

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
SCHOOL ADMISSIONS FORUM
HELD ON TUESDAY 2 DECEMBER 2014 FROM 7.00PM TO 8.30PM**

Present:-

Local Education Authority Representatives:

Ian Pittock

Diocesan Representatives

David Babb (Chairman)

Parent Representatives:

Phiala Mehring (Vice Chairman)

Representatives from the Local Community

Captain Dave Barbieri - *Arborfield Garrison*

– *Other Faith Groups*

Schools Representatives

Celia Thatcher – *Grazeley CE Aided Primary School*

Also present:-

Sue Riddick, Lead Admissions Officer

Piers Brunning, Service Manager, Policy, Strategy a& Partnerships (Children & Adults)

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 2014/15 academic year.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED: That Phiala Mehring be appointed as Vice Chairman of the School Admissions Forum for the remainder of the 2014/15 academic year.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Forum held on 24 June 2014 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was submitted from Beth Rowland, Local Authority; Patricia Cuss, Early Years Forum; Elaine Stewart, Aldryngton Primary School; Maggie Segrove, Oakbank School.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Phiala Mehring declared an interest in Item 8 – Consultation on Admission Arrangements for The Forest School, on the grounds that she is a governor at The Forest School, and part of its Admissions Committee.

6. CONSULTATION ON 2016/17 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 2016/17 proposed changes to the admission arrangements for voluntary controlled and community schools and the co-ordinated admissions schemes set out on Agenda pages 4 and 5. However, this year none of the proposed changes require formal consultation.

It was noted that Annexe A to the report on Agenda pages 6 to 12 had been included in error and should be disregarded.

The proposed 2016/17 Coordinated Admissions Schemes for Primary and Secondary Schools, incorporating the Wokingham Borough Council's Admissions Policies for community and voluntary controlled schools, was attached on Agenda pages 13 to 44.

The proposed 2016/17 Foundation 1(F1) Admissions Policy was attached on Agenda pages 45 to 60.

The proposed Local Co-ordinated In-Year Admissions Scheme for community, voluntary controlled primary and secondary schools and own admission authority schools for 2016/17 was attached on Agenda pages 61 to 77.

The proposed 2016/17 Sixth Form Admissions Policy was attached on Agenda pages 78 to 86.

Sue Riddick explained the rationale for the proposed changes which were as follows:

Setting of sixth form admission numbers for external applicants with the agreement of the schools concerned

This change will be made in the Sixth Form Admissions Policy to comply with the provisions of the new School Admissions Code.

The inclusion of reference to Education, Health & Care Plans in addition to Statements of Educational Needs

This change will be made in various parts of the arrangements, following the replacement of Statements with Education, Health & Care Plans.

Clarification of Criterion A to include all previously looked-after children and amendments to the orders referred to

This change is to comply with the provisions of the new School Admissions Code.

Clarification of the wording of the sibling clauses to make clear that the rule applies to siblings attending school "at the time of application".

This change is for clarification.

Clarification of process for summer born children whose parents may request that their child may work out of normal year group

This change is for clarification following guidance from the Department for Education. This is a request not a right and the best interests of the child will be considered.

Comment was made that working out of normal year group can cause problems later in a child's school career. Sue Riddick said that initially parents are asked to apply for the proper year group, and then a request to delay is discussed.

It was suggested that in the second paragraph at the top of page Agenda page 19 the wording should be changed in the sentence "...parents will be required to submit an application for the normal age group ..." to be "...parents will be asked to submit..."

RESOLVED That the proposed changes to the Admission Arrangements for Voluntary Controlled and Community Schools, and the Co-ordinated Schemes for 2016/17 as set out on Agenda pages 4 and 5 be noted, and that there was no requirement to consult on the proposed changes

Sue Riddick mentioned that one suggestion for a change had been received from a parent in relation to the joint Designated Area for Polehampton Infant and Junior Schools and Colleton Primary. He suggested that in order to allow those who live in the north of the designated area to have a chance of getting a place at Polehampton Infant School, the point for measuring should be Polehampton Junior School. The admissions team will be looking for robust evidence of a problem and the effect of such a possible change, including the influence of the new primary school in the area. Consideration will be given as to whether this should be included in the consultation for the 2017/18 admission arrangements.

7. PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE SCHOOL ADMISSIONS CODE

The Forum received and considered a report, detailing the Department for Education's (DfE) proposed changes to the School Admissions Code, which were published for consultation in July 2014 and which will be implemented with effect from 19 December 2014, having been laid before Parliament in October 2014.

The report included copies of:

- The School Admissions Code, draft for consultation July 2014 - Agenda pages 89 to 130;
- The Changes to the Code - Agenda pages 131 to 146;
- Wokingham Borough Council's response to the consultation - Agenda pages 147 to 154;
- The DfE's response to the outcomes of the consultation - Agenda pages 155 to 169;
- The Draft School Admissions (Admissions Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) Regulations 2014 - Agenda pages 170 to 174.

Sue Riddick indicated that some of the proposed changes to the Code had been included in the proposed Admission arrangements for 2016/17.

RESOLVED: That the proposed changes to the School Admissions Code and Regulations 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:

- The Forest School attached at Agenda pages 176 to 186.

Minor amendments to the policy to comply with the School Admissions Code were suggested by Sue Riddick.

The other schools' policies are still being prepared and will be circulated later. It was reported that Maiden Erlegh School and The Holt School will be consulting on proposed changes to their admission arrangements

Comment was made that the Voluntary Aided C of E Schools are not proposing material changes.

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

9. UPDATE ON 2014/15 TRANSFER GROUPS

The Forum received and considered a verbal report giving an update on the entry to primary school, primary to secondary transfer and the transfer to year 3 in junior schools for September 2014.

Sue Riddick commented that currently, the number of school places available at Wokingham Borough schools was: 130 in Year 7 secondary schools and 47 in Reception at primary schools.

The number of In-Year applications across all year groups had increased this year; between May half term and September, 784 primary applications had been received and 315 for secondary, in comparison to the total numbers for the previous 12 months of 1218 primary and 482 secondary. The majority of applications are related to families moving into the area.

In relation to future availability of school places, Piers Brunning indicated that there were plans to open new schools within the Strategic Development Locations (SDL) in the Borough where large housing developments will be built over the next few years. A secondary school in the south of the Borough, and a new primary school in the Montague Park development the eastern part of the South Wokingham Strategic Development (SDL) are planned to be opened in September 2016. There will be a primary school in the western part of the South Wokingham SDL and another in the western part of the North Wokingham SDL. Applications for Year 7 places at the new Maiden Erlegh School in Reading for September 2015 can be made this year.

RESOLVED: That the update report on the current situation with admissions in the transfer groups to primary school, primary to secondary transfer and the transfer to year 3 in junior schools for September 2014 be noted.

10. DATES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

The dates for planned meetings of the Forum for the remainder of the 2014/15 municipal year were noted as follows: 10 February and 10 March 2015

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

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