

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of Corporate Director of Children & Learning
to
Cabinet

on
6th November 2012

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and Capital

Agenda
Item No.

**School Admissions Arrangements for Community Schools and the Coordinated
Admission Arrangements for Academic year 2014/15
Children & Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee
Executive Councillor: Councillor James Courtenay
A Part 1 Public Agenda Item**

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To outline the process for determining the admission arrangements for community schools for the academic year 2014/15.
- 1.2 To consider the Coordinated Admission Arrangements Scheme for 2014 for all schools and the mechanism for the final agreement of the scheme.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 **That there is no consultation on the admissions arrangements for community schools for the academic year 2014/15.**
- 2.2 **That individual consultation takes place with governing bodies of community schools on their published admission numbers for September 2014 as attached in Appendix 1.**
- 2.3 **That a report is brought in March 2013 for final determination of the published admission numbers for September 2014.**
- 2.4 **That the admission criteria and catchment areas remain unchanged for 2014.**
- 2.5 **That the proposed Coordinated Admission Arrangements Scheme for 2014 onwards attached as Appendix 4 is agreed in principle by the Council, and if there are minor issues to be resolved following consultation with schools that decisions on minor amendments be delegated to the Corporate Director of Children & Learning and the Executive Councillor for Children & Learning.**

3. Background

- 3.1 The Council has the responsibilities to determine in relation to school admissions:
 - a) the admission arrangements (admission numbers, admission criteria and catchment areas) for community schools;

- b) the coordinated admissions scheme, which sets out the way in which admissions for all schools (including academies and free schools) will operate.
- 3.2 The previous Schools Admissions Code set a requirement to consult formally all other admission authorities every year before determining our arrangements.
- 3.3 Each year a report was presented to Cabinet in November seeking to agree the admission arrangements and permission to consult with designated stakeholders. The result of the consultation was reported back to Cabinet in March for final approval. The exception to this has been the Coordinated Admission Arrangements Scheme. With this, the final sign off has been delegated to the Director and Executive Member by the November Cabinet in order to meet the requirement to submit this to the Department for Education (DfE) by 1st January each year.
- 3.4 In February 2012 the DfE published a revised School Admissions Code and there is no longer a requirement for an annual consultation. The code now says:
- “Admission authorities **must** set (‘determine’) admission arrangements annually. Where changes are proposed to admission arrangements, the admission authority **must** first publicly consult on those arrangements. If no changes are made to admission arrangements, they **must** be consulted on at least every 7 years. Consultation must be for a minimum of 8 weeks and **must** take place between **1 November** and **1 March** of the year before those arrangements are to apply.”*
- 3.5 The impact of this change is that where the admission arrangements have not changed there is no requirement to consult.
- 3.6 For a community school, the local authority (as admission authority) **must** consult the governing body of each school where it proposes either to increase or keep the same published admission numbers (PAN).

4. Admission Arrangement for 2014/15

4.1 Admission Numbers

4.1.1 Provisional published admission numbers for September 2014 were considered by Cabinet on 2nd November 2010 as part of the strategy for the provision of primary places.

4.1.2 The only proposed changes to PAN’s from September 2013 to September 2014 are to increase Thorpe Greenways Infant School from 120-150 and Darlington Primary School from 90 to 120. For all other community schools it is proposed that the PAN remains unchanged from 2013/14.

4.1.3 A list of the proposed PAN’s for community schools for 2014/15 is in Appendix 1.

4.2 Admission criteria

4.2.1 There is no proposed change from 2013/14. The proposed admission criteria for

community primary schools for September 2014 are shown in Appendix 2.

4.3 Catchment Areas

4.3.1 There is no proposed change from 2013/14. The catchment areas for primary schools for September 2014 are shown in Appendix 3.

5. Primary and Secondary Coordinated Admission Arrangements Scheme for the September 2014 round of admissions

5.1 Schemes for co-ordinating all admission applications to schools must be formulated and submitted to the Department for Education (DfE) by 1st January in the determination year, which for the school year starting in September 2014 will be 1st January 2013.

5.2 Consultation rules for coordinated arrangements are the same as admission arrangements and only need consultation once every seven years unless there are changes. The proposed scheme for 2014 proposes some minor changes as set out in paragraphs 5.2.1 to 5.2.3.

5.2.1 To cater for the changes in the selective arrangements it is proposed that the Secondary Admission booklets are published earlier so that information and the arrangements are available to parents from 1st July of the year proceeding admission. The application round will continue to open on 1st September and a reminder to year 6 parents will be sent out at the beginning of the autumn term along with a supplement to the booklet that includes appeal information and previous year admissions data.

5.2.2 It is proposed the primary coordination remains broadly the same with the primary booklet being published by 12th September or earlier and the admissions round opening on 14th September.

5.2.3 The current coordination allows for changes in preferences and this can be confusing to parents within the coordinated scheme and in the subsequent publication of the Council's admissions booklets. It is proposed such references are to be removed from the coordinated scheme. Changes in the order of preferences already expressed, that is, not an additional preference, will not be accepted after the closing dates unless the circumstances are deemed to be exceptional and the changes can be accommodated. Changes received after the closing date will be considered after the offer dates.

5.3 The proposed scheme for 2014 is attached as appendix 4.

5.4 Members are requested to support in principle the Coordinated Admission Arrangements Scheme for the academic year 2014 onwards, and if there are minor issues to be resolved following consultation with schools that decisions on minor amendments be delegated to the Corporate Director of Children & Learning and the Executive Councillor for Children & Learning.

5.5 We will then write to all schools requesting their approval to the scheme. DfE guidance is that it is assumed that schools agree if they do not respond.

6. Other Options

- 6.1 The alternative to delegation of final approval of the Coordinated Admission Scheme to the Corporate Director in recommendation 2.3 would be a special Cabinet in late December 2012.

7. Reasons for Recommendations

- 7.1 Determination of the admission arrangement for community schools and the coordinated admission scheme for all schools by the Council is a requirement of legislation.

8. Corporate Implications

- 8.1 Contribution to Council's Vision & Corporate Priorities – These arrangements will assist pupils within the Borough to access to quality learning opportunities to achieve the best possible outcomes for all children.

- 8.2 Financial Implications – There are no direct financial implications for the Council. The administration of school admissions is funded from the Dedicated Schools Grant.

- 8.3 Legal Implications
The determination of admission arrangements for community schools and the provision of a co-ordinated admissions scheme is a statutory requirement.

- 8.4 People Implications
None

- 8.5 Property Implications
None

- 8.6 Consultation
The views of the Admission Forum were sought at a meeting held on 18th October 2012 and the Forum agreed to the proposals in this report. Individual Governing Bodies will be consulted as at paragraph 6.4 and all schools as at paragraph 5.5. The views of Children and Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee will be sought in November before any decisions are finally taken by the Corporate Director of Children and Learning in December 2012 or Cabinet in March 2013

- 8.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications
A co-ordinated admissions scheme and clear oversubscription criteria are necessary to ensure fair access to school places.

- 8.8 Risk Assessment
If the Council does not agreed a scheme, one will be imposed by the DfE and the Council's reputation will suffer.

- 8.9 Value for Money
No direct implications.

8.10 Community Safety Implications
None envisaged.

8.11 Environmental Impact
None envisaged

9. Background Papers

9.1 [School Admissions Code 2012](#) and [School Admission Appeals Code 2012](#)

9.2 Admissions Forum – School Admissions report 18th October 2012.



School Admissions
2014-15 A F- 18 Oct

9.3 Cabinet 2nd November 2010 – “Provision of Primary School Places”.
<http://apps.southend.gov.uk/minutes/>

9.4 Cabinet 13th March 2012 – “School Admissions 2013-14”.
<http://apps.southend.gov.uk/minutes/>

10. Appendices

10.1 **Appendix 1** – Proposed Published Admissions Numbers for Community Schools 2014/15.

10.2 **Appendix 2** - Admission arrangements for community schools for September 2014 round of admissions.

10.3 **Appendix 3** – Primary Community School Catchment Areas 2014.

10.4 **Appendix 4** - Proposed Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for 2014/15.