

# OVER SUBSCRIPTION POLICY FOR COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED SCHOOLS – 2005/06 REPORT BY SCHOOL SERVICES MANAGER

LOCAL ADMISSIONS FORUM

29 JANUARY 2004

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## Purpose

1. To consider the proposed admissions policy for community and voluntary controlled schools for the school year 2005/06.

## Admission Arrangements

2. The Forum has the duty of considering how well the existing and proposed admission arrangements serve the interests of children and parents within the area of the relevant authority.
3. Under the Code of Practice, the Council as the Local Education Authority (LEA) is required to have an over-subscription policy which has admission criteria that are clear, fair and objective for the benefit of all children, including those with special educational needs, disabilities or in public care.
4. The current policy for allocating places in over-subscribed schools has been successful in achieving fairness in the allocation of places over many years. For this reason, the Council has proposed that the existing criteria should be carried forward into 2005/06.
5. The policy that will be circulated for consultation, under the terms of the Education Act 2002, will be as follows:-

When there are more applications than places, in a community or voluntary controlled school, children are admitted on the basis of the published policy listed in the following order of priority:

- pupils with a Statement of **special educational needs** which names the school; (see Footnote 1)
- pupils in the '**looked after**' system where the approved agencies agree that the preferred school meets the child's social, pastoral and education needs; (see Footnote 2)
- pupils whose principal home address is within the **catchment** area of the school; (see Footnote 3)
- pupils who have a **brother or sister** at the preferred school not only at the time of application but also when the younger child is due to start; (see Footnote 4)

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from Mark Chamberlain, School Services Manager on 01432 260923

- pupils with exceptional **medical, social or compassionate** grounds for admission and whose parents can show that entry to a particular school is necessary for the well being of their child. Parents are required to produce a medical certificate or other appropriate information preferably from an independent source. Applications on such grounds will not be considered by the Director of Education or his advisory panel unless this supporting information is attached to the application form when applying – 29 October 2004 (high schools) and 14 January 2005 (primary schools); (see Footnote 5)
- pupils who live **nearest** to the school by the shortest available walking route; (see Footnote 6)

### General Notes

6. No priority is given to pupils living outside, but attending a primary school within, the catchment area of the relevant high school, i.e. the determining factor is the child's home address.

**Footnote 1:** This is the first priority because the Council must comply fully with the requirements of the Statement of SEN.

**Footnote 2:** This is the second priority because the Council wishes to protect children in public care from further disadvantage that can arise from possible changes of school when the care placement changes.

**Footnote 3:** This is the third priority because the Council gives high importance to trying to ensure that children are able to attend the school within their local community.

**Footnote 4:** This is the fourth priority to recognise the importance to daily family life, including travel arrangements, of having brothers/sisters at the same school where possible. The rule is **not** intended to favour parents with a previous but no longer current family connection with the school.

**Footnote 5:** This is the fifth priority to be sensitive to exceptional needs that individual children and families might have.

**Footnote 6:** The sixth priority is a measurable, objective way of allocating the remaining places.

7. Where, at any school, applications exceed the number of places, the priorities will be applied in the sequence indicated above, i.e. after SEN and children in the 'looked after' system it will be catchment area children third, brothers and sisters fourth, special reasons fifth, then according to distance, each assessed as indicated above.
8. If the admission of the top 3 categories can be satisfied, but there are insufficient places for all out-area brothers and sisters, priorities will be decided first by reference to special reasons, then according to distance.
9. Following the allocation of the top 2 categories, there may be an occasion when it is not possible to offer places for all children living in the catchment area. In that situation, the places will be allocated in the sequence of the criteria listed above, i.e. first to children with brothers and sisters who would still be at the school in September 2005, next to pupils with validated medical, social or compassionate grounds and finally, according to distance from the school.

## **Recommendation**

**THAT: the Local Admission Forum endorses the proposed general admissions policy for determining the allocation of places in community and voluntary controlled schools for the school year 2005/06.**

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Manager on 01432 260923