

DECISION-MAKER: CABINET
SUBJECT: ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED SCHOOLS FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2016/17
DATE OF DECISION: 17 MARCH 2015
REPORT OF: CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND CHANGE

CONTACT DETAILS

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STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

NONE

BRIEF SUMMARY

The Council is required by statute to approve its Admission policies for the School year starting September 2016 (including Published Admission Numbers – PANs) by 15 April 2015 to meet the statutory requirement. This allows the admission process to begin for all Schools in September 2015.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (i) To approve the Admissions Policies and the Published Admissions Numbers (PANs) for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools; the schemes for coordinating Primary and Secondary admissions for the school year 2016/17 as set out in the appendices 1 to 5
- (ii) To authorise the Director, People to take any action necessary to give effect to the admissions policy and to make any changes necessary to the admissions policies where required to give effect to any Acts, Regulations or revised Schools Admissions or School Admissions Appeals Codes or binding Schools Adjudicator, Court or Ombudsman decisions whenever they arise.

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Local Authority has a statutory duty to determine the admission criteria annually and to ensure that all rising 5s have an allocated education place
2. The proposed policy is at appendix 1. There are no changes from the 2015/16 arrangements except for an expanded statement of the right of parents of summer born children – children born between 1 April and 31 August – to request that their child be educated in the following admissions round. This is a requirement of the School Admissions Code published 19 December 2014
3. Implementation of the policy is dependent on the following schemes:-
 - Admissions Policy for Infant, Junior, Primary, Secondary and Sixth Form pupils to Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools, see appendix 1

- Published Admission Numbers (PANs) for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools, see appendix 2
- The coordinated scheme for entry to Infant/Primary Schools see appendix 3
- The coordinated scheme for entry to Junior Schools see appendix 4
- The coordinated scheme for entry to secondary schools see appendix 5

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 1 The only alternative option considered was to not determine local admission arrangements. This has been rejected because it would result in the imposition of admission arrangements upon local schools by the Secretary of State for Education

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

- 2 It is a statutory requirement that School Admission Authorities determine the Admission Policy each year to approve the allocation of School places to Southampton pupils and to pupils applying for a place in a Southampton School from outside the City. The City Council is the Admission Authority for all Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools in the City and is therefore responsible for determining the admission arrangements for these Schools. Regulations require all Admission Authorities i.e. the Local Authority, governing bodies of Voluntary Aided and Foundation Schools and Academy Trusts to determine their admission arrangements for the school year 2016-17 by 15 April 2015 and to notify the fact to other Admission Authorities within 14 days of this date.
- 3 The principles of Southampton's Admission Policies are well established. They seek to fulfil the requirement to be "fair, clear and objective" (School Admissions Code 2014). The proposed policies seek to make this process as transparent as possible. In particular they enable the Local Authority, Schools, and parents:
 - a) To protect the rights of vulnerable children.
 - b) To meet significant medical or psychological needs of individual children.
 - c) To develop, strengthen and support immediate family ties.
 - d) To develop and strengthen links between designated feeder and receiver schools, and
 - e) To have access to reasonable, clear, objective, procedurally fair criteria that avoid ambiguity in the interpretation of the policy.
- 4 An Admission Authority must consult on any changes it proposes to make to its admission arrangements. However if no alteration is proposed then there is no need to consult but the Admission Authority must still determine its arrangements in line with the timetable set out in the Regulations. The minor amendment in the 2016/17 arrangements did not require consultation as it is required to make the Council's arrangements comply with the School Admissions Code.

- 5 It is a statutory requirement that School Admission Authorities determine their admission arrangements each year to approve the allocation of places to Southampton pupils and to pupils applying for places in Southampton Schools from outside the City even if no changes have been made from the previous year's arrangements.
- 6 Apart from required changes of dates there are no changes to the coordinated schemes for Infant Junior or Secondary transfers

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

- 7 There are no additional revenue costs to the General Fund arising directly from the approval of the admission policies for the school year 2016/17.

Property/Other

- 8 N/A

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

- 9 Admission Authorities are legally required to determine their admission arrangements (including PANs, under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 as amended by the Education Act 2002 and the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012 as amended by The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Coordination of Admission Arrangements) (England)(Amendment) Regulations 2014.
- 10 In accordance with the above, the deadline for determining admission arrangements is 15 April 2015. Following determination on 17 March 2015, the Local Authority has 14 days to notify all Schools in writing of its decision. School's governing bodies then have 6 weeks to object to their respective PANs (but no other aspect of the admission policy)

Other Legal Implications:

- 11 The Education Acts, Regulations made pursuant to them and the School Admissions Code (December 2014) require Local Authorities to formulate coordinated schemes for dealing with applications to Infant, Primary, Junior and Secondary Schools at the relevant age of transfer. Such schemes also include admission to Schools where the Local Authority is not the Admission Authority i.e. Voluntary Aided, Foundation, Free Schools and Academies. The schemes must ensure that every parent is notified of one and only one offer of a school place on the same day. A National Offer date of 1 March, or first working day thereafter, has been set for Secondary admissions and a National Offer date of 16 April, or first working day thereafter, for Primary sector admissions. The regulations also set National closing dates for applications of 31 October in the offer year for Secondary applications and 15 January in the offer year for Primary applications.

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

- 12 The recommended admission arrangements proposed in the report are consistent with the Children and Young People's Plan

KEY DECISION? Yes

WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED: ALL

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

1. Admission Policy for Infant, Junior, Primary and Secondary pupils to community and voluntary controlled schools 2016-17
2. Proposed Published Admissions Numbers for all Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools
3. Coordinated scheme for year R entry to Infant/Primary Schools 2016/17
4. Coordinated scheme for year 3 entry to Junior Schools 2016/17
5. Coordinated scheme for year R entry to Secondary Schools 2016/17

Documents In Members' Rooms

N/A

Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to be carried out. No

Other Background Documents

Equality Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)

Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)

School Admissions Code

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/389388/School_Admissions_Code_2014_-_19_Dec.pdf