

**Meeting:** Executive  
**Date:** 6 November 2012  
**Subject:** Determination of admission arrangements to Greenleas Lower School (Sandhills) for September 2013

**Report of:** Cllr Mark Versallion, Executive Member for Children's Services

**Summary:** The Council's Executive determined on the 21 August 2012, to expand Greenleas Lower School and to change its admission number. The proposed arrangements have previously been subject to statutory consultation. This report sets out the proposed admissions 'over subscription' criteria for Greenleas Lower School (Sandhills), as previously proposed within the approved statutory proposals to expand the school onto a second site.

**Advising Officer:** Edwina Grant, Deputy Chief Executive/ Director of Children's Services

**Contact Officer:** Pete Dudley, Assistant Director for Learning, Commissioning and Partnerships

**Public/Exempt:** Public

**Wards Affected:** Leighton Buzzard South

**Function of:** Executive

**Key Decision:** No

## **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Council Priorities:**

The report supports Central Bedfordshire's Medium Term Plan: Delivering your priorities – Our Plan for Central Bedfordshire 2012-2016 and the specific priority of Improved Educational Attainment.

### **Financial:**

1. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

### **Legal:**

2. The main legislation governing school organisation is found in sections 7-32 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 and the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Mainstream Schools) (England) Regulations 2007.

3. Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on Councils to secure sufficient and suitable school places to provide for 5 – 16 year old statutory aged children in its area. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives Councils a strategic role as commissioners, but not providers, of school places to promote parental choice, diversity, high standards, the fulfilment of every child's educational potential and fair access to educational opportunity.
4. Department for Education regulations and the Admissions Code outline the requirements and process for proposals to expand maintained schools and to change admissions arrangements and these include full public consultation, the publication of statutory proposals and the decision making process. Decision makers must be satisfied that proposals have followed due process and must also have regard to statutory guidance.
5. As decision maker for the statutory proposal published in regard to Greenleas Lower School, attached at Appendix A to this report, the Council determined arrangements on the 21 August 2012 in relation to the capacity of the school's second site and its Published Admission Number.

#### **Risk Management:**

6. The need to commission the new school places and to make the related investment of capital reflected in the original proposal implements the identified need in the previously published school organisation plan and mitigates the risk on the Council of failing in its statutory duty to provide sufficient school places. Key risks include:
  - Failure to discharge legal and statutory duties/guidance.
  - Failure to deliver the Council's strategic priorities.
  - Reputational risks associated with the non delivery of required school places.
  - Financial risks, including non realisation of anticipated Section 106 monies and anticipated levels of government grant.

#### **Staffing (including Trades Unions):**

7. Staff and Trades Unions were consulted on the proposals to expand the school in as part of the initial consultation and statutory process required by regulations.

#### **Equalities/Human Rights:**

8. Public authorities have a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and to foster good relations in respect of the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

9. This statutory duty includes requirements to:
- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
  - Take steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
  - Encourage people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.
10. The consultation and decision making process set out in regulation for proposals to expand maintained schools requires an evaluation on a project by project basis of any equalities and human rights issues that might arise.
11. As Decision Maker for these proposals, the Council considered that there were no race or disability discrimination issues that arose from the changes being proposed.

**Public Health:**

12. Greenleas school currently provides a range of extended school services which will be further developed as a result of the growing school population and capital investment.
13. The range of extended services that may be provided more effectively in larger schools includes:
- Parenting and family support officers.
  - Transition support for pupils, schools and families.
  - Combined clubs and after school activities.
  - Holiday activities.
  - Support for vulnerable pupils and families i.e. siblings group and young carers.

**Community Safety:**

14. Whilst it is acknowledged that schools have an important role in working alongside a range of other agencies to ensure safety in their local communities, the expansion of the schools identified in the report does have the potential to increase community safety issues around the school locations. Inconsiderate parking, low level anti social behaviour, noise, litter etc. These are issues that can, in some instances, have a significant impact on residents living in the school vicinity and place additional demand upon the services responsible for dealing with them. To meet its statutory duty in relation to crime and disorder the Council will need to work with the school to ensure that community safety issues are considered and appropriate measures are put in place to mitigate any risks with regard to community safety issues in these areas.

**Sustainability:**

15. Whilst there may be additional costs in order to meet sustainability objectives for new build and/or expansion of existing schools, these will be contained within the costs identified in the Council's New School Places Programme. These measures will contribute to reduced running costs through better energy and resource efficiency, and therefore limit the Carbon Reduction Commitment burden on the Council and the school, alongside creating a better learning environment for the pupils.

**Procurement:**

16. There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

**Overview and Scrutiny**

17. This report has not been considered by Overview and Scrutiny.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:****The Executive is asked to:**

1. **note that the procedures established by The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) and The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended by The School Organisation and Governance (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2007 and The School Organisation and Governance (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2009, have been complied with in bringing forward the proposals outlined in this report;**
2. **note the statutory notice and the proposed admissions arrangements as set out in Appendix A, issued on 11 June 2012 under Section 19(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 for Greenleas Lower School; and**
3. **approve the recommended admission criteria as set out in the report, for September 2013.**

*Reason for Recommendations: To determine the admission criteria for Greenleas Lower School (Sandhills), Leighton Buzzard*

**Executive Summary**

18. The purpose of this report is to provide the Council's Executive with sufficient information and guidance to enable the determination of admission arrangements for Greenleas Lower School (Sandhills), that have previously been subject of statutory consultation, with an implementation date of September 2013

## Introduction

19. The initial consultation period for the expansion of Greenleas Lower School onto a second site on the Sandhills housing development of Leighton Buzzard commenced on Monday 23 April 2012 for a four week period to Monday 21 May 2012. The statutory proposals were published on 11 June 2012 with information prescribed by regulation. The information was complete, clear and complied with statutory requirements. The statutory notice with prescribed information for the proposal is attached to this report at Appendix A.
20. The consultation was conducted to meet the requirements set out in the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended). Admissions arrangements contained and approved in statutory proposals supersede arrangements previously published in the Council's Admissions Booklet.
21. The proposal was publicised through the production of consultation documents placed:
  - on the Council's website;
  - at each of the schools, for circulation to parents (including early years), carers, staff and Governors;
  - in local libraries and Town Council offices;
  - on community notice boards;
  - by email to local MPs, to members of the Children's Trust Board, to neighbouring Local Authorities and to key voluntary sector organisations;
  - in the members Bulletin;
  - in Central Essentials; and
  - in the local media.
22. Meetings for staff, unions and Governors were held at the school and public meetings were also arranged to give parents, carers and other interested parties the opportunity to have their say on the proposals.
23. The consultation set out the proposed expansion of the school and its intended admission arrangements.
24. Recommended admission arrangements for the school's Sandhills site will be in accordance with the Council's published criteria and were outlined on the statutory notice for September 2013 as:
  - 1) All 'looked after' children or children who were previously 'looked after'
  - 2) Pupils with siblings at the school
  - 3) 'Very exceptional' medical grounds
  - 4) Children attending Greenleas Nursery Unit (Derwent Road site)
  - 5) Children attending Willows Pre-School on the Greenleas Derwent Road site
  - 6) Children who live nearest to the school determined by straight line distance from the Greenleas Lower School - Sandhills site, to the pupil's home address.

These criteria are to be reviewed further for September 2014.

25. The inclusion of criteria of children attending the school's existing nursery and pre school was intended to align the school's existing admission criteria and to avoid any disadvantage for children from the Sandhills development who already attend the existing Derwent Road provision.
26. The only concern arising from the consultation related to admission arrangements to the new site from September 2013 and the way in which year groups of uncertain size might be managed initially between the two sites. The admissions service and school, supported by the local community house, are undertaking further work with the Sandhills and Billington Park communities to better forecast the numbers and ages of children who may express a preference for the Sandhills site from September 2013. This will enable the school to better plan their staffing structure for both sites. The school are committed to work with parents to achieve transitional arrangements that are appropriate for siblings who could potentially be split between each site.

### **Determination**

27. Having followed the procedure required by regulation and in consideration of the key issues and factors for decision makers set out in guidance it is recommended that the proposed admissions arrangements as set out in this report and published by Statutory Notice issued on the 11 June 2012, be approved for a September 2013.

### **Appendices:**

Appendix A –Statutory notice and prescribed information for proposal to expand Greenleas Lower School

### **Background Papers:** (open to public inspection)

None