

Meeting:	Harrow Admissions Forum
Date:	18 November 2009
Subject:	Draft community school admission arrangements 2011-12 academic year
Responsible Officer:	Heather Clements - Director, Schools and Children's Development
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Anjana Patel - Portfolio Holder for Schools and Children's Development
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Admission arrangements – Definitions Admission to Community Nurseries – 2011-12 Admission to Community Primary Schools 11-12 Admission to Community High Schools 2011-12 Scheme of Co-ordination <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Reception</li><li>○ 11+ Transfer</li><li>○ Infant to Junior</li><li>○ In-Year</li></ul> Fair Access Protocol Harrow's Relevant Area

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

To review the current admission arrangements to ensure they meet local needs and the requirements of the School Admissions Code of Practice.

### **Recommendations:**

To review the admission arrangements, adopt recommendations detailed in the report and agree the consultation process on proposed admission arrangements to apply to Harrow community primary and high schools for the school year 2011-12.

### **Reason: (For recommendation)**

To meet the statutory requirement to consult before determining admission arrangements.

## Section 2 – Report

### INTRODUCTION

Under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 Harrow is required to consult before determining its admission arrangements.

The 1998 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.

The Harrow Admissions Forum has a role to consider current admission arrangements to assess how well they serve the interest of local parents and children.

### 1. ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

#### Nursery classes attached to Harrow schools

A report from the Working Party with recommendations on proposed changes to the arrangements for nursery admissions is elsewhere on the agenda.

**Recommendation:** To consult on the changes to nursery class proposed by the Working Party on Nursery Admissions.

#### Primary schools

##### **Twins and other multiple-births**

A recent report from the Office of the Schools Adjudicator has recommended that “...all admissions authorities should be required to consult on, and publish arrangements for the admission of twins and children from multiple births. This should include a specific mention within the oversubscription criteria for primary schools”.

The Code of Practice includes guidelines on setting fair oversubscription criteria including on the admission of siblings. The emphasis is on keeping siblings together if this is what parents want, particularly in primary schools. Paragraph 2.2 of the Code says “The admission authorities for primary schools **should** ensure in their oversubscription criteria that siblings (including twins, triplets or children from multiple births) can attend the same primary school”. The proviso on this is that this complies with the infant class regulations.

To meet the Code’s advice, the Chief Schools Adjudicator is recommending that the list of ‘excepted pupil’s in the class size regulations should be extended to include twins and children from multiple births. The Secretary of State for Education has indicated he intends to consult on this, with a view to amending the School Admissions Code at the next opportunity

### **Recommendation:**

1. Infant classes: To amend the oversubscription criteria to ensure twins and other multiple-birth children can attend the same primary school. with the proviso that the Code is amended to include twins and other multiple birth children as exceptions for infant class sizes.
2. For all other admissions: In cases where only one place is available and twins tie for the last available place, then both will be offered even if this exceeds the planned admission number. Paragraph 1.18 of the Code of Practice allows this “..where .... the school and the local authority agree that admitting above that number will not adversely affect the school in the longer term and will not have a detrimental effect on neighbouring schools”.

### **Flexible entry to reception**

Extract from the Cambridge Review on Primary Education

#### Recommendation 14

- (i) The preferred pattern of entry to reception classes should be the September immediately following a child's fourth birthday. However, this should be subject to well informed discussion with parents, taking into account their views of a child's maturity and readiness to enter reception class. Arrangements should be such as to make entry to reception class an exciting and enjoyable experience for all children, with opportunities for flexible arrangements such as a period of part-time attendance if judged appropriate.
- (ii) The DCSF should provide information to parents and local authorities about the optimum conditions, flexibilities and benefits to children of entering reception class in the September immediately after their fourth birthday.

The government intends to make funding available across the maintained, private and voluntary sectors to enable all children to receive full time provision in education and childcare from the September after their fourth birthday. Alongside making that provision available, they will ensure that parents have clear information about the benefits of beginning reception in September and will work to help schools and early years settings to smooth the transition for any children who move into reception after September.

All Harrow schools admit children to school in one intake in September and the current Code of Practice makes provision for parents to defer entry to reception.

### **Recommendation:**

To await further guidance from the DCSF to assess if any changes are required to Harrow's admission arrangements to reception.

## High schools

### **Twins and other multiple-births**

Whilst the Code of Practice is clear about admission of twins and other multiple birth children to primary school there is no specific guidance about high schools. Forum Members may wish to consider consulting on the following:

#### **Recommendation:**

To amend the oversubscription criteria to ensure twins and other multiple-birth children can attend the same secondary school.

1. Secondary transfer: When using the random allocation criterion for admission to Bentley Wood High School, in the case of twins to allocate the same random number.
2. For all other admissions: In cases where only one place is available and twins tie for the last available place, then both will be offered even if this exceeds the planned admission number. Paragraph 1.18 of the Code of Practice allows this “..where .... the school and the local authority agree that admitting above that number will not adversely affect the school in the longer term and will not have a detrimental effect on neighbouring schools”.

## **2. SCHEMES OF CO-ORDINATION**

Primary Scheme: The proposed scheme has been amended from the 2010/11 scheme to be fully in line with the Pan-London Co-ordinated scheme for admission to reception. The scheme differs from previous schemes in that Harrow residents are required to complete a Harrow common application form and all Rising 5 applications will be fully co-ordinated across all London authorities. This will ensure that only one offer of a place is made and that this will be for the highest ranked school possible. Harrow will follow the agreed Pan-London timetable for co-ordination.

Although there was not complete agreement across all London authorities, the majority of councils have agreed that parents should be able to list six preferences. Members of the Forum are requested to agree that Harrow resident applicants can apply for up to six schools on the common application form.

11+ Transfer Scheme: The proposed scheme varies from the 2010/11 scheme in that it has been amended to be fully in line with the Pan-London Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme. Harrow community schools are now part of this scheme. This is the first time that all Harrow students will transfer to high school in year 7.

## Infant to Junior Transfer Scheme

The Junior school transfer scheme will only apply to Harrow community schools as there are no separate voluntary aided infant and junior schools. It is in line with Harrow's current 12+ scheme in that all applicants apply to Harrow regardless of where they live. Applicants will only be able to apply for a junior school that is separate from the infant school. Children attending all through primary schools move automatically from Year 2 to Year 3.

Parents wishing to apply for Year 3 places other than in separate junior schools will be treated at in-year applicants (see below)

In-Year Scheme: From September 2010, all local authorities are required to co-ordinate in-year applications. This means Harrow residents must apply for a school place to Harrow council, whether they are applying for a Harrow community / voluntary aided school or a school outside the borough. Harrow will share information about the application with the relevant school and/or local authority. When the outcome of all the preferences are known, Harrow will co-ordinate the decisions to make sure only one offer is made. This will be done by applying the ranking information so that a place will be offered at the highest ranked school possible.

The in-year scheme sets out how Harrow will work with other local authorities and its voluntary aided schools.

Currently, for in-year applications parents can express up to three preferences for Harrow community schools. Members of the Forum are requested to consider whether this should be extended to four preferences, to allow for the fact that parents can now also apply for voluntary aided and out-borough schools on the same application form.

### **Recommendations:**

1. In line with other London authorities, to allow parents to list up to six preferences for applications for reception.
2. To allow parents to list up to four preferences for in-year applications.
3. To consult on draft schemes of co-ordination.

### **3. FAIR ACCESS PROTOCOL**

A number of minor amendments to the protocol are proposed in order to bring it up to date and ensure it reflects fully those students to whom it applies.

- To clarify that the protocol applies to children newly arrived in Harrow where no school place is available. For secondary students this will be when it is not possible to offer a place in any school because all schools are full in the relevant year group. For primary children the protocol will apply because there is no school place available within a reasonable distance from the home address.

- To include in the protocol newly arrived young people for whom English is not their first language. These students will be referred to Harrow College for a language assessment. This assessment will include a recommendation as to the most appropriate placement, ie referral to a high school or placement on an appropriate ESOL course.
- A report is to be presented to the Education, Admission and Awards Advisory Panel requesting a change of name to the Fair Access Panel to better reflect the Panel's current role.

**RECOMMENDATION: To consult on adopting the amendments proposed to Harrow's Fair Access protocol for the 2011-12 academic year.**

#### **4. HARROW'S RELEVANT AREA**

As the admission authority for community schools, Harrow is required to consult the following before determining the admission arrangements:

- All admission authorities within the relevant area
- The Admissions Forum
- Admission authorities in neighbouring local authority areas

The relevant area means

- The area of the local authority  
or
- Such other areas as may be determined

Harrow proposes to retain its current relevant area, namely that area within the borders of the London Borough Harrow.

Harrow will also consult admission authorities in neighbouring LA areas.

**RECOMMENDATION: To consult on maintaining Harrow's relevant area as the administrative area of the London Borough of Harrow.**

#### **CONSULTATION**

It is proposed that consultation on admission arrangements will take place between 30 November 2009 and 29 January 2010 and will involve all statutory consultees, including parents and community groups.

## Implications of the Recommendation

### Financial Implications

There is a risk that the requirement to offer flexible entry to reception may increase pressure on the Schools Budget. If a parent defers entry and chooses to send their child to another setting in the meantime, it would require funding for both places. The impact will depend on the number of parents choosing to defer their child's entry into primary schools however it's not expected to be significant.

### Risk Management Implications

N/A

## Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Emma Stabler	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the* Chief Financial Officer
Date:11.November 2009		
Name: Linda Cohen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the* Monitoring Officer
Date:12 November 2009		

\*Delete the words "on behalf of the" if the report is cleared directly by Myfanwy or Hugh.

## Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Madeleine Hitchens, Manager, Place Planning & Admissions  
Service 020 8424 1398

Background Papers: N/A