

Agenda Item: 11

Meeting: Admissions Forum

Date: 24 June 2009

Subject: Admission Arrangements 2010

Report of: Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Children, Families and Learning

Summary: To advise the Forum on the admission arrangements for all foundation, trust and voluntary aided schools for 2010.

Contact Officer: Rosa Bonwick

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. To note that the admission arrangements for all foundation, trust and voluntary aided schools will be compliant with the School Admissions Code, once Pulford and Sundon Lower Schools have circulated their admission arrangements.**
- 2. To seek the views of the Forum on the change to the admission arrangements for John Donne VA Lower School.**

Background

1. Members of the Forum received a report, at the previous meeting on 24 March 2009, on the proposed admission arrangements for foundation, trust and voluntary aided schools.
2. All of the schools, with the exception of Pulford VA Lower School and Sundon Lower School, have now circulated their determined admission arrangements. These schools are considering a few minor changes to their policies and the final versions are expected shortly. The versions submitted previously indicate that the policies will be compliant with the School Admissions Code.
3. Members of the Forum will recall that St Mary's Catholic Lower School had not consulted on their proposed admission arrangements. Consultation has now taken place and the Governors have determined their arrangements which are fully compliant with the School Admissions Code.

Issues raised with schools at the consultation stage

4. A summary of the issues raised with schools is attached at Appendix A. The schedule has been updated to reflect the action taken by the Governors of the schools. Although some of the recommended changes have not been made, all of the changes required to ensure compliance with the Code have been made.

John Donne VA Lower School

5. Members of the Forum will recall that the Governors of John Donne VA Lower School consulted on a change to their admissions policy which would give out of catchment siblings a higher priority for admission than other catchment children. The Local Authority expressed concern that such a change would be inconsistent with the Council's catchment area policy and could result in local children being denied a place at their local school.
6. The implications of the change have been discussed with the headteacher. The view of the Governors is that as a Christian School the family is at the heart of its community and that it would wish to support those parents from outside of the catchment area who have shown a commitment to the school.
7. The school is not traditionally oversubscribed at the time of allocation and it is the view of the headteacher that catchment children would not, therefore, be denied a place at the school as a result of the change. Should the school become oversubscribed in the future, the headteacher is confident that the Governors would wish to continue to admit catchment children, even if this would result in the published admission number for the school being exceeded. On this basis, the Governors have decided to proceed with the change and have determined their admission arrangements accordingly.
8. Members of the Forum are asked to consider whether they would support the change on the understanding that catchment children would not be denied a place, or whether they would wish the Local Authority to refer the matter to the Schools Adjudicator for a judgement.

Appendices:

Appendix A - Admission Arrangements 2010 – Foundation, Trust and VA School