

### **STARTING SCHOOL DURING THE YEAR IN HARINGEY DURING 2011/12**

The priority rules described earlier for primary and secondary schools also apply to in-year admissions.

#### **HOW WE PROCESS YOUR APPLICATIONS FOR IN-YEAR ADMISSIONS TO ALL HARINGEY SCHOOLS IN ALL YEAR GROUPS**

- Applications for school places received after 1 September in any school year will be called an “in-year” admission. The Haringey Admissions Service has been processing in-year applications for all its resident children and schools in the borough, including voluntary aided and foundation schools since September 2010.
- All applications for pupils who live in Haringey must be made directly to the Admissions service for co-ordination and **NOT** to individual schools even when a parent/carer is seeking a school place in another authority. This arrangement is to ensure that parents need only contact the Authority to check the availability of places for all age groups across the borough.
- All applications for pupils who live outside Haringey must be made through the child’s home authority.

#### **Applications**

- Haringey Common Application Forms for all year groups for all maintained primary and secondary schools have been drawn up by the Authority.
- Supplementary Information Forms required by some schools will also be available from the Haringey Admissions Service and the schools in question will use them to apply their admission rules. The schools in question will also hold Common Application Forms for ease of access for parents. These will be available in paper format, on the Haringey website and on-line.
- Parents/carers may express a preference for six schools. However, Haringey schools may have no vacancies in a specific year group at that time. In these circumstances, a parent/carer will be offered the nearest reasonable school place or be dealt with through the In-Year Fair Access Panel where it becomes necessary to admit over the Published Admission Number (PAN) for that year group.

- Where there is insufficient information available through the Common Application Form for consideration of the admission rules that are particular to an individual school, a Supplementary Information Form will be used. This form will be made available to the Haringey Admissions Service and this will be provided to parents/carers where appropriate. However, an application will not be processed without the Common Application Form.
- Governors who are the admission authority for their school will continue to apply their admission rules (over subscription criteria) to rank applicants in order of priority.

### Processing Applications

- When an application is not fully completed, Haringey Admissions Service will not treat the application as valid until all information is received.
- An application for a child who lives in another authority to attend a Haringey school will not be considered until the home authority asks us to do so.
- Applications for school places for children living outside the UK will be received but not be processed until it can be determined that the child has entered the country and become a Haringey resident.
- Once the Haringey Admissions Service is satisfied that the application contains all the information and evidence required, it will undertake reasonable checks to verify residency, date of birth and identity of the child. Where application forms state that the child is “Looked After” checks will also be made. If the application is for a place in another authority, the Admissions Service will aim to send the information to them within **5 working days**. It will aim to offer a school place in a Haringey school within **15 working days**.
- If a child has been educated in any UK school, the Admissions Service will try to secure information about the child in order to improve the speed and appropriateness of a school placement. This information will be passed on to the school(s) or other authorities where a school place is being sought.

### Offers

- The co-ordination for in year admissions will not require a set timetable of events (as with reception and secondary transfer) as applications are received at all times throughout the year. Regular exchanges of information with other authorities via the Pan London arrangements will take place.
- Haringey Admissions Service will aim to respond to out-borough requests for school places within **10 working days** of receiving information from the home authority so that parents/carers can receive the offer from their

home authority within **15 working days** also.

- Priority will always be given to pupils out of school and Children in Care before vacancies in schools are allocated to those already in receipt of education.
- Offers will be made to parents as soon as possible by letters to the parents/carers of children who live in Haringey by the Haringey Admissions Service. Where it seems reasonable, schools will be notified of these offers at the same time to help speed up admission.

### **After the offer**

- The parent/carer must notify the Admissions Service of whether they are accepting or declining the school place within **two weeks** of the offer being made. When a parent/carer does not respond within this timeframe, two further attempts will be made to contact them by letter, telephone, fax or email. If these attempts fail, the offer of a school place will be withdrawn.

If the child is thought to be out of school, the Admissions Service will refer the case to the Children Missing Education (CME) Team or the child's home authority for further searches to be carried out to establish the child's whereabouts and their educational provision.

- An offer may also be withdrawn if the parent has failed to attend three invitations for a school admission interview. This is to prevent other children from having access to the school vacancy.
- Once the school has been informed about the pending admission, they will endeavour to arrange an admission appointment and set an admission date for within **15 school days** of the date of the offer letter and notice to admit. This means that the school should agree with the parent a start date which is before the 16<sup>th</sup> day.
- If the pupil does not attend on the date that has been agreed they should still be placed on roll (effective from the agreed date) and any absence from then should be recorded as unauthorised. If a valid and compelling reason has been provided why the pupil has not started on the agreed date then another admission date may be agreed. In the case of unauthorised absence where the pupil has been placed on roll and not attended, the school's Attendance Officer/Education Welfare Officer should be making demonstrable contact with the family. If after 10 days (or earlier in the case of vulnerable students), the pupil has not attended, the case should be discussed with the Education Welfare Service (Secondary Attendance Manager) and an agreed plan of action will be implemented. This could include legal action.
- If the school has been unable to contact the family to arrange for an agreed start date, the case must be referred back to the Admissions Service. The Admissions service will then refer the case to the CME Team

for further investigation and possible legal action.

- If the offer of a school place has been made on the basis of fraudulent or intentionally misleading information from a parent, the offer may be withdrawn.

### **Waiting lists.**

- Waiting lists for all year groups for community primary schools, St. Aidan's CE Primary School and community secondary schools will be held centrally by the Admissions Service so that the Authority can co-ordinate offers as required by the School Admissions Code. Waiting lists will be held in the order of priority of the admission rules.
- The exceptions will be the schools who are their own admission authority and who have to construct a waiting list based on the criteria that are specific to their school and where the Supplementary Information Form (SIF) has to be used to prioritise the pupils on the list. The Haringey Admissions service will be entitled to have access to these upon request.
- In order to maintain an efficient admissions system, including waiting lists, each school will provide a weekly roll return to the Admissions Service providing information concerning admissions pending; dates of admission; pupils leaving and dates; vacancies. Where schools fail to do this, admissions will be made on the basis of the last roll return to be provided.
- Schools will also be invited to add information to the roll returns about numbers of pupils with statements of special educational needs (SEN), Children in Care (CIC) and admissions made through the In Year Fair Access Panel per year group. This is so that the additional needs of pupils can be taken into account by the In Year Fair Access Panel and a fair distribution of pupils can be achieved per school and year group.

### **Requests for transfer between schools**

The Admissions Team will not encourage changes from one local school to another. This is because research shows that these sorts of moves can damage the educational achievement and success of children. Parents will be encouraged to discuss their reasons for wishing to switch schools with their child's present school. The Admissions Service will seek a wide range of educational information from the child's current or previous school to aid the admissions process.

### **The In-Year Fair Access Protocol**

Some pupils have additional needs and/or experienced difficulties during their school career. They may need extra support from their school and special consideration about the suitability of a school place may be necessary. In these cases, there are arrangements whereby the needs of both the child and the school have to be fairly weighed up. This is done through the In Year Fair

Access Protocol which is a legal requirement for all authorities and all local schools and academies must participate.

The In-Year Fair Access scheme in Haringey complies with that requirement and has been revised and agreed by the head teacher and local authority partnership following review of the implementation of the procedures. Its aims are to:

- respond to the real needs of vulnerable young people who are not on the roll of a school and need to be dealt with quickly and sympathetically;
- admit vulnerable students fairly across all schools and academies, taking account of their capacity to support each student;
- arrange such admissions openly through a process which has the confidence of all.

### **Students within the scope of this scheme**

The admission to school of the following students falls within the scope of this scheme:

- children in public care who require a particular school where there are no vacancies;
- children who are carers;
- children for whom the authority accepts have a significant social or medical need for a particular school where there are no vacancies including homeless children and young people; asylum seekers and refugees not in accommodation centres; those with unsupportive family backgrounds where a place has not been sought; Traveller/Gypsy/Roma children;
- those permanently excluded or where there is evidence that they were at risk of exclusion prior to leaving their last school;
- children removed from school and unable to find a place after a number of fixed term exclusions;
- children whose parents have moved into the area and are unable to find a school place;
- pupils ready for reintegration from the Pupil Support Centre;
- those known to the police or other agencies such as the Youth Offending Service;
- those returning from secure units;
- those without a school place and a history of serious attendance problems – defined as 80% or less attendance in the last 12 months in any authority or where Haringey is pursuing a School Attendance Order ;

- those who have been out of education for more than 6 weeks (half a term);
- children of UK service personnel and Crown Servants;
- Children with special educational needs, not covered by a Statement and with particular requirements that merit consideration by the Fair Access Panel
- Children requiring an educational place when all schools have reached their admission limit (PAN).

The In Year Fair Access arrangements include an “In Year Fair Access Panel” (IYFAP). This is a group of suitably qualified and experienced professionals who decide on school placements for these children. It also monitors “managed moves” which are moves between schools arranged by the head teachers. This process is detailed in the Managed Moves Protocol (Haringey, 2007).

It should be noted that there are separate special admissions arrangements for children with statements of special educational needs (SEN) and children in public care (Children in Care). This protocol does not override those arrangements. However, it has been agreed that pupils who are, or could be, placed through those arrangements will be noted by the IYFAP panel.

### **Composition of the panel**

The panel, consisting of three head teachers, or their designated representative and the Head of Admissions (chair), will meet once a month (or as necessary) to ensure the prompt and fair allocation of young people to schools. The quorum will be three, with at least two head teachers and one local authority representative. Head teachers’ representation on the panel will be agreed annually at the secondary head teachers’ meeting.

### **The decision-making process**

Cases will be brought to the panel by the Haringey Admissions Service. Decisions will be made in the light of information for the numbers of admissions to each school in the current and previous school.

Where a young person is known to a particular service or agency, an officer with knowledge of that young person may be invited to the IYFAP, or a short written statement may be submitted.

The placement panel for children in public care will continue to determine the most appropriate placement for each young person. In special circumstances a case will be brought by the Children in Care Manager to the IYFAP panel for confirmation and the points allocation.

When making the decision as to an appropriate placement for the child, the panel will take into account:

- the parents' views (including religious affiliation);
- the extent to which the school has itself recently excluded students;
- the number of students admitted through IYFAP.

#### **EXPLANATORY NOTE 1:**

Over an academic year this must not exceed **4** pupils above the school's published admission number per year group and must not exceed a maximum of **15** pupils above the published admission number in total across all year groups.

#### **EXPLANATORY NOTE 2:**

The panels will award points for each pupil admitted under the protocol. Points can range from 1 to 3, with 3 allocated to those pupils who, in the view of the panel, represent the greatest challenge to the schools to which they are allocated

- the number of 'points' accumulated by schools that have already admitted students under the protocol (please see explanation below);
- the needs of the student, where this is known;
- any capacity/capability reasons why the school may not be able to respond to the needs of the student.

The distance from home to school will also be considered. However the principal aim of the protocol is to equitably distribute the admission of vulnerable students fairly across all schools.

#### **EXPLANATORY NOTE 3:**

The panel will also award points to a school where they have been named because a School Attendance Order has been instigated by Haringey. This will be 1 point in the first instance, pending the outcome of the legal process, but indicative points will be determined should the process be successful and the young person starts at the school.

The points allocation to The John Loughborough School will be multiplied by four to bring it into line with other schools. This is because it is a much smaller school.

Decisions regarding placement of students under the Fair Access scheme will be made by the panel, and will be final. Admission must take place within **15 school days** of the school receiving notification of the decision.

The school may appeal against the panel's decision **only** where the school has prior knowledge of the specific young person which was not known to the panel at the time of decision, which makes the placement

inappropriate. The appeal should be made in writing within **5 school days** of the school receiving notification of the decision.

The appeal will be considered at the next panel meeting, or an extraordinary meeting of the same panel members may be called to consider an appeal where a delay to the following panel would be inappropriate, for example in the case of children in care.

The Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF) recognises that admission of a young person through the Fair Access Panel could potentially take the school above the planned admission number for that year group. This allocation by the Fair Access Panel will never exceed the agreed number per year group per school.

It is recognised that for young people seeking in-year admission to school there is often little information easily or readily available. To support fair access and help make suitable school placements, the authority will try to obtain comprehensive information about the child's educational levels and needs.

At the same time, every effort will be made to admit children into schools quickly. However, where a young person has been allocated a school place and the school awarded points based on the best information available at the time, and this subsequently proves to be inappropriate/inaccurate, the school may bring the case back to the panel for a change in points allocation or, in very rare and extreme circumstances, reallocation.

### **School admission appeals by other children**

Young people can be admitted to a school above the published admission number (PAN) in any year group, under the Fair Access Protocol. Therefore Admission Appeal Panels will be made aware of the conditions of the Fair Access Scheme, and that the fact that additional students may have been already admitted under this scheme and any decision to admit an extra pupil will place further pressure on a school's resources.

### **Monitoring the operation of the protocol**

The anonymised details of all decisions will be made available to the Admissions Forum as a standing agenda item to demonstrate that the Protocol is being applied appropriately.