

HARROW ADMISSIONS FORUM

MINUTES

14 MARCH 2012

Chairman:	* Reverend P Reece
Councillors:	* Husain Akhtar * Brian Gate
Community School Representatives:	<u>Governor</u> (Vacancy) <u>Primary</u> (Vacancy) <u>Secondary</u> * Ms G Higgins
Jewish School Representative:	(Vacancy)
Roman Catholic School Representative:	* Mr M Murphy
Church of England School Representative:	* Mr G Denman
Krishna Avanti Primary School Representative:	† Dr K Bahl
Church of England Diocese Representative:	* Reverend P Reece
Catholic Schools Diocese Representative:	* Mrs M Ryan
United Synagogue Representative:	† Mr S Goulden
I-Foundation Representative:	† Mr N Gor

Primary Elected Parent Governor Representative:	(Vacancy)
Secondary Elected Parent Governor Representative:	Mrs A Khan
Harrow Association of Voluntary Service / Harrow Equalities Centre:	(Vacancy)
Early Years Development Partnership Representative:	(Vacancy)
Children's Services Representative:	† Mrs F Aldridge

- * Denotes Member present
- † Denotes apologies received

RECOMMENDED ITEMS

36. Feedback from the Consultation on School Admission Arrangements for September 2013/14

An officer introduced a report which set out information relating to feedback from consultation on school admission arrangements for community schools for September 2013/14.

An officer explained that the consultation had taken place during January to February 2012. The Council had publicised the consultation including the full details of the proposed schemes of co-ordination, the proposed admission arrangements for 2013/14 and the Fair Access Protocol. These had been circulated to Governors and Headteachers of all schools in the borough, other admission authorities in the area and neighbouring local authorities.

The officer further reported that:

- the consultation responses had been analysed. 8 responses had been received from governing bodies and all respondents had agreed to the proposed schemes and admission arrangements;
- two comments had been received in relation to the Fair Access Protocol. In response to these comments, it was proposed that further work would be conducted on reviewing this process;
- some concerns had been raised that schools may attempt to introduce 11+ exams in their admission arrangements. This was prohibited under the School Admissions Code;

- some comments had been made regarding a sibling sixth form link. There were a number of issues why this could not be implemented which had been highlighted in the report;
- during the consultation, it had become apparent that there were different definitions to determine the address for those pupils where there was shared responsibility. As a result the Council had drafted a definition which it encouraged for all schools to adopt;
- the oversubscription criteria had to be adapted to reflect the wording in the School Admissions Code relating to Children Looked After (CLA) and previous CLA.

During the discussion on this item, Members of the Forum raised a number of issues which were responded to by officers as follows:

- Kenmore Park had raised a concern in relation to the Fair Access Protocol and the impact of additional children placed through the Protocol at the school. It was believed that this was related to an issue last year when the School had received a union challenge on their class sizes. The Council had worked closely with the union to explain the relevant legislation relating to class sizes which had been useful. In October 2011, an additional Year 1 was opened in the south east of the Borough in response a significant number of children who had moved into the area. In the context of the growing pupil population it was anticipated that the Fair Access Protocol would continue to be utilised frequently in the future;
- issues relating to the Fair Access Protocol had been raised by all schools, and this would be investigated and reviewed.

Resolved to RECOMMEND: (to Cabinet)

That the admission arrangements be agreed without any further changes to the proposed arrangements and schemes other than the following:

- (i) Reword the first criterion in the oversubscription criteria to reflect the wording the in School Admissions Code to: “A 'looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order. A looked after child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).”
- (ii) Reword the first criterion in the oversubscription criteria to reflect the wording the in School Admissions Code to “An adoption order is an order under Section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002. A ‘residence order’ is an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989. Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a

‘special guardianship order’ as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child’s special guardian (or special guardians).”

- (iii) Change the wording on shared responsibility in the definition of “home address” to: ‘Where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility, each for part of a week, the address where the child lives is determined using a joint declaration from the parents stating the pattern of residence. If a child’s residence is split equally between both parents, then parents will be asked to determine which residential address should be used for the purpose of admission to school. If no joint declaration is received where the residence is split equally by the closing date for applications, the home address will be taken as the address of the parent who receives child benefit. In cases where parents are not eligible for child benefit the address will be that of the parents where the child is registered with the doctor. If the residence is not split equally between both parents then the address used will be the address where the child spends the majority of the school week.

Reason for Recommendation: To meet the statutory requirement to consult before determining admission arrangements and to meet the requirements of the new School Admissions Code. There was also a difference in the way shared responsibility was being determined by admission authorities in Harrow. The definition recommended would standardise how this would be determined and would contribute to more efficient co-ordination. This also dealt with a situation where a person was not eligible for child benefit if proposed welfare reforms were implemented.