

NURSERY AND PRIMARY ADMISSIONS 2008/09 – DISTRIBUTION OF BOOKLETS

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1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To seek the support of the Admissions Forum for the proposed method of disseminating information with regard to admission for nursery and primary schools for 2008/09.

2. Background

- 2.1 For 2007 nursery admissions we tried a new approach. Instead of sending out a book to all prospective parents/carers we sent them a letter. This letter was translated into Urdu, Bengali, Chinese and Polish. This approach has resulted in a large increase in online nursery applications. For 2007 admissions the number of books requested and posted before the closing date was 2,122. This compares with 12,062 sent out for 2006 admissions.
- 2.2 From market research survey work which has taken place this year across all school sectors, just over 70% of those responding have said that they would be prepared to look for the information online rather than receive a booklet.
- 2.3 From the telephone interviews conducted with a sample of those not applying online, the following feedback has been collected:
- i) The majority had no strong reason for not applying online and would consider applying online next time.
 - ii) 66% had access to internet
 - iii) The main reasons for not applying online were:
 - Don't trust security of internet / heard it crashed a lot
 - Not experienced computer user
 - Paper easier
 - Wanted to submit additional information & keep it all together

- It is easier to submit paper application than go to library
- iv) Other comments and things that would have encouraged them to apply online
- Email confirmation of application
 - Agreement with parents that schools can tell children their allocation
 - More information on the benefits
 - Encouragement of online applications by the school
- 2.4 The majority said they would have attended a drop-in session to help them to apply online. We are therefore planning to introduce drop-in sessions.
- 2.5 Primary schools will be informed of progress on this matter by way of a bulletin entry.

3. Arrangements for 2008/09

- 3.1 It is proposed to use a similar process for nursery for 2008/09 and also extend this to primary. It is anticipated that this will result in an increase in online take-up for primary because the same cohort will be familiar with the process used last year when making their nursery applications.
- 3.2 We have also received some feedback to this year's nursery process which suggests that the communication sent to parents/carers should include a little more information about the process e.g. contact and help details, online details, main facts about application process, timetable, community co-ed and single-sex admission arrangements. For the 2008 admissions process we propose to add this information and possibly expand the letter into a small leaflet. Work is currently underway to ensure that these leaflets are produced in the most cost effective way.

4. Conclusion

The Admissions Forum is asked to agree this report.