

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>School Admission Arrangements 2023/2024</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	The Executive on Thursday, 17 February 2022
<b>WARD</b>	None specific;
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	Director, Children's Services - Helen Watson
<b>LEAD MEMBER</b>	Executive Member for Children's Services - Graham Howe

**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:

- 1) determines the proposed Admission Arrangements for school admissions for the school year September 2023 to August 2024;
- 2) agree to final the report for publication including incorporation of statutory changes and non-material amendments and updates as required to the published version;
- 3) delegates authority to the Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the Lead Member for Children's Services, to determine Admission Arrangements for school admissions, if there are no substantial changes to the arrangements, in future years;
- 4) Please note that a further paper regarding place planning specifically, will be submitted to Executive as a separate report at a later date.

**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 (2022), the year before children are admitted to schools (2023).

***There are general changes to the wording/phrasing of the school admission arrangements which were required to be written in line with guidance from the Department for Education. Changes were also made for clarification, defining key terminology and the changing dates for the admissions process.***

**Change 1:** The Local Authority is proposing to change the deadline for house moves and additional supporting evidence for **Secondary School Applications to 31<sup>st</sup> December**. Currently the last date for providing evidence for house moves and other supporting evidence for secondary school applications is 15<sup>th</sup> January. Applying for secondary school is a nationally coordinated process and we are proposing to amend the deadline to match that of our neighbouring authorities.

**Change 2:** The Schools Adjudicator has determined a reduction in Published Admission Numbers (PAN) for the following schools;

- The Admission Number of the Colleton Primary School in Twyford to reduce from 60 to 45.
- The Admission Number of Radstock Primary School in Earley to reduce from 60 to 45.
- The Admission Number of Loddon Primary School in Earley to reduce from 90 to 60.

**Farley Hill:** The Executive approved to bring forward the expansion to Farley Hill Primary School to September 2022 on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2021. This report is to determine the admission arrangements for 2023/2024 only, to enable the Local Authority to implement those agreed changes to Farley Hill for children starting school in 2023/2024.

**Change 3:** The Designated Area of the Farley Hill Primary School is increased to include two additional areas:

- Sherman Avenue, Fox Close and Archer Grove
- Poperinghe Way and Highfield Park

**Change 4:** The address for measurement purposes is the Local Land and Property Gazetteer address point for the new Farley Hill Primary School site in Baston Road, Arborfield Green, RG2 9YW.

**Change 5:** The Planned Admission Number of the Farley Hill Primary School is increased to 60

A consultation on Wokingham Borough Admission Arrangements for 2023/2024 began on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2021 and ended on the 17<sup>th</sup> January 2022. There were 17 responses to the consultation, with 7 written comments relating to Farley Hill. The general theme was concern that the increase of PAN for Farley Hill would have a detrimental impact on other local schools. These issues have previously been considered when executive agreed the original expansion to Farley Hill.

## 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 coordinate admission to relevant year groups (to Reception, Year 3 and Year 7 classes) for all publicly funded schools in the Borough.

Voluntary Aided, Foundation, Free schools and Academies have responsibility for determining their own admission arrangements, also including catchment areas and oversubscription criteria.

Voluntary Aided, Foundation, Free schools and Academies are own admission authority schools. The governing body or academy trust is responsible for the admissions policy and make any decisions about the allocation of places.

The statutory duties are set out in the Statutory School Admissions Code 2021, based on 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 (last remaining community secondary school)
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### Primary

Aldryngton	Bearwood	Emmbrook Infant
Emmbrook Junior	Farley Hill	Gorse Ride Infants
Gorse Ride Junior	Hawkedon	Highwood
Hillside	Lambs Lane	Loddon
Radstock	Rivermead	Robert Piggott Infant
Robert Piggott Junior	South Lake	St Paul's Junior
The Colleton	The Hawthorns	Walter Infant
Winnersh	Willow Bank Infant	Willow Bank Junior
Woodley		

**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
The Emmbrook	

## Primary

Alder Grove	All Saints	Beechwood
Crazies Hill	Earley St Peter's	Evendons
Finchampstead	Floreat Montague Park	Grazeley
Hatch Ride	Keep Hatch	Nine Mile Ride
Oaklands Infant	Oaklands Junior	Polehampton Infant
Polehampton Junior	St Cecilia's	St Sebastian's
Shinfield Junior	Shinfield Infant	Sonning
St Dominic Savio	St Nicholas	St Teresa's
The Coombes	Charvil Piggott	Wescott Infant
Westende Junior	Wheatfield	Windmill
		Whiteknights

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 2022.

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 2022. 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 2022.

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

***The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.***

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	£0	Yes	

Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£0	Yes	
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£0	Yes	

<b>Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision</b>
None

<b>Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation</b>
A consultation on Wokingham Borough Admission Arrangements for 2023/2024 began on 29 <sup>th</sup> November 2021 and ended on the 17 <sup>th</sup> January 2022.
In accordance with the School Admissions Code 2021 the Local Authority has consulted with:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ parents of children between the ages of two and eighteen;</li> <li>➤ other persons in the relevant area who in the opinion of the admission authority have an interest in the proposed admissions;</li> <li>➤ all other admission authorities within the relevant area;</li> <li>➤ whichever of the governing body and the local authority is not the admission authority;</li> <li>➤ any adjoining neighbouring local authorities where the admission authority is the local authority;</li> <li>➤ in the case of schools designated with a religious character, the body or person representing the religion or religious denomination.</li> </ul>

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

<b>Climate Emergency – <i>This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030</i></b>
None

<b>List of Background Papers</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposed 2023/24 Admission Arrangements to be determined</li> <li>• Proposed 2023/24 In-Year Admissions Arrangements to be determined</li> <li>• 2022/23 School Admissions Arrangements for information (<i>this document is not included in the agenda but can be found on the Council’s website</i>)</li> <li>• The School Admissions Code 2021 (Statutory School Admissions Code) (<i>this document is not included in the agenda but can be found on the Council’s website</i>)</li> </ul>

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