

**CONSULTATION ON ADMISSIONS 2008-2009:
COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY-CONTROLLED SCHOOLS-
PROPOSED ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS**

Report of the Director of Children, Schools and Families

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1. Purpose of the Report

To ask the Admissions Forum to consider the proposed admission rules for community and voluntary-controlled primary and secondary schools for 2008-2009 and to provide the Local Authority with such advice as the Forum considers appropriate.

2. Summary

Formal consultation in respect of the admissions round for the school year 2008-2009 has been undertaken during January and February 2007. The consultation document (Appendix 1) comprises eight sections as follows:

- 1 A summary of the key areas for consultation for 2008 / 2009 admissions
- 2 Timetable for consulting on admissions arrangements
- 3 Admission rules for community and voluntary-controlled nursery, first, infant, primary, junior and middle schools for the school year 2008-2009
- 4 Admission rules for community and voluntary-controlled co-educational and single sex upper and secondary schools for the school year 2008-2009 (except Tring)
- 5 Admissions arrangements for Tring voluntary-controlled co-educational school for the school year 2008-2009
- 6 Sixth form admission arrangements for community and voluntary-controlled schools

7 Published admission numbers (PANs) 2008-2009 for community and voluntary-controlled schools

8 Co-ordinated Schemes of Admission for community and voluntary-controlled primary, junior, middle, secondary and upper schools

3. Conclusion

The Admissions Forum is asked to consider the proposals in respect of admission arrangements for the schools year 2008-2009 and to advise the Local Authority on possible amendments and future courses of action where appropriate.

4. Background

- 4.1 The LA is required to consult about its proposed admission arrangements by the end of February each year. These admission arrangements should be consistent with any co-ordinated scheme that will operate for the area in the year in question and should include:
- admission numbers for any years to which it is intended to admit pupils, including nursery and Year 12, and in the case of boarding schools any separate admission numbers for day and boarding pupils;
 - application procedures and timetables, as agreed locally;
 - the oversubscription criteria (rules) to be used, and the order in which they will be applied, to allocate places if the school receives more applications than there are places available;
 - information about any tests for aptitude or ability;
 - any separate entry requirements and oversubscription criteria for Year 12 , or nursery places, if applicable;
 - information about whether a waiting list will be maintained and for how long, plus confirmation that this will be maintained in the order of the oversubscription criteria, as required by the DfES Code of Practice on Admissions;
 - information about how late applications can be made and will be handled.
- 4.2 The statutory consultees, when there is an annual consultation about admission arrangements, include the governing bodies of Community and Voluntary-Controlled schools in Hertfordshire, the governing bodies of Foundation and Voluntary-Aided schools in Hertfordshire and neighbouring LAs. Consultation also takes place with the Church of England and Catholic church diocesan authorities and representatives of the Jewish community. The Authority is required to have consulted upon its proposed arrangements by the end of February to determine its admission arrangements by 15th April 2007 and to notify its statutory consultees within fourteen days of the date of determination.
- 4.3 The consultation will be available on hertsdirect, with clear sign posting. Parents and other interested parties will therefore be able to access the information electronically, if they so wish. Schools will be asked to bring this to the attention of their governing bodies for consideration and to draw parents' attention to this. Press releases will be launched at the beginning of the consultation period.
- 4.4 Typically, admission authorities are required to consult every year on the admission arrangements they intend to adopt in the following year. The LA is the legal admission authority for all community and voluntary-controlled schools, whereas the individual governing body of each foundation and voluntary-aided school is the admitting authority for these categories of schools.

- 4.5 There was a major review of secondary admission arrangements for community and voluntary-controlled schools in Hertfordshire, which took effect in September 2003. Minor changes have occurred since that time, and there has been a continuing increase in the proportion of families securing admission to a school of their preference. For 2007 admissions, random allocation has been introduced into the oversubscription criteria for community single sex secondary schools.
- 4.6 In September 2006, the DfES launched a consultation on a revised Code of Practice (COP) on Admission and School Appeals. This consultation closed on 1st December 2006, with the expectation that the revised Codes of Practice would become effective from late February 2007, subject to Parliamentary approval.
- 4.7 The Code of Practice on Admissions was laid on 8 January 2007, and will come into force on 28 February, following parliamentary approval. The Code of Practice on Appeals has not been laid yet.
- 4.8 The Education and Inspections Act Section 84(3) requires admission authorities, governing bodies (when not admission authorities), local authorities (when not acting as an admission authority), admission forums, schools adjudicators and admission appeals panels to act in accordance with the provisions of this Code. It is emphasised that all admission authorities are required to act in accordance with the mandatory provisions.
- 4.9 This Code now has a statutory basis, and admission authorities **must** comply with the mandatory provisions of this Code. The School Admissions (Alteration and Variation of, and Objections to, Arrangements) (England) (amendment) Regulations 2007 enable admission authorities to amend their determined admission arrangements without reference to the Schools Adjudicator to ensure that they comply with the law and the mandatory provisions of this Code. Whilst this is very helpful, referrals to the Schools Adjudicator should be made within six weeks of determining admission arrangements if there is non compliance.
- 4.10 As part of the annual statutory admissions consultation, it is necessary to consult on the published admission numbers (PANs). In relation to the PANs, background information is available on request. Following determination of admission arrangements, under the School Standards & Framework Act 1998, there is a requirement to publish a notice for every school which has a PAN which is lower than that indicated by the net capacity methodology. It is the responsibility of each admission authority to publish such a notice. The statutory responsibility to ensure that a notice is published where the IAN is higher than the proposed PAN lies with the admission authority.

5. Consultation on Admission Arrangements for 2008-09

What are Admission Arrangements?

5.1 Admission authorities **must** consult on the full details of admission arrangements they propose to determine, which **must** be consistent with the co-ordinated scheme operating in the area in the year in question, and **should** include:

- a) admission numbers for any years to which it is intended to admit pupils, including Year 12;
- b) application procedures;
- c) the oversubscription criteria to be used in accordance with the provisions of chapters 1 and 2 of this Code, and the order in which they will be applied, to allocate places if the school receives more applications than there are places available;
- d) information about any tests for aptitude or ability if allowed;
- e) any separate entry requirements and oversubscription criteria for Year 12 or nursery places, if applicable;
- f) information about whether a waiting list will be maintained and for how long after 1 September;
- g) information about how late applications can be made and how they will be handled, as agreed in the co-ordinated scheme.

6. Proposed changes to the current arrangements for September 2008

Sibling Arrangements

Sibling Rule: Secondary rules

- 6.1 In the light of the Secondary School Place Topic Group's work, a review has taken place and analysis carried out on the scope of limiting the number of siblings admitted to community secondary and upper schools by restricting the sibling connection to those siblings who live in the priority area. Appendix 2 outlines the number of siblings living outside the priority area allocated over a three year period. Overall there were only a relatively small number of siblings outside the priority areas, and therefore a change would have little impact on the numbers of siblings outside the priority areas. Therefore this option has not been pursued in the consultation for admission arrangements 2008.
- 6.2 In the light of the recent determination by the Office of the Schools Adjudicator, and the direction by the Secretary of State with regard to the sibling rule for secondary schools, the consultation outlines two options, as follows:

Option 1: This would read:

'Children who have a sibling at the school at the time of admission where the sibling would be in Years 7 – 11 (compulsory education).'

This option would be clear and transparent for families when making their applications, however, it would prevent sibling connections for those whose

children were in Year 11 and beyond at the time of application, from qualifying as a sibling.

Option 2: An alternative option would read as follows:

‘Children who have a sibling at the school at the time of admission. Note: Where the elder sibling is in Year 12 or Year 13 at the time of admission this would be based upon a ‘reasonable expectation’ that the elder sibling will be at the school.’

This option would enable a greater number of sibling connections, however it does place the sibling connection on a condition in the future, and one that is not necessarily known when families make their school applications, thus resulting in a potentially subjective arrangement.

The consultation has presented both options for consideration.

Sibling rule: Nursery and Primary rules

- 6.3 In order to be consistent the wording for nursery and primary admissions (including junior and middle) has been amended to use ‘at the time of admission’ rather than ‘at the time of application’. This would not change the effect of the rule, but would make the wording consistent for different phases of education.

Arrangements for Multiple Births and Twins

- 6.4 It is proposed to continue with current practice. This means that for admissions outside Key Stage 1 Class Size Limits the LA, as the admitting authority, would go over number. Where the LA is not the admitting authority the LA would seek to request that the school take in the subsequent child(ren).
- 6.5 Where Key Stage 1 Class Size Limits apply, it is interesting to note that the draft COP currently does not deem such children to be an “excepted group”. It is proposed that if the allocation process splits the multiple births/siblings living at the same address, the local admissions team would make contact with the parents at the point of allocation. If it would not disadvantage another child, i.e. if the lower preference school had at least one spare place, the parents would be offered the possibility of both children attending the lower preference school or another school for which they had not made a preference, but where there were places available. The places would be held for two weeks whilst the parents confirmed their decision in writing, prior to the first run of continuing interest.
- 6.6 With regard to twins/multiple births and random allocation, legal advice outlines that it would not be appropriate to admit the subsequent child(ren) where only one is allocated a place under random allocation. This is based on the fact that any such action would compromise the “random” element of the process.

Distance Measurement

- 6.7 It is proposed to provide further clarity within the consultation on admission arrangements as to how distances are measured for community and voluntary-controlled schools. The following explanation will be included:
- 6.8 The distance from the child's home to the school is measured using a computerised mapping system. Measurement is taken from the nearest point on the designated route to the address point for the child's house (as supplied by the post office) to the nearest public entrance of the school. Distance is measured in metres down to two decimal points.

Verification of Permanent Address

- 6.9 Hertfordshire County Council, as a responsible admitting authority reserves the right to verify any address given as the child's permanent address, in order to ensure that it is allocating oversubscribed places appropriately and fairly. Parents for 2008 admissions will be asked to agree to give Hertfordshire County Council permission to verify the details provided in their application with any agency/authority that may provide the information. Hertfordshire County Council may also ask for documentary evidence from parents.

Management of Fraudulent Applications

- 6.10 It is proposed to continue with current practice. This means that where a fraudulent application is identified during the iteration process, if relevant evidence is not provided and the application is deemed to be fraudulent, the family concerned would be offered the opportunity to provide their correct address, but advised that the application would be treated as late. If the fraudulent application is identified after the iterations, the place would be removed.
- 7. A consideration of the indicated admission numbers (IANs) derived from the net capacity assessment of 2006, and the proposed published admission numbers (PANs) for 2008-2009 for Community and Voluntary-Controlled Schools.**
- 7.1 The Published Admission Numbers (PANs) for individual schools have been developed having taken into account the Indicated Admission Numbers (IANs) as derived by the net capacity assessment conducted earlier this year, the developed framework for assessing Published Admission Numbers, the forecast demand for school places by planning area, recent trend data and in some cases, a pragmatic approach regarding the relationship between the IAN and the PAN.
- 7.2 A framework of key factors has been drawn up and considered where the Published Admission Number is lower than that derived from the net capacity for a school, and this is as follows:

- (i) the requirement to meet the Key Stage 1 pledge that classes will not exceed 30,
- (ii) an increase would compromise equal opportunity principles in terms of equality of access to single sex provision,
- (iii) insufficient core, specialist and/or general teaching space to accommodate more pupils than the PAN,
- (iv) implications for schools concerning curriculum delivery, class organisation and/or financial projections,
- (v) insufficient site capacity for a higher number,
- (vi) there are sufficient places to meet parental demand in the area,
- (vii) an interim change is not recommended pending consideration of the needs across the area,
- (viii) to balance the places available at linked infant and junior schools or middle and upper schools,
- (ix) the ability to integrate pupils from a linked special school or unit,

7.3 Section 7 of Appendix 1 lists the proposed PANs for 2008 for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools, together with information on their PAN 2007 and the IAN 2008.

7.4 For all schools where the proposed PAN 2008 is lower than the IAN 2008, notices will need to be published should these numbers subsequently be determined. The schools for which the LA is the admissions authority are listed in the tables below with a comment as to the reasons for setting the PAN below the IAN.

Primary Schools

Primary Schools

School	PAN 2007	IAN 2008	Proposed PAN 2008	Comment
Alban Wood Primary	30	42	30	To comply with the requirement to meet the Key Stage 1 pledge that classes will not exceed 30.
Aldbury C of E Primary	10	13	10	There are sufficient places to meet parental demand in the area.
Andrew's Lane Primary	30	35	30	To comply with the requirement to meet the Key Stage 1 pledge that classes will not exceed 30.
Applecroft	60	63	60	To comply with the requirement to meet the Key Stage 1 pledge that classes will not exceed 30.
Broom Barns JMI	30	37	30	To comply with the requirement to meet the Key Stage 1 pledge that classes will not exceed 30.
Codicote C of E Primary VAC	34	34	30	To comply with the requirement to meet the Key Stage 1 pledge that classes will not exceed 30.

Dewhurst St Mary C of E Primary	30	34	30	To comply with the requirement to meet the Key Stage 1 pledge that classes will not exceed 30.
Dundale Primary & Nursery	45	45	30	There are sufficient places to meet parental demand in the area.
Field Junior	60	64	60	To balance the places available at the linked infant school.
Leverstock Green Church of England Primary	38	38	30	There are sufficient places to meet parental demand in the area.
Longmeadow Primary	60	70	60	To comply with the requirement to meet the Key Stage 1 pledge that classes will not exceed 30.
Margaret Wix Primary	30	35	30	To comply with the requirement to meet the Key Stage 1 pledge that classes will not exceed 30.
Martindale Primary and Nursery	30	34	30	There are sufficient places to meet parental demand in the area.
Oakmere Primary	60	60	30	There are sufficient places to meet parental demand in the area.
Ponsbourne St Mary's C of E VC Primary	10	13	10	There are sufficient places to meet parental demand in the area.
Roebuck Primary	30	37	30	To comply with the requirement to meet the Key Stage 1 pledge that classes will not exceed 30.
Shephalbury Park Primary	30	34	30	To comply with the requirement to meet the Key Stage 1 pledge that classes will not exceed 30.
Swing Gate First and Nursery	30	35	30	To comply with the requirement to meet the Key Stage 1 pledge that classes will not exceed 30.
Tanners Wood JMI	56	51	45	There are sufficient places to meet parental demand in the area.
Templewood Primary	30	37	30	To comply with the requirement to meet the Key Stage 1 pledge that classes will not exceed 30.
Tonwell St Mary's C of E Primary	8	13	8	There are sufficient places to meet parental demand in the area.
Woodhall	30	41	30	To comply with the requirement to meet the Key Stage 1 pledge that classes will not exceed 30.

Secondary Schools

Secondary Schools

School	PAN 2007	IAN 2008	Proposed PAN 2008	Comment
Barclay (The)	194	203	180	There are sufficient places to meet parental demand in the area.

Broxbourne (The)	206	212	206	There are sufficient places to meet parental demand in the area.
Fearnhill	190	190	180	There are sufficient places to meet parental demand in the area.
Freman College	210	221	210	Insufficient core facilities to accommodate more pupils than the determined admission number.
Greneway (The)	120	153	120	Insufficient core, specialist and/or general teaching space to accommodate more pupils than the determined admission number.
Hemel Hempstead (The)	180	192	180	Insufficient core, specialist and/or general teaching space to accommodate more pupils than the determined admission number.
Hertswood	280	314	280	There are sufficient places to meet parental demand in the area.
Hitchin Boys	160	169	160	An increase would compromise equal opportunity principles in terms of equality of access to single sex provision.
Kings Langley	180	190	180	There are sufficient places to meet parental demand in the area.
Longdean	218	241	218	Insufficient core, specialist and/or general teaching space to accommodate more pupils than the determined admission number.
Monks Walk	210	226	210	Insufficient core, specialist and/or general teaching space to accommodate more pupils than the determined admission number as well as facilitating the integration of pupils and support staff from Knightsfield Special School for pupils with hearing impairment.
Onslow St Audrey's	150	157	150	There are sufficient places to meet parental demand in the area.
St Albans Girls' School	178	192	178	An increase would compromise equal opportunity principles in terms of equality of access to single sex provision.
Sir Frederic Osborn	210	220	210	There are sufficient places to meet parental demand in the area.
Westfield Community Technology College	210	213	210	Insufficient core, specialist and/or general teaching space to accommodate more pupils than the determined admission number.
Thomas Alleyne (The)	160	187	160	An interim change is not recommended pending consideration of the needs across the area. The school has constrained general and specialist teaching areas.

7.5 The table below shows those Foundation and Voluntary Aided Schools where, based on the Published Admission Numbers for previous years, and the Indicated Admission Numbers, as derived from the net capacity calculation, there is likely to be a need for these schools, as their own admission authority to publish a notice, depending on the size of the PAN they wish to consult on for 2008:

No	School	School type	School type	PAN 2007	IAN 2008
915	Ashlyns	Secondary	Foundation	240	297
203	Bishop's Stortford High School (The)	Secondary	Foundation	155	177
671	Bushey Hall	Secondary	Foundation	180	242
341	Goffs	Secondary	Foundation	210	273
266	Hertingfordbury Cowper Primary	Primary	Voluntary Aided	17	22
202	Hockerill Anglo-European College	Secondary	Foundation	72	100
277	John Warner	Secondary	Foundation	180	191
930	Little Gaddesden CE Voluntary Aided Primary	Primary	Voluntary Aided	14	15
927	Long Marston Primary Voluntary Aided CE School	Primary	Voluntary Aided	20	22
444	Nicholas Breakspear RC	Secondary	Voluntary Aided	175	176
760	Parmiter's	Secondary	Voluntary Aided	185	191
670	Queens'	Secondary	Foundation	262	275
690	Rickmansworth	Secondary	Foundation	185	187
312	Sacred Heart Catholic Primary	Primary	Voluntary Aided	20	22
494	St Dominic RC Primary	Primary	Voluntary Aided	30	33
268	Stapleford Primary	Primary	Voluntary Aided	10	15
408	Townsend C of E (VA) Secondary	Secondary	Voluntary Aided	150	151

8. Admission Rules for Sixth Forms

- 8.1 Arrangements for admission to the Sixth Forms of community and voluntary-controlled schools have traditionally been administered by the individual schools themselves. The current Admissions Code of Practice introduced a requirement for an appeals system and the determination of an admission number for each Sixth Form.
- 8.2 The admission number for Sixth Forms will only be applied to students who have not previously attended the school's Year 11. For example if a school has a Sixth Form admission number of 150 and has 162 applicants from Year 11 who meet its admission criteria all should be offered places. If there are 127 eligible applicants from within the school, then there will be 23 places available for students from other schools. The admission number only applies to admission to the Sixth Form and would not guarantee access to any particular course.
- 8.3 It is proposed at this stage to consult on the basis of an admission number determined by the school, but recognising the role of the 14-19 Partnership planning groups within Hertfordshire.
- 8.4 A summary of the current criteria for admission to the sixth form for

Hertfordshire secondary schools is set out at Section 6 Appendix 1. This has been updated for admission in 2008-2009, by schools where possible.

- 8.5 The Admissions Forum also has a role in monitoring the PANs of individual schools and in seeking a resolution of any issues relating to intakes.

An interim and initial analysis of the issues raised in the consultation (which closes on 16th February will be tabled as Item 7b).

9. Conclusion

- 9.1 The Admissions Forum is asked to consider the proposals in respect of admission arrangements for the schools year 2008-2009 and to advise the Local Authority on possible future courses of action where appropriate.