

## CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE ADMISSIONS FORUM** held at Committee Room 1, Watling House (former Council Offices), High Street North, Dunstable, LU6 1LF on Tuesday, 22 March 2011

### PRESENT

Mr S Fell (Chairman)  
Mr N Sharpe (Vice-Chairman)

Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools:	Mrs J Woodthorpe	Headteacher, Campton Lower School
	Ms Neale	Governor, Dunton & Wrestlingworth Lower Schools
	Mrs A Phillips	Headteacher, Streetfield Middle School, Dunstable
Voluntary Aided Schools:	Mr N Sharpe	Ashton Middle School, Dunstable
	Mrs P Cotton	St Vincent's Primary School, Houghton Regis
Church of England Diocese:	Mr R Slade	Diocese of St Albans
Roman Catholic Diocese:	Mrs F Image	Roman Catholic Diocesan Representative
Academy:	Mr J Kemp	Vice-Principal, All Saints Academy, Dunstable
Local Community:	Mrs D Day	Virtual School Headteacher, Central Bedfordshire (representing Looked After Children)
Officers in Attendance:	Mrs R Bonwick Ms L Braisher Mr J Goldsmith  Mrs S Hobbs Mrs H Redding Ms C Warner	Head of Admissions Service Senior Admissions Officer Assistant Director (School Organisation and Planning) Committee Services Officer Head of School Support Head of Partnerships and Reintegration, Bedford Borough Council

In the absence of the Chairman at the beginning of the meeting the Vice-Chairman chaired the meeting.

A/10/21 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillor Mrs A Lewis, Squadron Leader V Hodgson and Mr Robinson.

Members noted that Squadron Leader V Hodgson was being posted overseas and his replacement on the Central Bedfordshire Admissions Forum would be Squadron Leader Ted Sellers.

A/10/22 **Minutes and Matters Arising**

**RESOLVED**

**that the minutes of the Central Bedfordshire Admissions Forum held on 11 November 2010 be confirmed and signed by the Vice-Chairman as a correct record.**

A/10/23 **Fair Access Protocol**

The Forum considered a report setting out an analysis of the Fair Access Protocol figures from the last three years across middle schools. The analysis demonstrated that just under a third of middle schools had not had any student placed under the Fair Access Protocol due to their geographical position and the five mile distance limit.

The Forum acknowledged the proposal to extend the five mile distance limit for middle schools to ten miles in order to ensure an equitable distribution under the Fair Access Protocol. The change would be effective for placements through the protocol for and after September 2011.

The Forum noted that the methodology for assessing whether a pupil had challenging behaviour had been revised using the Coping in Schools Scale which had been tried and tested in the London Boroughs. The Coping in Schools Scale would be introduced with immediate effect.

**RESOLVED**

**to extend the five mile distance limit for middle schools to ten miles in order to ensure an equitable distribution under FAP.**

**NOTED**

**the revised methodology for assessing whether a pupil had challenging behaviour.**

A/10/24 **Consultation Process and Responses**

The Forum considered a report setting out the outcome of the consultation process. The Forum noted that consultation on the proposed admission arrangements for September 2012 had been carried out between 4 January and 1 March 2011.

The Forum was advised that following the consultation with community and voluntary controlled schools about the admission arrangements, a number of schools requested changes to their oversubscription criteria. The local authority had no objections to some of these changes.

Only one responses to the consultation had been received from a parent of pre-school twins suggesting that the local authority introduce a rule aimed at preventing children from multiple births being separated. The Forum was reminded that the admission number of a school could be exceeded to enable the admission of a twin or children from multiple births, provided the admission would not breach infant class size limits. This agreement would give a twin or children from multiple births as much chance of gaining a place as the suggested change.

**NOTED**

**the outcome of the consultation and the responses received.**

A/10/25 **Standard Admissions Policy - Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools**

The Forum considered a report on the proposed minor amendment to the very exceptional medical grounds definition of the standard admissions policy for community and voluntary controlled schools, relating to the seeking of further information to determine whether it was essential for a child to be admitted to the preferred school on medical grounds.

**RESOLVED**

**that the Standard Admission Policy for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools be approved.**

A/10/26 **Additions to Standard Admissions Policy - Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools**

The Forum considered the requests received from some community and voluntary controlled schools for additions to their admissions policies.

A number of schools had pre-existing additions to the standard admissions policy which had been in existence for a number of years. The governing bodies of Harlington Lower School and Pulloxhill Lower School had requested the following amendments to their Standards Admissions Policy:

- Harlington Lower School – additional criterion for September 2012 relating to children attending the pre-school; and
- Pulloxhill Lower School – the removal from September 2012 of the criterion relating to children attending the playgroup.

**RESOLVED**

**that the additions to the Standard Admissions Policy for those schools listed in Appendix A to the report be approved.**

A/10/27

**Admission Numbers - Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools**

The Forum considered a report which sought approval to the admission numbers for community and voluntary controlled schools and to note the exceptions which might result in the admission number for a school being exceeded.

The Forum noted that there were no proposals to increase the admission number at any of the community and voluntary controlled schools for September 2012. The Forum acknowledged that no changes were proposed to those exceptions that might result in the admission number for a school being exceeded.

**RESOLVED**

**that the proposed admission numbers for those schools listed in Appendix A to the report be approved.**

**NOTED**

**the exceptions which might result in the admission number being exceeded.**

A/10/28

**Co-ordinated Admission Schemes**

The Forum considered a report on the co-ordinated admission schemes.

The Forum was advised that no changes to the scheme for upper schools and the academy were proposed, other than to the timescales which had been updated for 2012/2013 and reference to possible future middle school phase academies. No significant changes had been proposed to the scheme for middle, primary and lower schools and lower phase academies, other than to the timescales which had been updated for 2012/2013 and reference to possible future middle and lower school phase academies.

## **RESOLVED**

- 1. that the co-ordinated scheme for admissions to upper schools and academies for 2012/2013 be approved; and**
- 2. that the co-ordinated scheme for admissions to middle, primary and lower schools and lower school phase academies for 2012/2013 be approved.**

A/10/29

### **Foundation, Trust, Voluntary Aided Schools and Academies**

The Forum considered a report on proposed changes to the admission arrangements for some of the Foundation, Trust and Voluntary Aided Schools for September 2012.

The governing bodies for Northill VA Lower School, Pulford VA Lower School and Manshead VA Upper School had consulted on changes to their admissions criteria. The Local Authority had no objections to the proposed changes.

The governing bodies of St Mary's VA Lower School, Clophill, Holywell VA Middle School and Harlington Upper School had consulted on changes to their admission numbers. The Local Authority had no objections to the proposed changes.

A query was raised about the consultation process for the Foundation, Trust, Voluntary Aided Schools and Academies. The Forum was advised that it was the responsibility of the governing bodies to consult with the local schools within their area.

## **NOTED**

- 1. the proposed changes to the admissions criteria for Northill VA Lower School, Pulford VA Lower School and Manshead VA Upper School; and**
- 2. the proposed changes to the admission numbers for St Mary's VA Lower School, Clophill, Holywell VA Middle School and Harlington Upper School.**

A/10/30

### **Determination of Admission Arrangements - September 2012**

The Forum considered a report setting out the arrangements for the determination of admission arrangements. Admission authorities must, within 14 days of determining their admission arrangements give notice of that determination to their local authority, other bodies consulted and any parents that responded to the consultation. Copies must be placed on their website (where they have one) for a whole offer year.

Local authorities must, by 1 May, publish on their website and in a newspaper information on the extent to which admission arrangements for schools and academies in the local authority area have been determined.

**NOTED**

**the requirements for determining the admission arrangements.**

A/10/31

**Any Other Business**

The Forum noted that the Government was due to consult on a new School Admissions Code, which included the abolition of Admission Forums. Members agreed that the Admissions Forum was a valuable meeting and expressed a preference for its continuation. The Forum were advised that individual schools were able to respond to the consultation.

A query was raised regarding the building of new schools and how the catchment area was determined. The Forum acknowledged that where a new school was normally built to serve a new housing development the catchment area tended to be co-terminus with the development. Local authorities did not normally propose amendments to existing school catchment boundaries unless there was good reason to do so.

The Forum noted that the next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday 28 June at 8.30am at Priory House, Chicksands.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 8.30 a.m. and concluded at 9.40 a.m.)