

**CONSULTATION ON ADMISSIONS 2007-2008:
COMMUNITY AND VOLUTARY-CONTROLLED SCHOOLS
CONSULTATION ON SCHEMES OF CO-ORDINATION IN
HERTFORDSHIRE FOR 2007-2008**

Author:- Sarah Vize
Senior Manager, Admissions and Transport - Tel No 01992 555933

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 2007-2008, and seek its feedback.
- 1.2 To highlight to members of the Forum feedback received during the consultation period on the Schemes of Co-ordination.
- 1.3 To propose amendments to the Schemes of Co-ordination for admission 2007-2008, in the light of recent experiences, and gain feedback from the Forum.

2. Summary

- 2.1 Co-ordination has been in operation for a number of years within Hertfordshire, and the Primary and Secondary schemes are well established. As a result of PAN-London and inter-LA co-ordination, this year's secondary scheme has been adapted to reflect this aspect.
- 2.2 The LA wishes 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.
- 2.3 In the light of recent experiences with the 2006-2007 Schemes of Co-ordination, several additions are proposed to those which have been consulted upon.

3. Background

- 3.1 Whilst intra-LA co-ordination has taken place in Hertfordshire for many years, this is the first year in which it has become a required activity for all English LAs for Primary. The 2007-2008 round will be the third year of required inter-LA co-ordination throughout England for Secondary.

4. Current Situation

- 4.1 The proposed Schemes of Co-ordination for Primary and Secondary admissions in Hertfordshire for admission 2007-2008 are attached as Appendices 1 and 2.

Proposed Additions

- 4.2 Under the secondary scheme, in order to reflect the operational requirements of inter-LA co-ordination and PAN-London, paragraphs 11 and 12 have been included for the first time this year.
- 4.3 In the light of recent experiences relating to Primary Co-ordination in Hertfordshire, it is recommended that where the Voluntary-Aided or Foundation school has failed to obtain a Supplementary Information Form (SIF) but there is a Primary Application Form (PAF) or a Common Admission Form (CAF), the application must proceed because an application has been made. Conversely, in circumstances where a SIF has been received by a Voluntary-Aided or Foundation School, the admission authority should be proactive in ensuring that there is a PAF/CAF for that application, in order that the application can be considered.
- 4.4 The recommendations outlined in paragraph 4.3 are based on Section 86(2) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 which require the LEA and the governing body of a maintained school to comply with parental preference. LAs and governing bodies may not refuse to admit children to any relevant age group, on the grounds of prejudice to efficient education or the efficient use of resources, unless the number of expressed preferences exceeds the published admission number. Paragraph 7.1 of the School Admissions Code of Practice also states that "if there are more places available than applicants, the admission authority's decision must be to accept all applications."
- 4.5 The admissions co-ordination currently underway has proved that 25% additional names is insufficient to keep the processes running to the required timescales. It is therefore proposed that admission authorities are asked to provide a minimum of 50% at the beginning of the process.
- 4.6 It is recommended that all schools with available places, at the point of Allocation Day, will be included on the list of schools with available places published by Hertfordshire County Council. The list would identify the status of the school.

4.7 Members of the Admissions Forum are asked to note that for admission 2007, PAN-London has promoted the scope of local authorities to co-ordinate secondary admissions beyond 1st March. At this current time, Hertfordshire is monitoring the introduction of such an arrangement.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Members of the Admissions Forum are asked to comment and provide feedback on the proposed Schemes of Co-ordination for 2007 inclusive of the recommendations identified (4.3, 4.5 & 4.6).