



Ms M Currie  
Walton High  
Fyfield Barrow  
Walnut Tree  
Milton Keynes  
MK7 7WH

Michael Bracey  
Corporate Director - People  
Director of Children's Services

Direct Line: 01908 258041

Email: michael.bracey@milton-keynes.gov.uk

17 December 2015

Dear Michelle

### **Walton High Admissions Arrangements - September 2016**

Thank you for your email on 3 December 2015 advising us of your view that there is an error in the recently published School Place Planning Framework. The Published Admission Number (PAN) which Milton Keynes Education Trust determined for Walton High's Brooklands campus and then published for admission into Year 7 in September 2016 was 90. There is not, therefore, an error in the School Place Planning Framework. A published admission number cannot be changed retrospectively; therefore what was published was technically correct and, indeed, is in line with what is published on your school website.

However you then advised us in a separate email on 8 December 2015 that Walton High intends to admit over PAN up to 240 places at the Brooklands campus. Paragraph 1.4 of the School Admissions Code states:

*Admissions authorities **must** notify their local authority of their intention to increase the school's PAN and reference to the change should be made on the school's website. If, at any time, following determination of the PAN, an admissions authority decides that it is able to admit above its PAN, it **must** notify the local authority in good time to allow the local authority to deliver its co-ordination responsibilities effectively. Admission authorities may also admit above their PAN in-year.*

Presumably your email on 8 December 2015 is giving the local authority notice of this intention and that Walton High would therefore want the council to admit up to 480 children across the two campuses in line with parental preference on national offer day 1 March 2016.

You have made it clear that the reason for the decision by Walton High to open many more places is because of a change to the way growth funding is now provided. This decision was formally made by the Schools Forum and was introduced because the pressure on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) made it necessary to control expenditure. However, the new arrangements continue to provide significant support for growing schools. Walton High will receive start-up funding for the two terms prior to opening of £46,600 payable in the spring term 2016 and £82,500 payable in the summer term 2016. It will also receive set up funding for resources to enable growth of £511,680 payable over 5 years at £127,920 per year from 2016/17 to 2020/21 inclusive.

This is in addition to the funding which would be received by the school through the standard funding formula, in line with our plans to write to the Education Funding Agency to support an increase to funded numbers of 270 places (90 places in each of Years 7, 8 and 9) for the financial year 2016/17, irrespective of how many children attend the Brooklands campus in September 2016. Funding for 2017/18 will then be determined by numbers as at the October census 2016. We would, however, wish to discuss further growth with Walton High, and the number of places required on a regular basis, in line with the developing picture.

Given that one of the aims of the *Expanding the Best* initiative was to take advantage of the existing capacity and resources of large and successful schools, we do not accept that the change made to the growth arrangements should mean the Brooklands campus cannot be opened in the way we had agreed. Opening all the places at once in Year 7 will provide an oversupply of places in 2016 thereby impacting adversely on other schools in the borough. It may also preclude children moving into Brooklands (the development for which the school has been planned and provided) from accessing their local school.

For the record, we do not support Walton High's proposal to open up to 240 Year 7 places at one time at Brooklands campus. Instead we recommend incremental growth in line with what was expressed in the *Expanding the Best* specification.

We will now need to carefully consider its direct impact on the plans we already have in place and in particular the timing of those plans.

Finally, if Walton High considers the Brooklands campus project to now not be financially viable under the current funding arrangements then we can request the Regional School Commissioner identifies another sponsor to open the campus. Please let me know if this is the case.

I am copying this letter to all secondary schools and local ward councillors as I am aware that you have been in correspondence with them on this issue.

Yours sincerely

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

**Michael Bracey**  
Corporate Director - People