

Strong Families, Children, and Young People Scrutiny Panel

6 February 2023

Time 6.00 pm **Public Meeting?** YES **Type of meeting** Scrutiny
Venue Council Chamber - 4th Floor - Civic Centre

Membership

Chair Cllr Rita Potter (Lab)
Vice-chair Cllr Adam Collinge (Con)

Labour

Cllr Paul Sweet
Cllr Qaiser Azeem
Cllr Lovinyer Daley
Cllr Dr Michael Hardacre
Cllr Carol Hyatt
Cllr Rupinderjit Kaur
Cllr Louise Miles
Cllr Lynne Moran

Conservative

Cllr Stephanie Haynes
Cllr Andrew McNeil

Wolverhampton Youth
Council

Cyril Randles - Representing
the Church of England

Quorum for this meeting is four Voting Members.

Information for the Public

If you have any queries about this meeting, please contact the Scrutiny Team:

Contact Earl Piggott-Smith
Tel/Email Tel: 01902 551251 or earl.piggott-smith@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Address Scrutiny Office, Civic Centre, 1st floor, St Peter's Square,
Wolverhampton WV1 1RL

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Agenda

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

- | <i>Item No.</i> | <i>Title</i> |
|-----------------|--|
| 1 | Welcome and Introductions [The Chair to welcome everyone to the meeting.] |
| 2 | Meeting procedures to be followed [The Chair will explain how the meeting will proceed, how questions are to be asked and any matters of meeting etiquette.] |

MEETING BUSINESS ITEMS

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 3 | Apologies |
| 4 | Declarations of interest |

PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY

[To give pre-decision scrutiny to the report

- | | |
|---|--|
| 5 | Determined Admission Arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools 2024-2025 (Pages 5 - 66) [Bill Hague, Head of School Business and Support, to present report] |
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DISCUSSION ITEMS

- | | |
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| 6 | School Appeals Update (Pages 67 - 74) [Bill Hague, Head of School Business and Support, Laura Gittos, Head of Governance, and Jaswinder Kaur, Democratic Services and Systems Manager, to give presentation] |
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| CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL | Cabinet 22 February 2023 |
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| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Report title | Determined Admission Arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools 2024-2025 | |
| Decision designation | AMBER | |
| Cabinet member with lead responsibility | Councillor Burden Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Work | |
| Key decision | Yes | |
| In forward plan | Yes | |
| Wards affected | All | |
| Accountable Director | Emma Bennett | Executive Director of Families |
| Originating service | Children's Services | |
| Accountable employee | Bill Hague | Head of Service, School Business and Support 01902 555100 Bill.Hague@wolverhampton.gov.uk |
| Report to be/has been considered by | Childrens & Education Leadership Team | 12 January 2023 |
| | Strategic Executive Board | 24 January 2023 |
| | Scrutiny Board | 7 February 2023 |

Recommendation(s) for decision:

The Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Approve the Co-ordinated Admission Schemes for secondary and primary school admissions at the normal year of entry for 2024-2025 and that the Secretary of State be notified by 28 February 2023.
2. Approve the proposed admission arrangements including the oversubscription criterion relating to children of staff for community and voluntary controlled schools for 2024-2025.

Recommendation for noting:

The Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Note the outcome of the external consultation in relation to the Determined Admission Arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools 2024-2025 included in section 4 of this paper.
2. Note a copy of the complete consultation results are included as Appendix 2.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To approve the schemes for co-ordinated school admission arrangements for secondary and primary schools and the admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools for 2024-2025 (please see Appendix 1).
- 1.2 To approve the inclusion of the oversubscription criterion relating to children of staff.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 In accordance with legislation and the Schools Admission Code 2021, each Local Authority (LA) is required to draw up a scheme (or schemes) for co-ordinating admission arrangements for all mainstream, maintained schools (community, voluntary controlled, voluntary aided, foundation and academies) within their area.
- 2.2 Each Admission Authority is required to determine admission arrangements every year. The City of Wolverhampton Council's (CWC) responsibility in this regard is for the Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools in Wolverhampton. For academies the academy trust(s) are the admitting authority not CWC, however some academies follow CWC admission arrangements.
- 2.3 Even if there are no changes to admission arrangements, they must be consulted on at least once every seven years in accordance with The School Admissions Code, which is also now due.
- 2.4 The School Admissions Arrangements (SAA) are required to adhere to the code ensuring the oversubscription criteria are simple, transparent, and objective. Having the ability to follow a set of admission arrangements and an application process where parents are fully supported is important.
- 2.5 Code compliant SAA's help contribute to the Council Plan as an overarching link to Strong families where children grow up well and achieve their full potential as the start of a child's educational journey begins with the school application process.
- 2.6 This item was considered as pre-decision scrutiny on 7 February 2023 by the Scrutiny Board and will therefore not be available to call in once a decision is made by Cabinet.

3.0 Current Admission Arrangements

- 3.1 All schools must have admission arrangements that clearly set out how children will be admitted, including the criteria that will be applied if there are more applications than places at the school.
- 3.2 The current SAA adhere to the code and the oversubscription criteria is simple, transparent, and objective. The criteria are as follows: -

Children with an Education Health and Care Plan are given overall priority to the named school. Remaining places are then allocated in accordance with the criteria below.

Criterion 1: Children and Young People in Care (as defined by Section 22 of the Children Act 1989). Children and Young People in Care and all previous Children and Young People in Care including those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

Criterion 2: Children attending the corresponding Infant School (Infant to Junior transfers only)

Criterion 3: Medical/Social. Whether there are specific medical or social circumstances that can be met only by the child's attendance at the preferred school.

Criterion 4: Siblings. Whether siblings attend the school when the application is made and will still be attending the school when the young person is admitted.

Criterion 5: Religious reasons for attending a voluntary controlled school (as assessed by a supplementary information form).

Criterion 6: Distance. How close the child lives to the school with those living closest to the school getting the highest priority. The measurement between home and school will be determined by the straight-line measurement from the home address to the preferred school carried out by the CWC's software.

- 3.3 A number of academies have consulted on their admission arrangements and included children of staff at the school as criterion 6 (i.e. above distance) as it can assist with staff recruitment for vacant posts for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage and aid retention of staff.
- 3.4 Since 2019 a small number of children have been allocated to academies under the children of staff criteria with the breakdown as follows.

Table 1

| Year | Primary cohorts | Secondary cohorts |
|------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 2019 | 1 | 2 |
| 2020 | 2 | 1 |
| 2021 | 0 | 4 |
| 2022 | 2 | 3 |

*Numbers allocated under the criteria out of a total of over 27,500 allocations

It is evident that the numbers allocated under the criteria are low and do not displace children from being able to attend a local school.

- 3.5 CWC has consulted stakeholders regarding the inclusion of the oversubscription criteria related to children of staff, please see section 4 for the outcome of consultation.
- 3.6 The LA's within the West Midlands and beyond operate an inter-Local Authority scheme for primary and secondary admissions. There are no proposals to change the schemes in this regard.

4.0 Consultation

4.1 Pre-consultation

- 4.2 In order to gauge initial stakeholder opinion, drop-in sessions were held during September 2022, with Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools to gain views on including children of staff as an oversubscription criterion.
- 4.3 Schools that attended were supportive of the change to include children of staff criteria. They could see the value it would have in assisting with staff recruitment for vacant posts for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage and aid retention of staff. Schools were also content that it would not displace children from a local school.
- 4.4 Strategic Executive Board approved the commencement of a seven-week external consultation.

4.5 Consultation

- 4.6 External consultation commenced on 31 October 2022 and ended on 16 December 2022.
- 4.7 The School Admissions Code has been adhered to by consulting with statutory consultees and other interested parties, which included:
- Over 200 Headteachers, Principals, Governors and education stakeholders of Infant, Junior, Primary, Secondary, Pupil Referral Units, Special Schools and maintained nurseries in Wolverhampton
 - Diocesan Authorities
 - Multi Academy Trusts and Academy Trust CEO's
 - All Councillors
 - School Appeal Panel Members
 - West Midlands School Organisation Group (this group includes School Organisation Officers from the Councils of Staffordshire, Sandwell, Walsall, Birmingham, Dudley, Telford and Wrekin and Worcestershire)
 - Internal dissemination via colleagues working with hard-to-reach communities.
- 4.8 The wider public has also been informed via a publicity campaign through CWC and School's social media channels, press releases, education bulletins including School newsletters (to reach parents and carers) and Governor newsletters.
- 4.9 Stakeholders could respond directly to the consultation via Council's Consultation Hub by completing a survey or by sending their views in by email or by post.

4.10 Outcome of External Consultation

69 responses were received via the Council's Consultation Hub from the stakeholders listed below. The feedback survey contained two questions: one relating to the inclusion of the oversubscription criterion relating to children of staff and the other as a general feedback question for comments on the Admission Arrangements. Full responses are in Appendix 2.

| Stakeholder Type | Total | Percentage |
|--|-----------|-------------|
| Academy Trust | 1 | 1% |
| Governor | 10 | 14% |
| Governor / Local Authority | 1 | 1% |
| Headteacher/Principal | 7 | 10% |
| Local Authority | 1 | 1% |
| Non-teaching Staff | 2 | 3% |
| Other Appeal Panel Member | 1 | 1% |
| Other Former Governor | 1 | 1% |
| Other Interested in how admissions work now | 1 | 1% |
| Other SFW | 1 | 1% |
| Parent / Guardian / Carer | 26 | 38% |
| Parent / Guardian / Carer / Governor | 5 | 7% |
| Parent / Guardian / Carer / Non-teaching Staff / Governor | 1 | 1% |
| Parent / Guardian / Carer / Other School Volunteer | 1 | 1% |
| Parent / Guardian / Carer / Teaching Staff | 1 | 1% |
| Parent / Guardian / Carer / Teaching Staff / Academy Trust | 1 | 1% |
| Teaching Staff | 4 | 6% |
| Teaching Staff / Governor / Other SACRE | 1 | 1% |
| Teaching Staff / Non-teaching staff | 1 | 1% |
| Governor / Other Parent | 1 | 1% |
| Parent / Guardian / Carer / Governor / Local Authority | 1 | 1% |
| Grand Total | 69 | 100% |

4.11 Question 1 - Do you agree with the inclusion of children of staff at the school as an oversubscription criterion? There was an option for “Yes” or “No” to be selected.

| Do you agree with the inclusion of children of staff at the school as an oversubscription criterion? - Y/N | Total | Percentage |
|--|-----------|-------------|
| No | 26 | 38% |
| Yes | 43 | 62% |
| Grand Total | 69 | 100% |

- A. Consultees were given to opportunity to make comments in association with their answer to Q1. There were 20 comments received.
- B. Several supportive comments regarding the inclusion of the proposed criterion were received during the consultation including:
- “Excellent idea!” (Response 29 - Governor / Other Parent)
 - “It helps with recruitment” (Response 41 - Appeal Panel Member)

- “This is a perfectly sensible alteration to the existing policy and well overdue. It will assist schools in the recruitment and retention of staff with little appreciable impact on the wider public.” (Response 62 – Governor)
- “I think it’s a good idea, however, there would still need to be consideration to the number of pupils etc, in case there isn’t enough space to go over PAN for staff children, in addition to other non-staff children, as there is only so many children you can fit into a classroom.” (Response 24 - Headteacher / Principal)

C. A number of concerns and considerations regarding the proposal were also identified during the consultation including:

- “I don’t think staffs’ own pupils at school is necessarily a good idea for both the child, other children and the staff attending that school. I think it can cause conflicts of interest and difficulties for all involved. Therefore I don’t think this should be given priority when allocating a school place.” (Respondent 27 – Parent / Guardian / Carer)
- “I can appreciate why thoughts may lean towards offering children of teacher's places at a school they work in. However, this is unfair and same measure should be applied to all parents regardless of profession status.
- If the teacher resides in a different postcode area to that in which he or she works within, the child/ren should apply to the nearest school to them accordingly to their postcode. This is something many working professionals have to juggle on a daily basis, it should not be any different for teachers especially as this concerns over-subscribed schools.” (Respondent 31 – Parent / Guardian / Carer)
- Two respondents (39 and 63) felt that the question “needs clarity”.

4.12 Question 2 - Do you have any other comments on the Proposed Admission Arrangements 2024-25? There was an option for “Yes” or “No” to be selected.

| Do you have any other comments on the Proposed Admission Arrangements 2024-25? - Y/N | Total | Percentage |
|--|-----------|------------|
| No | 61 | 88% |
| Yes | 8 | 12% |
| Grand Total | 69 | 100% |

A. Consultees were given to opportunity to make comments in association with their answer to Q2.

Seven comments were received from the stakeholders shown in the table below.

| Stakeholder type responding "yes" to Q2 | Total | Total with comments |
|--|--------------|----------------------------|
| Governor | 1 | 1 |
| Other Former Governor | 1 | 1 |
| Parent / Guardian / Carer | 4 | 3 |
| Parent / Guardian / Carer / Governor / Local Authority | 1 | 1 |
| Parent / Guardian / Carer / Teaching Staff / Academy Trust | 1 | 1 |
| Grand Total | 8 | 7 |

There were several comments and concerns on the overall school admissions arrangement including:

- How places are allocated.

“Priority for reception admission should be given to those who have completed nursery at the same school. It is unfair to expect a 4 yr old to understand why they cannot attend their school and places unnecessary stress on both the child and the parents and I believe school staff also agree that it is better for a child to have continuity.” (Response 5 - Parent / Guardian / Carer)
- Perceived complexity

“My son is going into Year 7 in Sept 2023 and I have found the process stressful and rushed; 1. We have to wait a number of months to receive our school choice which I understand however I feel that parents should be given longer to make that choice, therefore schools should start earlier with open days.” (Response 51 - Parent / Guardian / Carer)
- Survey circulation breadth

“Also there is a concern that only teachers reply to this survey and that will affect the outcome - if this happens CWC need to contact other parents for their views. This survey is not really advertised so it will not have a good reach.” (Response 40 - Parent / Guardian / Carer)
- Travel funding when local school is not allocated

“The current system is flawed. The way how allocations is managed does not work, as when you put a school down the LA allocate your child a school which is further away and oversubscribed. You then have to send your child to the oversubscribed school and pay more cost in bus passes. Then when you try and apply for support for a bus pass you get told no due to the fact you could have picked a closer school when it was the LA who placed your child at the further school.” (Response 63 - Parent / Guardian / Carer / Governor / Local Authority)

5.0 Responses to consultation

- 5.1 In responses to the concerns raised regarding the proposed oversubscription criterion, CWC Officers would like to make the following comments:
- 5.2 Staff length of service:
The following extract is taken from the Proposed School Admission Arrangements 2024-25 document which addresses respondents' concerns.
- “Children whose parent/carer is a member of staff employed at the school
This applies where the parent/carer has been employed by the school for two or more years at the time at which the application of admission to the school is made, and/or where the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post at the school for which there is a demonstrable skills shortage. This criteria applies to all permanent staff members, and excludes staff employed on a casual/temporary contract.” CWC (2022:11)*
- This wording has been chosen to allow individual school's the opportunity to determine which posts can be considered applicable through a “*demonstrable skills shortage*”.
- 5.3 Potential to exceed the Published Admission Numbers (PAN):
The oversubscription criteria for allocating school places are only applied if the school receives more applicants than it's PAN at which point on time applications are evaluated by the oversubscription criteria in the order prescribed by the SAA up until the school's PAN is met. PANs could only be exceeded by a permitted exception such as an upheld appeal through the appeals process.
- 5.4 Potential displacement of local children:
As several Academy Trusts have already implemented this criterion, the research of the impact was already completed before initial consultation and has been presented in paragraph 3.4 of this report. This shows that numbers of pupils being allocated under this criterion within other admission authorities have been analysed and are shown as being very low and therefore creating little to no impact on local children's access to places in schools.
- 5.5 Potential conflict of school staff interest:
Headteachers in August 2022 did not raise this matter as a concern for their individual schools. All schools should have local processes in place to ensure equality for all pupils, which are managed and governed by the individual school Governing Body and School Leadership Team.
- 5.6 Professional Status priority:
Children of staff is listed as a specific oversubscription criterion (i.e. it is not just a local policy) in paragraph 1.39 of The School Admissions Code 2021 and does not solely relate to teachers.
- 5.7 Clarity of the survey question:
The survey has been published with the Proposed School Admission Arrangements for 2024-2025 document which should be read in conjunction with responding to the survey.

Full wording of the SAA oversubscription criteria is within this document and allows the reader to make a more informed response to the survey question.

5.8 Responses to the comments on the overall school admission arrangements 2024-25

5.9 How places are allocated:

The CWC SAA are written with the specific objective to meet the requirements of the Department for Education School Admissions Code 2021, which is a statutory requirement for Admission Authorities. The School Admissions Code 2021 determines which criteria which should be prioritised and the criteria which cannot be included as oversubscription criteria. Place allocation by nursery attendance is not permitted in accordance with the School Admissions Code. In oversubscription cases children having Educational Health Care Plan's (EHCP) shall have first priority.

When places are allocated parent /guardians/ carers are fully informed of the circumstances and correspondence also includes the mechanism on how to appeal to an independent panel.

5.10 Perceived complexity:

It is noted that the SAA is a lengthy document however this is required to maintain statutory compliance with the School Admissions Code 2021. To assist parents/guardians/carers in completing application there is step by step guidance on the School Admissions section of the CWC website, alongside a dedicated customer service team providing support. Comments in Response 40 on the survey about including a video guide to the process are being taken into consideration.

5.11 Survey circulation breadth:

Response numbers are considered to be healthy following previous consultations on education matters. There has also been a variety of stakeholders responding. 38% of the responses have come from those identifying themselves primarily as parents/guardians/carers compared to 6% identifying as Teaching Staff and 10% identifying as Headteacher/Principal.

Due to the wide reach of the social media campaign from CWC and from Schools, the consultation has been accessible and regularly promoted by press releases, education bulletins and by email.

A full breakdown of stakeholders who responded to the survey via the Consultation Portal is shown 4.10 of this report.

5.12 Travel funding when local school is not allocated:

On the limited occasions where a school is allocated in excess of a reasonable distance under government guidelines then support with a home to school bus pass can be

considered. However each case is considered on its own merits and specific circumstances in accordance with CWC All Age Travel Assistance Policy.

6.0 Evaluation of alternative options

6.1 To consult on the admissions arrangements without any changes in accordance with the School Admissions Code 2021. As the last consultation occurred in 2015, consultation was due.

7.0 Reasons for decision(s)

7.1 Due to the outcome of consultation, it is recommended that the oversubscription criterion of children of staff be included above criterion 6 (for distance) in the CWC SAA for maintained & voluntary controlled schools for 2024-25.

A. 62% of consultees agreed that the oversubscription criterion of children of staff should be included in the 2024-25 CWC School Admission Arrangements.

7.2 Approval of the admission arrangements without the proposed change may create a misalignment in staff recruitment and retention between maintained and voluntary controlled schools and some academies (who are the admission authority) in the local area.

7.3 In addition, having the option to assist with staff recruitment and retention can contribute to outcomes for children and young people. This will align to the Council Plan as an overarching link to Strong families where children grow up well and achieve their full potential.

7.4 It is also recommended that the proposed CWC School Admission Arrangements for 2024-25 be approved as proposed as all comments have been considered and addressed.

8.0 Financial implications

8.1 There are no direct financial implications from the recommendations of this report. The activities detailed within the report will be met from existing budgets within Education.

[JB/19012023/O]

9.0 Legal implications

9.1 The CWC School Admission Arrangements are consulted on every seven years in line with current statutory requirements. The next consultation (should there be no proposed changes by CWC or in statutory requirements in the meantime) will be due in 2031-32, which would be conducted in 2029.

9.2 School admission arrangements are heavily regulated by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 as amended by the Education and Skills Act 2008. Regulations also apply and the CWC is required to comply with the School Admissions Code in relation to admission arrangements.

- 9.3 The Schemes for co-ordinated admissions and the admission arrangements for Wolverhampton community schools, voluntary controlled schools, free schools and academies comply with the current relevant legislation.

[SZ/10012023/P]

10.0 Equalities implications

- 10.1 Any changes to oversubscription criteria must be compliant with the School Admissions Code (2021) that adheres to and references the Equality Act 2010. The current SAA and the proposed SAA to include children of staff are compliant with the code.
- 10.2 Education officers met with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Team prior to the consultation commencing regarding the rationale for including the children of staff as an oversubscription criterion and no concerns were raised from an EDI perspective. This was agreed to be reviewed following completion of consultation.
- 10.3 The outcome of the consultation was fully shared with the EDI team in January 2023 and there were no concerns raised. It was understood how the children of staff criteria is specifically listed in the School Admissions Code 2021. It was acknowledged that without the proposed change there could be a misalignment in staff recruitment and retention between maintained and voluntary controlled schools and some academies (who are the admission authority) in the local area. A copy of the Equality Analysis can be found at Appendix 3.
- 10.4 It was also recognised that having the option to assist with staff recruitment and retention can contribute to outcomes for children and young people. Specifically, how this can align to the Council Plan as an overarching link to Strong families where children grow up well and achieve their full potential.
- 10.5 An equality analysis template was completed and shared with EDI to incorporate the rationale for the inclusion of the criteria and capture the consultation and relevant legislative matters.

11.0 All other Implications

- 11.1 The City of Wolverhampton school admission arrangements allow for a child with an Education Health and Care Plan which names the school to be admitted.
- 11.2 The oversubscription criterion includes children and young people in care and in former children and young people in care as the highest criterion. This includes children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.
- 11.3 The criterion allows for medical and social claims for a preferred school to be considered.

12.0 Schedule of background papers

[School Admissions Code 2021](#)

[School Admissions Regulations 2012](#)

13.0 Appendices

13.1 Appendix 1: School Admission Arrangements 2024-2025

13.2 Appendix 2: Full consultation responses

13.3 Appendix 3: Equality Analysis

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School admission arrangements 2024 - 2025

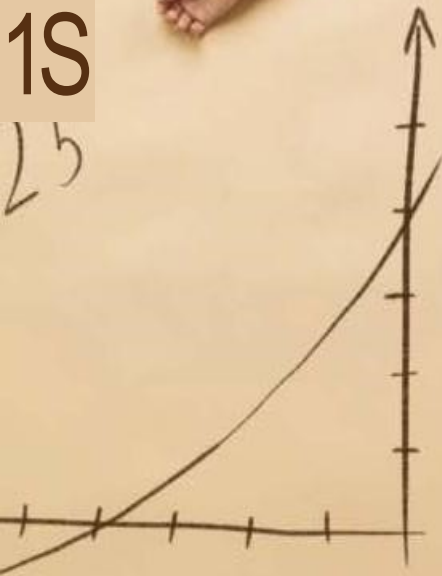
$$p(x) = 2x \cdot 50$$

$$2x^3 + 8^4 + 4 = 245x$$

kb

1S

2b



$$\frac{1}{6} v (S_1 + 4S_2 + S_3)$$

$$k = \frac{V_2}{V_1} = \sqrt{\frac{P_2}{P_1}}$$

mod p=
p=
q=27

S=
S=
S=

$k_a \cdot k_b \cdot k_c$

$$S = \frac{a \cdot v}{2}$$

$$4b - 3 = 15$$

$\binom{3}{2}$



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Definitions

1

Overview of the application process

The scheme is an “Inter-Local Authority” scheme whereby Birmingham, Dudley, Sandwell, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Telford and Wrekin, Walsall and Wolverhampton Local Authorities have agreed to co-ordinate applications for their schools to ensure that each child receives the best possible single offer of a place at a school, based upon parents’ preferences.

In brief terms:

- Parents whose child has an Education and Health Care Plan follow separate admission procedures through the Statutory Assessment or Annual Review process.
- Parents will only have to fill in one application form, on which they will state their school preferences and reasons for those preferences. Applications are made online;
- Five preferences are invited;
- Initially, all preferences are treated as equal, and sent out as equal to other admission authorities as appropriate (i.e. voluntary aided and academy schools in Wolverhampton, and other participating Local Authorities as detailed above).
- After over-subscription criteria have been applied (where appropriate), if more than one school place can potentially be offered, the single offer is for the available school the parent ranked highest on the preference form.

2

Primary admissions

Including admission into Reception Year and transfer from Infant to Junior education.

Admission into reception year

If your child was born between 1/09/2019 and 31/08/2020 you must apply for a place in Reception Year before the 15 January 2024.

The online application will go live in November 2023, hard copies of the form will only be made available on request. Parents are invited to name and give reasons for applying for up to 5 preferred schools, ranked in order of preference, by 23:59 **15 January 2024**. Parents should name all schools (to a Maximum of 5), for which they wish their child to be considered for a place, including any Voluntary-Aided schools, Academies or Free schools and/or any school outside the Wolverhampton area.

By **14 February 2024**, the admissions and appeals team will send other Local Authorities and own Admitting Authority Schools details of applicants for their schools. These details will not reveal the order of preference. All Own Admitting Authority schools will apply their over-subscription criteria and return their complete ranked list of applicants to the admissions and appeals team who will then compare the potential offer lists. If more than one school place can potentially be offered, a place will be allocated at the available school that the parent ranked highest on their application.

On **16 April 2024** parents who made their applications online will be able to view their allocation via the online admissions facility. The admissions and appeals team will also write to every applicant resident in Wolverhampton telling them of their allocated school place.

Parents will be required to respond to any offers made within 10 school days.

Transfer from infant to junior education

There are Infant Schools in Wolverhampton which cater for children up to the age of seven. At this point there is an expectation that pupils will transfer to the corresponding Junior School.

Parents of children attending a Wolverhampton Infant School will receive a letter from the Local Authority in the Autumn Term 2023 informing them that their child will automatically transfer to the corresponding Junior School.

If the parent wishes for this to happen, they will need to take no action. If, however, they wish to apply for a place in a Primary School they should make an application via the online application system.

Primary school application timeline

2023

By 10 Nov Online application is made live

2024

15 Jan Closing date for application forms to be submitted

12 Feb The final date for late applications

14 Feb City of Wolverhampton Council sends/receives unranked preferences to/from other authorities

1 Mar Schools submit final lists of applicants in ranked order

9 Mar Wolverhampton provisionally allocates places

By 29 Mar Final data exchange with co-ordinating authorities

16 Apr Allocation day

3

Secondary school applications

Children born between 1/9/2012 and 31/8/2013 will commence secondary education in September 2024. Parents must apply for a secondary school place before 31 October 2023.

The online application is made live in **September 2023**. Applications should be made online, hard copies of the form will only be made available on request. Parents are invited to name and give reasons for applying for up to 5 preferred schools, ranked in order of preference, by 23:59 **31 October 2023**. Parents should name all schools (to a Maximum of 5), for which they wish their child to be considered for a place, including any Voluntary-Aided schools, Academies or Free schools and/or any school outside the Wolverhampton area, with the exception of any independent schools.

By **18 November 2023**, the admissions and appeals team will send other Local Authorities and Own Admission Authority Schools details of applicants for their schools. These details will not reveal the order of preference. All admission authorities will apply their over-subscription admission criteria including any selection tests and return their complete ranked list of applicants to the admissions and appeals team who will then compare the potential offer lists. If more than one school place can potentially be offered, they will allocate a place at the available school that the parent ranked highest on their application.

On **1 March 2024** parents who made their applications online will be able to view their allocation via the online admissions facility. The admissions and appeals team will also write to every applicant resident in Wolverhampton telling them of their allocated school place. **Parents will be required to respond to any offers made within 10 school days.**

Secondary school application timeline

2023

| | |
|----------|---|
| By 8 Sep | Online application is made live |
| 31 Oct | Closing date for application forms to be submitted |
| 17 Nov | City of Wolverhampton Council sends/receives unranked preferences to/from other authorities |
| 29 Nov | The final date for late applications |

2024

| | |
|-----------|--|
| 12 Jan | Schools submit final lists of applicants in ranked order |
| 25 Jan | Wolverhampton provisionally allocates places |
| By 12 Feb | Final data exchange with co-ordinating authorities |
| 1 Mar | Allocation day |



4

Admission criteria for community and voluntary controlled schools

A child with an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which names the school will be admitted. Remaining places are allocated as detailed below.

Where there are less applicants than the PAN, all children will be admitted. In the event the school is oversubscribed, the admission authority will apply the following oversubscription criteria in order of priority.

1. **Children and Young People in Care and previous Children and Young People in Care**

Children and young people in care are children who are in (a) in the care of the local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of the social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time the application is made to school. Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order) immediately following having been looked after and those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.



Supporting evidence

If the child is in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by that authority this must be indicated on the common application form and evidence (e.g. evidence of child in care from the placement authority) to support this claim must be submitted with the common application form. If the child has previously been in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by them and has subsequently been adopted, or is subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order this must be indicated on the

common application form and evidence (e.g. adoption certificate/copy of court order) to support this claim must be submitted with the common application form. For children in state care outside of England who ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted the relevant legal document(s) must be supplied.

2. Children attending the corresponding Infant School (Infant to Junior transfers only)

3. Medical/social

Whether there are specific medical or social circumstances that can be met only by the child's attendance at the preferred school.



Supporting evidence

If parents believe there are specific reasons, medical or social, for claiming priority for their child to attend a particular school these special factors must be indicated on the form and evidence (e.g. a letter from a registered health professional such as a doctor or a social worker) to support this claim must be submitted with the common application form. The information submitted must state clearly the effects of the condition/illness and why the preferred school is the only school that can meet their child's needs. This is necessary because parents would be asking the Authority to assess their child as having a stronger case than many other children, even some who live closer to the school in question than they do. The information provided will be used to prioritise the request for a particular school. Please note that only in exceptional cases are places prioritised in respect of a child's/parent's medical/social grounds.

4. Siblings

Whether siblings attend the school (or the associated Infant/Junior School) and will be attending the school in September 2024. See definition of a sibling on page 21.

5. Religious reasons for voluntary controlled schools (PRIMARY ONLY)

To a child and family who has religious reasons for attending the preferred voluntary controlled school and for whom it can be demonstrated by the faith leader that s/he has current strong religious connections. This reason will only be taken into consideration if the preferred school is the nearest Church of England (voluntary controlled or voluntary aided) school to the child's home address (measured by a straight line from the home address to the school using the Local Authority's software).



Supporting evidence

A Supplementary Information form will be provided for parents and your faith leader to complete, to enable them to demonstrate your child and family's current strong religious connections.

6. Children whose parent/carer is a member of staff employed at the school

This applies where the parent/carer has been employed by the school for two or more years at the time at which the application of admission to the school is made, and/or where the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post at the school for which there is a demonstrable skills shortage. This criteria applies to all permanent staff members, and excludes staff employed on a casual/temporary contract.

7. Distance

How close the child lives to the school requested with those living closest to the school getting the highest priority. The distance from the applicant's home address is taken in a straight line between the mid-point of the respective school's address and the child's home address. The distance is measured using the Local Authority's software. If there are a limited number of spaces available and we cannot distinguish between applicants using the above criteria, children who live in the same block of flats will be offered the available spaces randomly selected by drawing lots.

Where multiple births (twins and triplets etc.) from the same family are tied for the final place for Reception we will admit them all, as permitted by infant class size legislation, in accordance with the School Admissions Code (2021).

5

Additional arrangements and information

Applications for children to be admitted outside their normal age group

Parents who wish for their child to be considered for admission to a class outside of their normal age group must make an application for the normal age group in the first instance by 31 October 2023 for Secondary school applications and 15 January 2024 for Primary school applications.

This will include parents of a “summer born child” that may choose not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to Reception in September 2025 rather than Year 1.

This will also include parents whose child is currently being educated outside of their normal age group but where the child has reached the normal age of transition to secondary school (i.e. normal age group is Year 6; however child is being educated in Year 5). Parents may request that the child continues to be educated outside of their normal age group and be admitted to Year 7 in September 2025 rather than Year 8.

Any parent wishing to make such a request must put the request in writing to the Admissions and Appeals section no later than 31 October 2023 (Secondary school applications) and 15 January 2024 (Primary school applications).

This request should be in the form of a written letter of application outlining the reasons why they wish for their child to be admitted into a class outside of their normal age group and enclosing any supportive evidence and documentation that they wish to be taken into account as part of that request.

Requests will be considered on an individual basis and decisions will be reached by taking account of the parent’s views; information about the child’s academic, social and emotional development; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional; whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group; and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely. The view of the head teacher of the school concerned will also be sought as part of the decision-making process.



If the request is agreed and the year group for which the parents have requested a place is for a future year group, i.e. Reception or Year 7 in September 2025, then the original application is withdrawn, and the parents must submit a fresh application for a school place in September 2025 when applications open in the autumn term of 2024.

Please note that parents only have the right to defer their application and re-apply for a place.

Where the decision is to agree the request for an application in Reception or Year 7 the following year, that application is considered alongside all other applications received and parents will be advised of the outcome of that application on national offer day. **No place is reserved or held for the child in advance.**

Parents should be aware that if the request is agreed and the child is admitted outside of their normal age group in September 2025, the child will remain with their adopted cohort and be educated outside of their normal age group for the remainder of their education at the school. However, should a request be made to transfer from the allocated school to an alternative school, parents will need to apply to the admission authority of the new school to request that the child continues to be educated outside of their normal age group.

Before any application is submitted it is strongly recommended that parents/carers also read the DfE guidance which can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/summer-born-children-school-admission>



Changes of address (occurring during the allocation process)

In these circumstances - or if a query arises in respect of your child's place of residence - you will be required to supply evidence of your new address. This would need to be validated by documentary evidence such as a solicitor's letter confirming the completion of a house purchase or rent book confirming tenancy.

Deferred entry

A child's parents may defer the date at which their child, below compulsory school age, is admitted to the school until later in the school year, but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age and not beyond the first day of the summer term 2025. A child may take up a part-time place until later in the school year, but not beyond the point at which the child reached compulsory school age. Upon receipt of the offer of a place a parent should notify the school, as soon as possible, that they wish to either defer their child's entry to the school or take up a part-time place.

Financial implications

There is no charge or cost related to the admission of a child to a Wolverhampton school.

Fraudulent or misleading applications

The Local Authority will follow up any reports they receive that allege that a fraudulent or misleading application has been made.

Parents can alert the Local Authority of any potential fraudulent applications by contacting the Admissions and Appeals team. Contact details are published in the composite prospectuses.

Late applications

Applications received after the closing date will be treated as late.

Applications received after the closing date and before the final date for late submissions with approved written evidence will only be incorporated into the initial allocation process if the late submission is for a valid reason or parents can demonstrate a material change of circumstances (see page 16).

When submitting late applications parents must give reasons in writing and supporting documentary evidence for the late submission. The appropriate admission authority will give consideration to the reasons, following which the application will be:

Either 1) incorporated into the initial allocation and assessed against the over-subscription criteria for the school(s) concerned

Or 2) considered only after all other applications.

Applications without written reasons for the late application or received after the final date for late submissions will only be considered after all other applications and the notification may be sent shortly after the national offer day.

Material changes of circumstance

In claiming material changes of circumstances the applicant, at the time of application, must supply documentary evidence to confirm the changes. An example of material changes of circumstances is a house move that necessitates a change of preferences. This would need to be validated by documentary evidence such as a solicitor's letter confirming the completion of a house purchase or rent book confirming tenancy. An impending change of circumstances should not delay the submission of the preference form.

If applicants' circumstances change during the course of making the application that relate to any of the published criteria it is the applicant's responsibility to provide evidence to the Admissions and Appeals Team as this may affect the outcome of the application.

Sixth form admission arrangements for academy and community schools

Applications for admission to Sixth form will be dealt with by the school in accordance with the school's published admission arrangements.

Each school which admits pupils into Year 12 is required to publish in the school prospectus the minimum requirements for entry into sixth form.

Pupils already in school will not be required to apply formally for places in Year 12 but should have reached the minimum entry qualifications for admission into the sixth form.



Minimum entry requirements are the same for internal and external applications.

External applicants must not be refused the opportunity to make an application, or advised that they can only be placed on a waiting list rather than make a formal application

Pupils will be considered for entry into Year 12 based on their academic attainment and/or individual subject grade criteria and the availability and suitability of courses at the school. Entry to Year 12 is not dependent upon attendance, behaviour records, and perceptions of attitude or motivation.

Schools must not interview children or their families for entry to Year 12, although meetings can be held to provide advice on options and entry requirements for particular courses.

Any applicant refused a place in year 12 is entitled to appeal to an independent appeal panel whether the child is already attending the school or is an external candidate.

Special educational needs

The admission of children with an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) will be agreed between the Local Authority's SEN Statutory Assessment and Review Team, parents and school in accordance with parental preference, as far as possible, and the child's individual needs. Children with an EHCP are given overall priority to the named school. This will reduce the number of places at the school, which are available for allocation in accordance with the above criteria.

Supplementary information forms

In order to assess the application for Voluntary Aided schools and Academies parents are required to provide additional information to that collected on the preference form and should complete a "supplementary information form". For Wolverhampton schools these forms will be made available on the City of Wolverhampton Council website, and they should be returned to the relevant school(s) by the specified date. In the case of Voluntary Controlled schools the supplementary information form must be returned to the Local Authority. Please note if the school is over-subscribed the additional information gathered will be used to determine the allocation of school places.

Parents who are applying for schools outside of Wolverhampton are advised to contact the appropriate Local Authority to determine whether any Supplementary Information Forms are required, their submission date and to whom they must be submitted.

Parents should be aware that where a Supplementary Information Form is completed it will not be regarded as a valid application unless the Local Authority has also received a completed application showing an expressed preference for the school concerned.

Similarly, if applicants are required to sit school tests, they will be required to complete an "entrance examination registration" form.

Tie breakers for over-subscribed schools

If there are an insufficient number of places to accommodate all the children of a particular criterion, the next criterion will be used to assess the applications concerned in order to prioritise applications.

Unsuccessful applications and appeals

If the applicant is a Wolverhampton resident and the admissions and appeals team is unable to allocate a place at any of the preferred schools, then a place will be allocated at the nearest Wolverhampton maintained school to the home address that has a place available. Allocations to Own Admitting Authority schools in this case would be made following consultation with the governing body concerned.

For Wolverhampton residents, where preferences cannot be met, the Admissions and Appeals Team will notify parents accordingly, setting out the reasons and advising of the right of appeal, how to lodge an appeal and to whom.

For other applicants for Wolverhampton schools the home Local Authority will notify parents of the reasons why parental preference cannot be met and to whom any appeal should be lodged.

Parents are only entitled to one appeal per year group, per school, per academic year unless there is a material change of circumstances.

Further information can be found at:

<https://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/education-and-schools/school-admission-appeals>

Waiting lists

If the applicant has not been allocated their first preference, the application will automatically be placed on a waiting list for the preferred Wolverhampton school or schools that were ranked higher than the allocated school.

Unless material changes of circumstances have been demonstrated a child's name will only be included on those lists for schools that were ranked higher on the application than the school allocated to the child and, therefore, if a child is allocated a place at the first preference school the child's name will not be added to the waiting list for any of the other preferred schools.

The waiting lists will be ranked in admission criteria order. As soon as places become vacant the Local Authority on behalf of the admitting authorities will re-allocate those places from the waiting list, even if this is before appeals have been heard.

The Authority will maintain the waiting lists until 31 December 2024, after which the Authority will cleanse each term to confirm parent wishes to remain on the list.

Requests for inclusion on waiting lists for non-Wolverhampton schools must be made in writing to the relevant local authority for the school concerned for assessment in accordance with their scheme.

A child's position on a waiting list is not fixed. This means that a child's position on the waiting list could go up or down during the time that it is on the list. Any late applications accepted will be added to the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

Withdrawing offer places

Any allegations received by the admission authority of people providing false accommodation addresses when applying for school places shall be fully investigated and, if found to be true, allocated places may be withdrawn, as appropriate.

6

Definitions

Sibling

For admission purposes, a sibling is a child who resides permanently at the same address as the child for whom a place is being requested, and is one of the following:-

- brother/sister
- half-brother/sister (i.e. share one common parent)
- or stepbrother/sister (i.e. related by a parent's marriage)
- any other child for whom it can be demonstrated that they are residing permanently at the same address (e.g. under the terms of a Child Arrangement Order).

The sibling connection only applies where the child concerned has a sibling attending the school at the time of the application as well as at the time of admission, (i.e. for normal year of entry applications siblings are expected to be attending the same school in September 2024). A sibling connection will not be accepted if the original place was obtained by using fraudulent or false information.

Children and young people in care

Children and young people in care are children who are (a) in the care of the local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of the social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time the application is made to school. Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order)

Member of staff

For admission purposes, a member of staff is a parent/carer who is employed by the specific school they are submitting an application for and:

- Is employed on a permanent contract
- Has been employed for two or more years at the time at which the application of admission to the schools is made, and/or
- Has been recruited to fill a vacant post at the school for which there is a demonstrable skills shortage

Home address

Parents are asked to provide their child's home address, i.e. the usual place of residence on weekdays and nights. Please note that childminder's addresses will not be accepted. This applies to both formal childminders and relatives and friends acting in a childminding capacity.

The home address of a pupil is considered to be the permanent residence of a child in a residential property when the place is offered. Documentary evidence relating to house moves taking place between National Offer Days (1 March 2024 and 16 April 2024 respectively) and the start of the academic year in September 2024 will be considered. The address must be the child's only or main residence and is either:


- Owned by the child's parent(s), carer(s) or guardian(s)
- Leased to or rented by the child's parent(s), carer(s) or guardian(s) under lease or written rental agreement.

Documentary evidence of ownership or rental agreement may be required together with proof of actual permanent residence at the property concerned.

Where parents have shared responsibility for the child and the child lives with both parents for part of the week then the main residence will be determined as the address where the child lives for the majority of the school week. If the child equally shares living with both parents, the parents must inform the Local Authority which address should be used for admission purposes and which parent will make the application. Parents will be requested to supply documentary evidence to support the address used for the application.

You can get this information
in large print, Braille, audio or in another
language by called 01902 551155.

wolverhampton.gov.uk 01902 551155

  WolverhamptonToday  Wolverhampton_Today  @WolvesCouncil

City of Wolverhampton Council, Civic Centre, St. Peter's Square,
Wolverhampton WV1 1SH

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| ID | Please select the group(s) that apply to you: - multiple choice | Do you agree with the inclusion of children of staff at the school as an oversubscription criterion? - Y/N | Do you agree with the inclusion of children of staff at the school as an oversubscription criterion? - Comments | Do you have any other comments on the Proposed Admission Arrangements 2024-25? - Y/N | If yes, please state in the box below: - Comments | Submitted Date |
|----|---|--|--|--|--|---------------------|
| 1 | Teaching Staff / Governor / Other SACRE | Yes | With a provision that a staff member has completed an agreed length of service at the school - ie 2 years | No | Not Answered | 2022-10-31 10:12:22 |
| 2 | Parent / Guardian / Carer | No | | No | Not Answered | 2022-10-31 14:25:17 |
| 3 | Parent / Guardian / Carer | Yes | | No | Not Answered | 2022-10-31 14:30:00 |
| 4 | Non-teaching Staff | No | | No | Not Answered | 2022-10-31 14:35:05 |
| 5 | Parent / Guardian / Carer | Yes | If member os staff intends on being there throughout the whole of their child's schooling then yes. | Yes | Priority for reception admission should be given to those who have completed nursery at the same school. It is unfair to expect a 4 yr old to understand why they cannot attend their school and places unnecessary stress on both the child and the parents and I believe school staff also agree that it is better for a child to have continuity. | 2022-10-31 14:37:51 |
| 6 | Parent / Guardian / Carer | Yes | | No | Not Answered | 2022-10-31 15:54:44 |
| 7 | Parent / Guardian / Carer | Yes | | No | Not Answered | 2022-10-31 16:21:11 |
| 8 | Teaching Staff | Yes | | No | Not Answered | 2022-10-31 16:40:24 |
| 9 | Parent / Guardian / Carer | No | This could lead to bias and potentially see children in the catchment area miss out | No | Not Answered | 2022-10-31 17:16:21 |
| 10 | Parent / Guardian / Carer | No | They shouldn't be priority | No | Not Answered | 2022-10-31 18:19:17 |
| 11 | Parent / Guardian / Carer | Yes | | No | Not Answered | 2022-10-31 18:49:33 |
| 12 | Headteacher/Principal | Yes | | No | Not Answered | 2022-10-31 18:57:14 |
| 13 | Parent / Guardian / Carer | No | | No | Not Answered | 2022-10-31 21:51:42 |
| 14 | Parent / Guardian / Carer / Other School Volunteer | Yes | | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-01 07:44:54 |
| 15 | Parent / Guardian / Carer | No | | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-01 08:27:10 |
| 16 | Governor | Yes | Schools should make a statement about the employment start dates to save admission panels dealing with some parents feeling they have been done over. | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-01 08:44:50 |
| 17 | Academy Trust | No | | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-01 09:16:21 |
| 18 | Governor | Yes | | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-01 16:13:32 |
| 19 | Governor | Yes | | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-01 16:59:03 |
| 20 | Teaching Staff | No | | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-01 17:33:07 |
| 21 | Parent / Guardian / Carer | Yes | | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-01 18:07:33 |
| 22 | Parent / Guardian / Carer | No | From experience as a parent as well as an employee in schools, I have seen first hand how difficult it can be for the parent and other staff when a colleagues child attends the same school. | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-01 19:27:39 |
| 23 | Headteacher/Principal | Yes | I think it's a good idea, however, there would still need to be consideration to the number of pupils etc, in case there isn't enough space to go over PAN for staff children, in addition to other non staff children, as there is only so many children you can fit into a classroom. | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-01 19:56:16 |
| 24 | Headteacher/Principal | Yes | | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-01 20:09:53 |
| 25 | Parent / Guardian / Carer | No | | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-01 21:16:24 |
| 26 | Parent / Guardian / Carer | Yes | | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-01 21:21:00 |
| 27 | Parent / Guardian / Carer | No | I don't think staffs' own pupils at school is necessarily a good idea for both the child, other children and the staff attending that school. I think it can cause conflicts of interest and difficulties for all involved. Therefore I don't think this should be given priority when allocating a school place | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-02 05:20:17 |
| 28 | Other SFW | No | | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-02 07:55:48 |
| 29 | Governor / Other Parent | Yes | Excellent idea! | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-02 10:47:07 |
| 30 | Parent / Guardian / Carer | No | I can appreciate why thoughts may lean towards offering children of teacher's places at a school they work in. However, this is unfair and same measure should be applied to all parents regardless of profession status. If the teacher resides in a different postcode area to that in which he or she works within, the child/ren should apply to the nearest school to them accordingly to their postcode. This is something many working professionals have to juggle on a daily basis, it should not be any different for teachers especially as this concerns over-subscribed schools. | Yes | | 2022-11-02 13:14:39 |
| 31 | Parent / Guardian / Carer / Governor | Yes | | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-02 15:03:05 |
| 32 | Teaching Staff | Yes | | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-02 19:20:00 |
| 33 | Parent / Guardian / Carer | Yes | | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-02 20:53:18 |

| ID | Please select the group(s) that apply to you: - multiple choice | Do you agree with the inclusion of children of staff at the school as an oversubscription criterion? - Y/N | Do you agree with the inclusion of children of staff at the school as an oversubscription criterion? - Comments | Do you have any other comments on the Proposed Admission Arrangements 2024-25? - Y/N | If yes, please state in the box below: - Comments | Submitted Date |
|----|---|--|--|--|--|---------------------|
| 34 | Parent / Guardian / Carer / Non-teaching Staff / Governor | No | | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-03 16:14:27 |
| 35 | Parent / Guardian / Carer | Yes | | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-04 16:45:59 |
| 36 | Other Former Governor | No | | Yes | What is being done to ensure that children are not registered at a grandparents home to get them in to a school .due you check electrol role of parents address | 2022-11-04 17:06:54 |
| 37 | Other Interested in how admissions work now | Yes | | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-04 17:11:26 |
| 38 | Parent / Guardian / Carer / Governor | No | | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-04 19:19:33 |
| 39 | Parent / Guardian / Carer | No | Children of staff should not receive preferential treatment and I think your question is badly worded and confusing. | Yes | You need to make the Admissions process easier to understand. You need to ensure parents understand why they need to complete all 5 choices as this is why so many end up with a school that is allocated after everyone else. Parents do not understand this process. A simple pre-recorded video should be produced and linked to the on line portal so they are encouraged to watch it before or even alongside completing the application. This has been suggested to the Appeals section on numerous occasions - nothing ever happens with it. Also there is a concern that only teachers reply to this survey and that will affect the outcome - if this happens CWC need to contact other parents for their views. This survey is not really advertised so it will not have a good reach. | 2022-11-05 13:25:41 |
| 40 | Teaching Staff / Non-teaching staff | Yes | | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-08 19:03:35 |
| 41 | Other Appeal Panel Member | Yes | It helps with recruitment. | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-10 13:40:15 |
| 42 | Parent / Guardian / Carer | No | | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-10 14:27:10 |
| 43 | Parent / Guardian / Carer | No | Places should be given to children and young people from the locality. Staff should not have a priority. | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-10 16:45:37 |
| 44 | Parent / Guardian / Carer / Teaching Staff / Academy Trust | Yes | | Yes | Another solution for children with SEND. Mainstream schools are being expected to have more and more children with complex and severe disabilities and learning needs. As a teacher I have found that this is significantly impacting upon our pupils learning as our learning environment is not set up to support children with complex needs. Accurate and appropriate considerations need to be made to ensure that a mainstream school can manage the needs of children with such needs. And how this may impact upon the other children. | 2022-11-10 17:09:04 |
| 45 | Parent / Guardian / Carer | Yes | | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-10 17:09:43 |
| 46 | Teaching Staff | Yes | Staff know the children/school better than Local Authority. | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-10 17:53:09 |
| 47 | Parent / Guardian / Carer | Yes | There should be an hours specification for this proposal, for example if members of staff work over 20 hours per week. It would be unfair if the child of someone who only works a few hours at the school gets priority but reasonable if the parents working hours mean they cannot easily drop their child off at a different school. | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-10 17:53:58 |
| 48 | Parent / Guardian / Carer | No | | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-10 22:57:11 |
| 49 | Non-teaching Staff | No | | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-10 23:05:46 |
| 50 | Parent / Guardian / Carer / Teaching Staff | Yes | I support this 100%! As a member of staff within a school, I applied for my child to attend my school (as she attended the nursery) and I don't live too far away sleuthed. Unfortunately, she did t receive a place,L so I had to appeal as she suffers from anxiety, and medical issues however, I was unsuccessful and she's had to attend another school. This has led to her being extremely unsettled and refuses to go in most days. I struggle to get her to school and collect her and this has an impact on my job and the pupils that I work with. If my daughter attended my school I wouldn't have anything to stress about as she'd come with me and leave with me. I think it's unfair that children of staff don't always get a criteria that allows them a space. | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-11 19:09:07 |
| 51 | Parent / Guardian / Carer | No | There is obviously a set criteria however this arrangement is only helpful to the parents that work at the school regardless where they live. | Yes | My son is going into Year 7 in Sept 2023 and I have found the process stressful and rushed; 1. We have to wait a number of months to receive our school choice which I understand however I feel that parents should be given longer to make that choice, therefore schools should start earlier with open days 2. My son does not meet the SEN criteria, no siblings, not looked after etc and I feel that he is down the pecking order before we have even begun the process. What makes his leaning any different? | 2022-11-14 19:18:10 |
| 52 | Parent / Guardian / Carer | Yes | | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-15 01:38:50 |

| ID | Please select the group(s) that apply to you: - multiple choice | Do you agree with the inclusion of children of staff at the school as an oversubscription criterion? - Y/N | Do you agree with the inclusion of children of staff at the school as an oversubscription criterion? - Comments | Do you have any other comments on the Proposed Admission Arrangements 2024-25? - Y/N | If yes, please state in the box below: - Comments | Submitted Date |
|----|---|--|--|--|--|---------------------|
| 53 | Parent / Guardian / Carer / Governor | No | Although this may be beneficial to schools unable to fulfil staff vacancies, This leaves the community at a dis-advantage, in a world where schools are already over-subscribed this puts un-nessessary strain on classes, potentially at a detriment to the children within the school. | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-15 12:18:32 |
| 54 | Governor | Yes | | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-15 12:23:29 |
| 55 | Governor | Yes | | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-15 13:28:39 |
| 56 | Governor | Yes | | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-15 16:05:35 |
| 57 | Parent / Guardian / Carer / Governor | No | | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-16 11:31:51 |
| 58 | Governor | Yes | | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-16 14:30:12 |
| 59 | Headteacher/Principal | Yes | | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-17 10:05:43 |
| 60 | Headteacher/Principal | Yes | | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-22 15:39:33 |
| 61 | Governor | Yes | | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-24 18:38:31 |
| 62 | Governor | Yes | This is a perfectly sensible alteration to the existing policy and well overdue. It will assist schools in the recruitment and retention of staff with little appreciable impact on the wider public. | No | Not Answered | 2022-11-30 20:06:11 |
| 63 | Parent / Guardian / Carer / Governor / Local Authority | No | No, Children of staff should be treated the same as other pupils, This question is quite misleading and needs clarity. Does this mean that children of staff are adding to the numbers of over subscription of the school where the teacher teaches? In one aspect it would make things easier for the teacher as it helps with transport etc. However that space could easily be given to a child who lives nearer and has added that school as there preference. The children of staff, should go to a school within the catchment area, not be given preference as there parent teachers there. | Yes | The current system is flawed. The way how allocations is managed does not work, as when you put a school down the LA allocate your child a school which is further away and oversubscribed. You then have to send your child to the oversubscribed school and pay more cost in bus passes. Then when you try and apply for support for a bus pass you get told no due to the fact you could have picked a closer school when it was the LA who placed your child at the further school. | 2022-12-06 06:52:46 |
| 64 | Local Authority | Yes | | No | Not Answered | 2022-12-06 13:06:20 |
| 65 | Headteacher/Principal | Yes | | No | Not Answered | 2022-12-08 09:50:39 |
| 66 | Governor / Local Authority | Yes | | No | Not Answered | 2022-12-12 09:38:22 |
| 67 | Headteacher/Principal | Yes | | No | Not Answered | 2022-12-12 09:44:42 |
| 68 | Governor | Yes | | Yes | I remain nonplussed as to how certain schools remain able to refuse to admit pupils, when all schools are already oversubscribed, on the basis of very tenuous excuses which would certainly not be accepted if proffered elsewhere. | 2022-12-12 09:54:27 |
| 69 | Parent / Guardian / Carer / Governor | No | | No | Not Answered | 2022-12-12 15:47:13 |

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A Guide to Undertake Equality Analysis

Equality Analysis Template

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Step 1 - Make sure you have clear aims and objectives on what you are impact assessing – The intended benefits

2. What are the aims of the service, function or policy you are analysing?

Under the School Admissions Code every Local Authority (LA) is required to draw up a scheme (or schemes) for co-ordinating admission arrangements for all mainstream, maintained schools (community, voluntary controlled, voluntary aided, foundation, free-schools and academies) within their area.

Even if there are no changes to admission arrangements, they must be consulted on at least once every seven years in accordance with The School Admissions Code, which is also now due. The School Admissions Arrangements (SAA) are required to adhere to the code ensuring the oversubscription criteria are simple, transparent, and objective. Having the ability to follow a set of admission arrangements and an application process where parents are fully supported is important.

Code compliant SAA's help contribute to the Council Plan as an overarching link to Strong families where children grow up well and achieve their full potential

All schools must have admission arrangements that clearly set out how children will be admitted, including the criteria that will be applied if there are more applications than places at the school.

The current SAA adhere to the code and the oversubscription criteria is simple, transparent, and objective. The criteria are as follows:

-
Children with an Education Health and Care Plan are given overall priority to the named school. Remaining places are then allocated in accordance with the criteria below.

Criterion 1: Children and Young People in Care (as defined by Section 22 of the Children Act 1989). Children and Young People in Care and all previous Children and Young People in Care including those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

Criterion 2: Children attending the corresponding Infant School (Infant to Junior transfers only)

Criterion 3: Medical/Social. Whether there are specific medical or social circumstances that can be met only by the child's attendance at the preferred school.

Criterion 4: Siblings. Whether siblings attend the school when the application is made and will still be attending the school when the young person is admitted.

Criterion 5: Religious reasons for attending a voluntary controlled school (as assessed by a supplementary information form).

Criterion 6: Distance. How close the child lives to the school with those living closest to the school getting the highest priority. The measurement between home and school will be determined by the straight-line measurement from the home address to the preferred school carried out by the CWC's software.

A number of academies have consulted on their admission arrangements and included children of staff at the school as criterion 6 (i.e. above distance) as it can assist with staff recruitment for vacant posts for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage and aid retention of staff.

Since 2019 a small number of children have been allocated to academies under the children of staff criteria with the breakdown as follows. This equates to 15 children out of a total of over 27,500 allocations

It is evident that the numbers allocated under the criteria are low and do not displace children from being able to attend a local school.

Children of staff is listed as a specific oversubscription criterion (i.e. it is not just a local policy) in paragraph 1.39 of The School Admissions Code 2021.

Approval of the admission arrangements without the proposed change to include children of staff may create a misalignment in staff recruitment and retention between maintained and voluntary controlled schools and some academies (who are the admission authority) in the local area.

In addition, having the option to assist with staff recruitment and retention can contribute to outcomes for children and young people. This will align to the Council Plan as an overarching link to Strong families where children grow up well and achieve their full potential.

School admission arrangements are regulated by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 as amended by the Education and Skills Act 2008.

Admission arrangements must be compliant with the School Admissions Code 2021. Please see extracts from the code below

Appendix 1 – Relevant Legislation

1. This appendix sets out the primary legislation and regulations most relevant to admissions decisions. Admission authorities, Schools Adjudicators, appeal panels, local authorities and maintained schools must comply with the relevant law as well as acting in accordance with the provisions of this Code. This Code and the School Admission Appeals Code (the Codes) are applied to Academies through their Funding Agreements. The information here aims to signpost the relevant law; it does not aim to provide definitive guidance on interpreting the law: that is for the courts.

Equality Act 2010

2. This Act consolidates the law prohibiting discrimination, harassment and victimisation and expands the list of protected characteristics. All schools must have due regard to their obligations under the Act and review their policies and practices to make sure these meet the requirements of the Act, even if they believe that they are already operating in a non-discriminatory way.

3. An admission authority must not discriminate on the grounds of disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; or sexual orientation, against a person in the arrangements and decisions it makes as to who is offered admission as a pupil.

4. An admission authority must not harass a person who has applied for admission as a pupil, in relation to their disability; race; or sex.

5. An admission authority must not victimise a person in relation to a protected act either done, or believed to have been done, by that person (e.g. bringing proceedings under the Equality Act 2010) in the arrangements and decisions it makes as to who is offered admission as a pupil.

6. This Act contains limited exceptions to the prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion or belief and sex. Schools designated by the Secretary of State as having a religious character are exempt from some aspects of the prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief and this means they can make a decision about whether or not to admit a child as a pupil on the basis of religion or belief. Single-sex schools are lawfully permitted to discriminate on the grounds of sex in their admission arrangements.

7. Admission authorities are also subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty and therefore must have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations in relation to persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

8. The protected characteristics for these purposes are: disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation.

9. Further guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duty is available in the Department for Education's Advice to Schools on the Equality Act 2010, on the website of the Government Equalities Office and from the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

Human Rights Act 1998

10. The Human Rights Act 1998 confers a right of access to education. This right does not extend to securing a place at a particular school. Admission authorities, however, do need to consider parents' reasons for expressing a preference when they make admission decisions, though this may not necessarily result in the allocation of a place. These might include, for example, the parents' rights to ensure that their child's education conforms to their own religious or philosophical convictions (as far as is compatible with the provision of efficient instruction and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure).

Step 2 – What does the information you have collected, or that you have available, tell you?

3. What Impact will or does the service, function or policy have on different equality groups at the moment on:-

Race, Disability, Sex, Gender Re-assignment, Age, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, Maternity/Pregnancy, Marriage/Civil Partnership and other Socially Excluded Communities or Groups)?

There are no perceived negative impacts on different equality groups based on the current policy or the proposed minor change to the policy.

Children with an Education Health and Care Plan are given overall priority to the named school, this is a mandatory provision with the School Admissions Code 2021.

Highest priority (again in accordance with the code) is then given to Children and Young People in Care (as defined by Section 22 of the Children Act 1989). Children and Young People in Care and all previous Children and Young People in Care including those

children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

The next highest criteria (excluding Infant to Junior School transfers) gives regard to social and medical reasons for attending a specific school.

Admission arrangements must be compliant with the School Admissions Code 2021. Please see extracts from the code below

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5. An admission authority must not victimise a person in relation to a protected act either done, or believed to have been done, by that person (e.g. bringing proceedings under the Equality Act 2010) in the arrangements and decisions it makes as to who is offered admission as a pupil.

6. This Act contains limited exceptions to the prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion or belief and sex. Schools designated by the Secretary of State as having a religious character are exempt from some aspects of the prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief and this means they can make a decision about whether or not to admit a child as a pupil on the basis of religion or belief. Single-sex schools are lawfully permitted to discriminate on the grounds of sex in their admission arrangements.

7. Admission authorities are also subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty and therefore must have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations in relation to persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

8. The protected characteristics for these purposes are: disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation.

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4. What does the equalities data or evidence you hold tell us about the people or groups who will be affected by the service, function or policy? (positive or negative impact) What evidence/data already exists about the service and its users? (in terms of its impact on the 'equality groups', i.e. race, disability, sex, gender re-assignment, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, maternity/pregnancy, marriage/civil partnership and other socially excluded communities or groups) and what does the data tell you? For example, are any groups not using or under-using the service?

The School Admissions Code 2021 does not allow oversubscription criteria that would contravene the Equality Act or Human Rights Act. The criteria in CWC (current and proposed) arrangements are all specifically allowed and listed in the code.

School admission arrangements are regulated by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 as amended by the Education and Skills Act 2008.

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5. Engagement and consultation - If we do not hold equality data relevant to this proposal, consultation will help to inform the impact of the proposed service, function and policy? If consultation has taken place, who have we consulted?

Pre-consultation

In order to gauge initial stakeholder opinion, drop-in sessions were held during September 2022, with Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools to gain views on including children of staff as an oversubscription criterion.

Schools that attended were supportive of the change to include children of staff criteria. They could see the value it would have in assisting with staff recruitment for vacant posts for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage and aid retention of staff. Schools were also content that it would not displace children from a local school.

Strategic Executive Board approved the commencement of a seven-week external consultation.

Consultation

External consultation commenced on 31 October 2022 and ended on 16 December 2022 exceeding the minimum 6 week consultation period specified in the code.

The School Admissions Code has been adhered to by consulting with statutory consultees and other interested parties, which included:

- Over 200 Headteachers, Principals, Governors and education stakeholders of Infant, Junior, Primary, Secondary, Pupil Referral Units, Special Schools and maintained nurseries in Wolverhampton
- Diocesan Authorities
- Multi Academy Trusts and Academy Trust CEO's
- All Councillors
- School Appeal Panel members
- West Midlands School Organisation Group (this group includes School Organisation Officers from the Councils of Staffordshire, Sandwell, Walsall, Birmingham, Dudley, Telford and Wrekin and Worcestershire)

In addition to this we have also consulted via

Internal dissemination via colleagues working with hard-to-reach communities.

The wider public has also been informed via a publicity campaign through CWC and School's social media channels, press releases, education bulletins including School newsletters (to reach parents and carers) and Governor newsletters.

Stakeholders could respond directly to the consultation via Council's Consultation Hub by completing a survey or by sending their views in by email or by post website etc. The survey and documents are all available in terms of accessibility in line with CWC policy (ie translations, print etc) . Consultation responses below

Do you agree with the inclusion of children of staff at the school as an oversubscription criterion? -

| Y/N | Total | Percentage |
|-------------|-------|------------|
| No | 26 | 38% |
| Yes | 43 | 62% |
| Grand Total | 69 | 100% |

Response numbers are considered to be healthy following previous consultations on education matters. There has also been a variety of stakeholders responding. 38% of the responses have come from those identifying themselves primarily as parents/guardians/carers compared to 6% identifying as Teaching Staff and 10% identifying as Headteacher/Principal.

Due to the wide reach of the social media campaign from CWC and from Schools, the consultation has been accessible and regularly promoted by press releases, education bulletins and by email.

Step 3 – Identify the impact

- 6. Identifying the impact - from the data you have gathered, and the consultation undertaken to date to inform your decisions, can you please set out below details as to whether the impact or the potential impact is positive and or negative. Where a negative impact is identified, please outline solution to mitigate.**

| Equality Themes Protected Characteristics | Positive Impacts | Negative Impacts identified | Solutions (ways in which you could mitigate the negative impact) |
|--|---|------------------------------------|--|
| Age (including children, young people and older people) | School Admissions Code prescribe the entrance requirements. Code and CWC arrangements mandate age and education out of normal age cohort. | | |
| Disability (including carers) | Highest priority must be given (prescribed by the code) to children and young people with an Education Health and Care Plan naming the school. Provision also for medical reasons to attend a specific school. | | |
| Sex (male, female, trans, non-binary) | See relevant legislation in section 4 of this document | | |
| Race (including Gypsies & Travellers and Asylum Seekers) | See relevant legislation in section 4 of this document | | |
| Religion or Belief (including people of no religion or belief) | See relevant legislation in section 4 of this document Faith based oversubscription criteria in schools designated with a religious character is allowed in the code. As with | | |

| Equality Themes Protected Characteristics | Positive Impacts | Negative Impacts identified | Solutions (ways in which you could mitigate the negative impact) |
|---|---|------------------------------------|--|
| | other publicly funded mainstream schools, these schools are required to offer every child who applies, whether of the faith, another faith or no faith, a place at the school if there are places available. Schools designated by the Secretary of State as having a religious character (commonly known as faith schools) may use faith-based oversubscription criteria and allocate places by reference to faith where the school is oversubscribed. | | |
| Gender Re-assignment (those that are going or have gone through a transition: male to female or female to male) | See relevant legislation in section 4 of this document | | |
| Pregnancy and Maternity | See relevant legislation in section 4 of this document | | |
| Sexual orientation (including gay, lesbian, bisexual and heterosexual) | See relevant legislation in section 4 of this document | | |
| Marriage and Civil Partnership | See relevant legislation in section 4 of this document | | |

| Equality Themes Protected Characteristics | Positive Impacts | Negative Impacts identified | Solutions (ways in which you could mitigate the negative impact) |
|--|--|-----------------------------|---|
| Human Rights | See relevant legislation in section 4 of this document | | |

Step 4 – Changes or mitigation actions proposed or adopted

7. What changes have been made, or are proposed to the service, function or policy after implementing the mitigating solutions above, is the service, function or policy more accessible and inclusive?

Having undertaken the analysis are there any changes necessary to the existing service/activity?

What changes or mitigating actions are proposed?

How will you provide this service to ensure it is accessible to all Equality Groups?

No changes identified . Consultation response supportive of change. Children of staff is listed as a specific oversubscription criterion (i.e. it is not just a local policy) in paragraph 1.39 of The School Admissions Code 2021

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Step 5 – Monitoring

8. Monitoring - How are you going to monitor the resulting service, function, policy or procedure?

Each year the School Admissions Code requires CWC to determine (agree) their admission arrangements by 28 February. There is only a requirement to consult every 7 years. In accordance with CWC constitution they are determined at cabinet each year for transparency and review.

However there will be careful monitoring of the impact of the proposed new arrangements and if required there will be a new consultation and they will also be reviewed every year when they are determined.

Step 6 – To complete Action Plan on progress

9. Action Plan

| Barrier | Improvement Action Required | Responsible Officer | Date for completion |
|---|-----------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| No barriers identified but will be reviewed each year in accordance with section 8 of this document | Monitoring | Dave Kirby | Each October |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

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10. Equality Analysis approved by (Head of Services):

Date:

Bill Hague

10 January 2023

Please keep a copy of the signed EA with the report for future updates, reviews etc.

11. Date of review:

| |
|--------------|
| October 2023 |
|--------------|

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Please upload your completed Equality Analysis form by following the link to: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (sharepoint.com).

This function is not available until June 2022.

Please email your completed Equality Analysis form to: EDI@wolverhampton.gov.uk

A word version of this template for larger and complex Equality Analysis is available.

It is important to retain a copy of your completed Equality Analysis for future reference

Additional notes

You can get this information in large print, braille, audio or in another language by calling 01902 551155

wolverhampton.gov.uk 01902 551155

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City of Wolverhampton Council, Civic Centre, St. Peter's Square,
Wolverhampton WV1 1SH

School Appeals Update

Governance - 6 February 2023

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Agenda Item No: 6

Presenters:

Laura Gittos
Head of Governance

Jaswinder Kaur
Democratic Services and Systems
Manager

wolverhampton.gov.uk

School Appeals

Under section 94 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, responsibility for making arrangements for appeals against the refusal of a school place rests with the admission authority of the school. The admission authority and appeal panel must act in accordance with The School Admission Appeals Code 2022, the School Admissions (Appeal Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012, the School Admissions Code, other law relating to admissions, and relevant human rights and equalities legislation, for example, the Equality Act 2010.

The following table sets out the admission authority and appeals authority for each type of school in England.

| Type of school | Who is the admission authority | Who is responsible for arranging an admission appeal |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Academies | Academy Trust | Academy Trust |
| Community schools | Local Authority | Local Authority |
| Foundation schools | Governing body | Governing body |
| Voluntary aided schools | Governing body | Governing body |
| Voluntary controlled schools | Local Authority | Local Authority |

The School Appeals Unit in Democratic Services is responsible for administering the arrangements for appeals for primary and secondary schools. The unit currently provide the appeals service to 72 schools.

An Independent Appeal Panel is made up of people who have no connection at all with the original decision. It is the responsibility of the relevant admission authority to convene the panel, including appointing a clerk.

School Appeals

Admission authorities must set a timetable for organising and hearing appeals. It is the responsibility of the admissions authority to ensure that appeals lodged by the appropriate deadlines are heard within the following timescales:

| Deadline to hear appeal in the normal admission round | Must be heard within 40 school days of the deadline for lodging appeals. |
|--|--|
| For applications made in the normal admissions round | Appeals must be heard within 40 school days of the deadline for lodging appeals. |
| For late applications | Should be heard within 40 school days from the deadline for lodging appeals if possible, or within 30 school days of the appeal being lodged. |
| For applications for in year admissions | Must be heard within 30 school days of the appeal being lodged. |
| Notification of appeal date to appellant | Must provide written notification of the date and arrangements no later than 10 school days before the hearing. |
| Notification of Decision | Must communicate the decision of each appeal, including the reasons for that decision, in writing to the appellant, five school days of the hearing wherever possible. |

School Appeals Arrangements

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Appeal Hearings | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The new Appeals Code allows appeal hearings to be held remotely by video conference.• The Council conducts appeals using Microsoft Teams.• This provides appellants and panel members greater flexibility to join hearings.• The appellant can request for the hearing to take place in person and the team will accommodate the request. |
| Reasonable Adjustment | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The appellant will be asked whether they need any reasonable adjustments to be made in order to take part in the appeal, for example, if they need a BSL or language interpreter or another reasonable adjustment relating to a disability. |
| Attending the Hearing | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The appellant is encouraged to attend the hearing and present their case in person.• If the appellant is unable to attend and informs the team in advance of the hearing, the team will reschedule the hearing.• If the team have not been notified beforehand, the panel will determine whether to proceed and a decision made based on the written information sent in. |
| Papers for Appeals | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Before the appeal, the appellant will be sent the appeal papers. These include all documents submitted by the appellant and the school's statement of case where they set out why they refused the appeal. |

School Appeals

What happens at the appeal hearing

An independent panel of three people will decide whether the appeal is successful or not and must follow the [school admission appeals code](#).

1. The admission authority/school will explain why they did not offer your child a place.
2. The panel check if the admission authority/school applied its admission policy correctly and if the policy follows the admissions code.
3. If the admission authority/ school have done everything correctly, the parent/guardian will explain to the panel why they should give their child a place at preferred school.
4. The appeals panel must decide if the school's admission criteria were properly followed and comply with the [school admissions code](#).
5. If the criteria were not properly followed or do not comply with the [school admissions code](#) your appeal must be upheld.
6. If your reasons for your child to be admitted outweigh the school's reasons for not admitting any more children at all, your appeal will be upheld.

What happens after the hearing

1. The clerk will send out a decision letter within 5 school days where possible. If the panel is hearing a large number of appeals for the same school, this may delay the decision letter. This will be advised at the time of the hearing.
2. The decision of the appeal panel is binding and only the courts, by way of a judicial review, can overturn a decision.
3. If a parent/guardian think that the council or the panel have not followed proper procedures in the appeal hearing, they can complain to the [Local Government Ombudsman](#). They can't overturn the decision but they can ask for the appeal to be heard again.

School Appeals – Development Plan

A review of the School Appeals Unit has been conducted by the Head of Governance and Democratic Service and Systems Manager. The below table outlines the developments being taken forward.

| Development | Details |
|--|---|
| Structure of the School Appeals Unit | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Detailed review and improvements of all job descriptions and person specifications for employees in the School Appeals Unit.• Two additional posts have been advertised to improve resilience and add extra capacity and assistance with peak periods. |
| Training and Development | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Refresher training will be delivered to Clerks and Panel Members.• All employees will attend customer services, body language and how to deal with difficult situations training due to the emotional nature of the role, and to ensure the parent is supported during what is a difficult period. |
| Processes | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Updating existing processes for administration and reporting of appeal activities.• Focus on the customer, and as a result deliver a better overall service.• Release resource to areas of priority.• Build capacity within the service.• Learn from and apply best practice. |
| Recruitment of Independent Panel Members | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase number of panel members.• On-going recruitment campaign of panel members.• Developing a recruitment campaign plan. |

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