

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**CABINET
MONDAY 18 DECEMBER 2000 AT 9.30 A.M.**

Agenda Item No:

1b

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
MONDAY 18 DECEMBER 2000 AT 2.15 P.M.**

SECONDARY COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ADMISSIONS 2002-2003

Report of the Director of Education

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Executive Member: Keith Emsall

1. Purpose of Report

To agree the admission rules on which the County Council should consult for the 2002-2003 admission year and the consultation arrangements for doing so.

The Cabinet are asked to make recommendations to the Executive Committee later in the day for decision.

2. Comments from Select Committee or Panel

2.1 The Student Services Panel consider that the admission rules on which the County Council should consult for community secondary schools for 2002-2003 should be the same as those used for September 2001.

2.2 The rules for the co-educational schools should be:

- a. Children who must go to the school because they have a statement of special education needs under the 1996 Education Act which names the school.
- b. Children who can prove that they have a particular medical or social reason why they must go to the school.
- c. Children have an older brother or sister at the school at the time of application.
- d. Children who would have the longest extra journey to get to an alternative school with places available. We will apply this rule until we have filled up to 90% of places at the school.
- e. Children who live nearest to the school.

- 2.3 The rules for single sex schools should be :
- a. Children who must go to the school because they have a statement of special education needs under the 1996 Education Act which names the school.
 - b. Children who can prove that they have a particular medical or social reason why they must go to the school.
 - c. Children have an older brother or sister at the school at the time of application.
 - d. Children who live nearest to the school (10% of the total places will be filled using this rule).
 - e. Children who would have the longest extra journey to get to an alternative school with places available. We will apply this rule until we have filled up to 90% of places at the school.
 - f. Children living in traditional areas of application for the school.
 - g. If there are still places available, we will admit those children who live nearest to the school.
- 2.4 The Panel also consider that the co-ordinated scheme for all secondary schools in Hertfordshire should continue for 2002-2003 in the same form as for 2001-2002.
- 2.5 The absence of any changes to the rules for community schools or the co-ordinated scheme for all schools, suggests that consultation should be limited to statutory consultees only, eg schools, neighbouring LEAs and local admission forums. This should take place during January and February with the closing date being 28 February 2001.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 The Cabinet is asked to make recommendations to the Executive Committee on:
- a. the admission rules for community secondary schools for 2002-2003 on which the County Council should consult;
 - b. the continuation of the co-ordinated scheme for all schools; and
 - c. the arrangements for consultation.

4. Background Information

- 4.1 The Student Services Panel considered reports on secondary admissions at their meeting on 18 October and 14 November.
- 4.2 The reports showed that overall:
 - a. the percentage of children obtaining a place at one of their preferred secondary schools has increased from 94.9% in September 1999 to 95.4% in September 2000.
 - b. the number of appeals heard for appeals heard for community and voluntary controlled school had decreased from 658 in 1998 to 445 in 2000.
- 4.3 The Panel investigated in some detail the pattern of admissions in different areas of the county, including rural and urban areas, looked at out-county admissions and considered the number of children in each primary school who obtained a place at one of their preferred schools.
- 4.4 The Panel considered that in respect of the operation of the secondary admission rules for community schools and the co-ordinated scheme for all schools there were no issues that were sufficiently widespread as to require any changes. A few issues had been identified and investigated at individual school or local community level but any action in respect of any of these would have an adverse effect on another group of people.
- 4.5 The Education Committee on 12 April 2000 asked for consideration to be given to extending the traditional areas for single sex schools and to how the sibling rules for single sex schools can accommodate families with boys and girls.
- 4.6 The Panel considered these two issues in depth including possible changes to the rules and concluded that:
 - a. If traditional areas were extended then more children would be admitted from areas further away from the school and less children would be admitted from areas nearer the school.
 - b. The number of out county children could increase and displace local children.
 - c. There are practical difficulties with pairing the single sex schools to introduce a mixed sibling rule because of the different number of boys schools and girls schools.
- 4.7 In the light of the above, the Panel considered that the admission rules for community single sex schools should not change for 2002-2003.