

Co-ordinated Admission Schemes for 2013-2014

SUMMARY

- 1.1 Following consultation on the changes to the Admissions Framework the Department for Education has revised the School Admissions and School Admission Appeal Codes. The Codes have been laid before Parliament ahead of being introduced for the admissions round for school entry in September 2013. The key policy changes are detailed in the attached briefing paper to be circulated to Head Teachers, Principals and Governors of own admission authority schools in Derby.
- 1.2 Compulsory Admissions Forums that were set up to ensure that admissions systems were fair and straightforward for parents to understand, have been scrapped, allowing local partnerships to determine whether or not they wish to run them. It is proposed that Derby City retains its Admissions Forum as a voluntary consultative body to ensure all admission authorities admission arrangements are fair, equitable and extend choice to parents.
- 1.3 From September 2013, Admission authorities, subject to certain limitations, are required by law to consult on their admission arrangements every seven years, with every governing body in its relevant area. This consultation must be completed by 1 March 2012. These arrangements must then be determined before 15 April 2012.
- 1.4 The proposed additional Criterion 2 in respect of children whose Looked After status ceased during the academic year of application.
- 1.5 Preventing the theft of school places by increasing the amount of evidence required to determine residency within a school's catchment area.
- 1.6 Increase in the Published Admission Number at Homefields Primary School
- 1.7 Due to potential new housing developments within the city, it may be necessary to consider making some minor amendments to a small number of primary school catchment area boundaries. This would be done in close consultation with the schools involved. Any proposed changes would be in relation to new housing development sites. Please note that there is no intention to make any changes to catchment area boundaries that would affect existing properties.

RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To note the key policy changes and agree the Authority's stance on the co-ordination of all admissions for school entry in September 2013 as detailed in the attached briefing paper.
- 2.2 To agree Local Authority (LA) consultation with own admission authority schools with the aim for schools to also support the fact that the LA should continue to co-ordinate all admissions.
- 2.3 To support the retention of the functions and duties of the School Admissions Forum.
- 2.4 To support the proposed Primary and Secondary admission arrangements for school entry in 2013 to Local Authority maintained schools for consultation.
- 2.5 To agree the impact of the proposed additional Criterion 2 on school admissions to Local Authority maintained schools in order to be included/excluded from consultation process for school entry in 2013.
- 2.6 To note and support the additional requirements placed on applicants to prevent school places being obtained fraudulently, or by submitting deliberately misleading applications.
- 2.7 To note and support the additional increase in the Published Admission Number at Homefields Primary School for entry in September 2013.
- 2.8 To discuss and agree the impact of any proposed amendments to catchment area boundaries as described in para. 1.7 for consultation on the proposed admission arrangements 2013-2014.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 To ensure compliance with the mandatory requirements of the School Admissions Code, School Admission Appeals Code, relevant legislation and regulations.
- 3.2 To ensure that fairness, equity and transparency is retained for parents/carers when applying for all school places in all year groups.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4.1 The Local Authority intends to continue with the full co-ordination of admission applications to all schools in its area. The attached briefing paper and specialist service details outlines the responsibilities and duties of admission authorities - including academies- and local authorities in respect of the new School Admissions Code's requirements.
- 4.2 Compulsory Admissions Forums set up by the previous Government to ensure that admission arrangements were fair, equitable and transparent are no longer a legal requirement. New requirements allows for local authorities to determine whether or not they wish to retain Admissions Forums in their relevant area.
- 4.3 The local authority must consult on by 01 March 2012 and then determine its admission arrangements by 15 April 2012. The local authority must collate and publish online - with hard copies available for those who do not have access to the internet – the determined admission arrangements for all schools in the area.

- 4.4 It is considered by professionals working with children who have recently had the status of a Care Order or Accommodation under Section 20 legally removed, does not remove the trauma, negative life experiences, disruption and gaps in a child's learning and development. It is their view that the challenges that remain as a result of the emotional impact of their experiences are likely to be significant and complex barriers to their progress and therefore, it is important that special consideration is given to children who would fall within the proposed Criterion when requesting Admission to a school.
- 4.5 A review of the current requirements placed on applicants to determine residency within a catchment area boundary found that existing requirements are no longer as effective as they were when first introduced, therefore more robust requirements are required. The proposed additional requirements are currently used by other local authorities and were sanctioned by the Schools Adjudicator.
- 4.6 Council Cabinet at its meeting on 15 March 2011, approved £1.6 million capital funding to expand and permanently increase the size of Homefields Primary School from 210 to 315 places in line with the demand for primary school places in Chellaston, which has now reached the point where it is considered appropriate to increase the number of places at the school to 45 in each year group (excluding the nursery) from September 2013.
- 4.7 Whilst sufficient school places currently exist in Derby, it is important to plan for the projected increases in pupil numbers in order to ensure that the Local Authority can continue to meet its statutory duty. The aim through the School Organisation Plan is to identify emerging pressures as early as possible and ensure, where appropriate, proposals are put forward to amend a catchment area boundary in line with basic need priorities.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 None arising from this report

This report has been approved by the following officers:

Legal officer	Robin Constable
Financial officer	Alison Parkin
Human Resources officer	Linzi Spargo
Service Director(s)	Rita Silvester
Other(s)	Gurmail Nizzer

For more information contact: Background papers: List of appendices:	<p>Name: Diane Whitehead. Telephone 01332 642724 or e-mail diane.whitehead@derby.gov.uk</p> <p>Background Papers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefing Paper – Changes to the Admissions Framework and the Admissions Code 2013 - • Admissions Specialist Service Paper • School Admissions and Appeals Codes - Consultation Response Document <p>Appendices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 1 – Implications • Appendix 2 – Primary Admissions Scheme 2013-14. • Appendix 3 – Secondary Admissions Scheme 2013-14
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IMPLICATIONS

Financial

- 1.1 None directly arising from this report

Legal

- 2.1 There remains a legal duty for the local authority to comply with the mandatory requirements of the Codes, relevant legislation and regulations.

Personnel

- 3.1 It is anticipated that there will be no direct impact upon personnel issues arising from this report or the implementation of the new Codes.

Equalities Impact

- 4.1 There is no direct impact upon equality issues arising from this report. The new Codes retain the requirement that admission arrangements must be fair, equitable and transparent and that applications are dealt with fairly and equitably in accordance with relevant legislation.

Health and Safety

- 5.1 Co-ordinated Admission Schemes are aimed at ensuring every child receives a single offer of a school place.
Concern detailed in the Consultation Response Form regarding children being at risk of missing from education.

Carbon commitment

- 6.1 None arising from this report.

Value for money

- 7.1 None arising from this report.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 8.1 To ensure that all parents who need support know where to turn to and benefit from a range of appropriate and accessible services.
- 8.2 To ensure the physical, emotional well-being and safe choices.

