

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET 14 FEBRUARY 2019

TITLE SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2020

**REPORT OF HEATHER LOVERIDGE, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
EDUCATION AND CORPORATE PARENTING**

LEAD CABINET MEMBER – CLLR SHIRLEY REYNOLDS

PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT

1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS

The Council has a statutory duty to annually determine the arrangements for admission to its community and voluntary controlled schools and to formulate a complying scheme for co-ordinating admissions at the main points of entry (i.e. Reception, Year 3 for junior schools, and Year 7 for transfer from primary to secondary school). The local authority must consult the public on its arrangements at least once every 7 years.

In order to ensure that admission arrangements continue to promote and enable fair access for pupils, secure preference and meet the needs of the community a public consultation was held for six weeks between 26th November 2018 and 18th January 2019. This is in line with the Local Authority's statutory duties set out in the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012 and the mandatory requirements of the School Admissions Code.

The consultation sought views on two key areas:

- the proposed oversubscription criteria for admissions to community and voluntary controlled schools in September 2020
- the designation of a shared attendance area for three primary schools to the north east of the borough: Priorslee and Redhill Academies and the new Free School to be opened on the new housing development planned on the Millers site adjacent to M54 Junction 4

In summary, the proposed oversubscription criteria for admissions to community and voluntary controlled schools in September 2020 is as follows:

1. Children who are, or were, previously looked after by Telford & Wrekin, or by any other local authority
2. Children previously in state care outside of England and have ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted

3. In area children (children living within the defined catchment area for the school)
 - a) Medical
 - b) Siblings
 - c) Early years pupil premium or pupil premium
 - d) Any other in-area children, as measured by straight line distance to the school
4. Out of area children (children living outside the defined catchment area for the school)
 - a) Medical
 - b) Siblings
 - c) Early years premium or pupil premium
5. Children of staff
6. Any other out of area children, as measured by straight line distance to the school

Please note: in the cases of Donnington Wood Church of England Junior School, Newport Church of England Junior School and Wrockwardine Wood Church of England Junior School, there is an additional criterion which is applied before the consideration of in area children - this is those children who have attended the linked infant schools.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Cabinet determines the Admission Arrangements as outlined in the report and delegates authority to the Assistant Director, Education and Corporate Parenting, to implement these arrangements for all community and voluntary controlled schools at the main points of entry (i.e. Reception, Year 3 for junior schools, and Year 7 for transfer from primary to secondary school) from September 2020.
- 2.2 That Cabinet approves the redesignated shared catchment area for Priorslee and Redhill Academies and the new proposed Free School on the Millers site development.

3. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Co-Operative Council priority objective(s)?	
	Yes	Put our children and young people first Improve local people's prospects through education and skills training
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	Yes	Children and young people
TARGET COMPLETION/DELIVERY DATE	September 2020	
FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT	No	There is no direct financial impact arising from these proposals. In general terms, maintaining effective admissions criteria assists in the operation of an efficient education service and thus promotes the best use of resources.
LEGAL ISSUES	No	<p>The Council has a statutory duty to annually determine the arrangements for admission to its community and voluntary controlled schools and to formulate a complying scheme for co-ordinating admissions at the main points of entry (i.e. Reception, Year 3 for junior schools, and Year 7 for transfer from primary to secondary school). The local authority must consult the public on its arrangements at least once every 7 years</p> <p>Key legislation and powers the Council must comply with are set out in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012 • The School Standards and Framework Act 1998

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children Act 1989 s.17, 22, 23ZZA, • Education Act 2002 s.46, s.48, Schedule 4 • School Admissions Code • Equality Act 2010 <p>Human Rights Act 1998</p> <p>The Council has complied with the relevant legislation, there are no other legal issues or concerns.</p>
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	No	
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	No	Borough-wide impact of the proposed Admission arrangement changes. Impact on Priorslee ward of the shared attendance area between Priorslee and Redhill Academies and the new Free School proposed adjacent to Junction 4 of the M54.

4. INFORMATION

The Council has a statutory duty to determine the arrangements for admission to its community and voluntary controlled schools and to formulate a complying scheme for co-ordinating admissions at the main points of entry (i.e. Reception, Year 3 for junior schools, and Year 7 for transfer from primary to secondary school.)

Section 88C of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 requires the Council in its role as an admission authority to determine the admission arrangements that will apply in line with regulations (currently, the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012 and the mandatory requirements of the School Admissions Code.

When determining its admission arrangements, the Council is required by Section 84(3) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to act in accordance with the relevant provisions of the School Admissions Code, which applies to admissions to all maintained schools and academies. The Code requires all admission authorities to undertake a public consultation on admission arrangements at least once every seven years or where changes are proposed, and to take due regard of the responses to the consultation in determining the final arrangements. The local Authority last consulted on admission arrangements in 2011.

4.1 Proposed changes to admissions oversubscription criteria

The need to conduct the seven yearly public consultation provided an opportunity to review the current arrangements, ensure they remained fit for purpose and continued to meet the needs of children in the borough. The Local Admissions Forum (LAF) (Appendix 1) considered the current arrangements and the views of head teachers in the borough and proposed two criteria be added to the consultation on the over subscription criteria for schools where the Local Authority is the admissions authority:

- Firstly, in order to ensure that our most vulnerable pupils are given the best opportunities available to them, a proposal to include an additional oversubscription criterion relating to children who are eligible for early years pupil premium (EYPP) or pupil premium grant (PPG).

(The **early years pupil premium** is additional funding to support disadvantaged three and four year olds in early years settings. Its aim is to close the gap between children from disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers. The **pupil premium grant** is additional funding given to state funded schools in England to raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and close the gap between them and their peers.)

- Secondly, in order to respond to the needs of schools, a proposal to include an oversubscription criterion in relation to children of staff at the school. Section 1.39 of the School Admissions Code does allow this to be introduced.

(The admission of the children of staff is defined in the admissions code as being either where a member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application of admission to the school is made, and/or where a member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.)

In addition the Minister announced in the Summer 2018 that he intended to amend the School Admissions Code to ensure that children who were previously in state care outside of England, and have ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted, receive the same highest priority for admission into a school in England as looked after children and previously looked after children. Until this amendment is made the Minister wishes admission authorities to introduce oversubscription criteria to give these children second highest priority for admission into school. Therefore, this criterion is included in the proposal.

4.2 Consultation on the changes to school attendance areas 2020/21

The Council currently has designated attendance areas for the vast majority of maintained schools and academies. Whilst these attendance areas do not prevent parents or carers from expressing preference for other schools, it is widely accepted that the practice of allocating an attendance area, usually linked to the school's proximity to local housing, helps to determine a range of issues which assists in providing an efficient service for allocating school places.

There are currently two schools serving the Redhill / Priorslee area - Redhill Primary Academy and Priorslee Primary Academy. There are also substantial housing developments scheduled for the north eastern part of the borough and the S106 Agreement affirms the provision of a new primary school within this area to accommodate 210 additional pupils in the first instance.

Having engaged in discussion with the Head teachers and Trustees of both Priorslee Academy and Redhill Academy, it is proposed that a new attendance area be determined in the north east of the borough to incorporate the existing attendance areas for Redhill and Priorslee Primary Academies and the area around the new housing development in the north eastern part of the borough. (Detail can be found in the map: Appendix 2.)

4.2 Public Consultation

In order to ensure that admission arrangements continue to promote and enable fair access for all pupils and respond as much as possible to the needs of parents and the community, a public consultation was held for six weeks between 26th November 2018 and 18th January 2019. The consultation document can be found in Appendix 2. The following stakeholders were invited to comment on the proposals:

- Parents / guardians and carers of children already at Telford & Wrekin schools
- Parents / guardians and carers of pre-school children
- Early years providers
- Private nurseries
- Childminders
- Local residents
- Parents / guardians of any other children aged from birth to eighteen
- Head teachers
- School staff and governors
- The diocesan authorities
- All of our neighbouring authorities
- Any interested stakeholders

4.3 Responses and feedback

The original proposals were agreed at the Local Admission Forum (LAF) and it was agreed that the head teacher representatives would discuss the proposals with colleagues at their cluster meetings. There were ten individual responses during the consultation period and feedback through LAF from nine schools, summarised as follows:

- Six schools fed back that they were happy with the proposed criteria
- Two head teachers wanted to see the staff criterion higher in the admissions oversubscription criteria
- Six primary, one infant and one junior school were not in favour of either the over subscription criteria for children of staff or for children eligible for PPG being given priority over local children. One of these primaries considered that this might disadvantage families who were marginally outside the threshold for free school meal eligibility and families where children's eligibility for PPG had not been determined at the point of application
- Three secondary academies broadly agreed with the Local Authority proposals and decided to adopt similar criteria, although without the inclusion of the PPG criterion
- Two parents were in support of the shared attendance area between Priorslee Academy, Redhill Academy and the new Free School, but proposing that children outside the attendance area with siblings, are given a higher priority in the oversubscription/subscription criteria than they are currently. This feedback has been shared with the Academies as they are responsible for determining their own oversubscription criteria.

There was a consensus at the Local Admission Forum that the proposed criteria reflect the needs of the pupils and families in the borough. A number of schools and academies for whom the Local Authority is not the Admission Authority have also

indicated that they would be willing to change their oversubscription criteria in line with these proposals.

4.4 Proposed Admission Arrangements

The following are the proposed oversubscription criteria for all primary, infant, junior and secondary schools where the local authority is the admissions authority. These are community and voluntary controlled schools. (List of schools: Appendix 2)

Changes are marked in 'bold'

When the school is oversubscribed, after the admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), the priority for admission will be given to those children who meet the criteria set out below, in priority order:

1. Those children who are or were previously looked after by Telford & Wrekin or any other local authority.
A 'looked after child', or a child who was previously looked after, but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements, or special guardianship order. These children are also known as children in care.
2. **Children previously in state care outside of England and who have ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted, and then**
3. Children who live in the school's defined attendance area.

If places are unavailable for all of these local children, then places will be given first to:

- a) Those children who have exceptional health reasons where there is written medical evidence that admission to the school is essential for their medical wellbeing. *The information must confirm the exceptional medical reason and demonstrate how the specified school is the only school that can meet the defined needs of the child;*
 - b) Those children who will have on the day of admission a brother(s), sister(s), step brother(s), step sister(s), half-brother(s) or half-sister(s) living as a family at the same address and who attend the school;
 - c) **Pupils in receipt of early years pupil premium or pupil premium at the point of closing the application round**
 - d) Other children living in the school's attendance area
4. Any places which remain available will then be allocated to applicants from outside the school's defined attendance area in the priority order a) to c)
 5. **Children of staff** - *children whose parent / guardian is a member of staff who has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time of application or has been recruited to fill a vacancy for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.*
 6. Other children living outside of the school's attendance area.

4.5 Timeline for determination

Public consultation ends	18 th January 2019
Local Admission Forum final consideration of responses	24 th January 2019
Cabinet approval	14 th February 2019
Admission arrangements published on the Council website	15 th March 2019

5. IMPACT ASSESSMENT – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The proposed shared catchment area between Redhill and Priorslee Academies and the new free school proposed as part of the housing development adjacent to junction 4 on the M54, will have a positive impact on residents in the Priorslee ward. Children living in the shared area will be given priority for admission to each of the three schools if parents have indicated these as a preference on their application, over children living outside the area. If the school is oversubscribed places will be allocated according to the oversubscription criteria of each school.

6. PREVIOUS MINUTES

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Appendix 1: Local Admission Forum membership and terms of reference.
- Appendix 2: Consultation on the proposed changes to admission arrangements 2020/2021
 - List of community and voluntary controlled schools where the Local Authority is the Admissions Authority.
 - Map of shared catchment area for Priorslee and Redhill Academies and the school planned as part of the development of the Millers site.

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