Bourton Centre from five days to two days per week and greatly increased the rent. At the moment it would appear that the school is not working in partnership with the pre-school and this could be detrimental to ensuring a smooth transition between services. The pre-school committee is considering closing their service from September 2004. This will mean a loss of provision for 2.5 year olds in the area.

Yours sincerely

KIM HART
Head of Early Years Development & Childcare



Bourton Meadow School

Burleigh Piece - Buckingham - MK18 7HX

Tel: 01280 823374 / Fax: 01280 823988

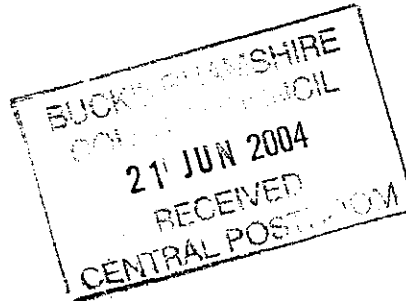
Headteacher: Mrs G Race



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

18th June 2004

Raj Papat
Legal Services
County Hall
Aylesbury
Bucks
HP20 1UA



Dear Raj

Thank you for the copy of the letter from Kim Hart.

I can confirm that we have followed all Kim's advice. This school is not insisting that children attend all five sessions - that will be negotiated with parents and arrangements made to suit the individual child.

With regard to the pre-school playgroup - they currently have 7 sessions, not ten per week, which, after a full discussion about financial viability with the Chairman of the group, were reduced to four sessions.

As a completely separate issue, the charges for the Bourton Centre have been increased after a number of years without a price rise. This has been applied across the board to all users of the community annexe. The school must not subsidise these facilities from the school budget.

The Governors have tried very hard to agree a way forward with the Pre-school group, to the point of re-arranging other users to make it more viable for them to have the sessions they want. They have also agreed to keep charges at the current level for a term in order for them to see how viable they can be. It was reported to me by the Chairman of the Pre-school group that they were considering closure because they could not find people to volunteer for the key roles on the committee. In fact they have achieved this and their intention is to continue. Since they already take very few, if any, 2.5-year-olds, our proposals ought to lead to more provision for them, not less.

The outcome of all these consultations is in line with what was discussed at the very first meeting with the Pre-school committee. The Governors have agreed to all their requests and we are satisfied that, although changes have created some tensions, the outcome is in the interests of the community as a whole.

Continued2

Raj Popat : Bourton Meadow School

Since Kim has had no further contact with me, other than our initial meeting, I can only assume she has reached her conclusions based on information from one source - that being the pre-school group.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gill Race', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

GILL RACE
HEADTEACHER

cc Sue Imbriano



Bourton Meadow School

Burleigh Piece - Buckingham - MK18 7HX

Tel: 01280 823374 / Fax: 01280 823988

Headteacher: Mrs G Race



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

18TH June 2004

Kim Hart
Head of Early Years Development and Childcare
Bucks County Council
The Friary
Rickfords Hill
Aylesbury
Bucks
HP20 2RT

copy = Raj Popot

Dear Kim

I have just received a copy of the letter you sent to Raj re the Governors proposals for Bourton Meadow to admit three-year olds.

I was hugely disappointed and somewhat puzzled since I was under the clear impression when we met that you were supporting us and I have, of course, passed this on to my Governors and we have proceeded only on this basis.

I am mostly baffled by the inaccuracies in the letter, which have clearly come from the Playgroup source only. I have been contacted by all other officers about the correspondence they have had and therefore been able to clarify certain things. Please see the following points.

- Of course we have followed all your advice.
- We have never said that children must attend five sessions a week, only that they can. We don't even insist on full attendance for Foundation 2 children if parents don't want it !
- There have been a series of meetings with the Playgroup committee. Very early on the discussion centred around viability, as you may guess. The committee was concerned and we all agreed four sessions to be a sensible way forward. We have also agreed to re-arrange other users so that they can have the sessions in their preferred sequence for maximum viability.
- They do not have 10 sessions at present, but 7.
- The charges for our community annexe have been raised across the board for all the user groups. Financial information showed that they school was subsidising the centre. By law this is not allowed. However, Governors agreed not to raise the charges for the playgroup alone for the next term, to allow them time to test their market for 2.5 year olds.

Continued.....2

Kim Hart : Bourton Meadow School

- Finally, it was reported to me last week, by the Chairman of the Pre-School Committee, that the reason they had been considering closure was because they had not had volunteers for the key responsibilities on the committee. This is now rectified and they have notices all around school saying they will be open in September 2004.

Since they currently take very few 2.5 year olds, if any, this should lead to an increase in provision for 2.5 year olds in the community.

The outcome of these consultations has been all that we had hoped for. It has of course been difficult and strained at times, due mainly to the personnel issues, but my view is clear, there is more choice for parents, not less.

I am not sure how the Early Years Department role fits in all this now, but surely someone should have been making contact to get the Governors views.

I am enclosing the letter I have sent to Raj for your information and since lack of support from Early Years will clearly jeopardise these plans and all the work we have already done, I feel I must copy this to Sue Imbriano as well.

Yours sincerely



GILL RACE
HEADTEACHER

cc Sue Imbriano



Buckinghamshire County Council

Head of Early Years Development and Childcare Kim Hart

County Hall • Aylesbury • Buckinghamshire • HP20 1UZ

www.buckscc.gov.uk

Gill Race
Head Teacher
Bourton Meadow School
Burleigh Piece
Buckingham
MK18 7HX

Ref kh/ds/ltrs.kh
Contact Kim Hart
Direct line 01296 382824
Fax 01296 338962
E-mail khart@buckscc.gov.uk
Date 22 June 2004

Dear Gill,

I am really sorry you read my letter to Raj Popat as 'unsupportive'. It was not intended to be so.

In responding to a statutory notice I simply gave the factual detail in relation to the number of sessions children attend in line with the guidance issued by DfES in the Code of Practice on provision of free nursery education and would give the same advice to any setting proposing to take 3 year olds. Similarly, my final paragraph relates accurately the information I had to hand and which came, not from the management committee, but from two E.Y. Development Workers.

My main concern is to ensure there are sufficient quality education places for 3 year olds across the county – whether they be in the private, voluntary or maintained sector is irrelevant as long as parents have a choice. In order that everyone understands the position of this service I too will copy this to Sue Imbriano and Raj Popat.

Yours sincerely

Kim Hart
Head of Early Years Development & Childcare

Cc Sue Imbriano
Raj Popat

**Schools
Policy, Planning and Performance**

MEMORANDUM

TO: ~~Raj Popat, Solicitor, Legal and Administrative Services~~

FROM: Andrew Tusting, Assistant Education Officer

Cc Paul Holmes, Group Manager, School Organisation

YOUR REF:
MY REF: PH-PCH

TELEPHONE: 2696
DATE: 5 July 2004

PROPOSED ALTERATION TO BOURTON MEADOW SCHOOL

Further to your memo of 1 June to Paul Holmes, I am replying on Paul's behalf.

Both Paul Holmes and I have been involved in the process to change the age range of Bourton Meadow School so as to admit 3 year old children, although not initially.

The school's building project which will cost an estimated £100,000 to provide the specialist accommodation for the 3 year old children will be given the go-ahead if the School Organisation Committee approves the proposal to let the school change its age range.

In the meantime 3 year old children, if admitted, will be accommodated in areas currently used by 4 year old children. They will be more than adequate if not ideal.

Paul Holmes

pp **Andrew Tusting**
Assistant Education Officer