

MINUTES

County Admissions Forum

Thursday 24th February 2005
6.30 p.m., Committee Room B, County Hall

Admission Forum Members		Others Attending:	
Mr Ivor Ambrose	Absent	Mr JF Anderson	Present
Mrs Mary Calvert	Present	Mr Mark Austen	Present
Mrs Pat Cherry	Present	Mr Michael Clarke	Present
Mrs Terrie Clifft	Present	Mr Martin English	Present
Mr Stephen Drake	Apologies received	Mr Tony Fleetwood	Present
Mrs Jane Furnival	New member	Mr Tim Griffiths	Present
Mrs Janet Goldsmith	Apologies received	Mrs Paula Harding	Present
Mr Robert Gordon	Present	Ms Jill Hempleman	Present
Mrs Helen Hyde	Apologies received	Mrs Ann McCrae	Present
Mrs Tanis Kent	Apologies received	Mr Chris Measures	Present
Mr David Lloyd	Present	Mr Andrew Peacefull	Present
Mr Seamus Quilty	Present	Mr Laurence Pingrim	Present
Mrs Maureen Roe	Absent	Mr S Phillips	Present
Mr Alan Scouller	Absent	Mr George Shiells	Present
Mrs Jeanette Shire	Absent	Miss Lesley Stevens	Present
Mrs Brenda Southorn	Present		
Mr Rodney Tucker	Absent		

Officers	
Mr David Ayres	Present
Mr Lao Cooper	Present
Mr Jim Dalton	Apologies received
Mr Justin Donovan	Present
Mr John Harris	Present
Mrs Jill Jackson	Present
Mr Lindsay Martin	Present
Mr Alan Sapsford	Apologies received

	ITEM
1.	<p>Apologies for Absence:</p> <p>Apologies received from Mr Jim Dalton, Mr Stephen Drake, Mrs Janet Goldsmith, Mrs Helen Hyde, Mrs Tanis Kent and Mr Alan Sapsford</p>
2.	<p>Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 14th October 2004</p> <p>Mrs Pat Cherry's name was omitted from the attendance list. The Minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record.</p>
3.	<p>Update on Matching Future Demand for School Places with Provision – (Verbal update)</p> <p>A verbal update was given with regard to matching future demand for school places with provision.</p> <p>An updated pupil forecast has been given to Schools Organisation Committee (SOC). SOC will look at the revised School Organisation Plan (SOP) shortly.</p> <p>It is recognised that there is a surplus of primary school places in some areas of the county.</p> <p>A review of the processes leading to review of school provision is being undertaken. This will need to be completed before a future work programme can be agreed.</p>
4.	<p>Consultation on Admissions 2006-07: Foundation and Voluntary-Aided Primary Schools</p> <p>The possible grounds for objections were highlighted. It was explained that Point 9 (Looked After Children), Point 7 (Equal Opportunity and avoiding discrimination – 3.12 of CofP), Point 8 (SEN) of the document 'Possible Grounds for Objection By the LEA' were very important, and needed careful consideration by admitting authorities. Points 8 and 5 are linked together.</p> <p>The Relevant Area list for foundation and voluntary-aided primary schools was explained and its significance with respect to consultation and the right of schools within the Relevant Area to object to the admission arrangements of other schools in the area.</p> <p>It was highlighted that at this stage non-compliance does not necessarily mean that the LEA will object to the admission arrangement.</p> <p>It was noted that some schools may have already taken on board comments and these may not be reflected in the relevant area lists.</p> <p>The admission forum was asked to consider page 1 of the relevant area list</p> <p>A comment was raised as to why SEN needs to be within the admission rules as there is a statutory obligation to admit these pupils if the school is named in the statement. It was agreed that this was a valid comment. The admission authority needs to ensure however, that this is clearly stated within the admission policy.</p> <p>The LEA's actions to date and future actions were reported.</p> <p>The LEA has written to all voluntary-aided and foundation schools, highlighting in general terms, the possible grounds for objection by the LEA and others. The</p>

Admission Forum, following the meeting, will write to voluntary-aided and foundation schools, on specific issues relating to their admission rules. If the comments are not reflected in the determined admission rules, the LEA will consider whether to object.

It was highlighted that the LEA has a duty to object to admission rules under certain circumstances.

The admission forum was asked to consider page 2 of the relevant area list. No comments were received from the admissions forum.

The admission forum was asked to consider page 3 of the relevant area list. No comments were received from the admissions forum.

The admission forum was asked to consider page 4 of the relevant area list. No comments were received from the admissions forum.

The admission forum was asked to consider page 5 of the relevant area list.

It was noted that St Helen's (Harpenden) gives higher priority to siblings than Looked After Children. It was however noted that in practical terms, this would not mean that a Looked After Child would not be offered a place at the school.

A question was raised as to what the period of time is when an LEA can object to admission arrangements.

The LEA can object to admission arrangements 6 weeks after being notified of a schools determined admission arrangements. Schools must determine their admission arrangements by 15th April. The School must inform consultees within 2 weeks of determining the admission arrangements.

The admission forum was asked to consider page 6 of the relevant area list. No comments were received from the admissions forum.

The admission forum was asked to consider page 7 of the relevant area list. No comments were received from the admissions forum.

The admission forum was asked to consider page 8 of the relevant area list. No comments were received from the admissions forum.

The admission forum was asked to consider page 9 of the relevant area list. No comments were received from the admissions forum.

The admission forum was asked to consider page 10 of the relevant area list. No comments were received from the admissions forum.

The admission forum was asked to consider page 11 of the relevant area list. No comments were received from the admissions forum.

The admission forum was asked to consider page 12 of the relevant area list. No comments were received from the admissions forum.

The admission forum was asked to consider page 13 of the relevant area list. No comments were received from the admissions forum.

It was highlighted that the Diocese did not receive all the admission rules before consultation. Schools are reminded that this should happen.

The importance of giving priority to Looked After Children was highlighted further,

and the importance of co-operative working.

**5. Consultation on Admissions 2006-07:
Foundation and Voluntary-Aided Secondary Schools**

The Relevant Area list for foundation and voluntary-aided secondary schools was explained.

The equal preference system was explained and how this works within co-ordination. It is not possible for a LEA to insist on schools using an equal preference system within their admission criteria. The DfES recommends an equal preference because it acts more in parents and children's interests than a first preference system.

The undesirable effects of a first preference first system were explained. If a parent/carer does not qualify for a school place at their first preference school it is unlikely they will qualify for a place at their second or third preference school. A ranking scheme has more predictable outcomes than a first preference first scheme.

If one or two schools adopt a first preference first system there may not be too much effect initially, but if the number of schools increase further this may cause a problem.

The Diocese confirmed they support an equal preference system.

A question was asked as to whether the LEA would object to a first preference first system. If the LEA feels it is necessary to object then the LEA would. It was noted however that not all objections with regard to first preference first were upheld.

It was confirmed that the South Quadrant has the lowest percentage of ranked allocations.

The admission forum was asked to consider page 1 of the relevant area list. No comments were received from the admissions forum.

The admission forum was asked to consider page 2 of the relevant area list.

A query was raised as to why voluntary-aided and foundation schools were being asked not to include notes within their admission arrangements. The LEA is not asking voluntary-aided and foundation schools to remove notes, but to make sure they are clear. Notes are part of the admission arrangements.

A query was raised as to whether Criterion 4 in Parmiter's School rules was ratio based or percentage based. It was confirmed that 35% of the total intake to the school each year would be on the basis of academic ability.

The right of appeal should be highlighted in all admission arrangements.

A query was raised as to whether the letter sent to voluntary-aided and foundation schools concerning admission arrangements would reflect the revised admission arrangements if the LEA had received them. It was agreed that these would be taken into account.

The admission forum was asked to consider page 3 of the relevant area list.

A query was raised as to whether siblings should benefit under admission

	<p>arrangements if they have moved out of the area. It was highlighted that these ideas have been commented on by government but no changes have yet been made to the Code of Practice.</p> <p>The admission forum was asked to consider page 4 of the relevant area list. No comments were received from the admissions forum.</p>
6.	<p>Consultation on Admissions 2006-2007: Community and Voluntary-Controlled Schools</p> <p>The paper was introduced. There are no radical changes planned to the admission arrangements for 2006/2007. There have been some changes that were highlighted. These included strengthening the position for Looked After Children with regard to casual admissions and the LEA undertaking primary casual admissions in some areas of the county where a review of provision is taking place.</p> <p>It was highlighted the PAN for Year 12 relates to the number of new pupils a school is able to admit. 6th Form admission arrangements need to be clear and criteria such as a pupil's behaviour should not be used.</p> <p>It was reported that middle schools need to be part of the junior admissions process.</p> <p>The forum was given the opportunity to comment on the admission rules for community and voluntary controlled schools.</p> <p>No further comments were received from the admissions forum.</p>
6a.	<p>Consultation on Admissions 2006-2007: Community and Voluntary-Controlled Schools – Interim Report on Feedback during the Consultation period January and February 2005 and other issues emerging.</p> <p>The report was introduced. The question was raised as to whether the admissions forum should be asking the LEA to make changes to their rules in light of the responses. It was reported that in some cases changes should be made, but this would need further consideration.</p> <p>The forum was asked to note the comments within the report.</p> <p>The forum made no further comments.</p>
7.	<p>Working Together on Exclusions (Protocol for children who are difficult to place)</p> <p>The advice from central government is that arrangements need to be in place in all LEAs and these arrangements should have the input of the admissions forum.</p> <p>It was reported that a lot of good work has already been happening in Hertfordshire and local arrangements are in place in all quadrants, however not all the arrangements are the same.</p> <p>The forum agreed to take this piece of work forward.</p>
8.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>It was confirmed that within a relevant area, if a school has made no changes to their admissions arrangements and there have been no objections and all admitting authorities within the relevant area have consulted there is no need to consult on</p>

	<p>the admission arrangements for next year.</p> <p>It was agreed at future meetings the members of the admissions forum would be clearly identified.</p>
9.	<p>Date of Next Meetings:</p> <p>Thursday 16th June 2005 at 18.30 hrs - Committee Room B</p> <p>Thursday 13th October 2005 at 18.30 hrs – Committee Room B</p> <p>Proposed dates for 2006</p> <p>Thursday 23rd February 2006 at 18:30hrs – Committee Room B</p> <p>Thursday 15th June 2006 at 18:30hrs – Committee Room B</p> <p>Thursday 12th October 2006 at 18:30hrs – Committee Room B</p>