

**LOCAL ADMISSIONS FORUM
THURSDAY, 8TH FEBRUARY, 2018**

Present:- Mrs. I. G. Hartley MBE (in the Chair); Mr. G. Lancashire (Community Schools), Mrs. M. Gambles and Mr. D. Shenton (Community Representatives).

Together with : Mrs. R. Colquhoun (Academy nominated representative) and Mrs. A. Gyte (observer).

Apologies for absence were received from:- Councillor Watson, Mrs. C. Cockayne and Mrs. P. Powell (Community Representatives) and from Mrs. E. Newton (Academy).

23. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 9TH NOVEMBER, 2017

The draft minutes of the previous meeting of the Rotherham Local Admissions Forum, held on 9th November, 2017, were discussed and approved in draft.

24. MEMBERSHIP OF THE LOCAL ADMISSIONS FORUM

Details of the current membership of the Rotherham Local Admissions Forum were noted including the new prospective member as a result of the advertisement which had been sent to schools/governing bodies etc. during the Autumn, 2017.

The Forum welcomed one new member and it was agreed that this person be appointed to the Forum in the category shown:-

Academy : Mrs. Rachel Colquhoun

The Chair welcomed Mrs. Colquhoun to the Forum for the first time.

25. SCHOOL ADMISSIONS CONSULTATION FOR ENTRY IN THE 2019/2020 ACADEMIC YEAR - OUTCOME

Further to a Minute of the meeting of the Local Admissions Forum held on 9th November, 2017, consideration was given to a report presented by the Principal Officer (School Organisation, Admissions and Appeals) concerning the admission arrangements (ie: criteria and admission number) which would apply for school admission in the 2019/2020 academic year.

The timetable for the year is:-

Autumn Term, 2017

governing bodies to consider the arrangements which will apply

by 24 th November, 2017 the	all relevant details to be forwarded to Borough Council
from 11 th December 2017 until 26 th January, 2018	period of consultation via the Borough Council's Internet web site
by mid-February, 2018	Borough Council and the Local Admissions Forum consider any changes and forward any comments to appropriate Admission Authority(ies)
by 23 rd February, 2018	all admission authorities to determine their arrangements and notify those consulted

The Local Admissions Forum noted that there were no proposed changes to the admission criteria for 2019/2020, nor the 'relevant area' for the purposes of admissions consultation.

The report made reference to the admission of children outside their normal age group, circumstances which could apply, for example, to children suffering ill health. In addition, the parents of a Summer-born child may choose not to send their child to school until the September after the child's fifth birthday and parents may therefore request that the child is admitted out of the normal age group.

The Local Admissions Forum noted that the current practice of co-ordinating in-year school admissions, with neighbouring local authorities, will continue even though there is no specific statutory requirement to do so. For 2019/2020, there would be a few minor date changes to the co-ordinated schemes.

Included within the report were details of each school and academy's proposed admission number for 2019/2020 (appendix two of the report submitted).

The 'waiting lists' which are kept for pupils' first admission to Primary and to Secondary schools will continue to be maintained only until the end of the Autumn Term.

Agreed:- (1) That the report be received and its contents noted.

(2) That the arrangements for admission to schools in the Rotherham Borough area, for the 2019/2020 academic year, as now submitted, be approved.

26. UPDATE ON ADMISSIONS AND SECONDARY SCHOOL ALLOCATIONS FOR SEPTEMBER, 2018

The Local Admissions Forum received an update about the school admissions and allocations process for new entrants to primary schools (Reception/Foundation Stage 2) and to secondary schools (Year 7) at the beginning of the 2018/2019 academic year beginning in September, 2018.

The National Offer Day for secondary schools was Thursday 1 March 2018 and the National Offer day for primary schools was Monday 16 April 2018.

It was noted that many more applications were now being submitted online, via the Local Authority's Internet web site. The expected pattern of applications for places at the most popular schools was occurring as in previous years.

A brief explanation was also provided of the method of assessing parental preferences for school places. It was noted that the application forms were not anonymised (a question on this issue had arisen during a school admission appeal heard in 2017).

Agreed:- That the information be noted.

27. SCHOOL ORGANISATION - UPDATE

Further to Minute No. 8 of the meeting of the Local Admissions Forum held on 29th June, 2017, updated information was reported about the various school expansions and about the first of the two primary schools to be constructed within the Waverley community (this primary school would open in September 2020). A plan of the Waverley community, showing the location of the primary school sites, was displayed at the meeting.

Agreed:- That the information be noted.

28. SCHOOL TERM DATES CONSULTATION FOR 2019/2020 - UPDATE

Further to a Minute of the meeting of the Rotherham Local Admissions Forum held on 9th November, 2017 the Principal Officer (School Organisation, Admissions and Appeals) reported on the progress of the consultation about School Term dates for the 2019/2020 academic year, with particular reference to the stated intention of one neighbouring local authority in respect of the placement of the two weeks' Easter school holidays in the first two weeks of April during both the 2018/19 and the 2019/2020 academic years. The consultation process was still in progress and included Councillors, school governing bodies, trades unions and other stakeholders.

Agreed:- That the progress of the consultation process about School Term dates be reported at the next meeting of the Local Admissions Forum.

29. FAIR ACCESS PROTOCOL - UPDATE

Further to a Minute of the meeting of the Rotherham Local Admissions Forum held on 9th November, 2017, discussion took place on the progress of Rotherham's Primary and Secondary School's Fair Access Protocol.

The Local Admissions Forum heard that the School's Fair Access Protocol was used to facilitate the individual assessment of pupils who did not have a school place and for whom the statutory processes (ie: parents' applications and appeals) had previously been determined. This Protocol was also used for pupils attending the Local Authority's Pupil Referral Units and for whom a return to mainstream school was considered to be appropriate.

Reference was made to the Social, Emotional and Mental Health partnership model, in respect of secondary schools, which had begun operating during January 2018. There were three separate partnerships covering the whole of the Rotherham Borough area and if a specific case could not be resolved at area level, there would be reference-up to the Borough-wide Fair Access Panel.

Agreed:- That the information about the Fair Access Protocol be noted.

30. ACADEMY CONVERSIONS AND MULTI ACADEMY TRUSTS - UPDATE

The current position, as at January, 2018 and listed on the submitted reports, of Rotherham schools which had converted, or were about to convert, to Academies was noted.

31. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Agreed:- That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 2 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual).

32. SCHOOL ADMISSION APPEALS - UPDATE AND STATISTICS

Consideration was given to a report containing statistics of the number of school admission appeals received and hearings taking place during the three school years 2015/2016, 2016/2017 and 2017/18. The report included comparative statistics of the number of admission appeals received and heard each year during the past decade from 2006/07 and also the number of complaints about admission appeals made to the Local Government Ombudsman and to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (and the outcomes of those complaints) during the same decade.

The continuing increases in the number of appeals for primary school places and also for places at faith schools were highlighted.

Agreed: That the statistical report be received and its contents noted.

33. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Agreed:- That the next meeting of the Rotherham Local Admissions Forum be held at the Town Hall, Rotherham on Thursday, 28th June, 2018, commencing at 10.00 a.m.