

Subject:	School Admission Arrangements 2020/21		
Date of Meeting:	14 January 2019		
Report of:	Pinaki Ghoshal – Executive Director of Families, Children & Learning		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Richard Barker	Tel: 01273 290732
	Email:	Richard.barker@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT

- 1.1 This report details the proposed school admission arrangements for the city's schools, for which the Council is the admission authority, for the academic year 2020-21.
- 1.2 When changes are proposed to admission arrangements, all admission authorities must consult on those arrangements that will apply. The committee agreed to a consultation in September 2018 and this was undertaken between 19 November 2018 and 31 December 2018.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the admission priorities for Community Schools as set out in the consultation documents (appended) be adopted for all age groups so as to include children who have been in state care outside of England and have ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted within the definition of children in care and previous children in care.
- 2.2 That the proposed school admission numbers set out in the consultation documents be adopted for the admissions year 2020/21 including the reduction in the Published Admission Number (PAN) of Westdene Primary School from 90 pupils to 60 pupils.
- 2.3 That the co-ordinated schemes of admission be approved.
- 2.4 That the city boundary be retained as the relevant area for consultation for school admissions.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 In total there were fewer than five responses to the consultation that was hosted on the council's online consultation portal.
- 3.2 Admission authorities are currently required to give highest priority to children in care and all previous children in care. Previous children in care are children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order).

On 4 December 2017, the Rt Hon Nick Gibb, Minister of State for School Standards wrote to admission authorities to encourage them to introduce a change in their admissions policies so as to give children who have been in care overseas the second highest priority.

- 3.3 The Council's consultation asked respondents to comment on the proposal to change the definition of Priority 1 to include pupils who are or were in care outside of England.
- 3.4 There were no negative comments made in relation to the proposed admission arrangements and oversubscription criteria. It was noted that this follows the recommendation of Government. An observation was made that obtaining credible evidence that a child was previously in care in another country could be hard to achieve. This difficulty is understood by the Council who will seek to maintain a high level of scrutiny to assure itself that this criterion is suitably met.
- 3.5 A list of PANs for primary and secondary schools where the council is the admission authority were published as part of the consultation. Respondents to the consultation were asked to provide any comments on the Published Admission Numbers and the proposal to reduce the admissions number for Westdene Primary School. No comments on this proposal were received.
- 3.6 The consultation also asked for any comment or changes you would propose to the In-Year Coordinated Scheme. No comments were received.
- 3.7 A comment was received about the clarity and range of information in the school admission literature about admission to school outside a child's chronological year group. Admission authorities must make clear in their admission arrangements the process for requesting admission out of the normal age group and it was noted that there is no information on parents who may be seeking accelerated entry to school. These comments have been noted and will be considered when the literature is reviewed prior to publication in September 2019.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 The Council could propose to make no change to its current admission arrangements. There has been no change to the School Admission Code and therefore the Council's current priority in relation to children in the care of a local authority and previous children in care is compliant.
- 4.2 The responses received to this proposal do not contest the proposal to implement the change to the current admission arrangements.
- 4.3 The Council could propose to make no change to the Published Admission Number for the community schools. The Council has not sought to reduce the PAN of any school unless it has the support of the Governing Body. Therefore no other reduction in PAN has been proposed. The Council could propose to make no change at Westdene Primary School but there is a need to reduce the supply of school places in the city as the numbers of children requiring places reduces.

- 4.4 The responses received to this consultation have made no comment on the proposal to reduce the PAN of Westdene Primary School.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The Council undertook a consultation on its proposed arrangements between 19 November and 31 December 2018.
- 5.2 Governing Bodies of all maintained schools and Academies in the city were invited to give their views on the proposals for admission arrangements to Community Schools. This was communicated by a Schools Bulletin on 19 November 2018.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The School Admissions Code requires admission authorities to determine admission arrangements for school and to have consulted upon these proposals in line with the stipulated requirements.
- 6.2 A consultation activity has been undertaken between 19 November and 31 December 2018 and the responses and proposals have been outlined in the report.
- 6.3 It is proposed that the recommendations relating to the school's admission numbers, admission priorities, co-ordinated scheme and relevant area are agreed. There were no responses to the consultation which opposed the proposals put forward.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 It is not possible to quantify in detail the financial implications of recommendation 2.1. However, any changes to admission arrangements or patterns may impact on the numbers of pupils at individual schools and therefore individual school budget allocations which are largely driven by pupil numbers.
- 7.2 In reducing Westdene's PAN from 90 to 60 in September 2020, this will reduce their budget for 2021/22. The school are working on their longer term budget plan in the knowledge that this will happen and therefore planning in the knowledge that a reduction will happen, they have time to plan for this during 2019/20 & 2020/21 before the change in 2021/22.

Finance Officer Consulted: Andy Moore

Date: 04/12/18

Legal Implications:

- 7.3 Section 88C of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 as amended requires admission authorities to determine their admission arrangements annually. Arrangements must be determined 18 months in advance of the academic year to which they apply. The determination must be preceded by consultation with the Governing Bodies of Schools within the area of the Local

Authority for which the Local Authority is the admission authority, with parents and with neighbouring admission authorities. Consultation must be completed by 31 January in the year preceding the admission round, and should be for a period of no less than 6 weeks. Admission Authorities must determine their admission arrangements following that consultation by 28 February.

- 7.4 Admission arrangements must conform to the School Admissions Code which sets out acceptable and unacceptable admission arrangements and priorities. Any person or body who considers admission arrangements for either maintained schools or an Academy to be unlawful or contrary to the provisions of the Admissions Code can make an objection to the Schools Adjudicator. Community schools also have the right to object to the Schools Adjudicator if the PAN set for them is lower than they would wish.

Lawyer Consulted:

Serena Kynaston

Date: 04/12/2018

Equalities Implications:

- 7.5 Planning and consultation for school admissions procedures and school places and the operation of the admission process are conducted in such a way as to avoid potentially discriminatory admissions priorities or planning processes. The city council and own admission authority schools' governing bodies must be mindful of bad practice with regard to equalities issues as described in the School Admissions Code.

Sustainability Implications:

- 7.6 School admission arrangements are intended so far as it is possible to provide pupils with local places where they have asked for them. The planning of school places for the city takes into account the changing population pattern and resultant demand for places. The current pattern of parental preference is reflected in different schools operating both over and under capacity. In planning for school places the council will have regard to sustainability priorities and seek to provide local places and places which are accessible by safe walking and where possible cycling routes and public transport wherever this is possible.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Various implications
2. Published Admission Numbers for Primary and Secondary schools.
3. Admission arrangements and priorities for community primary and secondary schools
4. Coordinated scheme of admissions – primary.
5. Coordinated scheme of admissions – secondary.
6. Coordinated scheme of admissions – in year arrangements

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 1.1 None

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 1.2 Any change to school attendance patterns and pupil numbers will impact directly on resource allocation both revenue and capital, and on the Council's ability to meet parental expectations on school places. Pupil data and broader population data is used to identify the numbers of school places required and where they should be located. This feeds into the capital programme so that resources are allocated where they will have the most beneficial effect.

Public Health Implications:

- 1.3 None

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 1.4 The allocation of school places affects all families in all parts of the city and can influence where people choose to live. Failure to obtain the desired choice of school can create a strong sense of grievance. The process of expressing a preference and if disappointed, entering an appeal can create intense anxiety for many families in the city. Admission arrangements together with school place planning are framed in such a way as to be mindful of supporting the needs of communities.

