

LOCAL ADMISSIONS FORUM

Venue: Town Hall, Moorgate
Street, Rotherham.

Date: Thursday, 17 March 2005

Time: 9.30 a.m.

A G E N D A

1. To determine if the following matters are to be considered under the categories suggested, in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972.
2. To determine any item which the Chairman is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.
3. Apologies
4. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 11th November, 2004 (copy herewith). (Pages 1 - 4)
5. Matters Arising
6. Minutes of a meeting of the School Organisation Committee held on 20th January, 2005 (copy herewith). (Pages 5 - 12)
7. Matters Arising
8. Admissions to Schools 2006/07 - Consultation Report (copy herewith). (Pages 13 - 25)
9. Co-ordinated Admission Arrangements 2005/06 (Verbal report).
10. Additional Information Form - Church of England Schools (Malcolm Robertson to report)
11. Hard to Place Children - Developing and Agreeing a Protocol (information herewith). (Pages 26 - 39)
12. Date and Time of Next Meeting

LOCAL ADMISSIONS FORUM
11th November, 2004

Present:- Mr. B. N. Sampson (Church of England), Mrs. G. Atkin (Church of England), Mr. P. Storey (Diocese of Hallam), Mr. F. Hedge (Community Representative) and Mr. G. Lancashire (Junior and Infant Schools)

Also in attendance were Mrs. J. Griffiths, Mr. D. Hill (LEA), Miss. M. Jordan (LEA) and Tom Minett (RMBC)

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

Agreed:- That Councillor Hodgkiss be appointed Chairman of this Forum for the 2004/05 Municipal Year.

(Mr. B. N. Sampson took the Chair for this meeting)

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Agreed:- That Mrs. I. Hartley be appointed Vice-Chairman of this forum for the 2004/05 Municipal Year.

3. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Boyes, Austen and Hodgkiss, Mrs. P. Powell, Mrs. I. Hartley and Mr. M. Robertson.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE LOCAL ADMISSIONS FORUM HELD ON 13TH MAY, 2004

The minutes of the meeting held on the 13th May, 2004 were accepted as a true record.

5. MATTERS ARISING - ADMISSION TO SECONDARY SCHOOL 2005/06 - DRAFT BOOKLET

Marina Jordan informed the meeting that the booklet had been submitted to the Press Office for comments on the content.

Some amendments had been suggested which were incorporated prior to the booklet being distributed.

6. MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SCHOOL ORGANISATION COMMITTEE HELD ON 30TH SEPTEMBER, 2004

The minutes of the meeting of the above Committee were received and the content noted.

7. MATTERS ARISING - SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLAN 2003/04 TO 2007/08

David Hill informed the meeting of the up to date situation regarding new build projects.

It was noted that Rotherham schools were still popular with parents that lived outside the Borough, the effect of this and the difficulties that can result for Rotherham schools when places were allowed for extra district pupils were outlined.

The meeting was informed of the situation for 2004 in respect of the number of appeals heard compared with previous years.

The number had been reduced, the main reduction being the number of appeals heard for Church Aided Schools.

8. ADMISSIONS CONSULTATION 2006/07

Marina Jordan and Joanne Griffiths reported on the content of a report which, for admission numbers and admissions criteria, gave governors the opportunity to consider the admission arrangements which will apply for 2006/07.

The Local Admissions Forum has previously considered the requirements for consultation and has agreed that the LEA should facilitate this, as far as possible, by use of the Authority's Internet site.

The timetable for consideration of the arrangements is :-

Autumn Term 2004	Governing bodies consider the arrangements which will apply
By 14th January 2005	All relevant details to be forwarded to the LEA
18th January – 1st March 2005	Period of consultation via the LEA's website
By end of March	LEA and other Local Admission Forum consider any changes and forward any comments to appropriate Admission Authority(ies)
By 15th April 2005	All admission authorities to determine their arrangements and notify those consulted.

The report submitted set out the arrangements for Voluntary Aided Schools and for Community Controlled Schools.

Admission numbers, for all schools, for 2005/06 and proposed numbers for 2006/07 were submitted with the report along with advice on action to be taken in order to agree, or not, to the admission number indicated.

Reference was made to the co-ordinated admission arrangements from 2005/06, it being noted that it was intended to amend the scheme for

secondary preferences for 2006/07.

This was only in respect of extending the existing arrangements in South Yorkshire to include Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire.

Discussion took place on the admission arrangements for pupils with special needs, whether statemented or not.

It was acknowledged that there would be more pupils with special needs in mainstream schools due to the inclusion policy. The effect of this on a school's admission criteria was referred to, it being under (v) for community schools (specific medical reason), as was the reasonableness/practicality of a particular school for a child with special needs e.g. accessibility and curriculum requirements being available on ground floor accommodation.

The Booklet and Common Application Form included reference to the need for parents to inform the Authority/School Governing Body of a child's medical needs. This would enable teaching staff to be made aware at an early stage of a child's requirements both educationally and physically.

The possible effect on schools' budgets was referred to should adaptations be required to cater for a child's needs and the need for schools to have an access plan. Such issues were to be considered when designing future plans of school buildings.

It was accepted that schools which were suitably adapted could receive a disproportionate number of children with a disability, although the numbers involved were low.

Agreed- That the report be received.

9. CO-ORDINATED ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

Marina Jordon and Joanne Griffiths gave information in respect of :-

(a) the responses received from aided schools and other LEAs. The process appeared to be operating satisfactorily;

(b) the situation whereby parents were reminded to submit a preference for a school.;

(c) the relatively few queries received in respect of the new arrangements, the majority being from parents not living in the Rotherham LEA;

(d) the timetable for the co-ordinated arrangements;

(e) the questionnaire in the booklet (parental survey) and early responses

indicating that the information set out was in a way which parents could understand.

10. PRIMARY AND SECONDARY ADMISSION BOOKLETS

Booklets were distributed to those present. It was explained that the information contained therein was available in different formats.

11. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Agreed:- That the next meeting be arranged for Thursday 17th March, 2005 commencing at 9.30 a.m.

**SCHOOL ORGANISATION COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, 20TH JANUARY, 2005**

Present:- Councillor Boyes (in the Chair)

Mr. P. Robins (Junior and Infant Schools), Mr. B. Sampson (Church of England), Mrs. J. Scott (Junior and Infant Schools), Mrs. B. Watson (Infant Schools) and Mr. P. White (Church of England)

Also in attendance were the following officers:-

Mr. M. Harrop (Education, Culture and Leisure Services), Hill (Education, Culture and Leisure Services) and Mrs. S. Green (Democratic Services)

12. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Malcolm Robertson, Ann Winfield, Councillor Austen, Kabir Hussain and Shabana Ahmed.

13. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 30TH SEPTEMBER, 2004

Resolved:- That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 30th September, 2004 be received as a correct record.

14. MATTER ARISING

Membership/Resignations/Terms of Reference

Discussion took place on the membership of the Committee.

The Secretary reported a lack of response to a recent advertisement placed in the Governors Newsletter for representatives to substitute on some of the Schools' Groups and for a Special Schools representative.

Resolved:- (1) That the Strategic Leader School Improvement be asked to raise this matter at the next Chair and Vice-Chairs meeting of Governing Bodies.

(2) That the Secretary pursue whether the Rotherham Association of School Governors have yet appointed a Chair and, if so, liaise with him/her on this matter.

15. MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE LOCAL ADMISSIONS FORUM HELD ON 11TH NOVEMBER, 2004.

The minutes of the meeting of the above Committee were received and the content noted.

16. MATTERS ARISING

(a) Co-ordinated Admission Arrangements

The meeting was informed that the new co-ordinated admission arrangements were presently working reasonably well.

An update report on this matter would be submitted to the next meeting of the Local Admissions Forum.

A discussion took place on the content of the booklet and in particular the amount of information for parents to absorb. It was noted that a two page summary was made available which furnished parents with sufficient information to enable them to complete the application form.

Parents were asked to complete a questionnaire on completion of the booklet and this was measured as a Performance Indicator within Education, Culture and Leisure Services.

Current feedback has indicated that the majority of parents are of the opinion that the booklet is clear or very clear. More up to date information on this issue would be reported to the next meeting of the Local Admissions Forum.

A very small number of parents who had failed to return an admission form, were sent a follow up letter and help was offered to families through the Welfare Service.

A great deal of effort was taking place this year, through Schools or other Agencies, to encourage parents to complete forms on time.

A debate took place on the issue of interpreters and the presentation of written information, it being pointed out that approximately fifty-seven languages were now spoken in schools.

In general, problems due to a lack of English did not seem to be apparent at Admissions Appeals.

It was pointed out that the LEA made use of the language library and the Welcome Centre as a point of contact for parents.

(b) Admissions Consultation 2006/07

It was reported that a great deal of work had taken place to ensure the admissions criteria for Church Aided Schools had been placed on the Council's web site by the deadline of 18th January, 2005.

The site also included information on the co-ordinated schemes for Primary and Secondary and admissions criteria and numbers for all community and controlled schools, and those of individual Church Aided

Schools

Agreed:- That a suitable press release be issued raising awareness of the availability of the on-line consultation and preference forms, and the timetable for the current admissions round.

17. ONS RECLASSIFICATION OF RURAL/URBAN AREAS

Further to Minute No. 8 of the previous meeting of this Committee held on 30th September, 2004, consideration was given to the information received on the reclassification of Rural/Urban Areas, carried out by the Office for National Statistics on areas within Rotherham.

This information can now be used by the School Organisation Committee if faced with any proposal for closure, as suggested in the DfES' recently revised guidance on such matters.

Overall, 52.7% of the Rotherham area is classed as rural and that area contains 12.38% of the population.

The following schools actually situated within the areas classed as rural in Rotherham are:-

Primary

Aston Fence
Harthill
Kiveton Park Inf.
Kiveton Park Meadows Jnr.
Laughton
Laughton C.E.
Thorpe Hesley Inf.
Thorpe Hesley Jnr.
Thrybergh Fullerton CE
Thurcroft Inf.
Thurcroft Jnr.
Todwick
Treeton C.E.
Wales
Wentworth C.E.
Woodsetts (16 schools)

Secondary

Wales High (1 school)

Special

Green Arbour (1 school)

A total of 18 schools, which is 13.9% of Rotherham's total of Primary, Secondary and Special Schools.

In the absence of further guidance from DfES, the point was made that it remained the responsibility of the School Organisation Committee to determine what a rural school was when considering individual proposals. Obvious considerations when deciding any proposed closure of a rural school would be transport and sustainability issues, as well as the issues relating to education standards.

The main aspect of DfES guidance is a general presumption not to close a rural school. This did not mean, however, that no rural school would ever close.

18. THE EDUCATION (SCHOOL ORGANISATION PROPOSALS)(MISCELLANEOUS REGULATIONS 2004 (SCHOOL ORGANISATION AMENDMENTS)(ENGLAND)

Following earlier consultation, the above Regulations were laid before Parliament on 25th November, 2004.

The meeting was reminded of a previous discussion at SOC which related to a proposal to amend the Education (School Organisation Committees)(England) Regulations 1999. This specifically concerned the make-up of the schools group and the addition of a nursery schools representative.

The wording of the proposals in the consultation documentation seemed to be confusing and, in places, contradictory.

DfES had now taken into consideration the views of Rotherham LEA and, as a result, removed the contradiction of nursery representatives when nursery schools are less than 5% of the pupil population.

The provision relating to the addition of a nursery representative will come into effect on 1st February, 2005, and, although the wording is now clear, the position in Rotherham needs to be clarified.

The position in terms of the membership of the schools group is as follows:-

The number of members must be at least 1 and no more than 7, except that in some instances the membership may have to exceed 7 in order to comply with the provisions contained within the Schedule to the 1999 Regulations (N.B. the latter does not apply in Rotherham).

When setting up the schools group in Rotherham, the LEA had decided to appoint 7 members even though the minimum number required (by reference to the Schedule) would have been just 3 (i.e. 1 Primary, 1 Secondary and 1 Special). This had been in order to give a broader

cross-section of views.

The minimum required under the new Regulations is 4 (same as above, plus the new Nursery representative).

Rotherham's current membership is as follows:-

- 1 Secondary (11-16)
- 1 Secondary (11-19)
- 2 Primary (J & I/Primary)
- 1 Primary (Infant)
- 1 Primary (Junior)
- 1 Special

The addition of a Nursery representative has the potential to increase the membership to 8 which would not be possible under the Regulations. Currently, however, the 11-16 schools representative (Mr. Alan Walker) is also a member of the Governing Body for the Arnold Centre and, therefore, can represent both. This would leave the number of members at 7.

The meeting was asked to consider whether this is the best way forward despite the fact that Mr. Walker has not been elected as a Nursery representative.

If it is believed to be the best way forward, the question posed for this meeting was what did SOC think the make-up of the group should be, in the event of Mr. Walker ceasing to be a member of SOC in the future?

In the case of Rotherham it would be a representative for Rawmarsh, Arnold and Aughton Nurseries who now have their own Governing Bodies.

The meeting discussed the following issues:-

- impact of the Children's Centres in terms of the changing role of Nurseries
- Private Nurseries

Resolved:- (1) That no action be taken on the potential additional nursery representative position at the present time.

(2) That a further report be made to the next meeting on this matter.

19. DFES FIVE YEAR STRATEGY: CONSULTATION ON PROPOSALS FOR FOUNDATION SCHOOLS, EXPANDING POPULAR AND SUCCESSFUL SCHOOLS AND ADDING SIXTH FORMS

The meeting considered a report by the LEA in response to a consultation by the DfES to change regulations and guidance in line with the content of

its Five Year Strategy, particularly in relation to secondary schools having 'a greater independence'.

In view of the need to respond to the proposal by 31st December, 2004, a response had been sent to DfES, as outlined in Section 7 of the report now submitted.

The DfES' strategy offers a system where there will be (amongst other things):-

- Freedom for all secondary schools to own their land and buildings, manage their assets, employ their staff, improve their governing bodies, and forge partnerships with outside sponsors and educational foundations
- More places in popular schools

The DfES believes that the current process for changing category of school to foundation is often seen by schools as onerous and that it acts as a disincentive to change.

One member expressed concern regarding the DfES' new proposals whereby the governing body of a school could determine its own proposals, even when there may be objections. This was seen as a retrograde step.

In addition, it was pointed out that School Organisation Committees had been established to make local decisions.

There was discussion on the position in Rotherham and the possible demand for either of the above changes.

The second proposal could create more appeals being sent to an Adjudicator in the event of SOC being unable to make decisions.

Resolved:- That the Secretary write to DfES questioning (a) the rationale behind the proposals (b) the lack of consultation for school proposals in respect of changes of category and (c) the diminution (and exclusion in the case of foundation schools) of the role of the School Organisation Committee.

20. REDSCOPE INFANT AND JUNIOR SCHOOLS - PROPOSED 'AMALGAMATION'

The meeting was advised of the timetable for consideration of the proposed amalgamation of the above schools, as published on 7th January, 2005.

The consultation period was six weeks. In the event of no objections being received, the matter will be determined by the LEA. If objections

are received within the six weeks period, all relevant papers will be submitted to the next meeting and a decision on the proposal made by SOC.

The proposal had arisen following the retirement of the Head Teacher of the Junior School and was being carried out in accordance with the School Organisation Plan.

Meetings had taken place between the LEA, Acting Head Teacher (Junior School), Head Teacher of the Infant School, staff and parents and advice given to Governing Bodies.

Both schools and parents were very much in favour of the proposal.

Officers from the LEA were thanked for the amount of advice and information given to the school which had helped to ensure a very clear process had been followed by the Governing Body and staff.

21. CHILDREN ACT 2004: SCHOOL ORGANISATION COMMITTEES AND THE CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN

The meeting considered the contents of a letter from the Department for Education and Skills on their plan rationalisation proposals and the introduction of the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP). This Plan will be produced for the first time in 2006.

The Children Act 2004 provides a power to require Children's Services Authorities to prepare and publish a CYPP. The plan is designed to support the move to more integrated and effective services to secure the outcomes for children set out in Every Child Matters and reflected in the Children Act 2004.

At the same time, the existing complex statutory planning requirements were to be streamlined and the Children Act repeals seven statutory planning requirements including the School Organisation Plan (SOP).

The Department for Education and Skills was aware of the concern that removal of the SOP (and therefore the SOC's power to approve it) will undermine the role of the SOC and are therefore proposing to require local authorities, by regulations, to consult SOCs and diocesan authorities during the preparation of the plan. DfES also intend to support this requirement in non-statutory guidance on developing the CYPP.

Authorities will still need to plan effectively for school organisation, despite the removal of the statutory requirement to produce a SOP.

The LEA will therefore need to give consideration in terms of what was produced for consideration by SOC in the future.

The repeal of the requirement to produce a SOP will take effect as soon

as possible, probably with the first Commencement Order for the Children Act, early in 2005. With effect from the same date, SOCs will no longer have a duty to have regard to the SOP when considering individual statutory proposals.

Information on the contents of the full Plan by DfES was presently awaited.

Resolved:- That further information be submitted to a future meeting when up to date information had been received from DfES.

22. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next two meetings be held as follows:-

Thursday, 17th March, 2005 at 11.00 a.m.

(Please note: in the event of no objections to the Redscope Infant and Junior Schools proposed 'amalgamation', this meeting may not be necessary).

Thursday, 14th July, 2005 at 9.30 a.m.

(Please note: this is a provisional date to discuss the update of the School Organisation Plan).

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
--

1.	Meeting:	ECALS Cabinet Member and Advisers
2.	Date:	15 th March 2005
3.	Title:	Admissions to Schools 2006/07 – Consultation Report (All Wards)
4.	Programme Area:	ECALS

- 5. Summary:** This report covers issues that have arisen as a result of the annual consultation exercise with and between schools and other LEAs.
- 6. Recommendations: That:**
- i) the proposed admission numbers contained within Annex 1 for community and controlled schools be confirmed for 2006/07, subject to the clarifications / amendments contained in Annex 2.
 - ii) the admissions criteria for community and controlled schools for 2006/07 (as shown at Annex 1) be confirmed,
 - iii) the changes shown at Annex 2 for voluntary aided schools be noted.
 - iv) the appropriate notice be published in respect of the proposed admission numbers for schools named in Annex 2 where the admission number will be less than that currently indicated by the net capacity calculation.
 - v) the co-ordinated admissions schemes for both Primary and Secondary schools be confirmed and forwarded to the Secretary of State as required,
 - vi) this report be forwarded to the Local Admissions Forum for consideration at its next meeting.

7. **Proposals and Details:** Annex 1 shows details of the LEA's consultation document relating to community and controlled schools. The admissions criteria are unchanged from the previous year and there has been no specific feedback from consultees on this.

Proposed admission numbers for community and controlled schools have, in the main been agreed by school governing bodies. There has been some feedback and details are indicated at Annex 2.

Aided schools have also been taking part in the consultation and for this year, this has been facilitated by use of the LEA's internet site. Details of aided schools proposed admission number and admissions criteria have been included on the site.

There has been no specific feedback on the consultation regarding the co-ordinated admission schemes. The period for consultation ended on 1st March and determinations by admission authorities must be made by 15th April 2005.

The Local Admissions Forum also needs to consider this report.

8. **Finance:** There are no specific financial consequences related to the recommendations of this report, although numbers on roll do have an effect on school budgets.
9. **Risks and Uncertainties:** All consultees must be informed of any determination and it is possible for objections to be made to the Adjudicator.
10. **Policy and Performance Agenda Implications:** The recommended action has no specific consequences in terms of policy and performance agenda implications.
11. **Background Papers and Consultation:** This is an annual consultation exercise undertaken by reference to statutory regulations and associated guidance – School Standards and Framework Act 1998, Education Act 2002 and subsequent regulations; DfES' School Admissions Code of Practice.

Contact Name: *Martin Harrop, PO Forward Planning, 01709 822415*
e-mail: martin.harrop@rotherham.gov.uk

**ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TO GOVERNING BODIES – AUTUMN TERM 2004**

CONSULTATION ON ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE ADMISSION YEAR 2006/07

i) Admission Numbers and Admissions Criteria

This item gives governors the opportunity to consider the admission arrangements (criteria and admission number), which will apply for admission in 2006/07. The Local Admission Forum has previously considered the requirements for consultation and has agreed that the LEA should facilitate this, as far as possible, by use of the Authority's Internet site.

The timetable for the year is:-

Autumn Term 2004	Governing bodies consider the arrangements which will apply.
By 14 th January 2005	All relevant details to be forwarded to the LEA.
18 th January – 1 st March 2005	Period of consultation via the LEA's website.
By end of March	LEA and the Local Admission Forum consider any changes and forward any comments to appropriate Admission Authority(ies).
By 15 th April 2005	All admission authorities to determine their arrangements and notify those consulted.

Community and Controlled Schools

For these schools, the LEA is the admission authority. The proposed admissions criteria remain the same as those determined for 2005/06. Admission numbers for 2005/06 and proposed numbers for 2006/07 are as shown in the Appendix.

Action: If the governing body consider that a different number would be more appropriate for the school, then details should be forwarded to Martin Harrop, 1st Floor, Norfolk House, as soon as possible and no later than **14th January 2005**.

Voluntary Aided Schools

The governing body is the admission authority. Governing Bodies of Church of England schools should consult their Diocesan Board before consulting anyone else. Governing bodies to consider any changes to their admission criteria and/or admission number.

Action: Full details of the admissions criteria and admissions number to be forwarded to the LEA by 14th January 2005 in order for the full consultation with all the appropriate consultees to be carried out via the Internet. This should be done by e-mail to martin.harrop@rotherham.gov.uk It should be noted that if the full consultation is carried out appropriately for all admission authorities within the 'relevant area' (ie Rotherham), then the requirement to consult will only apply every other year for voluntary aided schools where no change to the arrangements are proposed. This could, therefore, apply for 2007/08, if full consultation is done for all schools for 2006/07.

Further General Points

All admission numbers should now be set by reference to the indicated admission number (IAN) deriving from the net capacity calculation.

An admission number higher than the IAN can be set, subject to the necessary consultation, feedback and determination.

An admission number lower than the IAN can be set, subject to the above, but would also require the publication of a notice with provision for objection to the Adjudicator.

All infant, J&I, Primary schools need to continue to be mindful of the need to maintain classes from R to Y2 at 30 or less.

If you require any further information or would wish to discuss any matters relating to admission numbers/criteria/net capacity, please contact Martin Harrop on 01709 822415.

ii) Co-ordinated Admission Arrangements

Schemes for the co-ordination of admission arrangements for Primary and Secondary schools were agreed for 2005/06.

For 2006/07, the LEA intends to amend the scheme for Secondary preferences, but only in respect of extending the existing arrangements applying to all LEAs in South Yorkshire to include Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire. Both these LEAs are happy to agree this arrangement in order to avoid the possibility of some pupils receiving more than one offer of a school place.

Action: Governing Bodies to note and to forward any comments, if any, to the LEA marked for the attention of Martin Harrop.

Admission Criteria for community and controlled schools – 2006/07

Primary Reception

Places will be allocated in the following order of priority

- i) Children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs will gain a place at the school stipulated in the Statement.
- ii) Children in Public Care will gain a place at the catchment area/local school or the school deemed most appropriate by the Authority as part of the child's personal education plan.
- iii) Children living in the catchment area of the school as defined by the Authority.
- iv) Those children who live outside the catchment area whose older brothers or sisters will be on the roll of the preferred school or its associated junior school at the time of their admission.
- v) Children who have a specific medical reason confirmed by a medical practitioner which the Authority is satisfied makes attendance **at that particular school essential**.
- vi) Children with a compelling social reason which the Authority is satisfied makes attendance **at that particular school essential**. The kinds of overriding social reasons which could be accepted are where there is evidence that the pupil's education would be seriously impaired if he or she did not attend the preferred school.
- vii) Children who live nearest to the school measured in a straight line on a horizontal plane (as the crow flies).

Year 3

Places in Year 3 at a Junior School will be allocated following receipt of parental preferences according to the following criteria, which are in priority order:-

- i) Children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs will gain a place at the school stipulated in the Statement.
- ii) Children in Public Care will gain a place at the catchment area/local school or the school deemed most appropriate by the Authority as part of the child's personal education plan.
- iii) Children in attendance at Y2 in the associated Infant School.
- iv) Children living in the catchment area of the school as defined by the Authority.
- v) Children whose older brothers or sisters will be on the roll of the school at the time of their admission.

- vi) Children who have a specific medical reason confirmed by a medical practitioner which the Authority is satisfied makes attendance **at that particular school essential**.
- vii) Children with a compelling social reason which the Authority is satisfied makes attendance **at that particular school essential**.
- viii) Children who live nearest to the school measured in a straight line on a horizontal plane (as the crow flies).

Secondary Year 7

Places will be allocated in the following order of priority:-

- i) Children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs will gain a place at the school stipulated in the Statement.
- ii) Children in Public Care will gain a place at the catchment area/local school or the school deemed most appropriate by the Authority as part of the child's personal education plan.
- iii) Children who, on the Allocated Date, are living in the catchment area of the school as defined by the Authority.
- iv) Those children who live outside the catchment area whose older brothers or sisters will be on the roll of the preferred school at the time of their admission.
- v) Children who have a specific medical reason confirmed by a medical practitioner which the Authority is satisfied makes attendance **at that particular school essential**.
- vi) Children with a compelling social reason which the Authority is satisfied make attendance **at that particular school essential**. The kind of overriding social reasons which could be accepted are where there is evidence that the pupil's education would be seriously impaired if he or she did not attend the preferred school.
- vii) Children who, on the allocation date, are on the roll of one of the associated Primary/Junior/Junior and Infant schools as identified by the Authority.
- viii) Children who, on the Allocated Date, live nearest to the school measured by a straight line on a horizontal plan, (commonly known as measurement, "as the crow flies").

NB Places will be allocated in accordance with the LEA's co-ordinated admissions schemes for Primary and Secondary schools. In assessing preferences, the LEA will operate an 'equal preference' system, which means that no priority will be given according to the ranking of the preference, except where a potential offer can be made in respect of more than one school. In that situation, the final offer of a place will be made at the highest ranked of the potential offer schools.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS

School	Net Capacity	Indicated Admission Number	Admission Number 2005/2006	Proposed Admission Number 2006/2007	Comments
Anston Brook Primary	253	36	40	40	
Anston Greenlands J&I	266	38	38	38	
Anston Hillcrest Primary	210	30	30	30	
Anston Park Infant	225	75	75	75	
Anston Park Junior	270	67	75	75(67)	Govs could consider the lower number
Aston CE J&I	210	30	30		
Aston Fence J&I	140	20	20	20	
Aston Hall J&I	210	30	30	30	
Aston Lodge Primary	210	30	30	30	
Aston Springwood Primary	210	30	30	30	
Aughton Primary	195	27	30	30	
Badsley Moor Infant	270	90	90	90	
Badsley Moor Junior	360	90	90	90	
Blackburn Primary	392	56	56	56	
Bramley Grange Primary	280	40	40	40	
Bramley Sunnyside Infant	240	80	80	80	
Bramley Sunnyside Junior	320	80	80	80	
Brampton Cortonwood Infant	115	38	40	40	
Brampton the Ellis CE Infant	120	40	40		
Brampton the Ellis CE Junior	269	67	70		
Brinsworth Howarth J&I	210	30	30	30	
Brinsworth Manor Infant	240	80	80	80	
Brinsworth Manor Junior	320	80	80	80	
Brinsworth Whitehill Primary	296	42	42	42(40)	Govs could consider the lower number
Broom Valley Infant	225	69	75	75	
Broom Valley Junior	272	68	68	68	
Canklow Woods Primary	270	38	40	40(38)	Govs could consider the lower number
Catcliffe Primary	170	24	25	25	
Coleridge Primary	210	30	30	30	
Dalton Foljambe J&I	150	21	30	30	
Dinnington Primary	431	61	52	52	New building in Sept 2004
St Joseph's Catholic Primary (Dinnington)	196	28	28		
East Dene J&I	420	60	60	50	To reduce in line with new build capacity
Ferham Primary	266	38	30	30	New building
Flanderwell Primary	206	29	30	30	
Greasbrough J&I	328	46	50	50	
Harthill Primary	180	25	30	30	
Herringthorpe Infant	210	70	70	70	
Herringthorpe Junior	280	70	70	70	
High Greave Infant	180	60	60	60	
High Greave Junior	240	60	60	60	

School	Net Capacity	Indicated Admission Number	Admission Number 2005/2006	Proposed Admission Number 2006/2007	Comments
Kilnhurst Primary	168	28	28	28	
Kimberworth Primary	210	30	N/A	30	New school will have capacity of 210 (R-Y6)
Kiveton Park Infant	150	50	50	50	
Kiveton Park Meadows Junior	200	50	59	59	
Laughton CE Primary	105	15	15		
Laughton J&I	145	20	24	24	
Lilly Hall Junior	268	67	67	67	
Listerdale J&I	210	30	30	30	
Maltby Craggs Infant	240	80	70	70	Will be based on capacity of new buildings – 210
Maltby Craggs Junior	320	80	70	70	Will be based on capacity of new buildings - 280
Maltby Hall Infant	178	59	60	60	
Maltby Manor Infant	180	60	60	60	
Maltby Manor Junior	243	60	60	60	
Maltby Redwood J&I	315	45	45	45	
St Mary's Catholic Primary (Maltby)	208	29	30		
Meadowhall Primary	350	50	N/A	50	New school will have capacity for 350 (R-Y6)
Ravenfield Primary	210	30	30	30	
Rawmarsh Ashwood J&I	210	30	30	30	
Rawmarsh St Mary's CE Primary	131	18	30		
Rawmarsh Monkwood Infant	173	57	60	60	
Rawmarsh Monkwood Junior	240	60	60	60	
Rawmarsh Rosehill Junior	240	60	60	60	
Rawmarsh Ryecroft Infant	180	60	60	60	
Rawmarsh Sandhill Primary	209	29	30	30	
Rawmarsh St Joseph's Catholic Primary	196	28	28		
Rawmarsh Thorogate J&I	210	30	30	30	
Redscope Infant	180	60	60	60	
Redscope Junior	240	60	60	60	
Rockingham J&I	390	55	56	56	
Roughwood Primary	392	56	56	56	
Sitwell Infant	228	76	76	76	
Sitwell Junior	300	75	76	76	
St Ann's J&I	345	57	60	60	
St Bede's Catholic Primary	280	40	40		
St Mary's Catholic Primary (Herr)	208	29	30		

School	Net Capacity	Indicated Admission Number	Admission Number 2005/2006	Proposed Admission Number 2006/2007	Comments
St Thomas' CE Primary (Kiln)	180	25	30	30(25)	Govs could consider the lower number
Swallownest Primary	210	30	30	30	
Swinton Brookfield Primary	347	49	50	50	
Swinton Fitzwilliam Infant	150	50	50	50	
Swinton Fitzwilliam Junior	200	50	60	60	
Swinton Queen Primary	315	45	45	45	
Thornhill Primary	231	33	30	30	New building
Thorpe Hesley Infant	210	70	80	70	
Thorpe Hesley Junior	324	81	81	81	
Thrybergh Fullerton CE Primary	105	15	15		
Thrybergh Primary	315	45	50	50	
St Gerard's Catholic Primary	140	20	20		
Thurcroft Infant	180	60	60	60	
Thurcroft Junior	355	88	70	70	
Todwick J&I	210	30	30	30	
Treeton CE Primary	259	37	37		
Trinity Croft CE J&I	112	16	16		
Wales Primary	171	24	30	30	
Wath CE Primary	210	30	30		
Wath Central Junior *	240	60	60	60	
Our Lady & St Joseph's Catholic Primary	175	25	30		
Wath Park Infant *	180	60	60	60	
Wath Victoria J&I	240	34	40	40	
Wentworth CE J&I	104	14	14	14	
West Melton J&I	140	20	28	28(20)	Govs could consider the lower number
Whiston J&I	210	30	30	30	
Whiston Worrygoose J&I	210	30	30	30	
Wickersley Northfield Primary	419	59	60	60	
St Alban's CE Primary	210	30	30		
Woodsetts J&I	176	29	30	30	

* Schools will amalgamate with a net capacity of 420 and admission limit of 60.

SECONDARY SCHOOLS

School	Net Capacity Figure	Indicated Admission Number	Admission Number 2005/2006	Proposed Admission Number 2006/2007	Comments
Aston Comprehensive School, A Specialist School in Maths and Computing	1833	313	319	319	
Brinsworth Comprehensive School	1487	255	255	255	
Clifton Comprehensive	1433	286	250	250	
Dinnington Comprehensive School	1444	252	252	252	
Maltby Comprehensive School	1639	290	290	290	
Oakwood Technology College	1050	210	210	210	
Rawmarsh School, A Sports College	1112	222	217	222	
Swinton Community School, A Maths & Computing College	1320	226	241	241(226)	Govs could consider the lower number
Thrybergh Comprehensive	704	140	140	140	Net capacity should be 700 for 2006
Wales High School	1520	248	248	248	
Wath Comprehensive A Language College	1740	290	300	300	Net capacity should be 1800 for 2006
Wickersley School and Sports College	1725	279	300	300	Net capacity should be 1850 for 2006
Wingfield Comprehensive	845	169	170	170	Net capacity should be 850 for 2006
Winterhill	1128 (for Old Hall)	225	320	320	Net capacity should be 1600 with new build
St Bernard's Catholic High, Specialist School for the Arts	664	132	132		
Pope Pius X Catholic High	650	130	130		

ADMISSION NUMBER FOR SIXTH FORMS

School Name	Admission Number for Y7-Y11	Proposed Admission Number for Y12 2006/07 *
Aston Comprehensive School, A Specialist School in Maths and Computing	319	47
Brinsworth Comprehensive School	255	38
Dinnington Comprehensive School	252	37
Maltby Comprehensive School	290	43
Swinton Community School, A Maths & Computing College	241	36
Wales High School	248	37
Wath Comprehensive A Language College	300	45
Wickersley Schools and Sports College	300	45

* This number is 15% of the admission number for Y7.

Feedback from the annual admissions consultation**Community and Controlled Schools**

A number of schools were asked to give consideration to an alternative admission number to that already in place for 2005/06. Responses have been as follows:-

School	Possible numbers	Number preferred by Governors
Anston Park Junior	75/67	75
Brinsworth Whitehill	42/40	42
Canklow Woods	40/38	38
St Thomas CE, Kilnhurst	30/25	30
West Melton	28//20	28
Swinton Community, A Maths & Computing College	241/226	226

Additionally, there were other schools where the previous admission number and the indicated admission number deriving from the net capacity were at variance:-

School	Indicated Admission Number	Previous Admission Number	Number preferred by Governors
Lilly Hall Junior	Was 67, now 60	67	60
Swinton Fitzwilliam Jnr	50	60	50
Thorpe Hesley Inf	70	80	80

For all of the above there is no reason why the governors' preferred admission number cannot be agreed for 2006/07.

Voluntary Aided Schools

There is one school where the proposed admission number is different to that which applied for 2005/06. This should be noted:-

School	Indicated Admission Number	Previous Admission Number	Number preferred by Governors
Rawmarsh St Joseph's	28	28	30

At Treeton Primary the proposed number should be 37 (as in 2005/06) rather than 35 as published.

Required publication where an admission number is less than that indicated by the current net capacity calculation for the school

As in previous years, there is now a requirement for a notice to be published should any admission authority wish to have an admission number, which is lower than that indicated by the current net capacity calculation. For 2006/07, this will apply to the following schools:-

School	Change	Comments
Clifton	250 rather than 286	will have changed capacity
Thurcroft Junior	70 rather than 88	large classrooms
Maltby Craggs Infant	70 rather than 80	will have changed capacity
Maltby Craggs Junior	70 rather than 80	will have changed capacity
Meadowhall *	40 rather than 75	will have 7 rather than 4 year groups
Kimberworth	30 rather than 66	will have 7 rather than 3 year groups
East Dene	50 rather than 60	will have changed capacity

* NB This number will now be 40 for 2006/07 rather than 50 (in the original document), which will fit with the net capacity calculation for the new school, following recent discussions.

Hard to Place Children - Developing and Agreeing a Protocol

1. The Government's Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners set out a number of ways in which schools will enjoy greater independence and freedom. However it also highlighted the need for schools to work together on their wider responsibilities, such as the provision of places for hard to place children. All schools should recognise that they share a collective responsibility to ensure that these children are admitted to a suitable school as quickly as possible.

2. As explained in Every Child Matters, the Government believes that all children should receive a good education to help them fulfil their potential. However, for some children that can be harder than for others. Sometimes children can find themselves without a school place, because their personal circumstances are such that they have had to move home; or they are looked after children; or they have been excluded from a school. The Government considers that it is important that, wherever possible and in the best interests of the child, a suitable school place should be found quickly – certainly it should take no longer than 20 school days in the case of a looked after child.

3. However, there is often a balance to be struck between finding a place quickly, say in an undersubscribed school or one facing challenging circumstances, and finding a school place that is appropriate for the child. It is also important that no school should be asked to take an excessive or unreasonable number of pupils who have been excluded from other schools. To ensure that the needs of the child and the needs of the school are taken into account, the Government expects that every local Admission Forum which does not already have one, will agree a protocol for sharing hard to place pupils, and that those protocols will be agreed with schools and in place for the school year starting September 2005 at the latest. Although this is aimed at secondary schools in the first instance, Forums should decide whether protocols are also required to cover primary schools in their area.

4. The School Admissions Code of Practice, to which all admission authorities must have regard, will in due course be amended to reflect this guidance.

5. **Getting started** For your protocol to be useful it must be more than just a shared aspiration to collaborate. A firm voluntary agreement is needed from all parties. It must be clear that **the protocol applies to all schools**, including voluntary aided and foundation schools and Academies, and it must be agreed with those schools. It also needs to explain in what circumstances it will be used, and how decisions about the admission of hard to place children will be agreed. It is worth bearing in mind that in the vast majority of cases, children requiring a school place will continue to be admitted in accordance with the usual admission procedures, rather than through the protocol.

6. We think the starting point should be for schools and LEAs, working through their Admission Forum, to identify the current scale of in year admissions and whether some schools are taking a disproportionate number of previously excluded pupils. This will help to analyse the types of pupils that are hard to place in their area.

7. What if some schools have had to admit too many previously excluded pupils? The general principle should be that no school should be required to admit an unreasonable number of these children. The protocol should state a maximum percentage of previously excluded pupils that an individual school will be asked to admit in any year group. We recommend that this should be cumulative and take into account previously excluded pupils already in the year, unless they have been in the school for 2 years without a fixed period exclusion. It is up to the Forum to agree the percentage for each school in their area. Where all the schools in a LEA have reached their limit in any year group, pupils may need to be placed in alternative provision until a place becomes available, unless schools agree to exceed the limit.

8. Why is a protocol important? It is a good way for everybody concerned to see what is happening, so that there is both openness and fairness about these admissions. It should demonstrate that the system is fair by working with schools and keeping them informed of any decisions or anything new that is happening. It is, for example, good practice for Forums to share statistics with head teachers each term to show how the protocol is working.

9. To help achieve this, the Forum needs to consider the following issues:

Who should the protocol cover? The Government expects all Forums to include looked after children and those pupils excluded from other local schools in these protocols. Forums could also agree, depending on local circumstances, to include children of compulsory school age in some, or all, of the following categories:-

Children attending PRUs who need to be reintegrated back into mainstream education

Children who have been out of education for longer than one school term

Children whose parents have been unable to find them a place after moving to the area, because of a shortage of places

Children withdrawn from schools by their family, following fixed term exclusions and unable to find another place.

Children of refugees and asylum seekers not in accommodation centres
Homeless Children

Children with unsupportive family backgrounds, where a place has not be sought

Children known to the police or other agencies

Children without a school place and with a history of serious attendance problems

Traveller Children

Children with statements of special educational need are not covered by these protocols as their needs must be considered separately.

10. The key point to remember is that the children covered by the protocol will be the ones who are hard to place in a school and who need to be admitted to a school quickly.

11. In what circumstances should it apply? The protocol should apply to all admissions of hard to place children, but Forums need to agree how to balance the circumstances of the pupil and the circumstances of schools.

12. The protocol could also cover alternative provision, especially PRUs. An excluded child without a school place might be admitted to a PRU for a short period until they can be admitted back into mainstream school. The protocol should set out how PRUs and other forms of alternative provision, such as Skill Force or the Prince's Trust, fit into the process and how children can be reintegrated into mainstream schools (see also New Ways for Schools and LEAs to work together to manage Excluded Pupils and those at risk of Exclusion). This would not be appropriate for looked after children who must be found a suitable school placement quickly. There may of course be circumstances in which a child cannot tolerate the mainstream environment and consideration will need to be given to whether good quality alternative provision best provides a longer term solution.

13. What schools are covered by the protocol? We expect all schools to be covered by the protocol, including foundation schools, voluntary aided schools, faith schools, grammar schools and Academies. Any CTC that does not become an Academy will be strongly encouraged by the Department to play a full part in sharing pupils.

14. Differing arrangements can apply to different types of schools as appropriate, but all schools are expected to sign up to the general principle that they play their part in taking hard to place children. Ideally the protocol, when triggered, should identify the school that should admit the child. Consideration should be given to how this is best done. (Annex A provides a list of some of the issues which

should be considered.) LEAs will need to work closely with their schools, both inside and outside the Forum, to get agreement and support for the protocol.

15. Who else should be involved? Forums could consider whether to set up a placement panel as a means of identifying which school is appropriate for the child. Such a panel might include LEA members from Social Services, welfare and exclusions, as well as head teachers or governors, as these people may already be involved in the child's case or they may be needed to provide additional support once the child is admitted to the school.

16. What if people don't agree to the protocol or the child to be admitted? We would expect that the protocol be agreed by the Forum and have the backing of all schools, the LEA and everybody else involved in supporting a hard to place pupil.

17. If any Forums fail to agree protocols on a voluntary basis, the Secretary of State will consider whether to take out legislation requiring them to do so, with the ability to impose a protocol if agreement cannot be reached.

18. If a school is identified as the one to admit a child and refuses to do so, the LEA can refer the matter to the Department (if it is a community or voluntary controlled school, or an Academy) or it can direct the school to admit the pupil (if it is a foundation or voluntary aided school).

19. The School Admissions Code of Practice will be amended in due course to make it clear that schools can be directed to comply with agreed protocols.

20. Funding. The protocol should cover arrangements for funding for the receiving school.

21. Where a pupil is permanently excluded the excluding school should pass the remainder of the 'age-weighted pupil unit' (AWPU) for that financial year back to the LEA. This money could be used either for alternative provision if it is not possible to place a pupil in a school, or passed to the receiving school when another school admits the pupil.

22. The protocol should also set out any additionally delegated funding relating to pupils in PRUs.

23. **Additional support.** The protocol should state what additional support, if any, and in what circumstances, will be provided by the LEA. This can include whether transport will be provided to schools beyond walking distance. Once a school has agreed to admit the child, a meeting should be arranged with the school and LEA to discuss the support needed.

24. **Finally** – the protocol should work for the benefit of all children concerned.

25. Annex B provides a sample of local protocols agreed by Admission Forums and in current use.

Annex A

Factors to be considered in protocols

In order for the protocol to be successful:

- all schools in the area need to agree to take part, even if they are responsible for their own admissions, including Academies
- schools should continue to admit local pupils who apply for an available place under normal admission arrangements
- schools cannot cite oversubscription as a reason for not admitting a pupil under the protocol
- hard to place pupils should be given priority for admission over others on a waiting list or awaiting an appeal
- schools must respond immediately to requests for admission so that the admission of the pupil is not delayed
- schools should not insist on an appeal being heard before admitting a child under this protocol
- schools should not refuse to admit a pupil who has been denied a place at that school at appeal, if the protocol identifies that school as the one to admit the child
- the LEA (or placement panel) should take account of any genuine concerns about the admission, for example a previous serious breakdown in the relationship between the school and the family, or a strong aversion to or desire for the religious ethos of a school
- wherever possible, parents' views will be considered, but will not override the protocol if the preferred school is unable to take the pupil.
- wherever possible, pupils with a religious affiliation should be matched to a suitable school, but this should not override the protocol if the school is unable to take the pupil, or if the pupil identified for the school does not have that affiliation.

SAMPLE PROTOCOL

Date:

Ref:

Target Audience: Headteachers/ Chair of Governors of
Infant/First/Primary/Junior/Secondary Schs

Service Sector: Planning for Learning

Information Category: Policy **Respond/Action by:**

High Needs Admission Scheme

SUMMARY

Following the Bulletins sent out last summer in which we consulted on our plans for a High Need Admission Scheme (HNAS), the scheme has now been approved formally by the Admissions Forum and the Secondary and Primary Headteachers' Phase Councils, on a pilot basis for review after a year. It is now being implemented throughout the County.

Aims of the Scheme

The scheme is designed to:

- acknowledge the real need of vulnerable young people who are not on the roll of any school to be dealt with quickly and sympathetically
- reduce the time that these "difficult to place/high need" pupils spend out of school
- ensure that schools admit pupils with challenging educational needs on a turn-taking basis
- be fair and transparent, and to have the confidence of all schools

Background

Working parties of representatives nominated by Primary and Secondary Council met during 2003 to discuss the principles and working of a scheme.

The scheme was then adopted in principle at the Admissions Forum meeting in January 2004. At each stage amendments were made to the scheme to take account of suggestions or concerns raised. A number of concerns remain from all the consultees and the year trial will be used to see if these concerns can be allayed.

Main Principles

It was agreed that in order for the scheme to be successful:

- all schools will take part
- schools will continue to admit local pupils who apply for an available place, under normal admission arrangements
- schools cannot say that they are over-subscribed if they are asked to admit a pupil under the scheme, and high need pupils will be given priority for admission over any others on a waiting list or awaiting an appeal
- schools must respond immediately to requests for admission so that the admission of the pupil is not unduly delayed
- the LEA will take account of any genuine concerns about the admission, for example a previous serious breakdown in the relationship between the school and the family, or a strong aversion by the family to the religious ethos of the school. If there is the potential to make a choice between a youngster who has a denominational affiliation or one who doesn't then we would offer the "denominational pupil" to the denominational school.

The general rule should be that if a child moves into the area, he/she attends a local school or the school named by the parents as their first preference. Headteachers should not refuse to admit a child if there is a place available, even if the child has a few behavioural issues or comes from a difficult family background. It is only in exceptional circumstances that schools may refuse admission. For schools which are their own admissions authorities Headteachers and Governing Bodies are asked to agree a procedure whereby the Head in consultation with the Chair is empowered to make immediate decisions about the placement of a pupil so that there is not a further period of absence from school. As a guide, only about 80 pupils per year (75 of whom are secondary-age) are defined as "difficult to place" or "high need pupils".

Procedure

If a pupil moves into the area, or moves to another part of the county, and cannot find a school place, this may be for one of the following reasons:

- all the local schools are genuinely full in the relevant year group

- the pupil has serious behavioural problems which the school cannot deal with (eg because it is on Special Measures)
- the pupil cannot travel to the school which can be offered, either because it is too far away or because the pupil has specific difficulties (eg very poor English, ADHD, health problems, etc)

The Points-Weighted List of Schools

If the pupil is accepted by the LEA as being “difficult to place/high need”, a points-weighted list will be referred to in order to identify the schools whose turn it is to admit next. At the specific request of headteachers, a single list is used, in the case of secondary schools, to place both permanently excluded pupils and “difficult to place/high need” pupils.

The schools are ranked, using data relating to such factors as the number of statemented pupils and pupils on School Action Plus, the number of children eligible for free school meals, and it also now includes information on mobility (turbulence) – again at the request of headteachers. When a pupil needs to be placed under the Scheme, the school at the top of the list for the area in which the pupil lives is approached. When a school admits a pupil under the Scheme points are credited to the school and the school moves to a lower position on the list. Schools will therefore not normally be asked to admit two pupils (either permanently excluded or “difficult to place/high need”) in quick succession and are unlikely to be asked to admit more than three or four pupils in any one year. The lists will be issued in the summer term with updated information.

Funding

In the case of “difficult to place/high need” pupils, an additional budget allocation will be made to the school, once the child is admitted, to fund any extra support which may be needed. This will be £1500 for pupils admitted in the autumn term, £1000 for pupils admitted in the spring term and £500 for pupils admitted in the summer term.

Additional Support

In addition the Multi-professional Team Managers will be asked to provide support, where appropriate and subject to resource pressures, as soon as possible after the pupil is admitted. In certain cases, where it is necessary, they may also be called on to assess the pupil’s needs before admission.

department for

education and skills

creating opportunity, releasing potential, achieving excellence

Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
Westminster
London SW1P 3BTtel: 0870 0012345
fax: 020 7925 6000
info@dfes.gsi.gov.uk
www.dfes.gov.ukChief Education Officers
Directors of Children's Services

18 November 2004

Behaviour in Schools

In recent years the Government has made a significant financial investment in measures to improve behaviour in schools. Much has been channelled into support for schools in challenging areas, through Excellence in Cities and the Behaviour Improvement Programme. We are also now providing support for all secondary schools' behaviour management through the KS3 strategy. We have taken strong action against bullying and have also increased the powers of schools to tackle behavioural problems, so that, for example, schools can use permanent exclusion for violence, even when it is a first offence.

There is a broad measure of consensus about this approach, including among the teacher unions. We believe the time is now right to build on the solid progress that has been made and to accelerate the pace at which effective practice in behaviour improvement is adopted in schools and local authorities across the country.

In a speech on 18 November to new heads, Charles Clarke made a statement about the Government's expectations of schools and local authorities on behaviour. The Secretary of State emphasised the leadership role of heads and others in schools in setting clear and consistent standards of behaviour, and in applying effective practice in behaviour management. But his statement also makes clear that in return heads are entitled to the support of the Government, LEAs and the wider community so that, for example, in every local area there is specialist support for schools to deal with pupils with more severe behaviour problems and arrangements to offer alternative provision for pupils who need a period out of school as well as for those who have been permanently excluded. It is important that there is available in every local area the right types of educational facilities for those pupils who should not be in mainstream schools.

Additionally the speech develops the proposals flagged in the Department's Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners to address the issue of schools that are asked to admit disproportionate numbers of hard to place pupils. In particular it is important that no school should be asked to take an excessive number of pupils who have been excluded from other schools. The Government expects that every local Admission Forum which does not already have one will agree a protocol for sharing hard to place pupils and that these protocols will



be agreed with schools and in place for the school year starting September 2005 at the latest. The protocols should include a fixed percentage limit to be agreed locally on the number of previously excluded pupils to be admitted in any one year group in any school. We want Forums to focus on developing such protocols for secondary schools in the first instance, but they should take a view on whether protocols are also required to cover primary schools in their areas. The first of the notes enclosed with this letter offers guidance to Forums on developing and agreeing protocols.

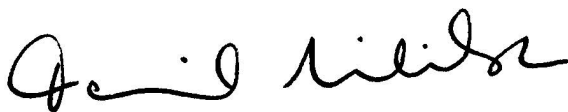
Action to share hard to place pupils more fairly between schools needs to be backed up by adequate support for schools taking in challenging pupils and by better arrangements for pupils for whom mainstream education is not appropriate. We think the way forward here is to give groups of schools both the funding and responsibility for alternative provision, with the schools working together to manage pupils with challenging behaviour; to develop preventative strategies which reduce the need for exclusions from school; and to place pupils in a range of alternative provision. There are a number of examples around the country where this approach is already working effectively and we want all LEAs to develop arrangements on these lines, initially for the secondary sector, in consultation with their schools. The second note enclosed with this letter offers guidance on how such arrangements can work. The foundation partnership model outlined in the Five Year Strategy offers a promising vehicle for this kind of collaboration: the Department plans to issue a prospectus for foundation partnerships in December.

Charles Clarke's speech on 18 November also set out new proposals to reduce the incidence of knife carrying in schools and to help head teachers respond to such incidents more effectively when they occur; and new action in relation to allegations against teachers.

Action required

The immediate action for you and your staff is

- To set in hand work with your Admission Forum towards a protocol on admission of hard to place pupils as outlined above and taking account of the guidance note enclosed. The Department will be providing further advice on the guidance on admissions protocols at a series of regional events for LEA Admission Managers, starting on 1 December.
- To work with heads on delegating or devolving funding to groups of schools to enable them to take collective responsibility for managing difficult pupils and making alternative provision where necessary, taking account of the second guidance note enclosed. The Department has already identified a number of LEAs which are committed to doing this and we will be working with them to support early progress. We are keen to hear from other LEAs who would like to join this group by 17 December so that we can plan a number of workshops around the country in January and February 2005.



DAVID MILIBAND



STEPHEN TWIGG



Sanctuary Buildings Great Smith Street Westminster London SW1P 3BT
tel: 0870 0012345 dfes.ministers@dfes.gsi.gov.uk
Rt Hon Ruth Kelly MP

Chief Education Officers
Directors of Children's Services

1 February 2005

Improving Behaviour in Schools

In my speech to secondary head teachers today, I emphasise the importance of improving behaviour in school and make clear my priority as Secretary of State to support all school leaders to tackle any level of bad behaviour in their school.

In the speech, I pay tribute to the excellent work most schools and Local Authorities are already doing in this area. Behaviour in most schools is good for most of the time. I also make it clear that this is not a challenge just for individual schools. Schools need the support of other schools in their area, and of their Local Authority, together with access to appropriate resources, if they are to manage pupil behaviour effectively and consistently. Parents also have an important role to play, working closely with schools to support their children.

Parental responsibility

I expect all Local Authorities to ensure they have, in their 'behaviour toolkit', the whole range of measures available to them to reinforce parental responsibility for their children's behaviour. This includes parenting contracts and parenting orders for cases of exclusion, among measures introduced in the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003. Ivan Lewis wrote to you on 25 February 2004 enclosing guidance on when and how these powers can be used.

To be able to use these measures, Local Authorities need to have agreed local arrangements in place. I have asked officials to keep me in touch with individual progress towards the implementation of these important measures. I have appointed advisers to help with implementation. They will be pleased to assist your authority with any practical advice or support that may be necessary. In addition, a series of guidance workshops for Local Education Authority staff is underway and will continue over the spring and summer terms.

department for

education and skills

creating opportunity, releasing potential, achieving excellence



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Secondary schools where behaviour is unsatisfactory

OFSTED inspectors judge behaviour to be unsatisfactory at just under 10% of secondary schools. I expect Local Authorities to give priority to helping these schools. In particular, Local Authorities should give immediate priority to such schools in deploying their Key Stage 3 Strategy Behaviour and Attendance Consultants and other specialist staff and helping the school develop and implement an action plan to improve standards of behaviour. Where the school is placed in special measures or classified as having serious weaknesses, the Local Authority should ensure that this is an integrated part of the wider recovery plan. Where a school is in special measures or has serious weaknesses re-inspection is automatic. But I am also asking OFSTED to re-visit any school with unsatisfactory behaviour outside these categories within a year to ensure that improvement is under way.

Admissions protocols

You will remember that Ministers wrote to you on 18 November to ask you to set in hand work with your Admission Forum towards a protocol on admission of hard to place pupils and to encourage groups of schools to take collective responsibility for managing support and provision for difficult pupils. Since then, officials have run a number of workshops for admissions officers and it is very encouraging that so many admissions forums are now making progress in this direction, so that protocols will be in place in September 2005.

I have, however, been considering the feedback I have received that some schools are reluctant to agree to protocols covering admission of previously excluded pupils, unless their behaviour has been improved and the schools have support in place. I believe it is important that, before any school is asked to take in previously excluded pupils, the school has arrangements in place to enable it to deal effectively with such pupils, should they become disruptive again.

I therefore announced today that admissions protocols for hard to place pupils need not apply to previously excluded pupils if the schools in the area do not consider themselves ready to take them. This should allow agreement quickly on finding places for looked after children and other hard to place pupils covered by the protocols, *which should still be agreed and put into practice in September.* Once schools have agreed between themselves and with their Local Authority arrangements for strengthening support available to them to deal with disruptive pupils, which should be completed by September 2007 at the latest, the protocol should be extended to include previously excluded pupils. Where groups of schools consider that they are already in a position, by September this year, to take previously excluded pupils, as part of an agreed protocol, then the arrangement can be put in place on that basis.

School collaboration on – and devolved funding for – behaviour management and alternative provision

Around a third of Local Education Authorities have already expressed an interest in exploring further with the Department how schools can work together, and use funding devolved from the LEA, to manage pupil behaviour and alternative provision.

My officials are running workshops for head teachers and officers from these LEAs in February and March. We expect that there will be a number of such groups up and running from this September. **I announced today that I expect that all secondary schools will be part of a group working together to manage pupil behaviour by September 2007.**

To support this approach, **I am writing now to ask that each Local Authority should hold early discussions with its school funding forum about the adequacy of local out-of-class and out-of-school provision for persistently disruptive pupils.** It is critical to get the funding balance right between Local Authorities and schools, to ensure that there is sufficient support for those pupils who most need it. The discussions need therefore to address the issue of how much of the funds available should be set aside to meet the collective needs of all schools in the area for this kind of support and, within this total, how much should be retained by the Local Authority and how much should be devolved to schools. I do recognise that it may only be possible to implement significant changes to the balance of funding from 2006/07.

I expect increased devolution of funds for behaviour support in school and alternative provision out of school to groups of secondary schools to be an important part of the local plans for strengthening alternative provision. Schools should be able to use their new purchasing power as a lever to help improve the quality of the provision they buy, whether this is from the Local Authority's Pupil Referral Unit or from the other providers or from a wider range of providers. This should also help to ensure that schools, collectively, take continuing responsibility for the well-being of their pupils, even after they have been excluded from one school in the group.

Discussions at local level about how to strengthen the range and quality of alternative provision will need to be informed by the guidance on best practice in alternative provision which the Department has developed – *Guidance for LEAs on Commissioning Alternative Provision* – and which was issued on 27 January. This emphasises the importance of assessing pupils' needs to determine the right placement for them and of developing an individual learning plan; and the need for PRUs and other kinds of alternative provision to provide an appropriate curriculum for each pupil and for individual pupil monitoring.

I am asking my officials to follow up with each Authority where these discussions get to and what process and timetable has been put in place for strengthening local alternative provision.



RUTH KELLY