

Meeting:	Harrow Admissions Forum
Date:	9 July 2008
Subject:	Strategic Reference Group – School Organisation Admissions Focus Group Update
Key Decision: (Executive-side only)	No
Responsible Officer:	Heather Clements, Director Schools and Children’s Development
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Anjana Patel, Schools and Children’s Development
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Appendices 1, 2, 3(i) and 3(i)

Section 1: Summary

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

Recommendations:

To note and comment on the work of the Admissions Focus Group established by the Harrow Admissions Forum to review admission arrangements to reflect Harrow’s change in the age of transfer from 12+ to 11+.

Reason: (For recommendation)

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SECTION 2 - REPORT

Background

At its meeting on 3rd March 2008, the Forum agreed to establish a Working Group to review admission arrangements to reflect Harrow's change in the age of transfer from 12+ to 11+.

The members of the Working Group considered the underlying principles for reviewing the admission arrangements at this stage and agreed the following:

- Encourage parents to stay in Harrow
- Achieve a balance so there is perceived fairness and equity across the borough
- Compliance with the Code of Practice
- Act on commitment made to review high school admission arrangements at time of change in age of transfer.

The group has met on four occasions and has agreed the following actions:

1. Parents' focus group meeting to get views on options for allocating high school places.
2. Views from other main stakeholders through primary heads, secondary heads governors and early years groups.
3. Letter to be sent to heads and chairs of governors (Appendix 1) to give notification of an exercise to gather early views on the fairest means of allocating high school places.
4. Draft timetable (see Appendix 2) to ensure that all stakeholders have time in which to respond.
5. To undertake an initial "sounding" exercise (Appendix 3i and 3ii) with all stakeholders, including an item in the July edition of Harrow People, to find out whether there is any agreement on a system for allocating high school places that is fair to all children and their families. Responses are required by 31 July 2008. A full consultation report can be viewed at www.harrow.gov.uk/earlysoundings
6. Feedback on "soundings" exercise to be considered by the Working Group, who will report to the Stakeholders Reference Group (SRG) on the outcomes. The SRG will make recommendations to the Harrow Admissions Forum to develop specific proposals for formal consultation.
7. Formal consultation will be undertaken in the Autumn term on specific proposals for the admission arrangements for entry to high school in September 2010.

Members of the Admissions Forum may wish to consider some of the more practical issues involved in changing the age of transfer. For example, what will happen to families where two siblings are going through different transfer groups? If one child is offered a place (either Year 7 or Year 8) should the other child have the sibling link for that year only? Forum Members may wish to identify other issues that could impact on admission arrangements in the transitional year.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Performance Issues

There are no performance issues arising from this report.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: John Stansfield	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the* Chief Financial Officer
Date: 30 June 2008		
Name: Rosemarie Martin	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the* Monitoring Officer
Date: 1 July 2008		

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Madeleine Hitchens, Manager Place Planning & Admissions – 020 8424 1398 madeleine.hitchens@harrow.gov.uk

Background Papers: N/A:

21 May 2008

TO ALL HEADTEACHERS
AND CHAIRS OF GOVERNORS

Dear Colleague

ADVANCE NOTICE OF REVIEW OF HIGH SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

As you know, Harrow reviews and consults on admission arrangements for community schools every year. This year, before doing any formal consultation, it has been agreed to take early soundings from schools, parents and other stakeholders on what is the fairest means of allocating high school places.

We are reviewing the admission arrangements to ensure that the oversubscription criteria meet the requirements of the new School Admissions Code of Practice. The Code requires admission authorities to have a system which is clear, objective and provides fair access to educational opportunities. It sets out the government's aim to have a system "where all parents feel they have the same opportunities to apply for the schools they want for their child". All admission authorities are required to have admission arrangements that enable parents to be able to understand whether they have a realistic chance of being offered a place for their child at any particular school. Admission authorities are now required to demonstrate that their admission arrangements are fully compliant with the Code of Practice and other relevant legislation.

After the half-term break we will be sending you detailed information to seek your views on high school admission arrangements. We thought you would like some early notice of this to give you an opportunity to consider how you will engage all parts of your school community in this exercise. Once we have your views these will be used to develop a set of proposals. Consultation on these specific proposals will take place in the autumn term, as part of the annual consultation on admission arrangements.

If you want to discuss this with me, please contact me. My direct line phone number is below.

Yours sincerely

Madeleine Hitchens

Madeleine Hitchens
Manager, Place Planning & Admissions Service

Tel: 020 8424 1398
Fax: 020 8427 0810

D R A F T
CONSULTATION TIMETABLE

INITIAL SOUNDINGS OF PARENTS, SCHOOLS AND EARLY YEARS PROVIDERS ON THEIR VIEWS	TBA BY STAKEHOLDERS REFERENCE GROUP (SRG) REPORT TO GOVERNORS TO INCLUDE INFORMATION ON INVOLVING PARENTS
ARTICLE AND RESPONSE PRO-FORMA IN HARROW PEOPLE	15 JULY ISSUE
CLOSING DATE FOR RESPONSES	31 JULY 2008
FEEDBACK FROM CONSULTATION TO AGE OF TRANSFER (AOT) WORKING GROUP	TBA
REPORT FROM AOT WORKING GROUP TO SRG	TBA
MEETING OF HARROW ADMISSIONS FORUM (HAF) TO AGREE SPECIFIC PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT	TBA
DEVELOPMENT OF OPTIONS / MODELS	SUMMER VACATION
PRESENTATION OF OPTIONS TO AOT WORKING GROUP TO AGREE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SRG	EARLY AUTUMN TERM
PRESENTATION TO SRG OF AOT WORKING GROUP'S RECOMMENDATIONS	TBA
MEETING OF HAF TO AGREE PROPOSALS FOR CONSULTATION	TBA
FORMAL CONSULTATION WITH PARENTS, SCHOOLS, GOVERNORS, STATUTORY CONSULTEES, COMMUNITY GROUPS ETC.	1 OCTOBER 2008
CLOSING DATE FOR CONSULTATION	10 DECEMBER 2008
FEEDBACK TO AOT WORKING GROUP	TBA
FEEDBACK TO SRG	TBA
FEEDBACK TO HAF TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET	TBA
CABINET MEETING TO DETERMINE ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS	TBA (?? 26 MARCH / 2 APRIL??)
STATUTORY DETERMINATION DATE FOR 2010 ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS	15 APRIL 2009

**PARENTS' VERSION
ADMISSION TO HIGH SCHOOL FOR SEPTEMBER 2010**

Harrow is asking for your views on the admission arrangements for entry to co-educational community high schools in 2010. Harrow already gives priority to children looked after, children with statements of special educational needs, medical claims and siblings as part of its admission arrangements.

Harrow has used linked schools for many years. Because of changes in the number of children each high school can admit, the unevenness in the number of primary schools linked to high schools and the fact some schools have two linked high schools and others only one, the system must change if it is to offer a fair means of allocating school places. Distance from home to school has been used for allocating places at primary schools for a number of years.

Before any formal proposals are made, you are being asked to give your views on what you feel is the system that is fair to all children and their families. Once we have your views these will be used to develop a set of proposals. Consultation on these specific proposals will take place in the autumn 2008.

A fuller report plus information about other possible admission rules is available at www.harrow.gov.uk/earlysoundings

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Name of school your child currently attends: _____

Please tick the boxes below to let us know which you think is the fairest system for allocating places in Harrow community high schools:

ADMISSION RULE	FOR		AGAINST	
Distance from home to school measured in a straight line from the home address to the closest school gate				
Linked schools (please see over the page for details of linked school arrangements)				
Would you still want linked schools if your child's current linked high school changed?	Yes		No	
Are there any other systems you think should be considered for allocating school places (including lottery and / or banding) or any other comments you would like to make.				

**PLEASE RETURN BY 31 JULY 2008 TO
ADMISSIONS SERVICE, HARROW COUNCIL, CIVIC CENTRE, HARROW HA1 2UW**

LINKED SCHOOLS

Pupils registered at a linked middle or first & middle school on the closing date for receipt of applications have priority for school places over children from non-linked schools regardless of where they live. Linked schools are as follows:

LINKED HIGH SCHOOL	PLACES AVAILABLE	FEEDER PRIMARY SCHOOLS	MAXIMUM POTENTIAL INTAKE FROM LINKED PRIMARY SCHOOLS
Canons	180	Aylward, Glebe, Little Stanmore, Stag Lane	232
Harrow	180	Belmont*, Elmgrove*, Norbury, Whitefriars*	262
Hatch End	300	Cedars, Grimsdyke, Marlborough, Pinner Park*, St. Johns CofE, Weald, Whitefriars	480
Nower Hill	300	Cannon Lane, Pinner Park*, Pinner Wood, St John Fisher ⁺⁺ , West Lodge	330
Park	280	Belmont*, Kenmore Park, Priestmead, Stanburn, Whitchurch	420
Rooks Heath	260	Earlsmead, Newton Farm, Roxbourne, Roxeth Manor, Welldon Park	330
Whitmore	260	Elmgrove*, Grange, Longfield, Roxeth, Vaughan	348

* Belmont has dual links to Harrow and Park

* Elmgrove has dual links to Harrow and Whitmore

* Pinner Park has dual links to Hatch End and Nower Hill

*Whitefriars has dual links to Harrow and Hatch End

⁺⁺ Currently there is no year 7 at St John Fisher

SCHOOLS' VERSION (ADJUSTED FOR SECTOR)
EARLY SOUNDINGS FROM PRIMARY SCHOOLS ON ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2010

There is a new national code of practice that Harrow must consider when setting the admission rules. The code gives some guidelines on fair ways of allocating places when more applications are received than there are places available in a school. Harrow is asking for your views on the admission arrangements for entry to co-educational community high schools in 2010. Arrangements for Bentley Wood High School for Girls and Harrow's two voluntary aided schools, Sacred Heart and Salvatorian, are not affected and would not change.

Harrow already gives priority to children looked after, children with statements of special educational needs, medical claims and siblings as part of its admission arrangements. All these are described as good practice in the code of practice. Other rules commonly used across the country are:

- Random allocation (lottery)
- Distance between home and school
- Linked schools – this is the system currently used in Harrow
- Banding – this is used to try to ensure that the intake to each school includes a spread of children of different abilities.

We have been talking with parents, headteachers and governors as well as representatives from services that deal with younger children about what is the fairest means of allocating school places. These groups have considered all the options but were not in favour of using lottery or banding.

This leaves distance and linked schools. Harrow has used linked schools for many years. Because of changes in the number of children each high school can admit, the unevenness in the number of primary schools linked to high schools and the fact some schools have two linked high schools and others only one, the system must change if it is to offer a fair means of allocating school places. Distance from home to school has been used for allocating places at primary schools for a number of years.

Before any formal proposals are made, you are being asked to give your views on what you feel is the system that is fair to all children and their families. Once we have your views these will be used to develop a set of proposals. Consultation on these specific proposals will take place in the autumn 2008.

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NAME OF PRIMARY SCHOOL: _____

Please tick the boxes below to let us know which you think is the fairest system for allocating places in Harrow community high schools:

ADMISSION RULE	FOR		AGAINST	
Distance from home to school measured in a straight line				
Linked schools (see overleaf)				
Would you still support linked schools if the high school your school is linked to changed?	Yes		No	
Are there any other systems you think should be considered for allocating school places (including lottery and banding) or any other comments you would like to make.				

**PLEASE RETURN THIS TO THE ADMISSIONS SERVICE, HARROW COUNCIL, HARROW HA1 2UW
 BY 31 JULY 2008**

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Park	280	Belmont*, Kenmore Park, Priestmead, Stanburn, Whitchurch	420
Rooks Heath	260	Earlsmead, Newton Farm, Roxbourne, Roxeth Manor, Welldon Park	330
Whitmore	260	Elmgrove*, Grange, Longfield, Roxeth, Vaughan	348

* Belmont has dual links to Harrow and Park

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