

Central Bedfordshire Admissions Forum: Terms of Reference (May 2009)

1. The Central Bedfordshire Admissions Forum covers the administrative area of Central Bedfordshire Council.
2. The Forum consists of 20 members:

<u>Group</u>	<u>Number of Representatives</u>
Local Authority:	1 (Portfolio Holder for Children, Families and Learning)
Schools:	
Community	1 Upper School Head Teacher 1 Middle School Head Teacher 1 Lower School Head Teacher
Voluntary Controlled Foundation / Trust	2 Governors or Head Teachers 1 Upper School Head Teacher 1 Middle School Head Teacher
Voluntary Aided	1 C of E Lower School Head Teacher 1 RC Lower School Head Teacher 1 C of E Middle School Head Teacher
Lower Schools (any)	1 Governor or Head Teacher
Religious Denominations:	
Church of England Diocese	1 Diocesan Board Representative
Roman Catholic Diocese	1 Diocesan Board Representative
Academy:	1 All Saints Academy
Parents: (must be a resident in the area and the parent of a child who is of compulsory school age or who is 2+ and receiving primary education)	2 Parent Representatives
Local Community Representatives:	1 Ethnic Minority Groups 1 Looked After Children 1 Armed Forces

3. Where any vacancies arise, the local authority may appoint other members to the Forum, where the members consider them to represent the interests of any section of the local community and recommend them. The Forum may also invite other key groups or bodies to attend meetings on an ad hoc basis if they have an interest in the topic being discussed.
4. Members are appointed for a period not exceeding four years, after which they are eligible for re-appointment.

5. Members will appoint a Chair and Vice-Chair to hold office for one year, after which they are eligible for re-appointment.
6. Members will appoint a Secretary, nominated by the authority.
7. The quorum is a third of the appointed membership, with representation from at least three of the groups.
8. Any member of the Forum may nominate an alternate member to attend meetings in their absence except that:
 - 8.1 local authority members may only nominate an alternate member who is a member of the authority;
 - 8.2 school members may only nominate an alternate member who is a head teacher or governor from the same school group;
 - 8.3 parent representatives may only nominate an alternate member who is a parent representative;
 - 8.4 local community members may not nominate an alternate member unless the authority consents to the proposed nomination; and
 - 8.5 Church of England and Catholic Diocesan members may not nominate an alternate member unless the body by which the member was nominated consents to the proposed nomination.
9. Nomination of an alternate member will be made by giving written notice to the Secretary and will remain effective until it is withdrawn.
10. There will be three meetings of the Forum each year.
11. Members will receive seven working days' notice of the date of the meeting.
12. All meetings will be clerked and minutes taken by the Secretary.
13. The role of the Forum will be to consider and advise on the fairness of admission arrangements for schools in the Central Bedfordshire area, and in particular to:
 - 13.1 consider how well existing and proposed admission arrangements serve the interests of children and parents within the area of the local authority;
 - 13.2 promote agreement on admission issues;
 - 13.3 review the comprehensiveness, effectiveness within the local context and accessibility of advice and guidance for parents by the local authority, both through the published composite prospectus and the delivery of Choice Advice within the area of the Forum;

- 13.4 consider the effectiveness of the authority's co-ordinated admission arrangements and advise on whether those arrangements differ substantially from the previous year;
 - 13.5 consider the means by which admissions processes might be improved and how actual admissions relate to the admission numbers published;
 - 13.6 monitor the admission of children who arrive in the authority's area outside a normal admissions round with a view to promoting arrangements for the fair distribution of such children among local schools, taking account of any preferences expressed in accordance with arrangements made under Section 86(1) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and in accordance with the School Admissions Code;
 - 13.7 promote the arrangements for the admission of children with special educational needs, looked after children and children who have been excluded from schools;
 - 13.8 monitor the effectiveness of local authority Fair Access Protocols;
 - 13.9 consider any other admissions issues arising; and
 - 13.10 publish an annual report on the effectiveness of local admission arrangements or contribute to the local authority's statutory annual report on local admission arrangements.
14. The Forum should refer an objection to the Schools Adjudicator where it identifies policy, practice or oversubscription criteria of a school that may be unfair, unlawful or that contravene the mandatory provisions of the School Admissions Code, or where their advice has been disregarded by admission authorities.
 15. The Forum should promulgate advice that represents the agreed views of the whole Forum and should therefore seek to achieve a consensus rather than secure a majority opinion, except where the Forum votes on a proposal to make an objection to the Schools Adjudicator, in which case the proposal must first be approved by a simple majority of all members voting.
 16. Any advice agreed by the Forum will be published *on the school's website* and will be sent to all admission authorities in the area covered by the Forum.