

## **WRITTEN ANSWERS FOR COUNCIL**

**4<sup>TH</sup> MARCH, 2015**

### **Children and Education Services – 16<sup>th</sup> February, 2015**

**Question - Minute No. F50 (Proposal to increase the Published Admission Number at Brinsworth Whitehill Primary School)** - Councillor Parker referred to issues for children not getting a place at Wickersley Northfield or Flanderwell and children were being home tutored as they could not get a place at their preferred school.

**Answer** - Parental preference in relation to the School Admissions Code refers to the fact that parents can express a preference for any school they so wish on the Common Application Form. It does not guarantee a place at any school and the Local Authority as required under the School Admissions Code 2014 and previous versions are required to set oversubscription criteria. Any Child with a statement of special educational need / Education Health and Care Plan must be allocated a place must be allocated a place named in the document.

The oversubscription criteria being:-

1. Children in Public Care (Children looked After and previously looked After)
2. Compelling Medical reasons making attendance at that particular school essential
3. Compelling Social reasons making attendance at that particular school essential
4. Catchment area residence with an older sibling on roll at the school
5. Catchment area resident
6. Sibling on roll at the school
7. Attendance at a designated feeder school e.g. Y2/3 transfer / Y7 application
8. Distance category

On National Offer day for Primary and Secondary School applications e.g. Reception (FS2) and Y7 places must be allocated up to the schools published admission number and where more applications for places are received than places are available then the oversubscription criteria must be applied to ensure fair allocation.

Inevitably some schools are more popular than others and in some cases Parents will not get their 1<sup>st</sup> or even 2<sup>nd</sup> preference schools particularly if they are not their catchment area school (see oversubscription criteria above). Schools are however legally bound to maintain a waiting list for places for Reception and Y7 up to the 31<sup>st</sup> December of the year of entry, any places becoming available must be allocated in accordance with waiting list position. Any individual refused a place has the right of appeal and an application can be submitted at any point by an applicant, if there are no significant changes in circumstance then an applicant can apply for a place and

appeal that decision of refusal if the school is full once per academic year, should circumstances change significantly then the can apply and appeal within that period.

All schools once they have reached their Published Admission Number must refuse an application and the applicant can appeal that decision. Appeals must be heard by independent panels and cases are judged against Infant Class size legislation or prejudice in relation to the provision of an efficient and effective education.

Rotherham consistently satisfies over 90% first preferences annually in both the Primary and Secondary phases. It should be noted that we have to balance the need for places with the sustainability of schools e.g. flooding an area with places could compromise a school in an area e.g. low numbers making the school not viable. This demand also has to be balanced against the Basic Need/Section 106 funding available.

Without the specific details of individual cases it is hard for officers to comment further in relation to the cases you outlined, they would, however, be happy to look in to this further should the information be provided.

Within the Wickersley and Bramley Learning Community an additional 15 places per year group have been put in to the system at Flanderwell Primary School (105 through school), 15 places per year group at Listerdale Primary School (105 through school), 10 places per year group at Sunnyside I & J schools (70 through school), 3 places per year group at Bramley Grange Primary School (21 through school) and 30 places per year group at Wickersley SSC (150 through school) giving a total of 451 new through school places between Reception (FS2) and Y11 at a cost of approximately £5.8M from Basic Need, Targeted Basic Need and Section 106 funding since September 2012