

Headteacher: Mr D. Whales | Chair of Governors: Mr A. Brown

8th October 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

Following on from the letter I sent in the summer regarding the fence around the school field on the [6th of August 2024](#), I find myself needing to make contact with you again around the same issue.

On the 15th of October there is another council meeting, where we hope a decision to finally bring this matter to a conclusion happens.

We consider that the decision should be a straightforward one as there are **3 essential facts**:

- Firstly, that the field adjacent to the school (Area C), is designated Educational Land. This was confirmed previously and remains the legal position as confirmed by the Council Papers shared via this [link](#) (item 5, pages 9-20).
- Secondly, the reason it has been designated the area it has, is dictated by the Building Bulletin 103, the Governmental Guidance which outlines the appropriate size for a secondary school. Area C represents the minimum size for a school our size.
- Lastly, do we need a fence to safeguard your children? The answer is very simply 'yes', this remains the most appropriate action to safeguard children on school fields.

The decision originally made to fence Area C was in line with the guidance clearly stated in the Council report in July, it also remains the recommendation and is also supported by the Department for Education who have reconfirmed their position.

Our motives are constantly brought into question, suggesting things like we are attempting 'land grab' and 'make a profit'.

In an attempt to clarify:

- It is impossible to 'land grab' land that is designated as 'Educational'. Our students are currently unable to access their land due to the safeguarding concerns that exist.
- The school will make no money from the hire of the pitches. Beyond the school day and at weekends the pitches would be the responsibility of Vivacity, which is the identical to the position now with the community use agreement; with the pitches and internal sports facilities available for hire.
- Any additional clubs that use the fields will gain access to safer and improved facilities, through formal agreements made as part of a community use agreement.
- As the pitches are designated as Educational Land, that protection means that the council would not be able to sell off the land even if it wanted to.

There is seemingly now a call for 'compromise' or a 'reduction' of the area to be fenced. There are some important points/facts of clarity required here:

- If there were to be a fence across 'part of the field', your children will never step the other side of it, for the very safeguarding reasons that will create its existence. This would contravene the Department of Education's stance around the disposal of school playing fields. As it would remove child's rights to the area.

- The land the other side of the fence, will after a further 5 years lose its educational protection, as we would not have used it for educational purposes for 10 years - meaning it would become at risk of redevelopment
- The land is not dual use or public space. It is educational by designation – the fact that it has had permissive public use does not change its designation (as stated in the Council Papers).

My motives remain, to improve the quality of the facilities and to ensure that the children of Ken Stimpson access their green area as is their right. The fields are already sports fields, we simply want to improve the quality and availability to a thousand plus children. These motives have been twisted and misrepresented repeatedly to try and suggest that we have some ulterior motives or are in some way anti-community. I appreciate that there is a proportion of people who don't want the area fenced, and I do understand their position. It doesn't however change the facts or what needs to happen.

I therefore am writing to you, our school community to make sure you have the opportunity to have your voices heard and to speak up on behalf of your children to ensure they get a space they deserve, a space they have been unable to access for too many years!

I would like to request that you share these thoughts with me and potentially the council. I think it appropriate to make it clear to the decision makers that any attempt to consider anything other than the rights of the young people would represent a dereliction of duty and a breach of their academy agreement.

There has already been a whole cohort of KSA students who have never accessed the field, there are a 1000+ currently unable to access the field. This has been ongoing for over 5 years – surely enough is enough, the council need to reaffirm their original decision and enable students', your children to access to their school field.

I assure you, that in my role as headteacher of this school, I will do everything I can to ensure your child gets what is their right, this includes legal action if required.

At this point I request your support by making your voices heard and sharing in writing anything you would like me to share when I attend the council meeting next week.

You can share your thoughts with me via this email address enquiries@kenstimpson.org.uk and if you wish to share your thoughts with the council you can do that here:

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Many thanks



Mr D Whales
Headteacher