

Appendix 3

16th October 2017

Our ref: PA/TW
Contact: Tracey Wilson
Tel: 01905 678131

Headteachers & Chairs of Governors of all Maintained Schools
Neighbouring Local Authorities
Worcester Diocesan Board of Education
Church of England Diocese Birmingham
Birmingham Diocesan Schools Commission
Chair of the Worcestershire Association of Governors
Trade Unions
SENDIASS

Dear Colleagues

**Consultation on Admission Arrangements for Community and Voluntary
Controlled schools for the Academic Year 2019-2020**

Consultation is now taking place on the admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools for the academic year 2019/2020. Consultation will run from **16th October 2017 to 11th December 2017**. A Consultation Response Form has been included with this letter and a response is invited from all interested parties.

A copy of the current approved admission arrangements is attached as Appendix 1a and 1b for your information.

Detailed below are the changes proposed for the 2019/2020 academic year. The Authority is seeking views on these changes before the Cabinet makes a final decision at its meeting in January 2018.

The changes proposed for inclusion in consultation are as a result of requests from interested parties.

1. Feeder School inclusion in the oversubscription criterion for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools

When a Worcestershire Community or Voluntary Controlled school is oversubscribed, Feeder School attendance at the time of application is currently priority v) on the oversubscription criterion.

The Code on School Admissions states in relation to Feeder Schools in Section 1.15

Admission authorities may wish to name a primary or middle school as a feeder school. The selection of a feeder school or schools as an oversubscription criterion must be transparent and made on reasonable grounds.

As more schools have become their own admission authorities and can therefore set their own admission criterion, feeder school links have changed over the years. As school become part of multi-academy trusts this has changed how some schools work together. Some schools are concerned that the existing feeder school arrangements originally

introduced to the admission arrangements in 2003, are no longer accurately reflecting how school pyramid links currently work. If the links currently in place are not up to date or are no longer reflecting school relationships, then this priority may no longer seem to be reasonable and could be open to challenge.

In addition, there are a number of areas in the county that are particularly heavily oversubscribed in all tiers, e.g. First, Middle and High School.

For example;

John Smith reside in catchment for and applies for a Reception Class place at **Example First School A**, this school is oversubscribed from within its own catchment, and **John Smith** and a number of other catchment area applicants cannot therefore obtain a place in that school and have to attend an alternative school.

In 5 years' time, **Example Middle School B**, also the catchment area school for **John Smith** is also oversubscribed from within its own catchment. After admitting all siblings, this school then admits the children from its feeder schools and is so heavily oversubscribed that children in catchment who are at non-feeder schools are unsuccessful in obtaining a place. **John Smith** once again is unsuccessful in obtaining a place and has to attend an alternative Middle School.

Those children who were unable to obtain a place previously in the feeder **First School A**, then find themselves once again unable to obtain a place in their catchment **Middle School B**.

Similarly because John Smith and others were unable to obtain a place at their catchment **Middle School B**, they once again are unable to obtain a place at their catchment **Example High School C**, simply because they could not gain a place in the feeder schools, even though they live in the catchment for the schools.

These children have been disadvantaged from an early age, in obtaining a place at the catchment Middle or High School, because they were unable to obtain a place in their catchment First School. This may lead to challenges that this is not fair and therefore in breach of the Code Paragraph 14, it may be viewed as fairer to use distance rather than current school to prioritise applications.

It is therefore proposed that consultation take place on the following options:

- A. Feeder School Links as shown in the attached Appendix 2 remain unchanged for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools;
- B. Feeder School is completely removed from the Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools oversubscription criterion;
- C. Feeder School links are revised to accurately reflect current school working practices.

Your response on the above suggestions is sought. If option 3 is favoured please provide full details of proposed links on the response form.

2. Giving Sibling link higher priority in the oversubscription criterion for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools

When a Worcestershire Community or Voluntary Controlled school is oversubscribed, Sibling currently has a lower priority than Catchment area.

As more schools have become their own admission authorities and can therefore set their own admission criterion, a number have removed or reduced the priority given to Catchment Area children and have given Siblings a higher priority in the oversubscription criterion.

Some schools are concerned that they have historically been able to offer places to out of area applicants in years when oversubscription has not occurred. However as the population has grown in some years, there are some pupils applying for places, who already have siblings at the school, who have not been able to gain a place.

Concern has been raised that the impact that this has on families can be of considerable. In some cases it has meant a number of those parents removing older children from schools to move them to existing year groups at other schools in order to keep families together. This can disrupt a child's schooling as well as having a negative impact on a school's budget. It is likely that this may continue in future years. Having small children at different schools can cause huge concern for parents in terms of logistics, before and after school activities and clubs, different TE days and different start and finish times.

However, parents must also be made aware that they may not necessarily be entitled to transport assistance to get children to schools that are not their designated schools.

It is therefore proposed that consultation take place on the following options:

- A.** Catchment area as a higher priority than the sibling link should remain unchanged for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools;
- B.** Sibling is given a higher priority than Catchment area in the Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools oversubscription criterion;

Your response on the above suggestions is sought.

3. Admission Policy for Academy (A), Foundation (FO), Free (FR) and Voluntary Aided (VA) Schools.

All Academy, Foundation, Free and Voluntary Aided schools must consult on their proposed Admission Policies, where there is a change from the 2018 policy. A copy of the proposed arrangements for Academy, Foundation, Free and Voluntary Aided schools can be found on the Worcestershire County Council website, at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/schooladmissions the individual school's website or from the schools' offices. A public notice has been placed in the free local press to this effect.

Where there is no change from the determined policy approved for 2018, and no objections were received to that policy, those admission authorities need not consult this year.

Any comments on Academy, Foundation, Free and Voluntary Aided school policies should be directed to the schools themselves.

4. Co-ordinated Admission Arrangements and Dates

Local Authorities are required, to operate a co-ordinated admissions scheme for all schools. Under the scheme, LA's are required to coordinate with neighbouring authorities, and all admission authorities within their area to ensure that **only one offer of a school place** is awarded to pupils.

The draft schemes are attached as Appendices 3a (Prim/Midd) and 3b (Sec) for implementation in 2019/20 and subsequent years. These are similar to the schemes implemented for the last few academic years.

5. Published Admission Number changes (PAN)

Admission Authorities are not required to consult on an increase to the PAN if the school has the accommodation. However, there is still a statutory requirement to consult on an increase to the size of a school where the increase is 30 places and by more than 25% of the existing accommodation.

Pressure in school places in Worcestershire is moving from first/primary schools to middle/high schools. However, pockets of localised pressure remain in all phases across the County. Forecast pupil numbers indicate that the following numbers of additional school places are required:

- Pershore – 30 additional places are required from September 2019 at secondary level.
- Stourport – 30 additional places are required from September 2019 at secondary level.
- Bromsgrove – 15 additional places are required from September 2019 at first school level with a further 30 places at middle school.
- Increases of 5 pupils per year group are also proposed at Hartlebury CE Primary and Kempsey Primary to meet local demand.

Included as Appendix 4 are a list of those schools that have come forward to be considered for expansion. Some of the increases proposed are 'significant' and will need to follow the statutory process. Academies will need to seek permission from the Regional Schools Commissioner to vary their PAN and funding agreements. Additional accommodation will be required at some schools to meet this Basic Need and the projects will need to be included in the capital investment plan.

Some other modest increases are also proposed which can be managed within the existing accommodation and are not deemed to be significant. The PAN changes will be published

in the Information for Parents Book 2019 which when published can be found at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/schooladmissions

If a school is not included in Appendix 4 and has not approached the Local Authority to increase its PAN within existing accommodation then the PAN is proposed to remain unchanged. The PAN's for 2018 can be viewed on the Worcestershire County Council Website in the Information for Parents Book 2018 which can be found at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/schooladmissions

Norton Juxta Kempsey First School has requested a decrease in PAN due to falling numbers. As this school is now an Academy, any response to the proposed decrease in PAN should be sent directly to the school.

Timescales for this consultation

Responses are required by Monday 11th December 2017. They should be sent to:

Admission Arrangements Consultation
School Admissions
Babcock Prime
Prime House
Woodbury Lane
Norton
Worcester
WR5 2PT

Or by e-mail to tracey.wilson@babcockinternational.com

If you have any queries on these issues please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



Tracey Wilson
Mainstream Admissions Manager

Consultation on Proposed Changes to the Admissions Policy for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools 2019/20 Response Form

School/Organisation/ Name	
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1. Feeder School inclusion in the oversubscription criteria for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools.
A. Feeder School Links as shown in Appendix 2 should remain unchanged for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools.
Agree
Disagree
Comments-:
B. Feeder School is completely removed from the oversubscription criterion for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools.
Agree
Disagree
Comments-:
C. Feeder School links should be revised to accurately reflect current school working practices for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools.
Agree
Disagree
Comments including full details of proposed links, these can be attached separately if additional space is required-:
2. Giving Siblings a higher priority in the oversubscription criterion for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools.
A. Catchment Area as a higher priority than the sibling link should remain unchanged for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools.
Agree
Disagree
Comments-:

B. Sibling should be given a higher priority than catchment area in the oversubscription criteria for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools.
Agree
Disagree
Comments-:
3. Are there any comments on the Co-ordinated Primary Scheme you wish to make?
Comments-:
4. Are there any comments on the Co-ordinated Secondary Scheme you wish to make?
Comments-:
5. Are there any comments you wish to make on the proposed PAN changes?
Comments-:

Signed.....

Printed.....

Responses are required by 11th December 2017. They should be sent to:
 Admission Arrangements Consultation 2019/20, School Admissions, Prime House,
 Woodbury Lane, Norton, Worcester, WR5 2NP
 Or by e-mail to tracey.wilson@babcockinternational.com