

Corporate Director of Children and Young People  
London Borough of Newham  
Newham Dockside  
1000 Dockside Road  
London E16 2QU  
Date 03<sup>rd</sup> February 2021

**Sent Via Email Only**

Dear Parents,

I'm sure many of you will have been following the developments about the proposed expansion of Little Ilford School with great interest, and I wanted to write to explain the council's position having had a number of conversations with the school and the NEU (National Education Union), including through ACAS.

In Newham, we respect the right to take industrial action and have a proud history of support for the trade union movement. Listening to the NEU to understand their members' concerns has been hugely important to us, and together with the school we have offered a number of assurances about the expansion.

We also recognise the impact of strike action on pupils and parents, especially during what has already been such a difficult and disruptive year for education, and we are grateful for your ongoing patience.

In Little Ilford, Newham is proud to have an outstanding school that is currently supporting more than 1,400 students to learn, grow and fulfil their potential. We want to extend these opportunities to more young people as well as meeting our legal obligation to ensure there are enough school places in Newham for the borough's children.

Our forecasting shows that we will need to significantly increase secondary school places to meet rising demand during the coming five years. We have already provided an additional 11 forms of entry across the borough, and it was agreed last year to expand both Little Ilford and Lister Community Schools by two forms of intake from 2021. These plans are essential to having enough school places to meet demand – to scrap the expansion of Little Ilford would mean denying young people in our borough the right to the high quality local education they deserve.

Having listened carefully to the NEU and other staff at the school, we have responded to the unique context of Little Ilford and have reviewed the proposed design of the expansion to increase the size of additional classrooms and introduce a new staircase to reduce congestion in the school.

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In addition to this, the school has carried out significant research into the pastoral structures in other Newham secondary schools and recognises that it will need to expand staffing for pastoral, special educational needs (SEND) and English as an additional language (EAL) support as well as recruiting additional teachers for the new classes. The school is clear, and we support them in their position, that any additional staffing needs to be carefully managed to ensure that staffing levels remain sustainable, flexible and affordable in the future.

In addition to new teachers, the school has set out the following staffing proposals:

This academic year and in September 2021:

- Bringing in an additional teaching assistant after lockdown
- Increasing counsellor provision to five days per week
- Adding an Attendance Officer and Pastoral Administration Support worker in September
- Reducing contact time of heads of year who teach by one lesson each week to create more time to support students
- Allocating a Teaching Assistant (TA) to support EAL students

2022-2024:

- Reviewing staffing provision for Pastoral/SEND/EMA for 2022/23 and 2023/24, including a commitment to add one member of staff in 2022, on a one-year contract in the first instance, and an additional teaching assistant in 2023 to maintain the current TA to student ratio

The school has also made clear its determination to ensure that existing staff are protected by sound budget management, which will better safeguard jobs in the future.

We welcome and support the school's proposals. Together with our commitments to the building, we believe these represent a really positive offer that underlines our joint commitment to making the expansion a success while supporting existing staff and ensuring that Little Ilford can continue to thrive as an outstanding school.

Yours Sincerely,



Tim Aldridge  
Corporate Director of Children and Young People