

## Decision Record – Admission Arrangement 2014/15

### Cabinet Portfolio Holder taking decision

**Councillor Heather Timms – Children and Schools**

**Date of Decision:  
(NOT BEFORE – 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2012)**

**23 NOVEMBER 2012**

### Decision taken

That I, as Portfolio Holder for Children and Schools, agrees the proposed arrangements for School Admissions in 2014/15 and approves a consultation exercise of the proposals.

### Reasons for Decisions

The Local Authority's proposed admission arrangements for 2014/15 are attached as **Appendix A**. These apply to all schools where the Local Authority is the admission authority, while the operational aspects of the scheme apply to all non-selective schools in Warwickshire (unless otherwise indicated).

For the reasons set out in the report, no changes to oversubscription criteria are proposed. The dates in the attached document are subject to change and may need to be amended to bring them in line with our neighbouring authorities. The Published Admission Numbers (PANs) found at the end of the consultation document will also need to be updated as and when these are received from schools / finalised.

Many of Warwickshire's schools are now academies with more due to convert in the near future. In an academy, the Academy Trust is the admission authority, and is therefore responsible for determining its own oversubscription criteria.

### Background Information/ factors considered in arriving at these decisions - (set out below and in the officer report):

#### Background:

Local Authorities are required to consult annually on admission arrangements. In accordance with the School Admissions Code, consultation must take place for a minimum of eight weeks between 1<sup>st</sup> November and 1<sup>st</sup> March. Admission arrangements must then be determined (finalised) by 15<sup>th</sup> April.

The proposed admission arrangements are very similar to those approved for operation in 2013/14 and include all relevant changes as required by the latest School Admissions Code (effective from February 2012).

The proposed admission arrangements are based around in-year admissions for 2014/15 remaining with the Local Authority. While it is no longer a legal requirement for Local Authority's to process such applications, retaining this function provides numerous benefits, especially around the tracking of vulnerable children and the operation of the In-Year Fair Access Protocol. The majority of 'own admission authority schools' such as academies have indicated they are happy for the Local Authority to continue to carry out this function. However, should a large number of schools indicate they now wish to process their own in-year applications then the situation would need to be reviewed.

A recent campaign has been launched by a parent who would like an amendment to the Council's oversubscription criteria. The aim of the campaign is to give children with a sibling at a school priority over other children who live within a school's priority area. The campaign includes an e-petition available on the Warwickshire County Council website.

Under the Council's current arrangements children living in a school's priority area and with a sibling at the school are already given priority over other in-area children. Similarly, children living outside of a school's priority area with a sibling at the school are given priority over other out-of-area children. In the case of applications for places in Reception or Year 3, siblings at partner infant or junior schools (where applicable) are also taken into account.

All of the oversubscription criteria used can be found in the document attached as Appendix A. Warwickshire's admission arrangements are designed to ensure that local children have every opportunity to attend their local school. The system of priority areas is well-established in Warwickshire and similar arrangements operate in numerous other Local Authorities including Coventry, Solihull, Leicestershire and Oxfordshire. The current arrangements also play a vital role in ensuring the Local Authority meets its duty to ensure that sufficient school places are available and that they are located where demand exists.

While parents are free to apply for a place at any school there can be no guarantee that a place will be offered at their preferred school -regardless of the admission arrangements in place. This is especially the case when applications are made from outside of a school's priority area. Under Warwickshire's current arrangements only 26 children were not offered a place at a primary school with their sibling for September 2012 - none of these were applying for a place at their local school. This compares to 1153 children that were offered a place at the school their brother or sister attends.

**Financial Implications:** None listed.

Report Author: Craig Pratt  
Head of Service: Mark Gore  
Strategic Director: Wendy Fabbro  
Portfolio Holder: Councillor Heather Timms

### **Checklist**

**Urgent matter: yes/no\***

No

**Confidential or Exempt (state category of exempt information)**

No

**Is the decision contrary to the budget and policy framework?**

No

**List of Reports considered** [please attach or forward a copy]

Report from author.

**List of Background Papers** [please include directorate contact names and numbers for access to background papers]

None

**Any members and officers consulted or informed and any comments given.**

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