

Your ref:

JF/LE

Please ask for:

John Freeman

Direct Line:

01384 814200

20 July 2004

Mrs M Brennan
Principal
Hillcrest School and Community College
Simms Lane
Netherton
Dudley
DY2 0PB

Dear Mo

September 2004 Admission

Thank you for your letter of 19 July, advising me that you now feel able to accommodate 30 additional pupils this September into Year 7. As this is strictly a governing body decision I have taken the liberty of seeking the confirmation of your chair, Cllr Martin Bradney. He will, of course, have to report this urgent decision to the next full meeting of the governing body.

You will realise that I have always been in favour of this option. It is a great pity that we could not have taken this action earlier in the year to avoid unnecessary angst to local children and their parents, against many of whom we have argued at appeals that there are no places.

I note that you were expecting 775 pupils on roll this September, therefore with the additional 30 pupils, 805 pupils will be on roll in total. I must make it clear that mobile classrooms and funding cannot be provided at this late stage in the planning process to enable you to accommodate the additional pupils, nor any further pupils, should your actual number on roll exceed 805 in September.

I note also the risk that this action will reduce your and our credibility at any future appeals. However, I confirm that the Admissions Service will offer 30 additional places this week as a matter of urgency. This is in line with our 'local schools' policy, as children will be admitted no more than 1 mile from the school.

Finally, I must give the usual caveats. The 30 extra pupils are being admitted over the Planned Admission Number, which will remain unchanged. There is no implied commitment either to increased admissions in September 2005 or thereafter, or to capital work to increase your capacity.

Having said that, we will need to engage in a dialogue with your governing body when we hear the outcome of our Building Schools for the Future bid in November 2004. If the bid is successful, as we hope, we will need to discuss the size and configuration of the new school buildings as a matter of urgency.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JF' followed by a horizontal line and a small flourish.

John Freeman
Director of Education and Lifelong Learning

cc: Cllr Martin Bradney, Chair of Governing Body
Karl Thompson, Senior Education Officer
Jane Porter, Acting Assistant Director, School Effectiveness Division
Sam Nicol, Head of Schools Admissions Service

WALL

Admission

WYK



hillcrest school
and community college

PROUD OF OUR SUCCESS

22 July 2004

040722 MBEON IPEAR

Mr Ian Pearson MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

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Principal: Mrs M Brennan

Dear Ian

Many thanks for your ongoing support for Hillcrest School and Community College. Following a review of our roll and the refurbishment of some rooms the governors have admitted a further 30 pupils into year 7 for September 2004. This increases our intake to 182 and will bring our numbers over 800.

In September I am formally requesting a further 30 pupils each year providing that the LEA finds the funds for temporary accommodation and the extra funding for September 2005.

We understand that the demand for school places at Hillcrest will increase year on year as our success grows. Our results should show further improvement this August. We are now a Training School and a Leading Edge School. This national recognition is probably not as important to our parents as the knowledge that their child will be well taught in a disciplined, caring environment at a school with a reputation for innovation and fun!

Have a good break. I know how hard you work and how much you care for our community.

Yours sincerely

Mo Brennan
Principal





HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

30 April '04

Mo,

Attached an interesting reply from David Miliband. You are I am sure aware of the incentive funding for popular schools and will want to note what he says about BSF too.

I'd be happy to discuss this and would be interested to hear about your future plans.

Had reply


28 APR 2004



2004/0021839PODM

Sanctuary Buildings Great Smith Street Westminster London SW1P 3BT
tel: 0870 0012345 dfes.ministers@dfes.gsi.gov.uk
David Miliband MP
Minister of State for School Standards

Ian Pearson MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Your ref: 040204

25 April 2004

Thank you for your letter of 5 April about Hillcrest School and the needs of children in Netherton.

I do applaud the work of the head teacher, governors and staff of Hillcrest School in achieving the significant improvements at this school and I recognise that it can be frustrating at having to turn away parents who want to send their children to their school.

LEAs have the primary responsibility for the local planning of school places so it is important that the school discusses their aspirations and plans with the LEA. You have mentioned that the LEA has referred to its recent unsuccessful Building Schools for the Future (BSF) bid. As part of the BSF programme we are looking to LEAs to consider, from first principles, what secondary schools are needed and are encouraging them to make visionary changes to school organisation and provision, taking into account parental preference. Whilst the LEA have not been successful in Wave 1 we hope to announce further waves of funding later this year. The school should therefore seek confirmation from the LEA as to their plans for Hillcrest as part of their overall BSF scheme. In addition to BSF, capital expenditure on schools continues to rise. This totalled £3.8bn in 2003-04, will be £4.5bn in 2004-05 and will rise to over £5bn in 2005-06. In Dudley's case, in 2003-04, the LEA was allocated £13.4m of Capital Funding to provide and improve its school building stock.

Mrs Brennan may also wish to be aware of new arrangements to make it easier for popular and successful secondary schools to expand. Under the new arrangements a school can apply to the Department for incentive funding for statutory proposals to expand by a form of entry, or by more than 25%. If funding is agreed "in principle", and the statutory proposals are subsequently approved, the Department will provide a capital lump sum of £400,000 (i.e. for schools without a sixth form). LEAs will usually be expected to fund the balance of any capital building costs although where the LEA is not supportive of the expansion the Department could fund the work in full, whilst reserving the right to claim back the funding from the Authority, less the £400,000 incentive amount.

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If the school were to consider this option they will wish to note that the statutory proposals would be decided by the local School Organisation Committee (SOC) or the schools adjudicator, if the SOC cannot reach a unanimous decision. It would be for the SOC or adjudicator to decide whether the school should be regarded as popular and successful and, therefore, whether the new "presumption to approve", which we have recently incorporated within statutory guidance for SOC and adjudicators, should be applied to the proposals. More information on publishing and deciding statutory proposals can be found on the Department's School Organisation Website www.dfes.gov.uk/schoolorg.

We would normally expect LEAs to apply for incentive funding for the expansion of popular and successful schools, but schools may also apply direct. Application forms are available through www.teachernet.gov/schoolscapital.

I hope this reply is helpful and I wish the school continuing success in their endeavours.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Miliband', with a stylized flourish at the end.

DAVID MILIBAND

Your ref: SC/2005 Please ask for: Samantha Nicol

Direct Line: 814264

16 February 2005

Mrs M Brennan
Principal
Hillcrest School & Community College
Simms Lane
Netherton
Dudley DY2 0PB

Dear Mrs Brennan

Admissions to Hillcrest School & Community College – September 2005

Thank you for your letter of 11 February 2005.

You will be aware that West Midland Local Education Authority's are coordinating the admissions process this year to ensure that every child receives only one offer of a school place. The region has not yet completed the process of finalising the exchange of information, it is, therefore, too early in the process to assess what impact your Governors request may have on other schools.

We propose to allocate up to your published admissions number of 152 pupils on the 1st March but will give full consideration to your request after this date. I understand that Ray Watson, Assistant Director (Resources and Planning) is visiting you on 25th February 2005 and this matter can be raised during the visit if you wish to discuss it in person with him.

I realise that this may cause considerable angst in the local community but the Local Education Authority must ensure that it considers all factors before reaching a decision.

Yours sincerely,



Samantha Nicol
Dudley School Admissions Service

Copy: Ray Watson, Assistant Director of Education and Lifelong Learning

Admissions
Sept 2005



hillcrest school
and community college

PROUD OF OUR SUCCESS

MB/SN Admissions/JF

11 February 2005

Sam Nicholls
Admissions
Westox House
Trinity Road
Dudley
DY1 1JQ

Hillcrest School and Community College
Simms Lane
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Principal : Mrs M Brennan

Dear Sam

ADMISSIONS SEPTEMBER 2005

I am writing to inform you of the outcome of the Governors Extraordinary Meeting held on 10 February 2005.

The Governors would like to admit above our published admission number by 33 pupils. This decision was reached following a long discussion and was unanimous. We have reached this decision because of our commitment to the local community and our desire for Hillcrest to be a local school for local children. Many Netherton parents have expressed concern at the possibility of their child not gaining a place at the school and have been making representations to Governors. The Governors considered the number of first choice preferences expressed by parents and also the increased demands placed on Hillcrest.

The Governors will not be making any claims for additional resources from the Local Education Authority to support this request.

I hope the Local Education Authority will look favourably on this request.

Yours sincerely

Mrs M Brennan
Principal

Copy to: Chair of Governors, Hillcrest



Co-ordinated Schools Trust





Sanctuary Buildings Great Smith Street Westminster London SW1P 3BT

tel: 0870 0012345 dfes.ministers@dfes.gsi.gov.uk

Stephen Twigg MP

Minister of State for School Standards

Mrs Mo Brennan
The Hillcrest School and Community College
Simms Lane
Dudley
West Midlands
DY2 0PB

13 January 2005

Dear Mrs Brennan

Congratulations on the success of your school in the Secondary School Achievement and Attainment Tables. Your results place you amongst the top 25% of schools nationally at Key Stage 2 to GCSE value added. At Age 15 your results also place you amongst the top 100 schools nationally based on sustained improvement from 2001- 2004 on the GCSE 5+ A*-C and equivalents indicator.

Please pass on my thanks and appreciation to your staff, governors and pupils for all the effort you have put into achieving such good results. I am sure that this year's results are a reflection of the priority that you have placed on achieving higher standards. I wish you and the school all the very best for 2005.

Stephen Twigg MP

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Wednesday 26 October

Dear Mrs Brennan,

We would like to thank you for allowing us to involve your school in the Schools White Paper, *Higher Standards, Better Schools for all*, that was published on Tuesday. Your school's case study can be found in Chapter 7 on page 88. I have enclosed a copy of the White Paper for your reference.

If you have any further queries about your case study or the White Paper please feel free to contact Jodie Semp on 020709256149, or on jodie.semp@dfes.gsi.gov.uk.

Thank you again for your support,

Yours sincerely,



Heath Monk
Head of Schools White Paper Team



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