



Agenda item:

[No.]

Cabinet

On 24 March 2009

Report Title: Admissions to Schools – Determination of arrangements

Forward Plan reference number (if applicable):

Report of: Director of the Children and Young People's Service

Signed:

Wards(s) affected: All

Report for: Key

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To request Cabinet's approval to determine the arrangements for admission to community primary and secondary schools and to St Aidan's Voluntary Controlled School for the 2010/11 school year.

2. Introduction by Cabinet Member

- 2.1 This report concerns the admission arrangements to be published and implemented for the 2010/11 school year by the Council as the admission authority for community and voluntary controlled schools in Haringey.
- 2.2 It includes admission arrangements to nursery classes in Haringey community primaries and St Aidan's Voluntary Controlled primary school, and admission arrangements to Sixth Forms in Haringey community secondary schools and the Sixth Form Centre. Cabinet is also asked to note that it contains admission arrangements for the new community secondary school, Heartlands High School.
- 2.3 Consultation on admission issues is an annual requirement for local authorities under Section 89 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 as amended by the Education and Inspections Act 2006.
- 2.4 Cabinet is asked to note that the DCSF has placed a duty on local authorities to co-ordinate all 'in-year' applications for admission. I have a concern about the additional resources required to take on the additional in-year admissions. DCSF does not accept the need for additional resources. I have asked officers to monitor the impact.
- 2.5 Cabinet is asked to note that agreement has not yet been reached with Fortismere governors in relation to the in-year fair access protocol. Failure to agree a protocol across all admission authorities means we will need to request the Secretary of State to impose one. I am recommending that we do this if the issue is not settled at our next meeting with Fortismere.

2.6 The possibility of Pan-London reception class admissions reported to Cabinet in the previous report has been delayed by DCSF until the September 2011 intake.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 To determine the proposed admission arrangements for consultation for all community primary and secondary schools and St Aidan's Voluntary Controlled Primary School.
- 3.2 To determine the proposed admission arrangements for Haringey community secondary schools (including Heartlands High School) and for sixth form provision in Alexandra Park School, the Highgate/Hornsey Consortium and the Sixth Form Centre.
- 3.3 To determine the amendment to the Authority's proposed system of measurement between the home address and the school where the main entrance of the school is to be used instead of the post office address point.
- 3.4 To determine the proposed Qualifying Scheme for the co-ordination of transfer from primary to secondary school as a member of the Pan-London consortium.
- 3.5 To determine the Qualifying scheme for the co-ordination of admission to reception classes within Haringey. Cabinet is asked to determine the amended timetable which will bring Haringey into line with five of our six neighbouring authorities. (The exception is Waltham Forest). This will assist parents in making cross-borough applications, and will eliminate some of the late applications received for Haringey primary schools.
- 3.6 To determine the reduction in the published admission number for Woodside High School from 243 pupils to 216 pupils entering Year 7 in September 2010. This reduction is to rationalise the number of secondary school places available with the opening of Heartlands High School, balanced against demand.
- 3.7 To approve the proposal to approach the Secretary of State and request that an In-Year Fair Access Protocol is imposed on all admission authorities in the area if agreement is still not reached following the next meeting with Fortismere.

Report Authorised by: :

Peter Lewis, Director of the Children and Young People's Service

Contact Officer: **Ian Bailey, Deputy Director (020 8489 4601) and Sheila Locke, Head of Admissions (020 8489 8350)**

4. Director of Finance Comments

4.1 Paragraph 10.4 raises the possibility of additional resources being necessary. The need for such resources would be felt after September 2010 i.e. in the 2010-11 Financial Year (FY), although given the uncertainty around the precise requirement and the DCSF contention that no additional resources are needed it might be prudent to review post September 2010 and reflect in the budget setting process for 2011-12 FY.

4.2 In any case the cost of Admissions is a call against the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and

would need to be reflected in the budget strategy presented to the Schools Forum for that year,”

5. Head of Legal Services Comments

5.1 The Head of Legal Services has been consulted on the content of this report and its appendices. The recommendations set out in the report comply with the statutory framework, which is set out below in Paragraph 6.

6. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education and Skills Act 2008
- The Education (Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2007
- The School Admissions Code (2007)
- The School Admissions Code (2009)
- The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2008
- The Education (Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2008

7. Strategic Implications

7.1 Section 89 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, as amended by the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and associated Regulations require admission authorities to consult annually on their admission arrangements for the following academic year. The Children and Young People’s Service gives advice to governing bodies who are the admission authorities for other maintained primary and secondary schools in Haringey (i.e. St Thomas More Catholic School, The John Loughborough School, Fortismere School and Greig City Academy). Consultation for all admission authorities should be completed by 1 March 2009, and determined by 15 April 2009. However, the Authority is consulted earlier than in previous years in order to report back to Cabinet on time in early March.

The new arrangements will then come into effect from the September 2010 intake.

8. Admission arrangements for the 2010/11 school year – secondary schools

8.1 The oversubscription criteria for admission to mixed community secondary schools in Haringey are attached as Appendices 1 and 2, and are fully compliant with advice given in the School Admissions Code and no changes are proposed.

No comments were received.

Recommendation – that Cabinet approve the oversubscription criteria outlined in Appendices 1 and 2 for determination.

9. Admission arrangements for the 2010/11 school year – primary schools

9.1 Appendix 3 shows the oversubscription criteria applied to nursery classes attached to primary schools. These arrangements are used where there are more applications than places for full time provision to ensure children most in need are targeted.

- 9.2 The current oversubscription criteria for admission to community primary schools in Haringey is attached as Appendix 4, and are fully compliant with the School Admissions Code. No changes are proposed for the September 2010 intake.

No comments were received.

Recommendation – that Cabinet approve the oversubscription criteria outlined in Appendices 3 and 4 for determination.

10. Casual Admissions

- 10.1 The current arrangements for 'casual' admissions (i.e. admission at stages other than at entry to reception classes or on transfer from primary to secondary school) will use the same oversubscription criteria described in appendices 1 and 2 (Hornsey School for Girls will follow the same oversubscription criteria as other Haringey community secondary schools). Priority for admission to secondary schools (not primary) is normally given to children without school places over those transferring from other schools. This policy is to ensure priority is given to the most vulnerable children. It is not proposed to change this arrangement.
- 10.2 As stated above, there is now a requirement for local authorities to co-ordinate all applications for admission to all statutory year groups. For secondary schools, this will mean the Admissions Service will have the additional task of co-ordinating applications for Fortismere School, Greig City Academy, The John Loughborough School and St Thomas More Catholic School. The overriding reason for this change is to assist parents in locating a school place quickly. The information about availability of places for all schools in the borough will be held centrally.
- 10.3 The scheme would be essentially the same as for secondary transfer but without a set timetable. The main elements would be:
- Applications received after 1 September 2010 and applications for places in a year groups other than the normal year of entry to primary and secondary school (i.e. reception and Year 7) will be treated as casual admissions.
 - This means that applications for admission to all primary year groups in all Haringey primary schools (including voluntary aided schools) must be made directly to the Authority for co-ordination and NOT to individual schools. The object of this change is to ensure that parents need only contact the Authority to check the availability of places for all age groups across the borough.
 - With regard to secondary admissions, all applications for any year group received at any stage of the academic year for years 7-11 will be made directly to the Authority. This will include applications for admission to Fortismere, Greig City Academy The John Loughborough School and St Thomas More Catholic School.
 - As with the reception and secondary transfer rounds, governors who are the admission authority for their school will continue to apply their determined arrangements to rank applicants.
 - Application forms for all year groups for all schools will be drawn up by the Authority; schools that use supplementary information forms will need to provide these for other year groups in order to apply their arrangements.
 - Offer letters will be sent to the parent by the Authority, and schools will be notified of these offers at the same time.
 - The co-ordination for casual admissions would not require a timetable of events as with reception and secondary transfer as applications are received at all stages throughout the year. In accordance with the DCSF proposal to enable parents to

access all information in one visit to the Authority, it would be very helpful for schools to make supplies of their supplementary forms available to the Admissions Service and agree to their being accessed online.

No comments were received on this issue.

Recommendation: That Cabinet approve 'in-year' co-ordination for all Haringey secondary schools for determination

- 10.4 Currently the administration of admission to primary age groups has been delegated to the schools. The voluntary-aided primary schools will also participate in the scheme. The additional burden that co-ordination will cause for the Admissions Service is significant, though impossible to gauge at present. At this time, it is appropriate to assess whether additional resources will be needed after the process has started. DCSF do not accept that local authorities will need additional resources.

Comment received:

'I am Chair of Governors at Muswell Hill Primary School and am responding on their behalf. Our only comment concerns the casual or 'in-year' admissions which will now be co-ordinated by the Authority rather than the school.

We fully support this change (assuming of course that any such admissions will be dealt with swiftly and efficiently!) since there is anecdotal evidence to suggest that under the current arrangements some schools are not simply taking the next child on the waiting list but are attempting to check on the child's background and aptitude before offering a place. Since Muswell Hill Primary School follows the admissions criteria to the letter, we consider that the change to administer the casual or 'in-year' admissions centrally would be a much fairer system for all concerned.

Recommendation – That Cabinet approve 'in-year' co-ordination for all Haringey primary schools for determination

11. Co-ordinated Admissions – secondary schools

- 11.1 The Pan-London co-ordinated scheme for children transferring from primary to secondary school is about to enter its fifth year. The preference success rate for Haringey residents in the last two years is shown below. The figures have remained fairly consistent

% of all applicants	School Year	
	2007/08	2008/09
offered their first preference	70	67
offered one of their preferences	92	92
allocated a place at the nearest secondary school with places available	8	8

- 11.2 A Transfer Advisor was appointed in September 2007 to advise parents about secondary school applications. Some parents find the admission procedures very difficult to understand, and the advisor can offer parents support that is independent of the Admissions Team. It is the government's belief that advisors will ensure that parents make realistic preferences, and raise the percentage of pupils who are offered their first preference school.

- 11.3 In the last report to Cabinet, the outcome of the appeals for the September 2008 entry was not known. The data is as follows:

	2007/8	Appeals upheld	2008/9	Appeals upheld
Number of appeals heard	171	19	130	7

There were seventeen appeals upheld for Fortismere in 2007 and the school is not included in the figures for 2008.

- 11.4 There are still a significant number of parents who make unrealistic preferences despite the information and guidance widely available. It is hoped that the Transfer Advisor will have a significant impact on this number; however many parents believe they have a free choice of school for their child.
- 11.5 The proposed scheme for the 2010/11 school year is attached as Appendix 5.

No comments were received on this issue.

Recommendation – That Cabinet approve the secondary co-ordinated scheme for determination.

12. Co-ordinated admissions – primary schools

- 12.1 The preference success rate in Haringey remains very similar to last year.

% of all applicants	School Year	
	2007/08	2008/09
offered their first preference	82	81
offered one of their preferences	96	95
allocated a place at the nearest primary school with places available	4	5

- 12.2 The number of appeals heard fell in 2008. This is likely to reflect the fact that infant class size appeals are rarely upheld due to the very limited powers of the independent appeal panels in these cases. It may also be reaction to the fact that none were upheld in 2007/08, and this information was published in the primary booklet. The figures for 2007 and 2008 are as follows:

	School Year	
	2007/08	2008/09
Number of appeals heard	55	38
Number of appeals upheld	0	1

- 12.3 The planned admission numbers for each community primary and secondary school and St Aidan's voluntary controlled school were included in the consultation documents.

The proposed scheme for the 2010/11 school year is attached as Appendix 6.

No comments were received on this issue.

Recommendation – That Cabinet approve the co-ordinated scheme for reception class admissions for determination.

13. eAdmissions

- 13.1 There was no government target for online applications in 2009. However, the percentage in Haringey rose slightly. In 2008 14.7% of secondary applications were made online, and in 2009 it was 17.6%. For reception, 17.4% of applications were made online in 2008 and this figure rose to 19.4% in 2009.

14. The In-Year Fair Access Protocol.

- 14.1 At the time of writing, agreement had not been reached with all admission authorities in Haringey with Fortismere governors deciding they were unable to agree the protocol in its current format.
- 14.2 Failure to agree a protocol across all admission authorities will result in the Authority requesting the Secretary of State to impose a protocol on all parties across Haringey.

No comments were received on this issue.

Recommendation – That Cabinet recommend DCSF impose a protocol if agreement cannot be reached following the Authority’s next and final discussion with Fortismere on this issue.

15. Entry to Sixth Forms (Years 12 and 13).

- 15.1 Appendices 7, 8 and 9 outline the proposed admission arrangements for sixth form provision in Haringey, namely Alexandra Park School, the Highgate / Hornsey Consortium, and the new Haringey Sixth Form Centre. The School Admissions Code permits some elements of academic selection in admission arrangements at this level. Haringey Council is the admission authority and therefore must approve the admission arrangements.
- 15.2 Applications from prospective students are made directly to each individual provider who will administer the agreed admission arrangements.

Comments received:

The Haringey Sixth Form advised that their admission number from 2010 should be increased from 500 to 560 students.

Recommendation – That Cabinet agree the arrangements for admission to sixth forms as described in Appendices 7, 8 and 9, with the amendment to the admission number for the Haringey Sixth Form Centre as described above.

16. Conclusion

- 16.1 The Education and Inspections Act 2006 and implementing Regulations require Local Education Authorities to consult on their admission arrangements annually.
- 16.2 The recommendations included in this report incorporate advice contained within the current DCSF School Admissions Code.

17. Recommendations

- 17.1 To approve the proposed admission arrangements for determination for all community primary and secondary schools and St Aidan’s Voluntary Controlled Primary School.
- 17.2 To approve the proposed admission arrangements for determination of the in-year co-ordination scheme.
- 17.3 To approve the proposed admission arrangements for determination for sixth form provision in Alexandra Park School, the Highgate/Hornsey Consortium and the Sixth Form Centre.

- 17.4 To approve for determination the amendment to the Authority's proposed system of measurement between the home address and the school where the main entrance of the school is to be used instead of the post office address point.
- 17.5 To approve for determination the proposed consultation for a Qualifying Scheme for the co-ordination of transfer from primary to secondary school as a member of the Pan-London consortium.
- 17.6 To approve for determination a Qualifying scheme for the co-ordination of admission to reception classes within Haringey. Cabinet is asked to approve an amended timetable which will bring Haringey into line with five of our six neighbouring authorities. (The exception is Waltham Forest). This will assist parents in making cross-borough applications, and will eliminate some of the late applications received for Haringey primary schools.
- 17.7 To approve for determination a reduction in the published admission number for Woodside High School from 243 pupils to 216 pupils entering Year 7 in September 2010.
- 18. Equalities Implications**
- 18.1 The current oversubscription criteria for Haringey community schools and the advice given to governors of schools who are their own admission authority (Appendix 1) complies with the advice given in the DfES School Admissions Code of Practice. The Code has due regard to the provisions of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000), and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001).
- 19. Use of Appendices**
- Appendix 1 Oversubscription criteria for Haringey mixed community secondary schools for the 2010/11 school year. (NOT Hornsey School for Girls)
- Appendix 2 Oversubscription criteria for Hornsey School for Girls for the 2010/11 school year
- Appendix 3 Oversubscription criteria for nursery classes in Haringey community primary schools and St Aidan's Voluntary Controlled School.
- Appendix 4 Oversubscription criteria for Haringey community primary schools and St Aidan's voluntary controlled primary school for the 2010/11 school year.
- Appendix 5 Draft Qualifying Scheme for the co-ordination of admission to Year 7 in Haringey maintained secondary schools in the 2010/11 school year
- Appendix 6 Draft Qualifying Scheme for co-ordination of admission to reception classes in Haringey maintained primary schools for the 2010/11 school year
- Appendix 7 Arrangements for admission to Alexandra Park Sixth Form
- Appendix 8 Arrangements for admission to the Highgate/Hornsey consortium
- Appendix 9 Arrangements for admission to the Haringey Sixth Form Centre