

Report to Cabinet

Wednesday 18 January 2023

Subject:	Determination of Admission Arrangements for Sandwell's Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools for 2024/25
Cabinet Member:	Cabinet Member for Children and Education Councillor Simon Hackett
Director:	Director of Children and Education, Michael Jarrett
Key Decision:	Yes
Contact Officer:	Donna Williams, Team Lead, School Admissions donna_williams@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations


- 1.1 That the Director of Children and Education, in accordance with the School Admissions Code 2021, be authorised to publish the Local Authority's Admission Arrangements for 2024/25 academic year for places in all community and voluntary controlled schools as set out in Appendix 1.

2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 The Local Authority (LA) must abide by the requirements of the School Admissions Code ('Admissions Code') and associated regulations and determine admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools each year. This report relates to the proposed arrangements to apply for the 2024/25 academic year and there is no obligation on the LA to consult on these arrangements as it last consulted in October / November 2017. The proposed arrangements are in line with the requirements of the Admissions Code.



3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>Best start in life for children and young people</p> <p>The recommendation in this report supports the desire of the council to focus resources on the specific needs and aspirations of the community. This contributes to the Council's Vision 2030 Ambition 1 – Raising aspirations and resilience, Ambition 3 – Young people to have skills for the future, Ambition 4 – Raising the quality of schools.</p>
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4 Context and Key Issues

4.1 Purpose of the Report

4.2 The Admissions Code published in September 2021 requires the Local Authority (as the admissions authority for community and voluntary controlled schools), to formally agree admission arrangements for those schools every year, even if the arrangements have not changed from previous years. Admission authorities must determine admission arrangements for entry in September 2024 by 28 February 2023.

The Admissions Code also requires the LA to consult governing bodies of community and voluntary controlled schools where it proposes either to increase or keep the same Published Admission Number (PAN). The proposed admission arrangements and PANs are attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

4.3 Background and main considerations

4.3 The LA last consulted all stakeholders on its admission arrangements in October / November 2017, and Cabinet has continued to agree to publish these arrangements for subsequent years as there have been no material changes. At its meeting on 12 January 2022 Cabinet agreed to publish the arrangements for the 2023/24 academic year (Minute No. 7/22). The arrangements are not proposed to change for the 2024/25 academic year and are attached in Appendix 1.

4.4 The list of schools and their PANs are included in Appendix 1. All PANs are proposed to be the same as last year, however it should be noted that consultation is currently being undertaken to reduce the PAN of both



Cape and Uplands Manor Primary Schools by a form of entry. The proposals will be subject to a separate report to Cabinet.

4.5 The current position

4.6 The LA's oversubscription criteria for the academic year 2024/25 for community and voluntary controlled schools is recommended to continue in line with that agreed for 2023/24.

4.7 Consultation (Customers and other Stakeholders)

4.8 There is not a requirement to consult on oversubscription criteria unless there are changes to the previous year's arrangements or if the admission authority has not consulted for a period of 7 years. The LA last consulted on arrangements in October / November 2017.

4.8 The Admissions Code does not require the LA to consult all community and voluntary controlled schools where it is proposed to increase or keep the same PAN as the previous year. Therefore, the LA has not consulted with all such schools as there were no proposals to alter PANs.

4.9 All schools are however currently being consulted on the proposal to reduce the PAN of both Cape and Uplands Manor Primary Schools by a form of entry with effect from 1 September 2023. A final decision will be made by the School Adjudicator to reduce the PAN's by a form of entry as the Authority has already determined its admission arrangements for those maintained schools for 2023/24 academic year.

5 Alternative Options

5.1 There is no alternative option open to the LA in relation to its responsibilities for agreeing and publishing oversubscription criteria for community and voluntary controlled schools. The LA must abide with the requirements of the Admissions Code.

6 Implications

Resources:	No strategic resource implications have been identified.
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<p>Legal and Governance:</p>	<p>The School Admissions Code (issued under Section 84 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998) was published in September 2021 and associated regulations require all admission authorities to determine (formally agree) admission arrangements every year, even if they have not changed from previous years and a consultation has not been required.</p> <p>Following determination of arrangements, any objections to those arrangements must be made to the Schools Adjudicator. Objections to admission arrangements must be referred to the Adjudicator by 15 May in the determination year.</p>
<p>Risk:</p>	<p>The Corporate Risk Management Strategy (CRMS) has been complied with. The Local Authority has a statutory duty to determine admission arrangements for all community and voluntary controlled schools in accordance with the Admissions Code and associated regulations. Based on the information provided, it is the officers' opinion that there are no current "red" risks that need to be reported with regards to this proposal.</p> <p>If this report's recommendation to publish the admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools is not approved the LA will be in breach of its statutory duty as determined by the Admissions Code.</p>
<p>Equality:</p>	<p>An Equality Impact Assessment initial screening has been undertaken and a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required for this report.</p> <p>The Policy is aimed at making sure we have a fair and equitable procedure for children needing an admission to Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools</p>
<p>Health and Wellbeing:</p>	<p>This proposal supports the prioritisation of applications from the local community and gives clarity to parents and carers about how their</p>



	applications will be considered, including how they will be measured under the distance criterion.
Social Value	In supporting the prioritisation of applications from the local community the proposal will ensure that children will be educated and develop within their residential and social communities.

7. Appendices

- 7.1 The proposed admission arrangements are attached in the appendix to this report. These also include the Published Admission Numbers (PAN) of all community and voluntary controlled schools.

8. Background Papers

None.

