

CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

17 MARCH 2011

REPORT OF CORPORATE MANAGEMENT TEAM

CABINET DECISION

Children and Young People – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Ann McCoy

PROCEDURE FOR ADMISSION OF PUPILS TO PRIMARY & SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN SEPTEMBER 2012

1. Summary

This report outlines the admission arrangements the Local Authority (LA) is proposing for primary and secondary schools in September 2012. In order to comply with legislation for admissions in 2012, the report includes the full Co-ordinated Admission Arrangements for Primary and Secondary Schools for that year.

2. Recommendations

Members are asked to agree:

1. the Admission Policy for September 2012 which is used to allocate places when a school is oversubscribed;
2. the Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for Primary, Secondary, Voluntary Aided (VA) schools and Academies ;
3. admission numbers for September 2012.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations

Legislation requires the LA to publish information to be available for parents when they apply for a place at primary and secondary school. The information has to comply with the recently published School Admissions Code derived from the Education & Inspections Bill 2006. The LA is required to set admission arrangements accordingly and lodge a copy of the Co-ordinated Admission Arrangements with the Secretary of State by the 15 April 2011.

4. Members' Interests

Members (including co-opted Members with voting rights) should consider whether they have a personal interest in the item as defined in the Council's code of conduct (**paragraph 8**) and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with paragraph 9 of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest in the item, he/she must then consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest (**paragraphs 10 and 11 of the code of conduct**).

A Member with a prejudicial interest in any matter must withdraw from the room where the meeting considering the business is being held -

- in a case where the Member is attending a meeting (including a meeting of a select committee) but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under statutory right or otherwise, immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence as the case may be;
- in any other case, whenever it becomes apparent that the business is being considered at the meeting;

and must not exercise executive functions in relation to the matter and not seek improperly to influence the decision about the matter (**paragraph 12 of the Code**).

Further to the above, it should be noted that any Member attending a meeting of Cabinet, Select Committee etc; whether or not they are a Member of the Cabinet or Select Committee concerned, must declare any personal interest which they have in the business being considered at the meeting (unless the interest arises solely from the Member's membership of, or position of control or management on any other body to which the Member was appointed or nominated by the Council, or on any other body exercising functions of a public nature, when the interest only needs to be declared if and when the Member speaks on the matter), and if their interest is prejudicial, they must also leave the meeting room, subject to and in accordance with the provisions referred to above.

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SUMMARY

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RECOMMENDATIONS

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DETAIL

ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2012/13

1. The Code of Practice for admissions determines that LA's, when drawing up admission arrangements, should ensure:
 - Parents' preferences for schools are met to the maximum extent possible;
 - Admission criteria should be clear and benefit all pupils including those with special education needs, disabilities or in public care;
 - Admission authorities must publish admission arrangements to include admission numbers, criteria to be used for over-subscription, timetables, co-ordinated arrangements and waiting lists.

ADMISSION POLICY FOR SEPTEMBER 2012/13 – Primary and Secondary Schools.

2. There are no changes to the admission policy for September 2012.
- 2.1 The proposed Admission Policy will give priority to applications for admission to a school if that school is oversubscribed, in the following order:
 1. pupils who are in the care of the Local Authority;
 2. pupils with complex needs who have been discussed at the Moderating or Statements Panel and been identified as needing a 'named' primary or secondary mainstream school;

3. pupils who have a brother or sister living at the same address and are still at the school when the pupil begins;
4. pupils resident within the admission zone who have returned a Common Application Form by the due date;
5. pupils who have social or medical reasons for being admitted to the school which would, should the child not be admitted, cause him or her to be seriously disadvantaged or put personal safety at risk.
In all cases corroboration will be sought from independent sources such as a medical specialist who has had continuing involvement over a period of time, social worker, or other professional. It should be noted that places would not be allocated on the basis of aptitude or ability.
6. Pupils who attend the nursery of the school they wish to attend on a full time basis.
7. Pupils who live closest to the particular school measured 'as the crow flies'.

NB Definitions of the criteria are explained in more detail within the published information for parents which is available in schools, libraries, council reception areas and on the Stockton on Tees website.

CO-ORDINATED ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2012/13

3. The LA is responsible for administering a co-ordinated scheme for the area in relation to all maintained community, voluntary controlled, voluntary aided schools and Academies. The purpose of co-ordinated admission scheme is to ensure that, as far as is reasonably practicable, every parent of a child living in the LA area who has applied for a school place in the normal admission round receives an offer of one school place on the same day.
- 3.1 The LA will act as a clearing house for the allocation of places by the relevant admission authorities in response to the Common Application Forms. The LA will only make a decision with respect to the offer or refusal of a place in response to any preference expressed on the Common Application Form where
 - it is acting in its separate capacity as an admission authority; or
 - an applicant is eligible for a place at more than one school, or
 - an applicant is not eligible for a place at any school that the parent has nominated.

Attached is a copy of the Stockton on Tees Co-ordinated Admission Scheme for admissions in 2012/13 which includes the timetable. **(Appendix 1)**

ADMISSION NUMBERS

4. **Appendix 2** shows published admission numbers for Community and Voluntary Aided (VA) Primary, Secondary schools and Academies.

CONSULTATION

5. The LA has consulted all school governing bodies, the Diocese, other neighbouring Local Authorities, Admission Forum, a 1% sample of parents across the Borough and special needs groups on the proposals for admissions in September 2012. The consultation was publicised in the Herald and Post informing that documents could be viewed on the Stockton on Tees website and at the reception in Municipal Buildings inviting comments. No objections have been received with regard to any of the items within the report.

- 5.1 The LA also consult with parents to get their views on the admissions process, the results are published in the Admissions Booklets which are available to them when they apply for a primary or secondary school place. The responses give an average of 98% satisfaction levels from parents and the comments/suggestions help the LA to develop new practices to continue to improve our service.

CONCLUSION

6. The new Admissions Code underpins the Government's aim to create a schools system shaped by parents which delivers excellence and equity, developing the talents and potential of every child, regardless of their background; a system where all parents feel they have the same opportunities to apply for the school they want.
- 6.1 The Code states: 'A fair system needs to provide parents with access to good information about admissions in order to support those parents who find it hardest to understand the system.'
- 6.2 Within Stockton on Tees we aim to ensure that the admission arrangements are in line with the principle of fair access to educational opportunity. The LA's current policies, procedures and the additional information published in the Primary and Secondary Education Booklet 2012 for parents, will support this.

APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 – Co-ordinated Admission arrangements for 2012/13
- Appendix 2 - Admission Numbers for Primary, Secondary Schools and Academies for September 2012

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7. The cost of the admissions arrangements have been included in the Council's Medium Financial Plan.
- 7.1. The framework for admissions was introduced in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 but a number of important changes were implemented through the Education Act 2002 and the Education and Inspections Bill 2006. The new School Admission Code published in February 2009 takes account of those changes, and of associated regulations. The consultation and information within this report complies with the relevant legal requirements.

RISK ASSESSMENT

8. A risk assessment has been carried out and this proposal is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

Economic Regeneration and transport

9. Sustainable School Travel Strategy is now in place and is a statutory duty. This has been developed closely with Road Safety Team and Travel Plan Co-ordinator, to provide added information for parents when applying for schools.

Children and Young People

10. Admission Arrangements are in accordance with School Admissions Code, Admission Authorities have a duty to comply with the Code to ensure that the admission arrangements are fair and equitable. This is a statutory requirement and is essential information for parents to assist them in their decision making regarding their preferred school. It is also essential to the organisation and planning for entry to reception, the smooth transition from primary to secondary school along with the development of in year requests for schools.

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

11. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and the score is 71, no negative impacts have been identified. A copy of the Equality Impact Assessment can be viewed on the Stockton on Tees website www.stockton.gov.uk

CORPORATE PARENTING

12. It is a statutory duty for all Admission Authorities (Community and Voluntary Aided admission authorities) to prioritise Looked After Children within their oversubscription criteria as set out within the School Admission Code. All admission authorities within this borough comply with that duty.

CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

13. Results of consultation included within the report, all Councillors consulted with.

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<u>Environmental Implications</u>	None
<u>Community Safety Implications</u>	None
<u>Background Papers</u>	None
<u>Education Related Item?</u>	Yes
<u>Ward(s) and Ward Councillors:</u>	Not Ward specific
<u>Property Implications</u>	None