

Chairman: Meriel Connor

Clerk: Janet Potter

18 May 1998

Mrs A Newton
Headteacher
Bridge and Patribourne School
Conyngham Lane
Bridge
Canterbury Kent

Dear Mrs Newton

As a result of the report from Mrs Ann McKeever at the Annual Parish Meeting on 30 April, Councillors are concerned that some children living in Bridge may not be able to gain entry to the school. Mrs McKeever reported that due to the school being oversubscribed and the application of the admissions criteria some families who wanted their children educated at the school were being denied that opportunity.

There has been some discussion between the school and the Parish Council on a previous occasion where it was indicated that all children in Bridge who wanted to attend the school could do so, unless their parents missed the closing date for applications.

Perhaps you could clarify whether this is still the position or whether you have to turn away Bridge children. If the latter is the case would you suggest ways in which the Parish Council could assist the school to meet the demand for places from the children of Bridge residents.

Yours sincerely

J Potter (Mrs)
Parish Clerk

BRIDGE



BRIDGE & PATRIBOURNE C.E.P. SCHOOL

Conyngham Lane, Bridge
Canterbury, Kent, CT4 5JX
Tel: (01227) 830276
Fax: (01227) 830649

Headmistress: Mrs A. Newton, MA DipSMEMS

21st May 1998

Mrs J Potter
Clerk to the Parish Council
50 Riverside Close
Bridge
Canterbury
CT4 5TN

Dear Mrs Potter

Thank you for your letter of 18th May and the Parish Councillors concerns regarding admission to Bridge & Patribourne C.E.P. School. Mrs McKeever was absolutely correct in her report to you that the School is oversubscribed and that we are having to deny Bridge children admission to the School for September 1998. We have also had to turn away children who have moved or would have moved into the village during this academic year.

I was most surprised by your second paragraph "There has been some discussion between the school and the Parish Council on a previous occasion where it was indicated that all children in Bridge who wanted to attend the school could do so, unless their parents missed the closing date for applications", as this has not been the case since Open Enrolment was introduced in the Education Reform Act of 1988. As with all L.E.A. maintained schools we have by law to abide with the admissions criteria namely:-

1. Parental choice
2. Denominational
3. Siblings (at time of entry)
4. Social and Health
5. Geographical (nearness of child's home and access to school)

As a School we should be delighted if you would express your concerns to the L.E.A. and perhaps together we can persuade them of our urgent need for a permanent extension to our buildings. I hope this has clarified the situation for you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'A. Newbould', written in dark ink.

Headmistress

cc Mrs G Goodman Chairman of Governors
Mrs A McKeever Vice Chairman of Governors
Mrs A Osborne District School's Officer

Chairman: Meriel Connor

Clerk: Janet Potter

14 June 1998

Mrs A Newton MA DipSMEMS
Headteacher
Bridge and Patribourne School
Conyngham Lane
Bridge
Canterbury Kent

Dear Mrs Newton

Thank you for your letter of 21 May confirming that children living in Bridge are being denied access to the school because it is over subscribed.

The Parish Council has asked me to write to Julian Brazier MP and Cllr Martin Vye to express its concern at this situation and to point out to them the transport implications. Councillors would like to ensure that all children living in the village have the opportunity to be educated at the village school.

Yours sincerely

J Potter (Mrs)
Parish Clerk

Chairman: Meriel Connor

Clerk: Janet Potter

15 June 1998

Councillor M Vye
The Dacha
Patixbourne Road
Bridge

Dear Cllr Vye

The Parish Council has asked me to write to you about the admissions criteria for LEA maintained schools which denies admission to pupils living in the village to Bridge and Patixbourne School.

Mrs Newton has confirmed to the Council that the school is oversubscribed and that some children living in Bridge will be denied admission to the school in September 98. Additionally children who have moved or would have moved into the village during the current academic year have also been turned away.

The Parish Council is very concerned at this situation, as Councillors would like all children living in the village to have the opportunity to attend the school here if their parents choose the school. Children who cannot gain entry to the village school have to be transported to schools outside of the village and thus contribute to the traffic congestion and pollution which this generates.

The Parish Council would like your advice on how it can ensure that all children living in the village, whose parents wish them to attend Bridge and Patixbourne School, are able to do so and would also urge your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

J Potter (Mrs)
Clerk



BARHAM DOWNS WARD

CANTERBURY SOUTH DIVISION

Councillor Martin Vye, The Dacha, Patrixbourne Road, Bridge,
Canterbury, Kent CT4 5BL

Telephone: 01227-830983

28.6.98

9/7/98 - Meeting
No further action
to be taken - only
2 children, at most
involved at present

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of the 15th, on behalf of the Parish Council.
I understand councillors' concerns about the oversubscription of Bridge and
Patrixbourne School, and about the fact that some present and future Bridge
children will not be able to obtain a place there.

I have been briefed by Mrs Newton on the situation. I understand that she and
the governors have already made the LEA aware of the immediate problem,
and I know that they have been lobbying for some years for proper ,built
extension to the school.

They have recently met the Chairman of Kent Education Committee to put the
problem to him.

As a first step on my part I have written to Ian Craig, the county Planning and
Provision Director, whom I know well. The Government's policy to insist on
reduction of all infant classes to 30 or fewer children is clearly a major new
factor, and I have asked him to tell me where the LEA have reached in
development of their own policies to reach that target. Statements have been
made by ministers that a) parental preference for high-achieving schools should
not be limited and b) extension of schools to meet the target should not be
achieved by setting up temporary buildings. If this is so, then the LEA is faced
with the need to provide magnet schools like Bridge with new permanent
buildings.

I will let the Parish Council what Ian Craig says in reply.

Yours sincerely,

Martin Vye

Chairman: Meriel Connor

Clerk: Janet Potter

20 July 1998

Mr J Brazier TD MP
House of Commons
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Dear Mr Brazier

The Parish Council has asked me to write to you about the admissions criteria for LEA maintained schools which denies admission to pupils living in the village to Bridge and Patrixbourne School.

Mrs Newton, the headteacher, has confirmed to the Council that the school is oversubscribed and that some children living in Bridge will be denied admission to the school in September 98. Additionally children who have moved or would have moved into the village during the current academic year have also been turned away.

The Parish Council is very concerned at this situation, as Councillors would like all children, living in the village, to have the opportunity to attend the school here if their parents choose the school. Children who cannot gain entry to the village school have to be transported to schools outside of the village and thus contribute to the traffic congestion and pollution which this generates.

The Parish Council would urge your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

J Potter (Mrs)
Parish Clerk

Margaret

In order to establish what criteria Bridge Primary School have for the admission of pupils I have ascertained the following:

Each year between 30 and 40 children are admitted.

The school is obliged to take into account in the first place the government stipulations concerning parental choice and the school's link to the Church of England. Having said that, following criteria are followed:

Siblings account for up to half the placements

Geographical preference is given to applicants from local villages in the following order:

Bridge
Patixbourne
Bekesbourne
Lower Hardres
Bishopsbourne

Governors have the right of appointment to 10% of places on the basis of social or educational need

There is no automatic transfer from nursery class

After the above factors have been taken into account, and if places still remain available, then pupils may be admitted from a 'geographical ring' outward from the above parishes. The closing date for the waiting list ~~closes~~^{is} on the 31 March each year, and Bridge children are only refused a place for the year of application if they apply after that date.

The above criteria are strictly adhered to otherwise the school would be likely to be taken to appeal by parents whose applications were refused.

I have this information from the Acting Head of School, Jennifer Vye, who would be happy to expand on this explanation if required. I really do hope that this information will set councillors minds at rest and discourage the frequent recourse to unsubstantiated allegations concerning primary school placements in the village.

Mencel