

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Agenda Item No.

4

TUESDAY 3 APRIL 2001 AT 10.30 AM

SECONDARY SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2002-2003

Report of the Director of Education

Executive Member:- Keith Emsall

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To consider the outcome of consultation on and proposals for the admission rules for community and voluntary controlled secondary schools for 2002-2003 and a co-ordinated scheme for all secondary schools in Hertfordshire. (See pages 5 to 9 of Appendix 1).
- 1.2 In addition, to consider the proposed admission rules for voluntary aided and foundation schools in Hertfordshire County Council. (Appendix 2).
- 1.3 Furthermore, to consider the views of the Student Services Panel which met on 13 March and the Children, Schools and Families Select Committee on 28 March.

2. Summary

- 2.1
 - a) The consultation exercise revealed that there was strong support for the proposed rules for community and voluntary controlled schools and for the co-ordinated scheme for 2002-2003.
 - b) The Student Services Panel considered the outcome of the consultation and the suggestion that the sibling rule for secondary schools should be aligned with the proposed primary sibling rule (see paragraph 2.3 of the report). This would mean the sibling rule should apply when the older child will be at school at the time of the younger child admission. It was noted that this had been considered for secondary school in previous years, and it had been decided to consult on the sibling rule continuing to apply at the time of application to secondary school in 2002-2003, because it would allow for the rule to apply when the older child is in Year 11 and its admission to Year 12 is uncertain. The Panel felt that the existing sibling rule should continue for secondary schools.
 - c) A number of foundation and voluntary aided schools are proposing admission rules for 2002-2003 which are different from those for 2001-2002 (Appendix 2). The Panel considered the proposed changes and asked officers

to discuss with schools the changes proposed by Bishop's Stortford High, Parmiter's and Bushey Meads Schools in particular.

3. Conclusion

The Cabinet will need to consider whether to propose to County Council that it should adopt the admission rules for community and voluntary controlled secondary schools for 2002-2003 and whether to propose to County Council that it should refer to the adjudicator any of the proposed admission rules for voluntary aided and foundation schools in Hertfordshire.

CABINET PROPOSAL FOR COUNTY COUNCIL APPROVAL

Will be reported to County Council following the meeting of Cabinet on 30 March 2001.

Background

- 1.1 The Executive Committee on 18 December 2000 agreed to consult on the admission rules for community secondary schools for 2002 – 2003 being the same as those for September 2001.
- 1.2 It was proposed that 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 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.
- 1.3 It was proposed that the rules for the 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 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.
- 1.4 It was proposed that the rules for Tring Voluntary Controlled School should be as below. Please note that the bold type indicates a change of ranking for rules 3 and 4, and the italic type indicates a change of wording.

Rule 1 – Children who must go to Tring School because they have a statement of special educational needs under the 1996 Education Act which names the school.

Rule 2 – Children who can prove that they have a particular medical or social reason why they must go to Tring School.

Rule 3 – Up to a maximum of 10 places will be available for children who can prove that they have specific religious reasons for attending Tring School.

Priority will be given to children whose parents have been active Church attendees (e.g. at least once a month) over a period of time. Applications must be supported by a letter from a Priest or Minister. *If there are more than ten applications which meet this criteria, priority will be given to those who live nearest the school.*

Rule 4 – Children who have an older brother or sister at the school at the time of application.

Rule 5 – Children who live in the parishes of Tring, Tring Rural, Aldbury, Wigginton and Little Gaddesden.

If there are more children living in these parishes than there are places then we will give priority to those who live nearest to Tring School.

- 1.5 The Executive Committee also decided to consult on the co-ordinated scheme for all secondary schools in Hertfordshire continuing for 2002 – 2003 in the same form as for 2001 – 2002 (Appendix 1, pages 5 to 9).
- 1.6 Consultation took place on the above proposals with statutory consultees during January and February. A consultation document with a response sheet was used to facilitate consultation (Appendix 1).

2. Results of Consultation

2.1 A total of 68 responses were received:

- 37 from primary schools
- 8 from community co-educational schools
- 8 from voluntary aided and foundation secondary schools
- 14 from other statutory consultees

2.2 Four questions were asked and the responses are set out below. The numbers are not consistent because not all questions were answered.

- a) Question 1: Do you agree the proposed rules should be used for community co-educational schools?

Responder	Yes	No
All responses	51	8
All Hertfordshire Schools	46	4

- b) Question 2: Do you agree the proposed rules should be used for community single sex schools?

Responder	Yes	No
All responses	47	6
All Hertfordshire Schools	42	4

- c) Question 3: Do you agree the proposed rules should be used for Tring Voluntary Controlled Co-Educational School?

Responder	Yes	No
All responses	39	2
All Hertfordshire Schools	35	1

- d) Question 4: Do you agree that the Scheme of Co-ordination should be used?

Responder	Yes	No
All responses	55	1
All Hertfordshire Schools	47	0

2.3 The level of response was low and a very small number of comments were made. The key ones may be summarised as follows:

- a) Co-educational community schools should have criteria similar to those used for single sex schools i.e. traditional areas. This would secure a wider geographical spread of access to schools.
- b) The point was also made that single sex schools should have the same rules as community schools in order to secure equity between schools.
- c) Knights Templar School should have special rules allowing it to recruit from certain geographical areas – its traditional areas.
- d) The sibling rule for secondary schools should be aligned with the primary sibling rule. Cases were made for either “the rule applies at the time of admission” or “the rule applies at the time of application”.

2.4. The Local Admissions Forums and the County Admission Forum considered the admission rules and the co-ordinated scheme. They were generally supportive of the proposals.

3. Rules for Voluntary Aided and Community Schools

3.1 The proposed rules received from voluntary aided and foundation schools have been analysed and compared with their existing rules. A small number of secondary schools did not meet the deadlines for consultation.

3.2 Appendix 2 shows that the majority of voluntary aided and foundation secondary schools are not proposing to make significant changes to their admission arrangements for September 2002.

3.3 There are seven schools which are proposing changes to their rules for 2002 which have been contacted by officers and where discussions with the Governing Body are taking place. The schools are Bishop's Stortford High, Bushey Meads and Parmiter's.