

KENT MESSENGER

28 languages spoken at primary

19.03.09

I visited one of our primary school's in Gravesend. My friend who runs it and a very experienced member of staff had entered a House of Commons competition to design a Christmas card to mark the 150th anniversary of Big Ben.

I will not name the school but it is one I visit on a regular basis. I was shocked to find out that the head is now dealing with children whose mother tongue is spoken in 28 languages - the result of the huge rise in immigration over the last few years.

Kent County Council's education department (not to mention our teachers on the front line) is doing its best to provide interpreters and additional English lessons. But we still have the crazy situation of teachers trying to teach a lesson - when a substantial minority of children in the class can't understand much that the teacher is saying. This has been barely thought out, and it not exactly what I would call joined up. And what is the effect on the education of children who already speak English - and on those who understand little of the language, or who have arrived later into the school system?

This is too serious an issue than to just push away into the box marked: "Too controversial - ignore for now".

Meet the MP

I will be holding a 'Meet the MP' session and look forward to meeting you.

Date: Friday, 27 th March 2009

Time: 12noon - 2pm

Venue: St George's Centre, Gravesend

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Adam". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.