

TITLE	School Admission Arrangements 2021/22
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on Thursday, 20 February 2020
WARD	None specific
LEAD OFFICER	Director of Children's Services - Carol Cammiss
LEAD MEMBER	Executive Member for Children's Services - UllaKarin Clark

PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)

The decision is a statutory requirement under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. It is a key decision because it affects all Wokingham residents. The benefit to Wokingham residents is that children can be admitted to Wokingham schools in an ordered way, in accordance with statutory requirements.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive determines that the Wokingham Borough School Admissions arrangements for the 2021/22 School Year should be unchanged from those in force for the 2020/21 School Year.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Wokingham Borough Council (the Council) has statutory responsibilities for admissions to mainstream publicly funded schools (Academies, Free Schools and Maintained Schools) in the Wokingham Borough area.

The council is the admissions authority for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools in its area. Academies, Free Schools and Voluntary Aided Schools are admissions authorities in their own right. Admissions authorities set the admissions arrangements (including the oversubscription criteria) and are responsible for managing appeals and mid-year applications for places.

The council also co-ordinates the admission of children into a relevant age group (i.e. the age groups to which pupils are normally admitted to schools) for all publicly funded schools in its area. This is normally for entry to the Reception Year, Year 3 (for Junior schools) and Year 7 (for transfer to secondary school). There is no requirement for admissions to other age groups to be co-ordinated. However, the council co-ordinates admissions to other age groups for community and voluntary controlled schools and for other Academy, Free and Voluntary Aided schools that have opted into this service.

Admissions arrangements and the co-ordination scheme must be determined by February 28th in the determination year (2020), the year before children are admitted to schools (2021). There is no requirement to consult, where the arrangements have been unchanged, for up to seven years. Even though no changes are proposed, the formal determination is the responsibility of the Council's Executive, because of the borough wide significance of the admissions arrangements.

No substantive changes to the 2020/21 admissions arrangements are considered necessary this year. These in turn were carried forward from the 2019/20 year (when consultation was carried out). This reflects both the number of own admissions authority schools in the borough and that the DfE have made no changes to the statutory guidance since 2014. All bar two secondary schools, all new primary schools and twelve long-standing primary schools are now own admissions authority schools.

There are no additional financial implications through adopting these arrangements and no significant risks have been identified. While changes could be made to the recommended arrangements, they would be at risk of being struck out a later stage by the Schools Adjudicator, because they have not been consulted on.

Once arrangements have been determined, the council must:

- notify a prescribed list of bodies
- publish a copy of the determined arrangements on its website
- publish information about how objections to the arrangements can be made to the Schools Adjudicator.
- send a copy of the determined arrangements to the Secretary of State for Education,
by 15th March 2020.

Objections to the determined arrangements can be made to the Schools Adjudicator until 15th May 2020.

The arrangements will be published in the parents' guides to primary and secondary admission in September 2020.

BACKGROUND

As noted in the Executive Summary the council has a statutory duty to determine admissions arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools and to co-ordinate admission to relevant year groups (to Reception, Year 3 and Year 7 classes) for all publicly funded schools in the Borough. The statutory duties are set out in the statutory School Admissions Code, based on the The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012 and the underlying School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and Education Act 1996.

The schools that the Council determines admissions arrangements for are:

Secondary

The Bulmershe School
The Emmbrook School

Primary

Aldryngton Primary School	Rivermead Primary School
Bearwood Primary School	Robert Piggott CE Infants School,(The)
Colleton Primary School	Robert Piggott CE Junior School,(The)
Emmbrook Infant School	Shinfield Infant and Nursery School
Emmbrook Junior School	Shinfield St Mary's CE Junior School
Farley Hill Primary School	South Lake Primary School
Gorse Ride Infant School	St Pauls CE Junior School
Gorse Ride Junior School	The Colleton Primary School
Hawkedon Primary School	The Hawthorns Primary School
Highwood Primary School	Walter Infant School
Hillside Primary School	Wescott Infant School
Keep Hatch Primary School	Westende Junior School
Lambs Lane Primary School	Whiteknights Primary School
Loddon Primary School	Willow Bank Infant School
Polehampton CE Infants School	Willow Bank Junior School
Polehampton CE Junior School	Winnersh Primary School
Radstock Primary School	Woodley CE Primary School

Note: CE is Church of England

A number of these schools are in the process of converting to Academy status. They would be expected to inherit arrangements set by the local authority, if they convert after the determination date.

The “own admissions authority” schools are:

Secondary

Maiden Erlegh School
The Holt School
The Piggott School (*all through school*)
Oakbank
The Forest School
Waingels College
Bohunt School Wokingham
St Crispin's School

Primary

Academy / Free Schools

Beechwood Primary School
Crazies Hill CE Primary School
Earley St Peter's CE Primary School
Ewendons Primary School
Floreat Montague Park Primary School
Hatch Ride Primary School
Nine Mile Ride Primary School
Oaklands Infant School
Oaklands Junior School
Saint Sebastians CE Primary School
Sonning CE Primary School
St Nicholas CE Primary, Hurst
St Teresa's Catholic Academy
The Coombes CE Primary School
Wheatfield Primary School
Windmill Primary School

Voluntary Aided Schools

All Saints CE Primary School
Finchampstead CE Primary School
Grazeley Parochial CE Primary School
St Dominic Savio Catholic Primary School

As established above the admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools, along with the co-ordination scheme for all publicly funded schools in the borough must be determined by 28th February 2020. After determination, a number of bodies must be informed, and the arrangements must be published on the council's website, along with a notice setting how objections can be made to the Schools Adjudicator. The bodies that must be informed after determination are:

- all other admission authorities within the relevant area (except that primary schools need not consult secondary schools);
- whichever of the governing body and the local authority who are not the admission authority;
- in the case of schools designated with a religious character, the body or person representing the religion or religious denomination
- all governing bodies for community and voluntary controlled schools in the relevant area.

Once determined the Council can only make changes to the adopted arrangements in very limited circumstances. These include to correct a mistake or to ensure that arrangements are compliant with statutory requirements. Otherwise, changes can only be made by the Schools Adjudicator, either in response to an objection or following an application by this council because of a major change in circumstances.

Objections can be made until 15th May 2020. The early date is to make it likely that objections can be considered before the composite prospectus (also known as the primary and secondary guides) is prepared, in time for its statutory publication date on 12th September 2020.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council continues to face severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of reductions to public sector funding and growing pressures in our statutory services. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions of approximately £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	Nil	Yes	
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	Nil	Yes	
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	Nil	Yes	

Other Financial Information
None

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation
No consultation is required.

Public Sector Equality Duty
Due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty has been taken. No equalities assessment has been undertaken because no change to policy is proposed.

List of Background Papers
2020/21 School Admissions arrangements (published on the Council's website) The School Admissions Code 2014 (Statutory School Admissions Code)

Contact Piers Brunning	Service Learning Achievement and Partnerships
Telephone Tel: 0118 974 6084	Email piers.brunning@wokingham.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank