



FROM THE
MINISTER OF STATE
FOR INDUSTRY AND
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY
ASHDOWN HOUSE
123 VICTORIA STREET
LONDON SW1E 6RB

TELEPHONE DIRECT LINE 01-212
SWITCHBOARD 01-212 7676

6401

Kenneth Baker's Office

Tim Flesher Esq
Private Secretary to
The Prime Minister
10 Downing St
Whitehall

Handwritten initials

Dear Sir,

Prime Minister:

Agree to draft message
for the "Micros for Primary
Schools Scheme" leaflet on
the same basis as that for
secondary schools?

6 July 1982

TF
6/7

Thank you for your letter of today's date advising us that the Prime Minister has agreed to announce the Micros for Primary Schools Scheme during her visit to Havant on 16 July.

When the Prime Minister launched the similar scheme for secondary schools last year, we were able to include a message from her in the leaflet describing the scheme (copy enclosed). We would be very pleased if the Prime Minister could agree to do the same for the Primaries leaflet. In the hope that this idea will be acceptable, I enclose a draft message which has been approved by Mr Baker. We would also like a picture of the Prime Minister and a copy of her signature to accompany the message.

I would be grateful if you could let me know whether the Prime Minister is content with these arrangements. We need to get copy to the printers by 8 July in order to have the leaflet ready in time and I would be very grateful if you could let me know by then.

I am copying this letter and enclosure to Nick Cornwell (DES).

Yours ever

N M McMillan

N M McMILLAN
PRIVATE SECRETARY


M49/M49ABV



ALL INDIA





Department of Industry 

Micros in Schools Scheme

Pound-for-pound aid
for secondary schools
buying a microcomputer



Britain's greatest natural asset has always been the inventive genius of our people. This is the asset which we must tap if we are to profit from advances in technology. In microelectronics and Information Technology, we must do everything to encourage and train people with the ability and skills needed to design systems, write software and develop new businesses and products.

We must start in our schools. The microcomputer is the basic tool of Information Technology. The sooner children become familiar with its enormous potential the better. At present only some schools have microcomputers. That is why the Department of Industry has introduced its 'Micros in Schools' scheme. This scheme, closely linked with the Education Departments' Microelectronics in Education Programme, is the first in a series of initiatives which the Government is taking to ensure that Britain stays with the leaders in the rapidly growing Information Technology market.

I urge schools and Local Education Authorities to take advantage of the Department of Industry scheme. I hope that schools who are willing to do so will be supported by their parent/teacher associations.

Margaret Thatcher

'This country's future trading performance will depend greatly on its ability to compete in world markets for products and services based on Information Technology and on the rapid and effective application of such products and services by industry and commerce generally.

'The development, production and application of Information Technology are all constrained by a substantial, or even critical, shortage of people trained in the skills needed for IT. Suppliers and users are experiencing a shortage of people with the ability and training to design systems and

write programs. The speed at which technology is advancing makes this problem particularly acute.'

Advisory Council for Applied Research and Development: Report on Information Technology, 1980.

Schools and Information Technology

Education is about the future and a nation's future prosperity depends on the quality of education of tomorrow's work force. Children entering schools now will still be active towards the middle years of the twenty-first century. During their lives they will probably have experienced technological changes even more far-reaching than those of this century. No individual, household, company, or occupation will have been left untouched. Patterns of employment will have changed and today's children are virtually certain to have been re-trained more than once for the new jobs which each technological advance will generate.

If the opportunities offered in tomorrow's world are to be accepted, an essential part of education in schools will be familiarity with the use and application of computers.

Already microelectronics and its widespread applications have entered our lives; electronic games and calculators are in nearly every home. At work, the microcomputer is being used increasingly for the control and operation of industrial machines. The Government is actively encouraging industry, trade and commerce to accept and exploit the new technology. The Department of Industry, for example, is just embarking on the second phase of a highly successful national programme to promote the use of microelectronics throughout the manufacturing sector.

There is, however, a growing awareness of the possibilities offered by the application of microelectronics in every aspect of the handling, storing, processing and dissemination of information. The first signs of this revolution in 'Information Technology' are already showing: cash dispensers outside banks, transaction terminals in shops, the design and equipment of modern electronic offices, satellite communications, new publishing and printing techniques, Prestel and Teletext are becoming increasingly familiar. At the heart of all of these activities is the computer.

Schools also are being affected by Information Technology. One of the most exciting aspects of modern education is the emergence of the

microcomputer as a teaching aid and there can be little doubt that it will soon be a familiar feature in every classroom. Developments such as this are leading to an extension of the teaching and learning process at a personal level. Interactive programs are now becoming available which will allow children to learn at their own pace and own time. A new keyboard generation is growing up, nursed on pocket calculators and electronic games. For these children using number and letter keys and buttons will be as natural as writing; visual display units as familiar as books; electronic scratch pads as necessary as jotters.

Familiarity with microcomputers will enable children to work with programs covering all subjects, not just the sciences; to develop their own programs to hold information, make calculations, solve problems and discover new applications. Children will then have a better understanding of the

Pupils of Long Road Sixth Form College, Cambridge, with Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and Kenneth Baker, Minister for Information Technology, at the Micros in Schools Scheme launch.

IT YEAR – 1982

An intensive Government / industry initiative to promote the advantages of the new technology will be made throughout 1982 – which has been designated 'Information Technology Year'.

Information Technology is defined as the acquisition, processing, storage, dissemination and use of vocal, pictorial, textual and numerical information by a microelectronics-based combination of computing and telecommunications.

In launching the year Kenneth Baker, Minister for Information Technology, said 'IT is the fastest-developing area of industrial and business activity in the Western World. Its markets are huge and its potential for increasing efficiency immense. Without doubt it will be the engine of economic growth for at least the rest of the century. Britain's economic prosperity depends on the success with which we manufacture its products and provide and exploit its services. This is the message that must be got over to everyone in this country – the general public and school children, as well as industry, trade and commerce'.

world in which they live, be better provided with the skills required by industry, and better prepared to undertake the retraining and acquisition of new skills which will be necessary to meet the changing needs of the future.

In order that schools may lay the foundations for an understanding of microelectronics technology and its applications, the Government is taking steps, through a £10M Microelectronics in Education Programme, to help

teachers acquire the skills and educational material, including the software and computer awareness, needed for the computer to be used as an aid to teaching and learning. Complementary with this Programme, the Department of Industry is taking steps to help schools acquire some of the essential hardware to assist them in giving their pupils practical 'hands-on' experience of microcomputers.

The Scheme

To encourage the widespread use of microcomputers in teaching and learning, the Department of Industry – under its 'Micros in Schools' scheme – is making funding available to Local Education Authorities to help all secondary schools to purchase a micro-computer and so enable their pupils to have 'hands-on' experience. The aim of the Department of Industry proposal, which came into operation on 1 June 1981, is that by the end of 1982 all secondary schools in the UK will have a microcomputer.

The scheme applied initially only to those secondary schools without a microcomputer, but it has been extended from 1 January 1982 to include also those secondary schools which already possessed such equipment when the scheme started.

This initiative links with the Microelectronics in Education Programmes of the Education Departments, and together these actions should enable schools to better prepare pupils to take advantage of the wide range of opportunities which are arising from developments in microelectronics and Information Technology.

The scheme is open to any maintained or independent secondary school in the UK.

One microcomputer per school is eligible for support and in each case the Department of Industry will contribute half of the cost of the microcomputer package, matching on a pound-for-pound basis funds provided locally. LEAs will be responsible for finding the local contributions and it will be open to them to invite schools, PTAs and local industry to assist in raising funds.

Details of the two micro-computer packages covered by the Department of Industry proposal, their cost and the maximum Department of Industry funding available in each case are set out later in this brochure.

To ensure that sensible use is made of the hardware provided, a condition of Department of Industry support is that two teachers from every school applying under the scheme have undertaken, or are about to undertake, a period of suitable in-service training in the use of microcomputers in education.

Schools wishing to know more about the scheme should get in touch with their LEA who will have particulars of the procedure for submitting applications.

Independent secondary schools (except in Scotland) should apply through the National Computing Centre, Oxford Road, Manchester M1 7ED; those in Scotland should apply through the Scottish Microelectronics Development Programme.

Details are also available on Prestel Page 20404.



The microcomputers covered by the Scheme

Under the scheme, schools will have the choice of one of two microcomputers, the Research Machines RML 380Z and the BBC Microcomputer from Acorn

Computers. Both are British designed and built; both enable the user to buy additional hardware and other attachments so that, as required, the scope and

capacity of the basic machine can be increased. Details of the two microcomputer packages and the maximum amount of Department of Industry support available are:

Further information about this scheme should be addressed to:

Industry/Education Unit
Department of Industry
Ashdown House
123 Victoria Street
London SW1E 6RB
Tel: 01-212 6119/0681/5196

General information on Government support and initiatives for Information Technology is available from:

Department of Industry
Information Technology Division
29 Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DT.
Tel: 01-213 6526.

Research Machines Ltd Microcomputer Package

Total package price:
£1,680 + 15% VAT
(reclaimable by the LEA)

Maximum Department of Industry funding available: £840

Hardware:
RML 380Z: Z80A microprocessor, 32K RAM, 4K ROM, dual double-sided single density mini-floppy disc drives (2 x 144K).

Parallel interface and serial interface.

High resolution graphics and monochrome UHF modulator for graphics.

12" monochrome monitor.

3 blank mini-floppy discs.

Software:
CP/M disc operating system.
Extended Basic version 5.
Text editor with formatter.
Z80 assembler.

Also full documentation for hardware and software.

Further details from: Research Machines Ltd., PO Box 75, Mill Street, Oxford OX2 0BW



Acorn Computers Ltd Microcomputer Package

Total package price:
£260 + 15% VAT
(reclaimable by the LEA)

Maximum Department of Industry funding available: £130

Hardware:
BBC Microcomputer (6502 microprocessor, 16K RAM, 32K ROM).

High resolution graphics.

12" monochrome monitor.

Cassette recorder/player.

Software:
BBC Basic.
6502 assembler and operating system software for all internal hardware options.
Also full documentation for hardware and software.

Further details from: Acorn Computers Ltd., 4A Market Hill, Cambridge CB2 3NJ



HLE

RM



cc: Mr HONE
Mr MOWBR

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

7 July, 1982

Thank you for your letter of 6 July enclosing a draft message for the Prime Minister's approval for inclusion in the leaflet 'Micros for Primary Schools'. The Prime Minister is content with the arrangements you propose and with the message and I return herewith the message duly signed by Mrs Thatcher.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Nick Cornwell (Department of Education and Science).

(TIM FLESHER)

N M McMillan, Esq
Department of Industry

dfj



MICROS IN PRIMARIES LEAFLET

MICROS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

I am delighted to announce a scheme giving pound for pound support to primary schools buying a microcomputer package. I hope this scheme will mean that, by the end of 1984, every primary school has its own microcomputer and will be giving young people the experience they need with the technology of their future working and daily lives.

Last year I announced a similar scheme for secondary schools - this is proving a great success with more than 80% of the maintained and independent schools in the United Kingdom already taking part. This new primary scheme, covering some 27,000 schools, will again be run by the Department of Industry and will be open from 1 October this year.

The Government attaches great importance to equipping young people to take up the challenge and opportunity offered by technological developments and I know schools and Local Education Authorities are keen to respond. We know how enthusiastically and skillfully young children can use technology in problem solving and as an aid to learning across the curriculum. Our future prosperity as a nation depends upon encouraging this enthusiasm to flourish from the earliest days at school.

Schools and Authorities can choose from three packages of equipment which have been selected on grounds of technological and educational merit with the help of teachers and advisers,



in close liaison with the Education Departments. Each package will include training material to assist teachers get started in the classroom. As well as helping young people develop their skills and understanding in technology, the scheme will stimulate the positive development of the microcomputer industry in this country, including the software industry.

I know schools and Authorities will welcome this scheme and respond enthusiastically to it.

Margaret Thatcher

MARGARET THATCHER