

OBSERVATIONS ON PROPOSED ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2013/2014

ST DOMINIC SAVIO CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL Consultation closes 20 February 2012

It is noted that the school is removing the Catholic Parish of Christ the King, Whitley.

Tiebreaker – the local authority is currently consulting on an amendment to the wording which provides more accurate information about how the measurement is taken. We would recommend that the school adopts similar wording reflecting the system used by the local authority.

Siblings from the same birth year – whilst the school advises that twins or sibling from multiple births are permitted exceptions; the school does not have a policy on how siblings in the same birth year will be handled.

Appeals – the new Appeals Code includes a deadline for lodging appeals which allows appellants at least 20 school days from the date of notification that their application was unsuccessful to prepare and lodge their written appeals. It is recommended that the school makes this clear in its arrangements.

Applications outside the normal admissions cycle – there is no requirement for parents to apply for schools outside the Borough via Wokingham Borough Council. Parents will need to find out what local arrangements exist in the area they are moving to and residents in other authorities may apply direct to Wokingham Borough Council instead of going through their home authority as part of the proposed locally agreed co-ordinated scheme.

GRAZELEY PAROCHIAL CE AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOL

This is the first year the school has not consulted on any changes.

Whilst the school is not consulting on any changes; it is noted that it has made changes to:

Criterion 2 – to include parents moving into the area who have formerly attended church and transfer to one of the churches listed will also be eligible for consideration under criterion 2 but will need to provide a supplementary information form from both churches

Criterion 3 – Siblings at the time of application - it is not unusual to receive a transfer application at the same time as in-year application for a child who will become a sibling at a school and therefore 'the time of application' may not be advisable as it would preclude the school from considering them as siblings.

Criterion 6 – the definition has changed for identification of Christian affiliation – it is possible to identify churches who are members of Churches Together or the Evangelical Alliance by searching on their website, it would not be so easy for a parent to determine whether their church ascribes to the doctrine of the Trinity or for the school to agree it and as this is more subjective, it may be helpful to define what this means and how you will apply it.

Tiebreaker – the local authority is currently consulting on an amendment to the wording which provides more accurate information about how the measurement is taken. We would recommend that the school adopts similar wording reflecting the system used by the local authority.

Clarification should be provided in the policy that the SIF is returned to the school to match the wording provided on the form.

Appeals – the new Appeals Code includes a deadline for lodging appeals which allows appellants at least 20 school days from the date of notification that their application was unsuccessful to prepare and lodge their written appeals. I recommend the school makes this clear in its arrangements. Dates should be made available on the school website.

Acceptance forms to be returned by 30th April 2013.

Note 6 – Previous looked after children are not mentioned. The school might want to consider what evidence should be provided by parents to verify an application made under this criterion e.g. copies of the special guardianship order, adoption order or residence orders (1.7 refers) and to make any requirements clear within the policy. It is also recommended that the school identifies what is meant by the term previously looked after child (the Code wording is on page 9 – notes 17 to 20 inclusive).

FINCHAMPSTEAD CE AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOL

Consultation closes 29 February 2012

Tiebreaker – the local authority is currently consulting on an amendment to the wording which provides more accurate information about how the measurement is taken. We would recommend that the school adopts similar wording reflecting the system used by the local authority.

Category 3 – Siblings at the time of application - it is not unusual to receive a transfer application at the same time as in-year application for a child who will become a sibling at a school and therefore 'the time of application' may not be advisable as it would preclude the school from considering them as siblings

For information, child benefit will not be available to all families.

Note 5 – it is noted that the school is not intending to offer to twins and multiple births. Please note that any appeals for twins or multiple births cannot be considered under infant class size regulations if this applies.

Appeals – the new Appeals Code includes a deadline for lodging appeals which allows appellants at least 20 school days from the date of notification that their application was unsuccessful to prepare and lodge their written appeals. It is recommended that the school makes this clear in its arrangements. Dates should be made available on the school website.

SONNING CE AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOL

This is the second year the school has not consulted on any changes.

Whilst the school is not consulting on any changes; it is noted that it has made changes to:

Criterion 3 – Siblings at the time of application - it is not unusual to receive a transfer application at the same time as in-year application for a child who will become a sibling at a school and therefore 'the time of application' may not be advisable as it would preclude the school from considering them as siblings.

Criterion 4 – It is noted that a new clause has been added to this criterion which has not been consulted on relating to families who have recently (what? Moved)

Criterion 5 – please see criterion 3 above; another new addition.

For information, child benefit will not be available to all families.

How will the school handle applications from siblings born in the same academic year?

ST SEBASTIAN'S CE AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOL

This is the first year the school has not consulted on any changes.

Whilst the school is not consulting on any changes; it is noted that it has made changes to:

Criterion 2 and 4 – Siblings at the time of application - it is not unusual to receive a transfer application at the same time as in-year application for a child who will become a sibling at a school and therefore 'the time of application' may not be advisable as it would preclude the school from considering them as siblings.

Church attendance has been changed relating to footnote 2 to include previous church attendance for families that have moved into the area.

ST TERESA'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

The school is not consulting on any changes to their current policy and has been reminded to determine policy for 2013/2014 including only changes prescribed in the School Admissions and School Admissions Appeals Codes.

This is the first year the school has not consulted on any changes.

THE PIGGOTT SCHOOL

Consultation closes 24 February 2012

It is noted that the denominational certificate was not submitted.

Tiebreaker – the local authority is currently consulting on an amendment to the wording which provides more accurate information about how the measurement is taken. It is recommended that the school adopts similar wording reflecting the system used by the local authority.

Criterion B – Siblings at the time of application - it is not unusual to receive a transfer application at the same time as in-year application for a child who will become a sibling at a school and therefore 'the time of application' may not be advisable as it would preclude the school from considering them as siblings. It is noted that the school intends to include siblings who were former pupils but the school has clearly stated how those former pupils are defined.

Criterion E – feeder schools. As the school is usually oversubscribed from higher criteria, it is questionable whether its inclusion is transparent and made on reasonable grounds in accordance with 1.15 of the Code. All but one feeder school (St Nicholas CE Primary School) falls within the designated area of The Piggott and therefore the majority of children attending the feeder schools would normally qualify under higher criteria, an option not available to children from St Nicholas CE Primary School which is not included within the designated area of the school.

Acceptances – this forms part of the co-ordinated admission scheme and therefore acceptances should be returned to the local authority. The school admissions team will ensure that the school is aware of any rejected offers and will then allocate from the waiting list on the school's behalf (in liaison with the school). This will minimise confusion for parents and ensure prompt movement of waiting lists.

The local authority will maintain the waiting list until 31 December 2012 when the list will be transferred to the school.

In-year – It is noted that the school seeks to admit children who move to the school's designated area in-year. Such children are prioritised in the school's oversubscription criteria and will be ranked on the school's waiting list if oversubscribed. The admittance of children over and above the admission number is made only through allocation to children with Statements of Special

Educational Needs; as permitted exceptions prescribed in the School Admissions Code, by an Appeals Panel or through the application of the local authority's Fair Access Protocols. Schools are not permitted to set its own protocol to admit children outside of those arrangements and to do so would inevitably compromise the school at appeal and lead to conflicts when placing children in accordance with law and through Fair Access Protocols.

In-year appeals – it is easy to understand the reasoning for wanting to charge appellants who subsequently withdraw their appeals; administration charges cannot be levied. This would be impossible to apply.

Sixth form – criteria for entry to the school – the first paragraph should state that the governors will, in any case, admit all applicants who are already at the school and 15 external applicants, if there are sufficient applications and provided they meet the minimum requirements for the relevant courses.

The school needs to ensure that all applicants, internal and external, are treated in the same way.

Is the tiebreaker the same as defined in year 7 or using a different system?

Criterion A – must be amended to include previously looked after children and then criterion B in criteria for admission on courses.

The school must ensure it complies with Code 2.5 regarding proof of birth date and ensure that it does not see 'long' birth certificates.

Appeals for sixth forms must comply with the timetable on page 10 of the new School Admissions Appeals Code.

LA – the definition needs amending regarding in-year applications.

MAIDEN ERLEGH SCHOOL

Consultation closes 29 February 2012

It is noted that the school intends to remove Criterion B – children who have a serious medical, physical or psychological condition.

Tiebreaker – the local authority is currently consulting on an amendment to the wording which provides more accurate information about how the measurement is taken. It is recommended that the school adopts similar wording reflecting the system used by the local authority.

For information, child benefit will not be available to all families.

In-year – in line with the proposed locally agreed scheme, applications can be made direct to Wokingham Borough Council.

Appeals – the new Appeals Code includes a deadline for lodging appeals which allows appellants at least 20 school days from the date of notification

that their application was unsuccessful to prepare and lodge their written appeals. It is recommended that the school makes this clear in its arrangements. Dates should be made available on the school website.

Please add that there is no automatic right to a further appeal for admission within the same academic year unless there is an exceptional situation resulting in a significant change of circumstance relevant to the application.

6th form admissions – it is noted that the school is proposing the requirement for a pass at C or above in English or Mathematics GCSE as an additional entry requirement to the 6th form. Please note that the school must apply entry requirements equally to both internal and external applicants to fill ad hoc courses.

Comments relating to tiebreaker above may also apply.

The school must ensure it complies with Code 2.5 regarding proof of birth date and ensure that it does not see 'long' birth certificates.

Appeals to the sixth form must follow the timetable on page 10 of the School Admissions Appeals Code.

THE HOLT SCHOOL

The school is not consulting on any changes to their current policy and has been reminded to determine policy for 2013/2014 including only changes prescribed in the School Admissions and School Admissions Appeals Codes.

This is the first year the school has not consulted on any changes.