



10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

24 February 1988

Jean Peter,

Thank you for your letter of 28 December, enclosing one from Mr. A.J. Bridges about the reorganisation of schools in the Ilkeston area of Derbyshire. I am sorry that there has been this delay in replying, but I wanted to look into the background most carefully.

I fully understand your concern about achieving the best possible education for pupils in Ilkeston and your determination to put forward the views of your constituents on Derbyshire LEA's plans. I am aware how eloquently you have argued your constituents' case to Kenneth Baker and I recognise how disappointed they must be. I very much regret that mismanagement in the consideration of the proposal and inadequate communication with you as the constituency Member has led to the frustrations to which you refer.

As you know, under the provisions of the Education Act 1980 Local Education Authorities are empowered to make proposals for the reorganisation of their provision of schools and it is the duty of the Secretary of State for Education and Science to consider any such proposals on their merits. The Derbyshire proposals, once published, were looked at very carefully not only against the need for Education Authorities to respond to the immediate and long term effects of sharply falling age groups but also against the consideration that Kenneth Baker would not normally be prepared to approve the closure of a school of proven worth unless there was evidence that it could not continue to sustain its established quality

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and that the proposals for change would secure at least the same quality and variety of education at lower cost.

As regards the events leading to the Department's letter to the Authority of 18 December, I understand that you have already spoken to Kenneth Baker and that he has explained to you why he felt obliged to authorise that that letter should be sent. As I have already said, I very much regret the misunderstandings and confusions which have arisen, and I appreciate that you would welcome a decision otherwise. But, like Kenneth, I must accept the legal position. Now that Derbyshire's reorganisation proposals have been approved there is no power left to Kenneth to reverse that approval. Consequently there is no room for me to intervene.

Yours ever

P. Rost

Peter Rost, Esq., M.P.



PRIME MINISTER

Here is the revised draft letter to Mr. Rost following your talk with the Secretary of State for Education on Friday. As you have asked, it contains an expression of regret about the mismanagement in the consideration of the proposal and the inadequate communication with Mr. Rost as the constituency Member.

N.L.W.

(N.L. WICKS)

23 February 1988





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22 February 1988

Dear Nigel

REORGANISATION OF SCHOOLS IN ILKESTON, DERBYSHIRE

Thank you for your letter of 19 February (received in the Department this morning).

I enclose a new draft for the Prime Minister to write to Mr Peter Rost MP, expanded as requested by the Prime Minister. This redraft has been approved by my Secretary of State.

Yours,  
Tom.

T B JEFFERY  
Private Secretary



3 AMEN

DRAFT FOR PRIME MINISTER TO WRITE TO MR PETER ROST MP

Thank you for your letter of 28 December, enclosing one from Mr A J Bridges about the reorganisation of schools in the Ilkeston area of Derbyshire. *I am sorry that there has been this*

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EDUCATION, Schools in Ukestan, Dec 87

