

Gilbrook School
Pilgrim Street
Birkenhead
Wirral
CH41 5EH

R. Richardson
Headteacher



CHILDREN AND YOUNG
PEOPLE'S DEPARTMENT

26 MAR 2009

RECEIVED

26th March 2009

Dear Howard,

As you know, Gilbrook has asked the LA to consider a relocation to a building with the resources to support our ever increasing involvement in the leadership and management of the needs of primary aged pupils with Social, Emotional & Behavioural Difficulties. Thank you for the opportunity to explore the possibility of a move to Arrowe Hill school which we know will be closing in July 2009.

The move to this site would enable Gilbrook to more effectively carry out the additional behaviour support work we are providing for the LA to mainstream schools and the support for excluded pupils which are, as you know highly acclaimed and invaluable services we provide to the LA over and above our role as a special school for 50 statemented pupils.

The key question from all governors was how the LA plan to continue supporting Gilbrook in the building as part of a strategic plan of behaviour support, clearly if we are to continue developing ownership of this key area of behaviour management, there are budgetary implications which will only increase with a move to a more "expansive" building.

After visits by myself, the headteacher, staff and governors of the school we would like to pursue this potential opportunity as soon as possible. We appreciate there will be unforeseen challenges with such a move and we would obviously want to work very closely with all involved to ensure as smooth a transition as possible. An understanding of timescale is essential and financial support for some of the "cosmetic" changes that would be required to ensure that we are moving to a building that will at the very least offer the current level of quality being provided for some of the borough's most challenging pupils.

We have enclosed some initial suggestions for consideration of what could be deemed more urgent needs:

- An extension of the car park onto the grassed area at the end for up to an Additional (at least) 20 cars because Gilbrook currently has 30 cars on an average day and the current car parking space would not accommodate these.





- Repairs to the glazing of the school including the car park facing side of the 2 storey section and the main hall / dining room
- Opening the route from the Infant building to allow the pupil transport to arrive and alight on the playground as Gilbrook currently has 6 buses and a number of taxis arriving at the school twice a day for the pupils
- Putting an alarm system into the building similar to the current panic alarm system in operation at Gilbrook in order to support the health & safety needs of pupils and staff in managing some of the more serious, violent incidents.
- Moving the interactive whiteboard and other ICT facilities from Gilbrook to Arrowe Hill to ensure a continuation of the quality teaching these resources provide.

David Armstrong attended our most recent governors meeting to answer questions and help everyone to understand the practicalities and protocol for moving in this way. There are some unanswered questions still, for example:

- there would need to be an adjustment to the budget to recognise the additional costs of maintaining the Arrowe Hill site e.g. I understand from Graham Rossiter that there are 42.5 cleaning hours at Arrowe Hill plus a full time caretaker, Gilbrook currently has a full time caretaker and no cleaners!
- There are also additional grounds maintenance costs.
- As you know the stated number of admissions for Gilbrook is 50, All governors are adamant that the move to a bigger building should not be an opportunity for the LA to put pressure on the school to take even more statemented pupils with SEBD needs.

We appreciate there is always a timescale to these situations, given the nature and the needs of our pupils, the governors have asked about the possibility of moving these things through as quickly as possible, in order that a move could be achieved for the start of the autumn term.

Yours Sincerely,

J. Roper
Chair of Governors

