

Meeting:	Cabinet
Date:	6 April 2006
Subject:	Determination of Admission Arrangements for the 2007/2008 academic year
Responsible Officer:	Geoff Wingrove
Contact Officer:	Madeleine Hitchens
Portfolio Holder:	Bill Stephenson
Key Decision:	Yes
Status:	Public

Section 1: Summary

Decision Required

1. To determine the admission arrangements to apply to Harrow community primary and high schools for the 2007/08 academic year, as set out in Appendix 1, taking into account the recommendations of the Harrow Admissions Forum:
 - To change the sibling link so that it applies to brothers/sisters living at the same address who will be attending the school at the same time.
 - To reduce the Planned Admissions Number for Little Stanmore First & Middle School from 45 to 30.
2. To agree the schemes of co-ordination for Primary, 11+ and 12+ for the 2007-8 academic year. (Appendix 2)
3. To agree a further one year extension of the single intake to reception pilot.
4. To agree the process for evaluation of the impact of single intake to reception, as set out in Appendix 3.

Reason for report

There is a statutory requirement under the School Standards and Framework Act 1988 for admission authorities to determine admission arrangements by 15 April in the determination year (ie by 15 April 2006).

This report and Cabinet decisions will satisfy this statutory requirement.

Benefits

- The Council will meet its statutory obligation under the School Standards and Framework Act 1988 to determine admission arrangements.

- The Council will be in a position to publish details of admission arrangements as required by regulations made under section 92 of the 1998 Act, which requires every LA to publish information annually about admission arrangements for the following year for maintained schools in its area.

Cost of Proposals

None

Risks

It is a statutory requirement to determine and publish admission arrangements annually.

Implications if recommendations rejected

The Council will not meet its statutory obligations under the School Standards and Framework Act.

Section 2: Report

Brief History

Under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 Harrow is required to consult before determining its admission arrangements. The 1988 Act (as amended by the Education Act 2002) also requires each LA to establish an Admissions Forum to provide a vehicle for admission authorities and other key interested parties to get together to discuss the effectiveness of local admission arrangements.

At its meeting on 10 October 2005 the Harrow Admissions Forum considered the current admission arrangements to assess how well they served the interest of local parents and children. The following issues were brought specifically to the Forum's attention and after careful consideration the Forum agreed to consult on a number of minor amendments.

Options considered

At the time of the meeting on 10 October 2005 the DfES was consulting on a Revised School Admissions Code of Practice, due to come into effect from

September 2007. The Admission Forum considered the implications of changes proposed in the Draft Code of Practice in relation to Harrow's current admission rules. Later in the Autumn, however, the Secretary of State for Education advised LAs that implementation of the draft Code of Practice would be deferred.

The following issues were brought specifically to the Forum's attention and after careful consideration the Forum agreed to consult on a number of minor amendments.

Sibling criterion

Harrow's current sibling rule gives priority to "children who have an older brother or sister who will be attending the school on the closing date for receipt of applications". This means that the older sibling will no longer be attending the school when the younger child starts.

In light of the revised draft code, which advises "it would not normally be good practice to give priority to children whose siblings previously attended the school but no longer do so", the Admissions Forum agreed to consult on changing the sibling criterion so that to qualify for the sibling link, brothers/sisters had to be attending the school at the same time.

Single intake to reception

At its meeting on 14 October 2003, the Cabinet agreed to the introduction of a pilot that would enable community primary schools to admit children in a single intake in September. As part of the pilot it was agreed that an assessment of the impact of single intake into Reception would be made after one full academic year.

Reduction in Planned Admission Number for Little Stanmore F&M School

The Governing Body of Little Stanmore F&M School put forward a proposal to reduce the Planned Admission Number (PAN). The reasons for the reduction are to:

- Enable the school to phase out mixed age classes.
- Support the school in delivering a stable, quality learning environment.
- Ensure the school can deliver better quality education and forward planning.
- Allow the school to develop their work as an extended school.

If the Cabinet agree this proposal, as the Planned Admissions Number is lower than the net capacity formula, Harrow will follow the necessary statutory procedures to implement this change for the 2007-8 academic year. The new Planned Admission Number would be introduced on a rolling basis, starting in Reception.

Consultation

Copies of proposed schemes of co-ordination, the current admission arrangements, plus details of the proposals from the Harrow Admissions Forum were circulated to all Harrow schools, all other admission authorities in the relevant area and neighbouring Local Authorities as required under The Education (Determination of Admission Arrangements) Regulations 1999.

In addition, consultation specifically on the sibling link was undertaken through the Harrow People magazine and the full consultation report was posted on the Harrow website.

An analysis of the consultation outcomes is attached at Appendix 4.

Recommendations to Cabinet from the Admission Forum

The Admission Forum agreed the following recommendations to the Cabinet to be effective from the 2007-8 academic year:

Schemes of co-ordination

To adopt the proposed schemes of co-ordination as set out in Appendix 2.

Admission Arrangements

To adopt the proposed admissions arrangements including the following changes:

- Change to sibling criterion, so that it applies to brothers/sisters living at the same address who will be attending the school at the same time (i.e. the older sibling will still be attending when the younger child starts at the school). A theme that arose from the consultation was about the introduction of Sixth Forms and the impact of these on the sibling link. The Forum decided not to recommend any change to the sibling criterion at present, but to review this in light of the development of sixth form provision in Harrow.
- Reduction to the Planned Admission Number for Little Stanmore F&M School from 45 to 30 on a rolling basis, starting in Reception.

Single intake to reception

To extend the pilot for a further year and to undertake an evaluation of the impact of the first year of operation of the Single Intake to Reception.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications to the Council arising from this report.

Legal Implications

Section 89 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 makes it a statutory obligation for each admissions authority to determine the admission arrangements annually. Regulation 3(2) of the Education (Determination of Admission Arrangements) Regulations (SI 1999/126) specifies that such determination should be before 15 April in any given year.

Equalities Impact

Harrow's oversubscription criteria have been developed in line with guidance in the School Admissions Code of Practice in order to be objective, clear, fair and compatible with admissions and equal opportunities legislation.

The proposed changes respond to the needs and wishes of service users from Harrow's diverse communities.

The changes are linked to the corporate strategic priority to promote Harrow as a centre of lifelong learning, by offering the highest quality education services, by raising aspirations and outcomes of achievement and by providing activities for cultural, artistic and leisure pursuits which reflect the profile and the interests of all local communities.

Section 3: Supporting Information/ Background Documents

Appendices (circulated in the Cabinet Supporting Documents Pack)

Appendix 1:	Admission arrangements for the 2007/2008 academic year.
Appendix 2(i)	Primary co-ordinated admissions scheme
Appendix 2(ii)	11+ co-ordinated admissions scheme
Appendix 2(iii)	12+ co-ordinated admissions scheme
Appendix 3(i):	Timetable for Single Intake to Reception
Appendix 3(ii)	Evaluation form for impact of single intake – schools and pre-school groups
Appendix 3(iii)	Evaluation form for impact of single intake – parents/carers
Appendix 4:	Consultation feedback on co-ordinated admissions schemes statutory consultees
Appendix 4(i)	Governing Bodies responding to consultation
Appendix 4(ii):	Consultation feedback from Schools
Appendix 4(iii):	Consultation feedback from Parents

Appendix 5 – Recommendation from Harrow Admissions Forum

Background reports:

Cabinet report – 14 April 2005 -Determination of Admission Arrangements for 2006/2007

Any person wishing to inspect the background papers should telephone 020 8424 1398