

Meeting of Executive Member for Children's 18 March 2008 Services and Advisory Panel

Report of the Director of Learning, Culture and Children's Services

Admission Arrangements and Admission Limits for Primary and Secondary Schools in York from September 2009

Purpose of Report

1. To seek approval of the City of York coordinated schemes and admissions policies for both primary and secondary schools for the 2009/10 academic year.
2. To seek the approval of the proposed individual school maximum admission limits for the academic year beginning in September 2009.

Background

3. It is the duty of the admissions authority to carry out a consultation each year on admission limits and arrangements. In the case of maintained schools, the admission authority is the Local Authority (LA), whilst in Voluntary Aided schools it is the governing body of the school in question.
4. In their role as admissions authorities, LAs must also consult other LAs with whom they share a border. For City of York LA, these are East Riding of Yorkshire Council and North Yorkshire County Council.
5. Admission limits are important because they relate to the maximum number of children who are able to enter schools (reception in Primary and Infant schools, Year 3 in Junior schools, and Years 7 and 12 in Secondary schools).

Options

6. The recommendations in this report has been prepared following consultation with the Local Admissions Forum. The Executive Member can modify the recommendations of the Forum.

Consultation

7. The new School Admissions Code of Practice, which came into force 27 February 2007, requires that consultation takes place and final determination of admission limits and arrangements should be made by 15 April 2008 for the academic year beginning in September 2009.

Analysis

8. The authority has consulted with relevant admissions authorities on the proposed admission arrangements for the 2009/10 academic year. The consultation ran from 3 January until 15 February 2008. The arrangements were considered by the Local Admissions Forum on 20 February. The City of York's proposed coordinated schemes and admissions policies for primary and secondary schools are set out at Annex A-D.
9. The coordinated schemes are applicable to all maintained schools in York including community, voluntary controlled and voluntary aided schools. The City of York admissions policy is applicable to all schools for which the local authority is the admissions authority, this includes all community and voluntary controlled schools. Voluntary aided schools operate their own admissions policies and these have also formed part of the consultation.
10. The LA undertook an informal round of consultation with schools in the Autumn term of 2007 in order to enter into early discussions about any proposed changes to admission limits. In the spring term of 2008, schools have been formally consulted on admission limits and arrangements for admissions in September 2009.
11. The list of school responses is shown in Annex E. Five schools requested changes to existing admission limits (indicated in bold text).
12. The Admission Forum recommends accepting an increase in the admission limit at Robert Wilkinson School from 70 to 75 in order to meet increasing demand for places from within the school's catchment area.
13. The Forum recommends that the LA should retain the existing admission limit of 200 at Fulford School but work with the school to review admission numbers and the school's capacity during the next year, given the proposed building development in the school's catchment area.
14. The Forum recommends rejecting a request from Ralph Butterfield School to increase its admission limit from 45 to 50, recognising the potential impact on neighbouring schools. The Forum recognised the need to keep the number under review given recent housing development. The school is able to meet the present level of demand from within its catchment area.
15. The Forum agreed to a proposal from Manor School to increase its Admission Limit to 180, reflecting the increased capacity of the new school building that is now under construction. This proposal had previously been considered by EMAP and the School Organisation Committee as part of the review of secondary education on the west side of the city which included the expansion of Manor school.

Implications

Corporate Priorities

16. The setting of admission limits forms an integral part of the Local Authority's effective planning of school places. This helps the Authority achieve its priority to "Increase people's skills and knowledge to improve future employment prospects"

Financial

17. There are no direct financial implications for schools or the Local Authority resulting from determination of admission limits for September 2008.

Human Resources (HR)

18. There are no HR implications.

Equalities

19. There are no implications relating to equalities.

Legal

20. Section 142 of the Schools Standards and Framework Act (SSFA) 1998 requires schools to have an admission limit for each 'relevant age group.
21. The Education (Determination of Admission Arrangements) Regulations 1999 (SI 1999/126) as amended by SI 2002/2896 and SI 2007/194, states that admissions authorities must have regard to the capacity assessment of the school when setting admission limits.
22. Section 1 of the SSFA 1998 requires that any admission number set must be compatible with the duty to comply with the infant class size limit.
23. Sections 89 and 89A of the SSFA 1998 state that the admission authorities for schools with a sixth form must consult on and determine the arrangements they propose to use to allocate places in Year 12 at the same time as other admission arrangements.
24. Section 89(2) of the SSFA 1998 requires that admissions authorities are required to complete consultation on admission arrangements by 1 March, and determine their arrangements by 15 April in each calendar year for the following school year. These dates are prescribed in The Education (Determination of Admission Arrangements) Regulations 1999 (SI 1999/126) as amended by SI 2002/ 2896 and SI 2007/194.

Crime and Disorder

25. There are no issues relating to crime and disorder.

Information Technology (IT)

26. There are no issues relating to IT.

Property

27. There are no direct issues relating to property

Risk Management

28. The risk to the LA of non-compliance with statutory regulations is exposure to legal challenge. Non-compliance with statutory regulations governing school admissions would have a detrimental effect on the management of school admissions and appeals procedures.

Recommendations

29. The Executive Member for Children's Services is recommended to approve the City of York coordinated schemes and admissions policies for both primary and secondary schools for the 2009/10 academic year as set out in Annex A.

30. The Executive Member for Children's Services is recommended to approve the proposed individual school maximum admission limits for the academic year beginning in September 2009 as set out in Annex B.

Reason: to meet the statutory requirements of the School Admissions Code of Practice.

Contact Details

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Specialist Implications Officer(s)

None.

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Annexes

Annex A - 2009/2010 Admissions policy for City of York Council Community and Voluntary Controlled Primary Schools

Annex B – 2009/2010 Admissions policy for City of York Council Community and voluntary controlled primary schools

Annex C – Co-ordinated admissions scheme for primary schools for September 2009 and January 2010 entry in the area of City of York Local Authority (LA)

Annex D – Co-ordinated admissions scheme for secondary schools in the area of City of York Authority (LA) for the 2009/10 school year

Annex E - proposed admission limits 2009/10