

Meeting:	Harrow Admissions Forum
Date:	3 November 2008
Subject:	Feedback from School Admission Arrangements Working Group
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:	Appendix 1 – Revised high school links Model A, Model B, Model C

## **Section 1: Summary**

### **Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations**

#### ***Recommendations:***

To note and comment on the work of the School Admission Arrangements Working Group reviewing high school oversubscription criteria.

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## SECTION 2 - REPORT

### Background

At the last meeting of the Harrow Admissions Forum (HAF), members received a report updating them on the work of the Stakeholder Reference Group, which was looking at a number of issues around school organisation. Forum Members were informed about an “early soundings” exercise to get initial views on high school admission arrangements

The outcome of this exercise was that 634 responses were received. This was lower than may have been expected but this is probably because no specific proposals were made. Also the results are somewhat skewed by the fact that there were no responses at all from some schools, whilst one school had 148 responses.

The overall response was as follows:

	Number	As a percentage of total responses
Number in favour of distance from home to school	357	57.3%
Number against using distance from home to school	172	27.1%
Number in favour of linked schools	393	62.0%
Number against using linked schools	152	24.0%
Number who would still want links even if they changed	258	40.7%
Number who would only want links if they stayed the same	289	45.6%

This demonstrated that a small number of respondees supported link high schools (ie 4.7%) over distance from home to school. This reduced considerably when the number who would only support link schools if they stayed the same is taken into consideration (ie 45.6% of respondees want the current links to stay the same). Individual responses indicated that support for linked school arrangements is only as strong as parental perception of the linked high school. Where the linked school is deemed by parents to be a school that is achieving well, then linked school arrangements are supported. Where parents' view of the linked school is not so positive, they were more likely to support distance.

The HAF agreed to establish a Working Party to oversee a review of high school admission arrangements and to make recommendations for options for consultation.

## Developing models

### **DISTANCE**

The Working Party were presented with information showing the outcome of the 2008 12+ transfer using distance rather than linked schools to allocate places. This showed relatively little impact on the number of successful first preference applications ie 1556 with linked schools and 1549 with distance (just over 1%).

What was shown was that 106 pupils (6%) who would have been offered the linked school using links, would not have been offered places if distance were used.

<b>DIFFERENCE</b>			
		<b>Linked school</b>	<b>Distance</b>
<b>Hatch End</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>-6</b>
<b>Nower Hill</b>		<b>30</b>	<b>-30</b>
<b>Park</b>		<b>32</b>	<b>-32</b>
<b>Whitmore</b>		<b>37</b>	<b>-37</b>

The Working Party were also presented with anonymised information about each of these pupils and were able to see that in many cases, the pupil concerned had been offered a more local (and in some case a higher preference) school.

Working Party Members discussed using distance as the main criterion for allocating places and felt that there were advantages and disadvantages but that this needed to be balanced against a revised linked school system.

### **LINKED SCHOOLS**

Members of the Working Party requested that a revised linked school model be developed using the following underlying principles:

- Distance in a straight line from the main gate of the primary school to the main gate of the high school
- Matching the potential intake from linked primary schools to the high school's planned admission number
- Minimising change to current links.

At their meeting on 17 September the Working Party were presented with three different link models A, B and C (see Appendix 1). All the models show the: planned admissions numbers, linked primary schools, distance of these schools from the secondary schools and the maximum potential intake. An additional version included the VA schools

The Working Party members discussed the models and felt that they were still not balanced and needed to have a clear rationale on how the link schools should be arranged if the linked school system were to be maintained. As there were some talks on retaining dual links the Members felt more input was needed from primary and secondary headteachers across the borough. Members favoured Models A and B as possible versions to present to the Stakeholder Reference Group (SRG).

## **Rationale for retaining links**

### **Primary Heads**

- Feedback from primary heads was that links supported curriculum continuity and provided a level of security for parents and children moving through the sectors.
- If it is decided to move to 11+ transfer when Key Stage 3 will take place in the high schools, then there was a question about whether curriculum links were still as important.
- Primary Heads were unanimous in their view that dual links were unfair.
- There were two opposing views about the benefits of linked school arrangements for admissions purposes. Schools that felt they benefitted from the link to their particular high school were in favour of retaining links. Where the link was not perceived to be beneficial, links were not supported. Some headteachers felt links had a detrimental effect because of parents' perception of the linked high school.
- It was felt the Models that included faith schools as part of the linked school system was not appropriate.
- Concern was raised about Elmgrove School and the impact of a change of links on those children with a physical disability. If the link changes then most children from Elmgrove would not get a place at Whitmore School. It was felt this meant children with a physical disability would be excluded from attending schools with their peers.
- Primary Heads felt distance from home to school was a sensible option to be considered as it is easy for parents to understand and should be included as part of the consultation.

Primary Heads supported consulting on:

1. Distance
2. Model B (with no dual links)

### **Secondary Heads**

All High School Headteachers supported the view of "every high school a good school" and felt that work needed to be done to change perceptions of some schools. There was a unanimous view that schools with high mobility were not perceived as being good schools. Heads felt this raised the question of where Harrow Council stood on this issue. There was overall support from high schools that a strategic response was needed to address the issue of mobility.

Generally, there were a range of views from High School Headteachers.

- There were questions of whether the Year 6 numbers as shown in the Models were reflective of the actual numbers that will apply in 2010.
- None of the Models were favoured. Heads felt linked schools should reflect proximity between primary and high schools, consistency and fair distribution.
- Linked schools do not address the issue of high mobility.
- Work was needed on addressing parental perception of schools.
- There was some reluctance to lose cluster working arrangements (although it was acknowledged that these could continue whether or not linked school arrangements were retained).
- Where they work well and are perceived to do so then heads were supportive of continuing with linked school arrangements.

Secondary Heads supported consulting on:

1. Distance
2. A model (yet to be developed) of links without VA schools.

The Working Group was advised that the Council had sought independent legal advice on the current oversubscription criteria for high schools and were provided with initial legal comments on the lawfulness of “linked” schools as follows:

The COP on Admissions (para 2.66) makes it clear that feeder schools can be an appropriate and lawful oversubscription criterion

Whilst the Code states giving priority to children from feeder schools is in principle an acceptable way of dealing with oversubscription, the principle is heavily caveated.

Dual links

Advice is that dual links are likely to be considered highly unfair by the Schools Adjudicator. Strongly recommend dual links are not kept.

The Working Group discussed the difficulty of finding a linked school system that will meet the requirements of the COP, reflect developments over future years and that will be sufficiently stable to meet any challenges.

The primary and secondary heads’ representatives agreed to take the legal advice back to their respective groups to consider whether it is possible to develop a linked school model which meets all the legal requirements of the COP and responds to headteachers’ concerns

### **Further feedback from primary school headteachers**

It was reported that 14 responses had been received from primary headteachers.

- 12 were in favour of using distance as the main determinant for high school oversubscription.
- Two were in favour of retaining links.

Primary headteachers expressed concern about the need to constantly review links and the instability this brought to the system.

The issue of physically disabled pupils at Elmgrove was also raised.

### **Further feedback from high school headteachers**

Whilst there are 10 high schools in Harrow, it was pointed out that only 7 are impacted by link arrangements. Only two heads responded to the issues raised by the legal advice that had been given at the last meeting.

- One headteacher felt that distance was the fairest means of allocating places.
- One headteacher queried whether it was possible to develop a model that met all the criteria as set out in the legal advice.

## **Working Party discussion**

If links are legally challengeable, it was questioned as to whether there is any real option to have links as an oversubscription criterion.

The main issue with links is whether it is possible to develop a model that can achieve equity and fairness.

It was felt that the same rigour regarding legal challenge was not directed at using distance, yet the outcome could be similar as only children who lived in "advantaged" areas could access the schools in those areas.

The high school heads were clear that they did not support any of the proposed models. They felt they were all unfair, did not promote equity nor did they address the main issue of mobility.

Links were seen to support a cohort of children moving from sector to sector.

## **Next steps**

- To seek further legal advice on how we develop a links model that meets the requirements of the COP, current legal advice, would mean that Harrow wasn't liable to legal challenge and would be sufficiently robust to meet the challenge of change (ie new housing developments, expansion/contraction of school population, etc.).
- To seek legal advice on Models A and B to find out if these could meet the national guidelines

## **CONSULTATION**

A new statutory timetable for consultation on admissions arrangements has been introduced for the 2010-11 academic year. Consultation must take place between 1 December 2008 and 1 March 2009 and must last for at least eight weeks.

Statutory consultation on the proposals to change the age of transfer and reorganise schools to infant, junior, primary and secondary schools, which were agreed by cabinet on 19 June 2008, will be undertaken from 8 September to 5 December 2008. This means consultation on admission arrangements will start after the statutory consultation has finished and take place between 8 December 2008 and 13 February 2009. It was felt that:

- a) Separating the two consultations would be less confusing for schools and parents.
- b) Any proposed changes to the admission rules would not impact on the proposals to change the organisation of schools with it consequent effect on the age of transfer.
- c) Two consultations meet the concerns of headteachers about the need for the two issues to be dealt with separately.

## 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: 22 October 2008		
Name: Rosemarie Martin	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the* Monitoring Officer
Date: 24 October 2008		

## **Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers**

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

Background Papers: N/A:



**REVISED HIGH SCHOOL LINKS**

MODEL A

MODEL B

MODEL C

**MODEL A (Without VA schools)**

High school	PAN	Linked primary schools	PAN	Distance school→ school	Maximum potential intake	Yr6* on roll
<b>Canons</b>	<b>180</b>	Aylward	60	<b>1.335</b>	<b>270</b>	68
		Little Stanmore	30	<b>0.285</b>		37
		Stag Lane	90	<b>0.304</b>		88
		Whitchurch	90	<b>0.867</b>		89
						<b>282</b>
<b>Harrow</b>	<b>180</b>	Elmgrove	82	<b>0.637</b>	<b>262</b>	81
		Glebe	60	<b>0.662</b>		51
		Marlborough	60	<b>0.835</b>		60
		Norbury	60	<b>0.546</b>		58
						<b>250</b>
<b>Hatch End</b>	<b>300</b>	Cedars	60	<b>0.288</b>	<b>270</b>	76
		Grimsdyke	60	<b>0.817</b>		60
		Weald	90	<b>1.108</b>		90
		Whitefriars	60	<b>1.003</b>		54
						<b>280</b>
<b>Nower Hill</b>	<b>300</b>	Cannon Lane	90	<b>1.299</b>	<b>330</b>	90
		Pinner Park	90	<b>0.425</b>		90
		Pinner Wood	60	<b>1.591</b>		64
		West Lodge	90	<b>0.977</b>		89
						<b>333</b>
<b>Park</b>	<b>300</b>	Belmont	60	<b>1.112</b>	<b>330</b>	60
		Kenmore Park	90	<b>0.489</b>		90
		Priestmead	90	<b>0.629</b>		93
		Stanburn	90	<b>0.493</b>		89
						<b>332</b>
<b>Rooks Heath</b>	<b>270</b>	Earlsmead	60	<b>0.377</b>	<b>330</b>	55
		Newton Farm	30	<b>0.427</b>		30
		Roxbourne	90	<b>0.705</b>		84
		Roxeth Manor	90	<b>0.068</b>		81
		Welldon Park	60	<b>0.632</b>		59
						<b>309</b>
<b>Whitmore</b>	<b>270</b>	Grange	60	<b>0.347</b>	<b>266</b>	82
		Longfield	90	<b>0.933</b>		89
		Roxeth	56	<b>0.475</b>		54
		Vaughan	60	<b>0.573</b>		59
						<b>284</b>

OR

<b>Rooks Heath</b>	<b>270</b>	Earlsmead	60	<b>0.377</b>	<b>300</b>	55
		Roxbourne	90	<b>0.427</b>		84
		Roxeth Manor	90	<b>0.705</b>		81
		Welldon Park	60	<b>0.068</b>		69
						<b>289</b>
<b>Whitmore</b>	<b>270</b>	Grange	60	<b>0.347</b>	<b>296</b>	82
		Longfield	90	<b>0.933</b>		89
		Newton Farm	30	<b>1.053</b>		30
		Roxeth	56	<b>0.475</b>		54
		Vaughan	60	<b>0.573</b>		59
						<b>314</b>

\*MAY 2008 CENSUS

**MODEL B (Without VA schools)**

High school	PAN	Linked primary schools	PAN	Distance	Maximum potential intake	Yr6 on roll
<b>Canons</b>	<b>180</b>	Aylward	60	<b>1.335</b>	<b>240</b>	68
		Glebe	60	<b>0.716</b>		51
		Little Stanmore	30	<b>0.285</b>		37
		Stag Lane	90	<b>0.304</b>		88
Harrow	180	Belmont	60	<b>1.287</b>	202	60
		Elmgrove	82	<b>0.637</b>		81
		Norbury	60	<b>0.546</b>		58
Hatch End	300	Cedars	60	<b>0.288</b>	330	76
		Grimsdyke	60	<b>0.817</b>		60
		Marlborough	60	<b>0.835</b>		60
		Weald	90	<b>1.108</b>		90
		Whitefriars	60	<b>1.003</b>		54
Nower Hill	300	Cannon Lane	90	<b>1.299</b>	330	90
		Pinner Park	90	<b>0.425</b>		90
		Pinner Wood	60	<b>1.591</b>		64
		West Lodge	90	<b>0.977</b>		89
Park	300	Kenmore Park	90	<b>0.489</b>	360	90
		Priestmead	90	<b>0.629</b>		93
		Stanburn	90	<b>0.493</b>		89
		Whitchurch	90	<b>0.505</b>		89
Rooks Heath	270	Earlsmead	60	<b>0.377</b>	330	55
		Newton Farm	30	<b>0.427</b>		30
		Roxbourne	90	<b>0.705</b>		84
		Roxeth Manor	90	<b>0.068</b>		81
		Welldon Park	60	<b>0.632</b>		59
Whitmore	270	Grange	60	<b>0.347</b>	266	82
		Longfield	90	<b>0.933</b>		89
		Roxeth	56	<b>0.475</b>		54
		Vaughan	60	<b>0.573</b>		59

OR

<b>Rooks Heath</b>	<b>270</b>	Earlsmead	60	<b>0.377</b>	<b>300</b>	55
		Roxbourne	90	<b>0.705</b>		84
		Roxeth Manor	90	<b>0.068</b>		81
		Welldon Park	60	<b>0.632</b>		59
<b>Whitmore</b>	<b>270</b>	Grange	60	<b>0.347</b>	<b>296</b>	82
		Longfield	90	<b>0.933</b>		89
		Newton Farm	30	<b>1.053</b>		30
		Roxeth	56	<b>0.475</b>		54
		Vaughan	60	<b>0.573</b>		59

**MODEL C (without VA Schools)**

High school	PAN	Linked primary schools	PAN	Distance	Maximum potential intake
<b>Canons</b>	<b>180</b>	Aylward	60	<b>1.335</b>	<b>180</b>
		Little Stanmore	30	<b>0.285</b>	
		Stag Lane	90	<b>0.304</b>	
<b>Harrow</b>	<b>180</b>	Belmont	60	<b>1.287</b>	<b>262</b>
		Elmgrove	82	<b>0.637</b>	
		Glebe	60	<b>1.548</b>	
		Norbury	60	<b>0.546</b>	
<b>Hatch End</b>	<b>300</b>	Cedars	60	<b>0.288</b>	<b>330</b>
		Grimsdyke	60	<b>0.817</b>	
		Marlborough	60	<b>0.835</b>	
		Weald	90	<b>1.108</b>	
		Whitefriars	60	<b>1.003</b>	
<b>Nower Hill</b>	<b>300</b>	Cannon Lane	90	<b>1.299</b>	<b>330</b>
		Pinner Park	90	<b>0.425</b>	
		Pinner Wood	60	<b>1.591</b>	
		West Lodge	90	<b>0.977</b>	
<b>Park</b>	<b>300</b>	Kenmore Park	90	<b>0.489</b>	<b>360</b>
		Priestmead	90	<b>0.629</b>	
		Stanburn	90	<b>0.493</b>	
		Whitchurch	90	<b>0.505</b>	
<b>Rooks Heath</b>	<b>270</b>	Earlsmead	60	<b>0.377</b>	<b>330</b>
		Newton Farm	30	<b>0.427</b>	
		Roxbourne	90	<b>0.705</b>	
		Roxeth Manor	90	<b>0.068</b>	
		Welldon Park	60	<b>0.632</b>	
<b>Whitmore</b>	<b>270</b>	Grange	60	<b>0.347</b>	<b>266</b>
		Longfield	90	<b>0.933</b>	
		Roxeth	56	<b>0.475</b>	
		Vaughan	60	<b>0.573</b>	

OR

<b>Rooks Heath</b>	<b>270</b>	Earlsmead	60	<b>0.377</b>	<b>300</b>
		Roxbourne	90	<b>0.705</b>	
		Roxeth Manor	90	<b>0.068</b>	
		Welldon Park	60	<b>0.632</b>	
<b>Whitmore</b>	<b>270</b>	Grange	60	<b>0.347</b>	<b>296</b>
		Longfield	90	<b>0.933</b>	
		Newton Farm	30	<b>1.053</b>	
		Roxeth	56	<b>0.475</b>	
		Vaughan	60	<b>0.573</b>	

