

Discussion of issues relating to each admission limit change request

School: **Rufforth Primary**

Proposal: **Increase admission limit from 10 to 12.**

Analysis

1. Rufforth Primary is a small school that currently caters for 60 children, with an admission limit of 10. Some teaching is currently conducted in part of the school hall due to lack of classroom space; there are currently two dedicated classrooms available for primary curriculum teaching, with an additional class due for completion in May 2009 which will increase the capacity of the school to a maximum of 82.
2. The small size of the school is such that the headteacher of the school currently teaches for 2.5 days a week.
3. The school has become increasingly popular with parents over the last three years (table 1), although the school only recruits around half of its children from within its own catchment. It is important to note that where the LAF has backed proposals to increase admission limits in the past, it has been on consideration of the forecast level of *in-catchment* demand only.
4. A planning application for additional houses within the village was rejected by planning committee during the autumn of 2008. There is therefore no additional pupil yield expected from local housing developments within the village.
5. The school have taken above their admission limit on several occasions over the last few years because of families moving into the village outside of the normal admissions round (table 3). Whilst the school has experienced these 'in-year' admissions for the last few years, the school's increasing popularity with parents means that there is now less room to accommodate them.

Arguments for Approval

6. Increasing the admission limit would enable the school to meet demand for an additional 2 places. This demand currently originates from out of catchment, not from within the village. The non catchment areas from which Rufforth attracts pupils are predominantly those serving Westfield and Carr Infant schools (97 and 84 Reception-age catchment residents, respectively, in January 2008). Given the small numbers involved, an increase in admission limit is unlikely to have a significant effect on these schools.
7. Existing levels of staffing at the school mean that it is difficult to meet workload pressures, and the headteacher wishes to reduce his 2.5 days per week currently spent teaching in order to provide a greater focus on leadership duties.

8. Increasing the admission limit would also enable the school to plan with greater assurance around two classes in KS1. However, financial pressures alone are not a reason to increase admission limits, as retrospective Infant Class Size funding is available to schools to cope with families moving into the area.

Arguments for Rejection

9. In-year admissions mean that cohort sizes increase above the admission limit as the cohort progresses through Key Stage 1 (table 3). The school must therefore be able to accommodate additional children *above* the proposed admission limit of 12 (probably around 14) if the increase was approved. The headteacher has given verbal assurances that 1 or 2 additional children could be accommodated to meet this 'in year' demand through creation of the additional KS1 class.
10. Increasing the admission limit would put additional strain on the physical teaching environment within the school. Despite the additional 'small group' classroom currently under construction, the school plans to continue existing teaching arrangements where some pupils are taught in part of the school hall. It is important to note that an agreement to increase admission limit at the school does not constitute any kind of guarantee or agreement to provide additional accommodation on the school site.

Conclusion

11. The school is expected to be able to meet demand for places from families that live within the catchment area. A decision to increase the admission limit, in order to admit pupils from the catchment areas of other schools, will signal a significant change of policy. This may encourage other popular and oversubscribed schools to seek increases to their admission limits to the detriment of other schools.
12. It is therefore recommended that the request to increase the admission limit at Rufforth Primary is refused on this occasion but that the LA should continue to keep the pattern of admissions under review.

Supporting Data (Rufforth Primary)

Table 1: 1st preferences for Rufforth primary by year of admission

Year	1st Preferences			children on roll at Jan census
	in catchment	out of catchment	total	
Sep-06	3	4	7	8
Sep-07	4	7	11	10
Sep-08	5	7	12	12
Sep-09 (est)	7	9	16	?

Table 2: Rufforth Primary, predicted pupils on roll

Yeargroup	number of pupils on roll					
	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14
Reception	12	12	12	11	12	12
Year 1	12	11	11	12	11	12
Year 2	10	13	11	12	12	12
Year 3	5	10	13	11	12	12
Year 4	10	6	11	14	12	14
Year 5	9	10	6	12	15	12
Year 6	11	9	10	6	11	14
Total on Roll	69	70	74	78	86	89
Surplus Spaces	-9	-10	-14	-18	-26	-29
Surplus Space	-15%	-17%	-23%	-30%	-44%	-49%

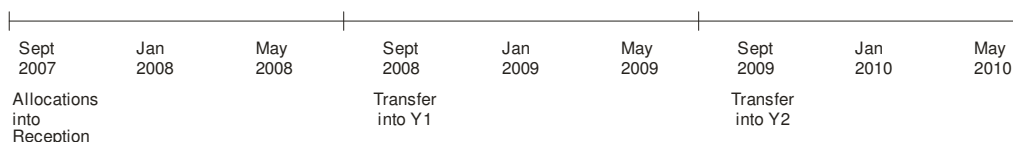
Table 3: Rufforth Primary: the effect of in-year admissions on cohort size

Intakes: September 2008

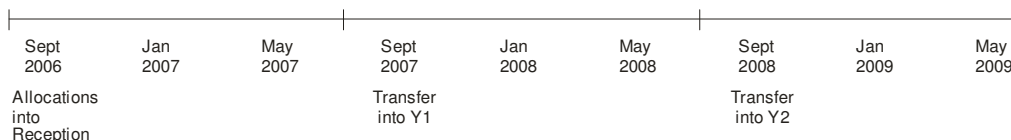
Cohort size -> 10 12

**Intakes and cohort progression: September 2007**

Cohort size -> 10 10 11 12 12

**Intakes and cohort progression: September 2006**

Cohort size -> 6 8 8 8 9 10 10 10

School: **Stockton-on-the-Forest Primary school.**Proposal: **Reduce the admission limit from 20 to 12.****Analysis**

13. The school are currently experiencing a downturn in Reception admissions in line with demographic trends (see annexe A, table 4). The current admission limit of 20 is around double the level of pupils that they are expected to attract over the coming years (annexe A, table 5). Intakes may however increase longer term (post-2014/15) as the birth rate rises across the city.
14. A private nursery operates on the school site, offering day care facilities for up to twelve pre school children. There are currently eleven children using this facility. An extension to the nursery building has recently been completed, although this will not create further capacity for pre-school children.

Arguments for Approval

15. The capacity of the school based upon current room usage and class organisation is 89, yet the current admission limit of 20 assumes that the school has a capacity of 140. Reducing the admission limit to 12 in order to match the functioning capacity of the school is good practice.
16. The number of pupils involved means that reducing the admission limit to 12 will not impact upon the school's ability to accommodate every

reception child from its catchment area, and would not have an impact upon the level of admissions at other primary schools in York.

Arguments for Rejection

17. The admission limit should not be reduced where the level of catchment demand falls above the proposed limit. There is no indication that this is (or will be) the case at Stockton on-the-Forest Primary.

Conclusion

18. Although there would be no direct impacts in terms of admissions, it is good practice to ensure that the admission limits of schools are 'in line' with their capacities. Reducing the admission limit at Stockton on the Forest would facilitate this, so it is recommended that the requested decrease in admission limit is approved.

Supporting Data (Stockton on the Forest Primary)

Table 4: 1st preferences for Stockton on the Forest Primary by year of admission

Year	1st Preferences
Sep-06	7
Sep-07	3
Sep-08	11
Sep-09 (est)	10

Table 5: Stockton on the Forest, predicted pupils on roll

capacity =
89

Yeargroup	number of pupils on roll					
	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14
Reception	10	8	9	8	9	9
Year 1	4	13	11	11	11	11
Year 2	9	4	11	10	10	10
Year 3	9	11	4	14	12	12
Year 4	8	9	11	4	14	11
Year 5	12	8	9	10	4	13
Year 6	15	13	8	9	11	4
Total on Roll	67	65	63	67	70	71
Surplus Spaces	22	24	26	22	19	18
Surplus Space	25%	27%	30%	25%	22%	21%