

Executive Decision Report

Outcome of consultation on Admission Arrangements 2014-2015

Decision Date: 2 April 2013

Decision maker: Assistant City Mayor Children Young
People and Schools

Lead Director: Rachel Dickinson



City Mayor

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All Wards
- Report author: Trevor Pringle
- Author contact details: 252 -7702 trevor.pringle@leicester.gov.uk

1. Decision Summary:

This report updates Scrutiny and Executive on the outcome of a recent public consultation exercise in connection with Leicester City Council's proposed admission arrangements for 2014/15.

Scrutiny/ Executive are asked to note related consultation outcomes and comment upon, support/ approve as appropriate Leicester City Council's published admission arrangements for the academic year 2014/2015 (**Appendix A**). These revised arrangements incorporate technical changes detailed within this Report and their exact content is dependent upon decisions taken with regard to Secondary School Catchment Areas.

A separate Report on the outcome of a further related public consultation exercise on the proposed Review of Secondary School Catchment Areas is therefore before the Scrutiny and Executive for consideration. If recommendations within this associated report are agreed then the City Council intend to remove 'linked' priority areas and make associated changes to over subscription criteria.

These changes to oversubscription criteria are detailed within this Report, **Appendix A** and key elements are summarised succinctly below:

- It is proposed to also remove Criterion 5 'Children living in the area of a closed school whose parents name one of the linked schools to that area'
- It is also proposed to make sibling links a separate criterion rather than a tie-break in criterion 3. This will have no impact on the way places for siblings are allocated, but will lead to greater clarity for parents.

The proposed admission arrangements for 2014/15 upon which views were invited are attached (**Appendix A**). Please note that this consultation was undertaken simultaneously with a second consultation upon a proposed review of Secondary School Catchment Areas. The oversubscription criteria detailed at **Appendix A** assume secondary school catchment area proposals will be implemented as consulted upon and recommended by Officers.

Recommendation 1: In the event of changes being agreed to secondary School Catchment Areas as set out in an accompanying report it is recommended that the Admission Arrangements and oversubscription criteria set out at numbers 1 to 8 in Section 1 of **Appendix A** be agreed.

Should proposed Secondary School Catchment Area change not however be approved for implementation then it will be necessary to continue to operate the current oversubscription criteria for a further year.

Recommendation 2: That the admission number for Sir Jonathan North be maintained at 240 for 2014/15 but be reviewed for 2015/16 in the light of capacity requirements.

2. Why it is needed:

As the Admission Authority for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools in the City, Leicester City Council is required to consult upon and determine its admission arrangements for entry to schools in September 2014/2015 by 15 April 2013, and to publish those arrangements by 1 May 2013..

General information about Leicester's policies and arrangements for School Admissions can be found within our three information booklets (Starting School, Transfer to Junior School, and Transfer to Secondary School). These booklets can be obtained from the School Admissions Service and are available online at www.leicester.gov.uk/admissions

In recognition that changes may be made to secondary school catchment areas as a result of a separate but related consultation exercise, views were invited upon potential complementary changes to published oversubscription criteria.

3. What people have said in response to the consultation upon Admission Arrangements for 2014/15 – Proposed City Council response.

The Council has only received three responses in relation to this consultation. One respondent did not answer any questions and one agreed with the proposal.

A further representation has been received from the Chair of Governors of Sir Jonathan North secondary school requesting a variation of their published admission number from 240 to 260.

Admission arrangements for 2014/15 *Taking account of the content of the very limited response to this present consultation the City Council propose to implement the arrangements detailed in **Appendix A** . Changes to oversubscription criteria as detailed in **Appendix A** will be dependent upon approval being granted to proposed changes Secondary School catchment areas set out in the separate accompanying report.*

Sir Jonathan North – requested variation to admission number from 240 to 260.

Representations have been received that the admission number be raised. Concerns have been raised that the School has potentially been disadvantaged by the rising of the admission numbers at other City schools in recent years. At present this school is technically oversubscribed and operating close to capacity.

With regard to the increases in Admission Numbers at other secondary schools including Rushey Mead and City of Leicester raised by Chair of Governors at sir Jonathan North the situation is as follows. Published admission numbers for this September (2013) were agreed as part of the BSF Strategy for Change process following consultation with individual schools. In summary the City is planning for 3,900 Year 7's by 2018/19 academic year.

On this basis capacity increases were proposed and finally agreed based on Year 7

PAN's as follows in the Schools below:

- City of Leicester – 220 to 240
- English Martyrs – 180 to 210*
- Fullhurst – 180 to 240*
- New College – 180 to 210*
- Rushey Mead – 270 to 300
- St Pauls – 180 to 210*

The position is complicated further by the fact that a number of the above schools (marked *) are technically their 'own admission authorities' and careful and sensitive discussions need to take place over when to increase their PAN's to ensure stability of wider family of schools whilst strategically increasing capacity as the forecasted cohorts start to feed through the system.

It is clear that our published admission numbers for September 2013 reflect the outcome of agreed processes and, whilst acknowledging the desire of the Sir Jonathan North to expand, *the Council propose to maintain the admission number of this School at 240 for 2014/15.*

In doing so the Council is acting in a wholly consistent manner as it has recently refused similar request from other Schools listed above to bring forward increases in their own admission numbers. This action has been taken by the Council to protect intake at City schools and financial stability at all other schools in the City.

The Council will of course need to continue to review admission numbers and capacity across the City to ensure sufficient supply and support families in securing their preferences. This means that we are likely to revisit this matter again in the near future and it is recommended that this is undertaken for 2015/16 entry at this particular school.

4. Tell us how this issue has been externally scrutinised as well as internally?

Initial proposals were consider by the Childrens Scrutiny Commission on 21 November 2012. Formal consultation took place between 21 December 2012 and 28 February 2013 and was carried out by way of a Public Notice, circulation to all schools via the Extranet, and publication on the Council website

5. Financial, legal and other implications

5.1 Financial implications

There are no capital or revenue costs to the proposals. A failure to address the inherent inequality in continuing with linked areas could result in complaints to the Local Government Ombudsman who could award financial compensation.

Pupil numbers are a key driver behind elements of the City Council's funding; this proposal would not impact on this provided the same number of pupils remained within

City schools. However there may be a financial impact on individual school budgets if the admission arrangement changes resulted in pupil movements between schools.

Kate McGee, Principal Accountant - ext 39 7490

5.2 Legal implications

Consultation has been carried out in compliance with the Schools Admission Code(2012) or The School Admissions (Admissions Arrangements)(England) Regulations 2012.

Objections to changes to the published Admission Arrangements can be referred to the Schools Adjudicator

Satish Surani, Solicitor Ext 7034

5.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

5.4 Other Implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

6. Background information and other papers:

7. Summary of appendices:

Appendix A – including Proposed revised oversubscription criteria

8. Is this a private report (If so, please indicated the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?

No

9. Is this a “key decision”?

Yes

CONSULTATION ON ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2014-15

This document outlines the proposed changes to admissions policies of schools in the City for September 2014 and provides you with the opportunity to comment.

Admission Authorities are required to consult for a minimum period of eight weeks before 1 March in the determination year. The consultation period will commence on 21 December 2012 and will close at midnight on 28 February 2013. The City Council is co-ordinating the consultation on behalf of Academies, Voluntary Aided, Trust and Free schools.

The general information about Leicester City Council's policies and arrangements for School Admissions can be found within our three information booklets ('Starting School', 'Transfer to Junior School' and 'Admission to Secondary School'). These booklets can be obtained from the School Admissions Service and are available online at:

<http://www.leicester.gov.uk/schooladmissionsconsultation>

Closing dates for applications for a school place in 2014:

The national closing dates will be 31 October 2013 for entry into Year 7 at secondary schools and 15 January 2014 for entry into Reception at primary schools.

1. Leicester City Council Proposals:

- Changes to the Oversubscription Criteria for Secondary Community maintained Schools

The City Council's separate Secondary School Catchment Area Review consultation proposes to remove 'linked' areas, and therefore it is proposed to also remove Criterion 5 'Children living in the area of a closed school whose parents name one of the linked schools to that area'

It is also proposed to make sibling links a separate criterion rather than a tie-break in criterion 3. This will have no impact on the way places for siblings are allocated, but will lead to greater clarity for parents.

The proposed criterion for Secondary Schools will be:

- 1 Children in the care of a Local Authority or who were previously in care of a Local Authority
- 2 Children who are on the 'list of children subject to child protection plans' and need to attend an alternative school to avoid the abuser.
- 3 Children who are both living in the catchment area served by the school and have brothers or sisters* still attending the school at the time of their application and admission. Siblings must be in year 8, 9 or 10 at the time of admission.
- 4 Other children living in the catchment area at the time of application and admission.
- 5 Children who do not live in the catchment area served by the school but who have brothers or sisters* attending the school at the time of their admission. Siblings must be in year 8, 9 or 10 at the time of admission.
- 6 Children of parents / carers fleeing 'Domestic Violence'. (Subject to verification by a senior Social Worker or current City Council procedures for housing reallocation in cases of recognised domestic violence).
- 7 Other children whose parents have requested a place.
- 8 Children whose parents did not request a place by the closing date.

*By siblings we mean a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or a child of the parent / carer's partner and in every case the child must be living in the same family unit at the same address.

The tie-break in each criterion will remain as distance from school in a straight line with those children living closest to the school having priority. Distance will be measured using the Local Authority's measuring system using the GEO CODE reference point for the child's home address to the GEO CODE reference point for the school.

2. Changes to Admission Numbers in Academies, VA, Trust and Free Schools

The proposed 2014 admission policies and arrangements for Academies and for Voluntary Aided, Trust and Free Schools can be found at:

<http://www.leicester.gov.uk/schooladmissionsconsultation>

or from the schools themselves.

The proposed schemes of co-ordination for Primary, Secondary and, for the first time, Mid-Term admissions are also available at

<http://www.leicester.gov.uk/schooladmissionsconsultation>

or from the School Admissions Service.

Comments on these proposals, or any other views on the admission arrangements for 2014, should be sent to: Steve Letten, Service Manager (School Admissions) by 28 February 2014. (Contact details below).

Alternatively, you may wish to use the attached response form. Any responses relating to the policies of Voluntary Aided, Trust or Free Schools will be passed on to the Governing Bodies concerned.

Following the end of the consultation period, the Leicester City Admissions Forum will consider all of the arrangements for 2014 and the comments made. Respective Admissions Authorities must make a final determination of their 2014 school admissions arrangements by 15 April 2013. Details of the outcomes will be published shortly afterwards.

If you require any details or clarification about this consultation, please contact: Steve Letten – steve.letten@leicester.gov.uk – or call

Tel: 0116 373 7455

LEICESTER CITY COUNCIL

CONSULTATION ON ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2014-15

1. It is proposed to change the oversubscription criteria to include siblings as a separate criterion.

Any comment?

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Please add any comments you wish to make on any aspect of Admission Arrangements for 2014 (continue overleaf, or use a separate sheet if you need to).

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Signed Name.....

Position (e.g. parent, Head, Governor)

School (if applicable)