

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
SCHOOL ADMISSIONS FORUM  
HELD ON MONDAY 2 DECEMBER 2013 FROM 7.00PM TO 8.25PM**

*Present:-*

**Local Education Authority Representatives:**

Ian Pittock and Beth Rowland

**Diocesan Representatives**

David Babb (Chairman)

**Parent Representatives:**

Phiala Mehring

**Representatives from the Local Community**

None present

**Schools Representatives**

Elaine Stewart – *Winnersh Primary School*

Hilary Winter – *The Piggott CE Aided Secondary School* (Vice Chairman)

Celia Thatcher – *Grazeley CE Aided Primary School*

*Also present:-*

*David Armstrong, School Place Planning and Support Team Manager*

*Sue Riddick, School Admissions Lead Officer*

*Piers Brunning, Service Manager, Children's Services Infrastructure Development*

*Tricia Harcourt, Senior Democratic Services Officer*

**1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

**RESOLVED:** That David Babb be elected as Chairman of the School Admissions Forum for the remainder of the 2013/14 academic year.

**2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

**RESOLVED:** That Hilary Winter be appointed as Vice Chairman of the School Admissions Forum for the remainder of the 2013/14 academic year.

**3. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Forum held on 17 July 2013 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**4. APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was submitted from Patricia Cuss, Early years Forum

**5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## 6. CONSULTATION ON 2015-16 ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED AND COMMUNITY SCHOOLS AND COORDINATED ADMISSION SCHEMES

The Forum received and considered a report setting out the proposed consultation on the 2015/16 proposed changes to the admission arrangements for voluntary controlled and community schools and the co-ordinated admissions schemes set out on Agenda pages 5 to 12.

The proposed 2015/16 Coordinated Admissions Scheme incorporating the Wokingham Borough Council's Admissions Policies for community and voluntary controlled schools, was attached on Agenda pages 13 to 43.

The proposed Local Co-ordinated In-Year Admissions Scheme for community, voluntary controlled primary and secondary schools and own admission authority schools was attached on Agenda pages 44 to 59.

The proposed Foundation 1(F1) Admissions Policy was attached on Agenda pages 60 to 76.

The proposed Sixth Form Admissions Policy was attached on Agenda pages 77 to 86.

The consultation within the local authority's relevant area on the proposed admission arrangements for 2015/16 will take place for a minimum eight week period which will be concluded by 1 March 2014. .

Sue Riddick explained the rationale for the proposed changes to be included in the consultation which were as follows:

### **Oversubscription Criteria**

#### ***Criterion B – Serious, medical, physical or psychological or social needs as grounds for admission (Primary and Secondary Schools)***

Proposal to revise the wording of the criterion and the note to make clearer. A further revised wording in light of the Chief School Adjudicator's observation in his annual report was circulated at the meeting as follows:

*B - Children who have exceptional medical or social needs as the grounds for their admission to a particular school. (See note 2)*

#### *Note 2*

*When submitting applications under criterion B (exceptional medical or social needs as grounds for their admittance to a particular school), this must be supported by written evidence from an independent professional aware of the child's case or the parent/carer's case (e.g. doctor, hospital consultant or psychologist for medical grounds or registered social or care worker, housing officer, the police or probation officer for social needs). This evidence must be specific to the school in question; it must show why that school is the most suitable; what facilities will benefit the child, and why no other school can offer the same support.*

*Your application cannot be considered if you do not declare that you are applying under this criterion and you do not provide written independent professional evidence. All supporting documentation must be received by 15 January 2015 for consideration prior to the main allocation of places. An admissions panel will consider the supporting evidence provided and will advise the applicant of its decision; the panel's decision is final. Any evidence received by the school admissions team after 15 January will not be taken into account in the main*

*allocation of places but may if agreed by panel, affect the applicant's position on a school's waiting list after offer day.*

*It should be noted that all schools have the resources to work with special educational needs and common childhood complaints such as asthma or allergies."*

**There were no objections from the Forum in relation to the revised wording for Note 3 in Criterion C section.**

***Criterion C – In the case of a junior school; children who have attended an infant school with close links with the school. (applicable to primary admissions only)***

Proposal to amend to show requirement for a child to currently attend the infant school by the closing date for applications.

**There were no objections from the Forum in relation to the revision of the wording in Criterion C.**

***Note 3 to criterion C and D,***

Remove Note 3 the section that applies to siblings living in the designated are, as this has will have time expired in 2015/16.

**There were no objections from the Forum in relation to the removal of note 3 in Criterion C and D.**

***Criterion F – Children whose parents have a preference for single sex education(applicable to secondary admissions)***

Proposal to remove this criterion and all other references to The Forest School, as there are no community schools requiring this criterion. The specific tiebreaker and sibling protection which applied to this school will also be removed.

**There were no objections from the Forum in relation to the proposed deletion of Criterion F.**

***Split Living Arrangements (applicable to primary and secondary admissions)***

Proposal to amend the wording the provide more detail relating to children who equally split their time between parents.

**There were no objections from the Forum in relation to the proposed rewording of the section explaining Split Living Arrangements.**

***Section relating to the inclusion of proposed new schools within the co-ordinated scheme arrangements.***

Proposal to include a new section setting out how any new schools in the Borough will be included in the co-ordinated admissions scheme

It was suggested that the words 'maintained school' in the eighth paragraph on page 29 of the Scheme ( Agenda page 41) be changed to 'established school'.

**There were no objections from the Forum in relation to the inclusion of a new section relating to new schools.**

***Upper School Admissions***

Proposal to amend the existing wording to include reference the introduction of a new relevant year.

**There were no objections from the Forum in relation to the revised wording relating to the inclusion of a new relevant year.**

### ***Waiting Lists***

Proposal to amend the wording to provide greater clarity.

**There were no objections from the Forum in relation to the revised wording on Waiting Lists.**

### **Admission Numbers**

There is no longer a requirement to consult on any proposed increase in admission numbers. None are currently proposed, but separate consultations on any proposals within the Primary School Strategy to expand or commission new schools will be carried out. Planned admission numbers in the Coordinated Scheme will be updated if necessary.

### **Designated Areas**

No changes proposed in the Borough.

### **Co-ordinated Schemes**

There are no major changes proposed to the schemes apart from changes to the dates, which are set out on Agenda pages 10 and 11.

### ***In-Year Co-ordinated Scheme***

Although there is no longer a requirement for in-year application to be co-ordinate, it is proposed to continue to maintain a co-ordinated in-year scheme for community and voluntary controlled schools, and own admission authority schools if there is an agreement to do so.

A revised paragraph relating to the process for appealing is proposed:

Changes to the criteria and admission scheme will be applied to the in-year co-ordinated scheme.

**There were no objections from the Forum in relation to the proposed changes to the Coordinated Admissions Schemes and the In-Year Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme.**

**RESOLVED** That the proposed changes to the Admission Arrangements for Voluntary Controlled and Community Schools, and the Co-ordinated Schemes for 2015/16 as set out on Agenda pages 6 to 12, be included in the consultation.

## **7. REVIEW OF FAIR ACCESS PROTOCOL – UPDATE**

The Forum received and considered a report giving an update on the progress made during the review of the Authority's Fair Access Protocol, as set out on Agenda page 87.

Copies of the revised documents were included as follows:

- Fair Access Protocol Overview
- Young people at risk of permanent exclusion
- Secondary Schools - Managed Transfers
- Primary Schools – Managed Transfers
- Vulnerable Children

These documents are now the subject of a formal consultation with all schools and responses have been requested from Headteachers and Chairs of Governors by 14 January 2014.

**RESOLVED:** That the revised Fair Access Protocol documents be noted.

## **8. ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR VOLUNTARY AIDED SCHOOLS AND ACADEMIES**

The Forum received and considered the copies of the admission arrangements, submitted by the following voluntary aided schools and academies:

- All Saints CE Aided Primary
- Shinfield St Mary's CE Aided Junior School

The other schools' policies are still being prepared and will be circulated later. Comment was made that the Voluntary Aided C of E Schools are not proposing material changes.

It was reported that Maiden Erlegh School was consulting on a with parents on a change to include give the children of staff who have been there for 2 years a priority in the oversubscription criteria. Also that The Forest will be consulting on setting an increased Admission Number for Years 9 and 10.

**RESOLVED:** That the submitted admission arrangements for Voluntary Aided Schools and Academies that had been submitted, be noted.

## **9. LOCAL AUTHORITY REPORT TO THE OFFICE OF THE SCHOOLS ADJUDICATOR – UPDATE**

The Forum received and considered a report, set out on Agenda pages 136 to 137, giving details of the reasons for in-year admissions during the period 1 September 2012 to 30 July 2013, as requested at the last meeting during the discussion of the Authority's report to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator.

Sue Riddick mentioned that in –year applications do not have to say why pupils are leaving their previous school; and that the figures did not include pupils allocated from waiting lists. There were more than last year and it is becoming more complex getting families into the same school, especially those with several children.

In response to issues raised, Officers confirmed that currently here were sufficient places in Reception, but there was pressure across the Borough for places in Years 1 and 2. They also indicated that it was difficult to predict numbers because there is a significant number of children who move into the area, and a number of the known 'birth children' are sent to private schools.

For their information, Forum Members had been sent a link to the Annual Report of the Office of the Schools Adjudicator, and the specific recommendations made were noted. In light of comments made in the report in relation to the sibling criteria, Officers were asked by the Forum to look again at the sibling criteria in terms of the recent adjudications.

**RESOLVED:** That the update on the Authority's annual report to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator be noted.

## **10. DATES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS AND FORWARD PROGRAMME**

The dates for planned meetings of the Forum for the 2013/14 municipal year were noted as follows: 10 February and 11 March 2014

Items for these meetings would include:

- 10 February – consultation from own Admission Authority's on their proposed admission policies/arrangements for 2015/16;

- 11 March - consideration of the responses to the Authority's consultation on its admission arrangements for 2015/16.

*These are the Minutes of a meeting of the School Admissions Forum*

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