

Mr M Avery
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13 October 2023

Dear Mr Avery

The Carlton Academy, expansion of school places in Gedling

The Carlton Academy is a highly successful, oversubscribed secondary school which OFSTED graded as 'good' in 2013, 2017 and 2022. The school is used as a model of sustained improvement from a previously inadequate provision by the DfE and supports schools both within our Trust and within the region. Outcomes have risen year on year in both Year 11 and sixth form. The school is part of a highly successful local Multi Academy Trust, which provides a high standard of education to over 4500 students in the borough.

The Redhill Trust has invested over £1m in site developments in the last four years, with the refurbishment of ten science labs, ICT rooms and existing dining spaces being completed. In addition to this, the school secured private investment in the large all-weather sports facilities opposite Carlton Forum in 2020. This saw the complete refurbishment of the facility, which is now fully booked and used by the community every day, with a long-term sustainable future. The school is a community-based school and is very proud of what it has achieved for children and their families.

In 2019, The Carlton Academy raised its PAN to 230 to accommodate the rising number of catchment families, this was supported by an investment of £3m from Nottinghamshire County Council in line with expansion of housing on the former Gedling colliery site at Chase Farm. This investment saw an excellent value for money

project delivered which included 10 classrooms, drama studio, two changing rooms, sixth form study space and a staff work base,

It was made very clear both to and with the local authority, that any further expansion would require much greater investment in infrastructure and site enhancement, specifically in respect of:

- Social space development – there is no grass play space on site and a very limited hard-court space which is now at end of life. This area requires reconfiguration to provide safe play and social space to accommodate the number of children on site.
- Technology workshops require rebuilding due to being too small and very outdated and need top-down refurbishment and reconfiguration.
- Expansion of catering and main hall facilities due to the significant rise in numbers.
- Additional changing and teaching facilities for PE curriculum.
- A further increase of twelve classrooms for due to rising numbers.

In 2022 we admitted a further 30 (260) children at the request of the Local Authority due to place demand, this was agreed to with the caveat of further investment on the site. No additional capital has been provided. In 2023, we again agreed to admit 260 students due to catchment demand and wish to continue to do this in support of our catchment, including those families now living on the Chase Farm estate. However, it is not possible to admit the additional students beyond our current PAN of 230 without significant capital investment to enhance and expand our school site. This is the case both due to there being a shortfall in teaching rooms, limited practical facilities and unreasonable and what could easily be unsafe dining and social spaces due to overcrowding.

Without further investment, it is simply not possible to continue this growth as facilities will not support the safe and effective education of young people on this site as it stands. We have been working with architects CPMG and project managers at Pulse Consulting to undertake a scoping exercise of costs to deliver this change on the school site and provide a sustainable increase in admission numbers at The Carlton Academy. Our initial costs are projected to be circa £7.5m and a build time of 18-20 months. We are very keen to begin this work as soon as possible in order to meet the rising demand and continue to deliver a high standard of education to families in Gedling. We have had initial conversations with Gedling Borough Council in respect of reconfiguration of the rear of the school site to enable a building to be constructed on and beyond the line of the current derelict squash courts and there this was received very positively as a concept that regenerates this space, provides additional parking for the school and leisure centre as well as opening up a space for any further expansion in years to come.

We are very happy to offer a site visit and can also share site development plans once they have been updated, which we are hoping will be by 18th October, having had further meetings with architects this week. We therefore strongly support the

application by the County Council for developer funding secured and obtained in respect of education provision arising from the Chase Farm development to be varied to enable the funding to be applied to support expansion of secondary education provision to serve the development,

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Pierpoint'.

Richard Pierpoint
Regional Director
Redhill Academy Trust