

Item No. 22.	Classification: Open	Date: 22 March 2011	Meeting name: Cabinet
Report title:		Southwark coordinated schemes for Secondary, Primary and In Year Admissions 2012	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
Cabinet Member:		Councillor Catherine McDonald, Children's Services	

FOREWORD – COUNCILLOR CATHERINE McDONALD, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES

1. Southwark Council is responsible for coordination of applications for admission to all schools in the borough and is signed up to the pan London agreement to deliver this service. The coordinated admissions schemes have been developed to ensure a fair and transparent system to allocate school places at normal point of entry and in year.
2. The introduction of a coordinated admissions process across London for primary school applications will assist a larger number of families to receive a school of their preference as all families across London will now receive a single offer for their child to join a reception class.

RECOMMENDATION

3. That Cabinet agrees the Secondary, Primary, Junior and In Year coordinated admissions schemes for 2012 admissions attached as appendices 1, 2, 3 and 4 of this report respectively.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

4. Admission arrangements must adhere to the requirements of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2008, School Admissions (Co-Ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2008 and the School Admissions Code of Practice 2010. These arrangements apply to admission authorities of all maintained schools and academies
5. The local authority is the admissions authority for Southwark community primary schools and is also responsible for coordinating school admission applications on behalf of all Southwark residents applying for a place at a secondary or primary maintained school/academy in England. This includes admissions at normal point of entry e.g. to primary reception year, Junior Year 3 and secondary Year 7, as well as all in-year admissions. Arrangements for these coordinated admissions are negotiated and agreed across all 33 London local authorities to form a pan London admissions scheme.
6. Admission applications to secondary schools have been successfully coordinated by the local authority for the last six years. The first year of coordinated admissions for primary schools is currently underway for September 2011. The coordination process for primary admissions will enable each family to apply to all the schools of their preference (irrespective of which borough the schools are located in) on a single form to their home borough then receive a single offer on 4 April. This will eliminate families that apply to schools in different boroughs from receiving separate offers from each borough they had applied to (double/triple offers) whilst other families remained on waiting lists until parents

decided which offer to accept/reject. The local authority is also in its first year of coordinating in-year admissions to secondary and primary schools.

7. Each local authority is required to undertake a consultation on their admission arrangements in line with the School Admissions Code of practice which must run for a minimum of eight weeks and end by 1 March each year.
8. Local authorities like all other admission authorities must determine their final admission arrangements to the Secretary of State by April 15 2011 for admissions from September 2012. Local authorities have a duty to publish a public notice in a local newspaper confirming these arrangements and where they can be viewed, this will take place in May 2012.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

9. The School Admissions Codes of Practice sets out requirements for local authorities to provide a system to enable the efficient admission of pupils to schools at normal point of entry (Reception Year, Year 3 and Year 7) and also, for all in-year admissions to maintained schools, primary and secondary. A coordinated admissions scheme for 2012 admissions must be in place with details of how this will operate within each local authority
10. Coordinated admissions schemes must enable parents in a home local authority to apply to any school in England and therefore, must set out how information will be received, processed and transferred between the LA, applicants, schools and neighbouring boroughs for secondary primary and in-year admissions. Any offer of a school place must be made by the local authority.
11. Coordinated admission arrangements provide a fair and efficient school admissions process and are able to almost entirely eliminate multiple offers being made to individual families.
12. Local authority officers across London have developed the key principles including a mix of mandatory and optional clauses for each for co-ordinated scheme to be considered and implemented by individual local authorities. Coordinated admission schemes for secondary, primary, junior and in-year are attached respectively as appendices 1, 2, 3 and 4 of this report for ease of reference, the four parts form Southwark's single coordinated admissions scheme for 2012 admissions.
13. Consultation on Southwark's co-ordinated schemes took place between 17 December 2010 and 11 February 2011, details of the consultation was sent to Governing bodies, Headteachers, community organisations including parents groups, neighbouring local authorities and other key stakeholders.
14. The current coordinated admission schemes for secondary, primary and in-year admissions have worked well and enabled successful management of school admissions. No changes have been made to these arrangements for 2012 other than dates throughout the documents to reflect the 2012 academic year.

Secondary coordinated admissions 2011

15. 2,521 applications from Southwark residents were made to Southwark secondary schools (including late applications) and 1,767 from out of borough residents for admission in September 2011 making a grand total of 4,288 applications to Southwark secondary schools. Of this number, 1,427 (57%) applications from Southwark residents were made online this is an increase of 32% from last year's online application total of 662. Parents and carers are notified of the secondary school offer for their child in a letter that is sent out on 1 March each year.

Primary coordinated admissions 2011

16. The admissions process for all primary applications is underway for entry to school in September 2011. 3,229 applications (on time by Southwark residents only) were received for primary school, 1,913 (59%) were made on line. Parents and carers will be notified of the primary school they have been offered for their child on 4 April 2011.

In Year admissions

17. The local authority took over responsibility for coordination of in year admissions to all primary and secondary schools and academies from 1 September 2010. To date, almost 1,300 applications have been processed by the team and the new system has worked relatively smoothly.

The Coordination of Applications for Looked After Children

18. Looked after children remain the highest priority on the admissions criteria for all Southwark Schools in line with the School Admissions Code of Practice. In January of each year, officers meet to identify applications received for looked after children and track the progress of these applications throughout the primary and secondary co-ordinated processes. This year, 37 applications for admission to Southwark secondary schools were received for Looked After Children (in and out borough children). All have been allocated a place at the school of their first preference. By prioritising places for looked after children the local authority is able to provide important support to children in its care and contribute towards their educational achievement.

The Coordination of Applications for Pupils with Statements of SEN

19. Applications for a secondary school place for pupils with a Statement of special educational needs are processed completely separately from the main co-ordinated admission arrangements. By the deadline date of 14 February 2011 the SEN Division considered secondary transfer applications for 118 pupils with a Statement of special educational.

Community impact statement

20. The Co-ordinated Admissions process is designed to produce fair and equitable access to school places for all children. Allocation of places is delivered through the strict application of admissions and oversubscription criteria of each school through a central pan London computer. Even greater emphasis is now placed on admissions authorities to achieve equity and fair access for all pupils through their admission arrangements through the Code. Additional support is made available to parents who may need support in understanding the application process and selecting schools of their preference through a School Preference Adviser who offers information and advice through outreach work delivered at schools and community centres. Support is also made available on a one to one basis on request and through referrals from schools and other agencies.

Resource implications

21. All costs associated with the admissions process are chargeable to the Schools Budget and are therefore met from Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Strategic Director of Communities, Law & Governance

22. Cabinet is asked to agree the Secondary, Primary and In Year Co-ordinated Admissions Schemes for 2012.
23. The Strategic Director of Communities, Law & Governance is of the opinion that the document is compatible with the requirements of the School Admissions Code 2010 and the School Admissions (Co-Ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2008 and with the Local Authority's Admissions Authority duties.

REASONS FOR URGENCY

24. The next meeting of the cabinet is scheduled for 19 April 2011. Coordinated admission arrangements must be confirmed and submitted to the Secretary of State by 15 April 2011 for implementation in the 2012 admission round. If this is not done, Southwark's coordinated admissions arrangements in 2011 will remain in place for 2012.

REASONS FOR LATENESS

25. It was not possible to carry out internal consultation and obtain the necessary clearance for the report to be circulated 5 clear working days in advance of the meeting.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
The School Admissions Code of Practice 2010	Tooley St. HQ DfE website	Glenn Garcia
The School Standards and Framework Act 1998	Tooley St. HQ DfE website	Glenn Garcia
School Admissions (Co-Ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2008	Tooley St. HQ DfE website	Glenn Garcia

APPENDICES

Number	Title
Appendix 1	Pan London Coordinated Admission System. Southwark LA Scheme for Admission to Secondary School in September 2012
Appendix 2	Pan London Coordinated Admission System. Southwark LA Scheme for Admission to Primary School (reception year) in September 2012
Appendix 3	Pan London Coordinated Admission System. Southwark LA Scheme for Admission to Primary School (Year 3) in September 2012
Appendix 4	Pan London Coordinated Admission System. Southwark LA Scheme for In-Year Admissions from September 2012

AUDIT TRAIL

Cabinet Member	Councillor Catherine McDonald, Children's Services	
Lead Officer	Romi Bowen, Strategic Director of Children's Services	
Report Author	Glenn Garcia, Head of Pupil Access	
Version	Final	
Dated	16 March 2011	
Key Decision ?	Yes	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments included
Strategic Director of Communities, Law & Governance	Yes	Yes
Finance Director	Yes	None required
Cabinet Member	Yes	Yes
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	16 March 2011	