

Meeting: Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 13 December 2013

Subject: Consultation on Admission Arrangements 2015/16

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

Summary: Attached at Appendix A is a report which was considered by the Council's Executive on the 5 November 2013 who approved the consultation to the Council's admission arrangements for 2015/16. The related appendices to the Executive report are attached as appendices B – F.

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

Contact Officer: Karen Oellermann, Assistant Director - Commissioning & Partnerships

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: All

Function of: Executive

Key Decision Yes

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The Council's admission arrangements and co-ordinated admissions scheme supports the Medium Term Plan priority to improve educational attainment.

Financial:

1. Not applicable.

Legal:

2. Regulations contained within the School Admissions Code set out the requirement for the Council to have a co-ordinated admissions scheme for the area. Admission Authorities must also determine their admissions arrangements by the 15th April each year, for implementation in September of the following year. If an Admissions Authority proposes to make amendments to their arrangements they must consult between the 1 November and the 1 March for a minimum of 8 weeks of the year before the arrangements apply.
3. For Community and Voluntary Controlled schools the admissions authority is the Council. Academies, Foundation, Trust and Voluntary Aided schools are their own admission authority and are therefore responsible for their admission arrangements.
4. The Council will fulfil its statutory responsibilities by consulting within the timescales set out above and conducting a consultation with the relevant parties on changes to admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools, inviting thoughts and comments from all consultees which will be reported to Executive in March when the admissions arrangements for September 2015 will be determined.

Risk Management:

5. This report sets out the statutory requirement for the Council to have a co-ordinated admissions scheme in place for the area. The risk of not having a co-ordinated scheme in place for Central Bedfordshire would entail the following key risks:

- Failure to discharge statutory duty
- Failure to provide an admissions process which allows parents to state preferences and apply by the national closing dates.
- Failure to allocate school places for the normal year of entry by the national offer dates.

All of the above would incur a negative perception of the Council which would be a reputational risk.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

6. Not Applicable.

Equalities/Human Rights:

7. The School Admissions Code sets out the duty on Local Authorities and Admission Authorities to produce admission arrangements which are fair, clear and objective, which can be easily understood by parents. Admission arrangements must comply with regulations and legislation including the Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998.
8. Public authorities have a statutory duty to advance equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and foster good relations in respect of nine protected characteristics; age disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. As part of the development of the Admissions Arrangements the Council will carry out an equality impact assessment to check that the proposed changes do not have a disproportionate or negative impact on vulnerable groups.

Public Health:

9. Not applicable.

Community Safety:

10. Not applicable.

Sustainability:

11. Not applicable.

Procurement:

12. Not applicable.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **The Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to consider the content of the report and support the following:**
- **Central Bedfordshire's co-ordinated admissions scheme.**
 - **The admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools for the academic year 2015/16**

Appendices:

Appendix A – Executive Report of 5 November 2013: Consultation on Admission Arrangements 2015/16.

Appendix B – Lower, Primary and Middle 2015/16 co-ordinated admissions scheme

Appendix C – Secondary and Upper 2015/16 co-ordinated admissions scheme

Appendix D – Community and Voluntary Controlled schools proposed admissions policy 2015/16.

Appendix E – Greenleas School, Kestrel Way – proposed catchment area

Appendix F – St. Andrew's Lower School, second site – proposed catchment area