

Chellaston Residents Association

Chairman: John Bowden

Hon. Treasurer: John Crone

31 July 2006

Dr Philip Hunter
Office of the Schools Adjudicator
Mowden Hall
Staindrop Road
Darlington
DL3 9BG.

Dear Dr Hunter

Re: Adjudication Number ADA / 000930
School: Chellaston School, Derby
Objector: Derby LEA

We refer to the recent adjudication dated 19 June 2006 and your determination with respect to admissions policy for the school, commencing in September 2007.

Deep concern has been expressed to this Association by parents of children who live in Chellaston and in the school's catchment area and who expect to obtain a place at the school for their children in 2007 and beyond. These are not families who have recently moved to the area nor do they live a long way from the school. They are residents who have lived in Chellaston for many years and had a reasonable expectation that their children would be educated at their local school, as many of them were themselves. As a result of your determination of the oversubscription criteria, these families will no longer have the reasonable expectation of a place at the school and indeed will not know if a place is available until the final application numbers are known which will determine the offers of places which can be made.

We also consider that this is a deeply unfair decision since preference will be given to children of families who live in remoter parts of South Derbyshire over those in Chellaston where the school is situated. As a result of your judgement, and because the school is always over-subscribed, all those living in those outlying villages will be virtually guaranteed a place, because their alternative schools are further away than Chellaston, whilst some Chellaston children will be deprived of the opportunity to attend their local school. They will have to catch a bus to school, or worse, be taken by car, rather than being able to walk. This makes little sense to us.

Your decision will mean that Chellaston is the only school in Derby or Derbyshire which will operate the "next nearest school" tie-breaker in the event of over-subscription. This surely is inconsistent with even the LEA view that "parents will find it simpler if all schools in the area are using the same approach", a view which you concurred with. Chellaston residents will

find it very difficult to understand why their own school has been singled out for this non-standard method of allocation of places.

We have noted that under clause 4.19 of the School Admission Code of Practice, your decision is final and binding on all parties. We also note that under clause 4.13 of the same code, "Adjudicators may uphold, reject or partially uphold objections, and may make modifications to admission arrangements beyond those suggested by objectors". We consider that a decision has been imposed which was not suggested by either the governors or the LEA, and we suggest that such an imposed decision is not what would be expected from an adjudication. There is no opportunity for subsequent consultation with the parties involved nor with the parents who are affected by the decision, nor any opportunity for appeal. We strongly feel that consultation on the admission tie-breaker has not been properly carried out as the particular selection criterion could not have been known prior to the decision being made and therefore could not have formed part of the consultation process. We consider that it is not too late to review this adjudication and we strongly recommend that you do so.

Yours sincerely

John Bowden
Chairman
Chellaston Residents' Association



Office of the
Schools
Adjudicator

Philip Hunter CBE
Chief Schools Adjudicator
Mowden Hall
Staindrop Road
DARLINGTON
DL3 9BG

Mr John Bowden
The Old Wharf
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DE73 6RW

11 August 2006

Objection to the admission arrangements of Chellaston School, Derby
Case reference: ADA/000930

Dear Mr Bowden

Thank you for your letter dated 31 July.

When I made my determination, I had before me a number of papers and had attended a meeting at the school. I was aware of the points that you make in your letter and the fact that people in Chellaston have strongly held views about how the school should assign priority for places. I was also aware that people in the villages have equally strongly held views. As I said in my determination, there are no solutions that would satisfy everyone. I do not wish to add anything to my determination.

Yours sincerely

Dr Philip Hunter