

## **CABINET MEMBER DECISION**

### **17 FEBRUARY 2022**

# **SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED SCHOOLS FOR 2023/24, CO-ORDINATED ADMISSION SCHEMES 2023/24 & PUBLISHED ADMISSION NUMBER CHANGES FOR 2023/24**

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#### **Relevant Cabinet Member**

Mr M J Hart

#### **Relevant Officer**

Director of Children's Social Care and Safeguarding Services

#### **Recommendation**

- 1. The Director of Children's Social Care and Safeguarding Services recommends that the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education:**
  - (a) approves the Admissions Policy for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools 2023/24 as set out in Appendices 1a and 1b;**
  - (b) approves the scheme for Co-ordinated Admissions for Primary/Middle and Secondary Schools for 2023/24 as set out in Appendices 2a and 2b; and**
  - (c) approves the Published Admission Numbers for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools, including the proposed reduction, as set out in Appendix 3.**

#### **Background**

2. In March 2014, Cabinet agreed that where no significant changes are proposed to the school admission arrangements, the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education and Skills has delegated authority for approving the Schools Admissions Policy for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools and schemes for Co-ordinated Admissions in consultation with the Director of Children's Services. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education and Skills has therefore approved the arrangements on an annual basis. There were significant changes made to those arrangements, including extending the delegated authority of the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education and Skills to include approving the admission arrangements as a whole (meaning policy, Published Admission Numbers (PAN) and co-ordinated schemes) as well as the introduction of an In-Year co-ordinated scheme and a new Fair Access Protocol. Cabinet reviewed and approved those changes in January 2020.

3. The Published Admission Number (PAN) must be determined at the same time as the admission policy. The 2014 delegations in relation to the admission arrangements, apply to the admissions policy and the co-ordinated schemes. Following approval by Cabinet in January 2020, this was extended to cover the admission arrangements as a

whole (including policy, PAN and co-ordinated schemes) annually, unless prescribed alterations to maintained schools, through increases in physical capacity, are required.

4. There are no significant changes proposed to the Admissions Policy, with one minor administrative amendment in relation to waiting lists and there is one PAN reduction. The arrangements were subject to full public consultation and require Cabinet Member approval for the academic year 2023/24.

### **Review of the Admissions Policy for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools 2023/24**

6. Worcestershire Children First (WCF) School Admissions Team undertook full public consultation in line with the statutory requirements of section 1.44 of the Code on School Admissions. This included direct mailing to all schools in Worcestershire, neighbouring local authorities, Diocesan Boards, Trade Unions, and libraries. The information was also published on the School Admissions website. An advertisement was published in all the local papers alerting parents to the information on the website and directing them to locations where hard copies could be viewed, if required. The consultation was also shared on social media. Consultation took place between 11 October 2021 and 26 November 2021. The consultation document is attached as Appendix 4.

7. The current approved arrangements for Community and Voluntary Schools state:

“Waiting lists will be maintained until the 31st December 2022. Parents will need to reapply at the start of each term if they wish to be included on the list for the following term.

8. The arrangements have been in place since 2012. Consultation has taken place to extend the current period a child remains on the waiting list to the whole of the relevant academic year. There have been no responses to the consultation.

9. As there are no significant changes recommended, responsibility for approving the arrangements remains with the Cabinet Member in consultation with the Director. It is therefore recommended that the Cabinet Member approves the admissions arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools for the academic year 2023/24, attached as Appendices 1a and 1b.

### **Co-ordinated Admission Schemes for 2023/24**

15. The School Admissions Code Section 2.20 states:

*"Each year Local Authorities must formulate a scheme to co-ordinate admission arrangements for all publicly funded schools within their area. Where the scheme is not substantially different from that adopted in previous years there is no requirement to consult."*

16. There are no changes to the closing and offer dates (see table below), with only minor amendments to the exchange of information dates with other admission authorities.

	<b>Closing Date</b>	<b>Offer Date</b>
<b>Primary/Middle</b>	15 January 2023	16 April 2023
<b>Secondary</b>	31 October 2022	1 March 2023

17. It is therefore recommended that Cabinet Member approves the Co-ordinated Admissions Schemes for primary/middle and secondary schools for the academic year 2023/24 as set out in Appendices 2a & 2b.

### **Published Admission Number (PAN) Changes**

18. Worcestershire Children First keep under review the PAN for all community and voluntary controlled schools and consults with Governing Bodies annually to ensure there are sufficient places in an area for the number of pupils seeking to attend their local school.

19. Admission Authorities need no longer consult on an increase to the PAN if the school has the accommodation. This change was introduced by the revised Code on School Admissions in December 2014.

20. The Governing Body of **Croptorne with Charlton CE First Voluntary Controlled School** requested the Council consult to reduce the PAN of the school from 18 to 15 for 2023 to allow the school to teach in line with infant class size legislation and to assist with the school's future financial viability.

21. The Council has reviewed the current and expected future demand for places at the school and agrees that the reduction in the PAN from 18 to 15 will not cause a concern for basic need. The Council is therefore supportive of the request for a PAN reduction. Full consultation has taken place on the PAN reduction and there have been no responses received to the proposed reduction.

22. The reduced PAN is in line with past and future demand for places, following which the school will continue to be able to support all children living within the catchment to attend their local school should they choose to do so.

23. **Fladbury CE First School**, have conducted public consultation on reducing PAN from 20 to 15 for 2023. The Governing Body wish to change the age range of the school. A reduction of the PAN at the school would be required to ensure this change could take place without any major accommodation changes.

24. The Governing Body recognise that a PAN reduction from 20 to 15 will ensure that the school can physically accommodate the extra year groups of Years 5 and 6, without the expense of extra accommodation or building works. The Council has reviewed the current and expected future demand for places at the school and confirms that the reduction in the PAN from 20 to 15 will not cause a concern for basic need. Full consultation has taken place on the PAN reduction and there have been no responses received to the proposed reduction. The school is a Voluntary Aided School and as such the Governing Body are responsible for the decision to reduce PAN, this is reported for information purposes for the Cabinet Member.

24. It is therefore recommended that the Cabinet Member approves the PANs for Community and Voluntary Controlled primary/middle and secondary schools for the academic year 2023/24 as set out in Appendix 3, which includes the PAN reduction for Cropthorne with Charlton CE First School.

### **Legal, Financial and HR Implications**

30. There are no legal or HR implications as a result of this report. Some of the PAN reductions relate to measures being taken that have an impact on the financial sustainability of those schools. There are no financial implications for Worcestershire County Council that would occur as a result of endorsing the recommendations in this report.

### **Joint Equality, Public Health, Data Protection and Sustainability Impact Assessments**

31. An Equality Impact Assessment relevance screening has been completed on the Admission Policy for 2023/24. It shows that the recommendations do not have an adverse impact on children and young people or any of the protected groups and promotes equality.

32. There are no Public Health and Privacy Impact Assessment implications that will occur as a result of endorsing the recommendations in this report.

### **Risk Implications**

33. The delivery and consequences of the recommendations have been considered and there are no risk implications that are likely to occur as a result of endorsing the recommendations in this report.

### **Supporting Information (available electronically only)**

- Appendices 1a & 1b - Admissions Policy for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools
- Appendices 2a & 2b - Co-ordinated Schemes for Worcestershire Schools
- Appendix 3 – Published Admission Numbers
- Appendix 4 – Consultation letter and Response Form

### **Contact Points**

#### County Council Contact Points

County Council: 01905 763763

#### Specific Contact Points for this report

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### **Background Papers**

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Director of Children's Services) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

School Admissions Code