

Handsworth free school deluged with applications

BIRMINGHAM'S first "free school" is over-subscribed less than a year after opening, it has been revealed.

BIRMINGHAM'S first "free school" is over-subscribed less than a year after opening, it has been revealed.

New figures show the Nishkam Primary School in Handsworth has been flooded with applications as families battle it out for places for this September's intake.

Admissions figures released by the Department for Education show that 101 families applied for just 60 available places at the Soho Road school, which only opened last autumn.

Nishkam is the first Sikh ethos, multi-faith school in the Midlands, and was dubbed a "flagship free school" by Education Secretary Michael Gove.

The free schools model, which has been championed by the coalition government, allows groups of parents and teachers to form schools away from local authority control.

The school is run by the Nishkam School Trust, which has just this month given the green light to open a new secondary school and sixth form in September.

Dr Brinder Singh Mahon, chairman of the Nishkam School Trust, said: "The Nishkam Primary School has become extremely popular amongst the local community in Handsworth. It has even surpassed our expectations of numbers applying to the school.

"We have been very disappointed to turn away over 50 families who could not be accommodated in the school.

"It is not a surprise to us that many families are looking for a better, values-led education, one in which the character of children is as important as the knowledge they learn."

The Nishkam High School will also be based on Soho Road, alongside the Nishkam Primary School and Nishkam Nursery, which opened in September 2009.

It will focus on three core subjects of maths, English and the sciences, and children will also have the chance to learn French, Latin, Punjabi, Spanish and Mandarin.

The first intake of students will include 100 Year 7 and 100 Year 12 youngsters, and it is hoped the school will be at capacity within five years.

From around the web

More from Birmingham Mail



Crack addict
Birmingham prostitute
guilty of murdering
rich...



VAT gang ordered to
pay back £4.4m or face
18 years in jail



Small Heath drugs
mastermind jailed for
18 years



Two members of gun
and machete gang
jailed for 15 years

Recommended by