

CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 22 March 2016
Report Subject	School Admission Arrangements 2017/18
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Education
Report Author	Chief Officer (Education and Youth)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To advise Cabinet of the outcome of the statutory consultation exercise on the admission arrangements for September 2017 and to recommend approval.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That the proposed admission arrangements for 2017/18 be approved.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS																				
1.01	<p>In accordance with the School Admissions Code, the local authority is required to undertake a statutory consultation exercise on its admission arrangements for the following year. Consultation must be complete by 1 March and the admission arrangements must be determined by 15 April each year. Statutory consultees include all schools in the area, the diocesan authorities and neighbouring authorities.</p>																				
1.02	<p>Consultation must cover the full admission arrangements including the admissions policy, over-subscription criteria, the timetable for admissions and admission numbers (ie the maximum number of pupils to be admitted in to each year group). This information is attached as Appendices 1 and 2.</p>																				
1.03	<p>The current admission arrangements and over-subscription criteria have been in place since 2003 and the majority of parental preferences continue to be met (96%). For information, the number of admission appeals in recent years is detailed in the table below:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="304 1003 1046 1196"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Secondary</th> <th>Primary</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2012/13</td> <td>21</td> <td>97</td> <td>118</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2013/14</td> <td>46</td> <td>81</td> <td>127</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2014/15</td> <td>20</td> <td>54</td> <td>74</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2015/16*</td> <td>60</td> <td>54</td> <td>114</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>*to date</p> <p>It is anticipated that oversubscription will continue at secondary and primary level in some areas of the County as a consequence of parental preference.</p>	Year	Secondary	Primary	Total	2012/13	21	97	118	2013/14	46	81	127	2014/15	20	54	74	2015/16*	60	54	114
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1.04	<p>No comments have been received during the consultation process. There are no changes proposed to the current admission numbers for each school or the current admissions policy or oversubscription criteria. However, the opportunity has been taken to clarify the wording of oversubscription criteria (c) and (d) (siblings and distance), in order that they reflect Welsh Government guidance. This re-wording does not change the criteria themselves or how they will be applied. For clarification the current and proposed wording is set out below.</p> <p><u>Current wording</u></p> <p>(c) Pupils who have expressed a preference for a school which is not the nearest to their home address will be admitted if they have a sister or brother attending the preferred school. The sibling rule will only be applied for the statutory period of education ie between the Years 7-11 (Secondary only).</p> <p>(d) Where a preference has been expressed for a school other than the nearest to a pupil's home address and there is no brother or sister attending that school, pupils will be admitted in order of proximity to that</p>																				

	<p>alternative school and up to its Admission Number</p> <p><u>Proposed wording</u></p> <p>(c) Pupils who will have a sister or brother attending the preferred school on the expected admission date. The “sibling” rule will only be applied for the statutory period of education.</p> <p>(d) Pupils for whom the preferred school is not the nearest to their home address. Pupils will be admitted in order of proximity to that alternative school and up to its Admission Number.</p>
1.05	The admissions timetable has been drawn up in consultation with neighbouring authorities and takes in to account factors such as allowing parents sufficient time to visit schools and express their preferences, the time needed to process applications and chase up late applications, etc. The timetable also incorporates the “common offer dates” prescribed by Welsh Government (ie 1 March for secondary and 16 th April for primary).
1.06	Applications for school places are now made using the Council’s on line system, with hard copies of forms made available to any parent who does not have access to an on line facility.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	Numbers of appeals will continue to be monitored to ensure sufficient capacity to clerk appeals in a timely manner.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	All statutory consultees have been consulted in accordance with the School Admissions Code. No further consultation is required.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	The annual determination of admission arrangements must be carried out in accordance with the framework and timetable in the School Admissions Code. Consultation has been completed and approval is being sought within the deadlines set out in the Code. Adherence to the Code minimises the risk of challenge to the Public Services Ombudsman or by way of judicial review.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 – Admission Arrangements 2017/18 Appendix 2 – Admission Numbers.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	<p>Contact Officer: Gill Yates, Pupil Support Services Manager Telephone: 01352 704187 E-mail: gill.yates@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	<p>School Admission Arrangements – the overall procedure and practices about how to apply for a school place, including criteria to decide how places are allocated, application procedures, the timetable for the admissions process, how late applications will be handled, waiting lists and the appeal process.</p> <p>School Admissions Code – a Code issued by Welsh Government in respect of the discharge of admissions functions. All admissions authorities have a statutory duty to act in accordance with the Code.</p> <p>Oversubscription criteria – a list of criteria which an admission authority must adopt to be used for the allocation of places if there are more applications received than there are places available.</p> <p>Admission Number – the number of school places that an admission authority must offer in each year group.</p>