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PRIME MINISTER

17 July 1987

G.M. Schools

We still need further changes.

1. Levy/Grant

The substance of this issue leaves us with little choice.
The grant must be reduced. ✓

The suggestion of a form of words by the Chief Secretary is very sensible and a considerable improvement presentationally.

2. Qualified Teachers

¹⁴
Para ~~16~~.b This is an improvement on the earlier draft.

But why do such teachers need to be granted "qualified teacher status" by the DES? Is it not enough that they are competent at their job? ✓

This concession to teacher unions should be dropped. ✓

3. Staffing

Para 13. While they recommend continuity of staffing at the time of a transfer to a GM school, they have taken on board

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your suggestion regarding redundancy payments.

I think their new proposal is fundamentally sound and deals with the need to get rid of 'Red Robbos'

I still do not see however why the last sentence of this paragraph should start with the word "Exceptionally".

4. Admissions policy

Para 11. It is far too dirigiste to require these schools under their Articles

"to set out their admissions policy for approval by the Secretary of State".

It should surely be enough to say that the Secretary of State must be convinced that the character of these schools will not change after they obtain GM status. If their admissions policy has to be approved by the Secretary of State it will mean these schools have less freedom than existing voluntary aided schools.

If GM schools are to be the flagship for freedom and higher standards within the school system, it is critical that the Secretary of State does not get involved in the details of admission policy.

5. Representation on Governing Bodies

Annex Two questions arise over this issue.

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- (a) How easy is it to get good businessmen and governors if the total number of governors is 18 or 19?

John Banham thinks it will be much easier to get people if the governing body is small. This would suggest

2/3 parents

1 teacher

1 head

8/9 Foundation/'Trust'

making a total of 12-14 people.

This is a point worth raising.

- (b) The second issue is the reason the Secretary of State should have a reserve power to appoint up to two additional governors is nowhere spelt out in any detail.

Unless it is, it should be rejected as once again being an extension of the traditional paternalism of government.

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