

# CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO DECISION RECORD 27 March 2012

## Extract

The meeting commenced at 10.35 am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

### Present:

Councillor Cath Hill (Children's Services Portfolio Holder)

Officers: Sally Robinson, Assistant Director, Child and Adult Services  
Peter McIntosh, Head of Planning and Development  
Danielle Swainston, Sure Start and Extended Services and Early Years Manager  
Sue Beevers, Admissions, School Place Planning and Support Services Manager  
James Sinclair, Youth Support Manager  
Graham Bryson, Integrated Youth support Service Planning Officer  
Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

## **28. Admission Arrangements for Admissions to Schools 2013-14 and Co-ordinated Admissions to Primary and Secondary Schools and In-Year Transfers 2013-14 and Update on New School Admissions Code 2012** *(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

### **Type of decision**

Key decision test (ii)

### **Purpose of report**

To determine the admission policy for community and voluntary controlled primary schools in Hartlepool for the school year 2012/13 and the coordinated admissions procedures to primary and secondary schools for 2012/13 following consultation with governing bodies, other admissions authorities and the general public.

### **Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder**

The Head of Planning and Development reported on the main changes within the School Admissions Code that came into force on 1 February

2012 as set out in the report.

In accordance with usual practice, the Council as admissions authority for community and voluntary controlled schools were required to consult on admission arrangements for these schools each year.

Submitted as an appendix to the report was a summary of the consultation responses received. The views expressed were considered by the Admissions Forum on 6 February 2012. The Forum discussed in detail the implications of moving sibling above admission zone and voted two for, four against with two abstentions. Following the forum meeting the issue was raised with the Primary Head teachers and, following much debate, a 'straw poll' of community and voluntary controlled heads was taken with 6 for and 9 against moving sibling above zone. Not every Head teacher from these sectors was present at the meeting. It was noted that the final decision on this matter would rest with the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services.

Revised admission limits had been discussed with schools on the basis of revised net capacity figures, and these were attached at Appendix 1.

The co-ordinated schemes for primary and secondary admissions and In Year Transfers agreed by the Admission Forum were also attached as appendices.

The Head of Planning and Development reported that on the basis of the consultation exercise, it was proposed that the admissions policy for entry to community and voluntary controlled primary schools in 2013/14 be as follows:-

- Parents / carers be invited to express preferences for up to 3 primary schools in priority order and give reasons for their preferences.
- In the first instance, places would be awarded to those pupils with a statement of special educational needs where the school was named in the statement.
- The remaining places will be awarded in the following priority order:
  - 1) those children who are looked after children and previously looked after children (*previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order*);
  - 2) those children who have older brothers or sisters who will be attending the school in September 2013; (previously number 3)

- 3) those children who live in the school's admission zone;  
(previously number 2)
- 4) those children who are distinguished from the great majority of other applicants whether on medical grounds or by other exceptional circumstances and who would suffer significant hardship if they were unable to attend the school;
- 5) those children who live closest to the school as determined by the shortest suitable walking distance (*measured by the shortest suitable walking route from the (ordnance survey) address point of the child's home address to the main entrance of the school, using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system*).

It was reported that the Admissions Forum no longer had a statutory standing following the new codes. The Admissions Forum can continue as a voluntary arrangement if it was of benefit. The consensus view from schools and the existing Forum was that it was prudent to retain the Forum and it should be kept, as it was an effective arrangement for receiving updates on codes, general matters of interest, feedback, debate etc, and the members were able to report back to other head teachers as necessary.

### **Decision**

- (i) That the proposed oversubscription criteria for community and voluntary controlled primary schools which proposes to promote the sibling criteria above school admission zone criteria set out in paragraph 4.1.1 of the report be approved.
- (ii) The revised admission limits attached be agreed.
- (iii) The Primary and Secondary and In Year Transfers co-ordinated admissions schemes be approved.
- (iv) That changes to the new school admissions code which came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2012 be noted.
- (v) The proposal that the Admissions Forum should continue to meet in an advisory form be noted.

The meeting concluded at 11.40 am.

**P J DEVLIN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

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