

**HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL  
CHILDREN SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES  
COUNTY ADMISSIONS FORUM  
THURSDAY, 22 FEBRUARY 2006 AT 6.30 P.M.**

Agenda Item No

**8**

**CONSULTATION ON ADMISSIONS 2008-2009:  
CONSULTATION ON SCHEMES OF CO-ORDINATION IN  
HERTFORDSHIRE FOR 2008-2009**

*Report of the Director of Children, Schools and Families*

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**1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To report to the Forum on the proposed Schemes of Co-ordination relating to the admissions arrangements for all Hertfordshire schools for admission for 2008-2009, and seek its feedback.
- 1.2 To highlight to members of the Forum areas of the scheme which require updating in the light of the recently laid DfES Code of Practice on Admissions.
- 1.3 To propose amendments to the Schemes of Co-ordination for admission 2008-2009, in the light of the above, and gain feedback from the Forum.

**2. Summary**

- 2.1 The LA continues to acknowledge the strong partnership working that takes place between individual admission authorities, the dioceses, other local authorities and itself, in order to ensure co-ordination is effective.
- 2.2 In the light of the laid Code of Practice several additions are proposed to those which have been consulted upon.
- 2.3 Feedback from the consultation on the Schemes of Coordination will be covered in the interim report under Agenda Item 7b and will be tabled at the meeting.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1 The 2008-2009 round of admissions to schools will be the fourth year of required inter-LA co-ordination throughout England for Secondary.
- 3.2 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. Current Situation**

- 4.1 The proposed Schemes of Co-ordination for Primary and Secondary admissions in Hertfordshire for admission 2008-2009 (see Appendix 1 Agenda Item 7a).

#### **General**

- 4.2 It is suggested that the following wording is inserted into the Schemes:  
"Foundation and voluntary aided schools are their own admitting authorities and will apply their own admissions criteria to all applicants. They will be responsible for organising and presenting admission appeals".

#### **Supplementary Information Forms**

- 4.3 The laid DfES Code of Practice provides more detail about the use and non-use of supplementary forms. It is proposed that the attached Appendix 3 replaces the wording currently shown in the Schemes of Coordination.

#### **Secondary Scheme of Co-ordination**

##### **Co-ordination beyond 1 March - Secondary**

- 4.4 Appendix 3 of the laid Code of Practice, Statutory Requirements of Co-ordinated Admissions Schemes, paragraph 7b states that for secondary schools schemes must continue after 1 March to ensure that places which become available are re-allocated effectively. Currently this is not the case in Hertfordshire, although it is in a number of neighbouring authorities. Arrangements post National Offer Day, 1 March, vary from authority to authority. It is proposed that the Scheme of Co-ordination is adapted to meet this requirement. Such a change is fundamental to all admission authorities in Hertfordshire and it is planned that all schools will be written to week ending 23 February, to seek their views on this proposed amendment. Such a change will have resource implications.
- 4.5 In looking at the arrangements post National Offer Day various considerations have been taken into account including the arrangements of IAAG, the 33 London boroughs, the number of voluntary-aided and foundation schools in Hertfordshire, the complexity of the admissions criteria for a number of these schools and the requirements of the laid Code of Practice.

- 4.6 It is recommended that the Scheme of Co-ordination for Secondary Schools be extended to manage this requirement according to the following process:

By 17 March Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) will request that resident parents accept or decline the offer of a place. Where a parent resident in Herts accepts or declines a place in a school maintained by another LA by 17 March HCC will forward the information to the maintaining LA by 24 March. Where such information is received from parents between 17 March and 31 August HCC will pass it to the maintaining LA as it is received.

After places have been offered, HCC will maintain CI lists for all community and VC schools and any VA/FD schools who wish us to do that for them. Other VA/FD schools will maintain their own lists. These schools will be in regular contact with HCC to advise of any further potential offers to ensure that places are reallocated effectively. A child's position on a CI list will be determined by the admission criteria for the school concerned. All admission authorities in Herts will continue to share information about potential offers and reference will be made to the preference order.

Cooperation between admission authorities will ensure that each child is offered only one school and that school is the highest preference that can be offered.

- 4.7 Additional work is underway to establish further detail relating to this proposal.

#### **Voluntary-Aided Foundation Schools – Provision of Names**

- 4.8 In managing co-ordination it is recommended that all applicants are prioritised and submitted to the Local Authority in order to run the iterative process. Currently HCC requests a minimum of 25%, but ideally 50% of names. The Forum's views are sought on the proposal to identify one secondary school in each area to participate in a pilot for 2008/2009 which would require them to provide one hundred per cent of names. The outcome of such a pilot would be reported back to the Forum.

#### **Boarding**

- 4.8 The Schemes of Co-ordination for secondary schools for 2008-09 makes reference to schools with boarding facilities. This was as a result of the then draft DfES Code of Practice on Admissions. Since publishing the consultation, the laid DfES Code of Practice has been published. There are a number of meetings to take place shortly, with regard to the laid Code of Practice as it relates to boarding provision. These meetings will help to clarify and inform us as to how we need to amend the Scheme of Coordination further. Liaison will also take place with the schools concerned.

#### **Testing Arrangements**

- 4.9 In the laid COP, paragraph 2.92 states "grammar schools and other schools, or their admission authorities, which are permitted to use selection by ability or

aptitude, **should** ensure that parents are informed of the outcome of entry tests before they make their application for other schools. The Forum is asked to consider this matter.

## **5. Conclusion**

- 5.1 Members of the Admissions Forum are asked to comment and provide feedback on the proposed Schemes of Co-ordination for 2008-2009 inclusive of the proposals identified above.