

<b>Item No.</b> 15.	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 9 February 2016	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Cabinet
<b>Report title:</b>		Southwark Coordinated Admission Schemes for Primary, Junior and Secondary Admissions 2017	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>		Councillor Victoria Mills, Children and Schools	

## **FOREWORD - COUNCILLOR VICTORIA MILLS, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND SCHOOLS**

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 – Reception class and Year 7.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That Cabinet agrees the Primary, Junior and Secondary co-ordinated admission schemes for 2017 admissions attached as appendix 1, appendix 2 and appendix 3 of this report.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

2. The co-ordination of admission arrangements must adhere to the requirements of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) and the School Admissions Code 2014. These arrangements apply to admission authorities of all maintained schools and non-maintained state funded schools.
3. At the Cabinet meeting on 19 March 2013, the Leader of the Council delegated authority to the cabinet member for children’s services to agree the Secondary and Primary Admissions Schemes for 2015 admissions and onwards where there were no changes made from the previous year. These reports are being presented to Cabinet this year due to proposed changes to the admission arrangements for community primary schools for 2017.
4. The Council is the admissions authority for Southwark community primary schools only and also has a statutory responsibility for coordinating school admission applications on behalf of all Southwark residents applying for a place at a primary, junior or secondary maintained school/non maintained state funded school in England. This includes admissions at normal points of entry, e.g. to primary reception year including Year 3 transfer and secondary Year 7 including 14-19 University Technical College transfer. Arrangements for these coordinated admissions are negotiated and agreed across all 33 London local authorities to form a pan-London admissions scheme.

5. Coordination provides families with a single point of application to schools where up to six preferences may be made on a common application form. The council is also responsible for confirming a single school offer to each child on offer date, which, for the September 2017 intake, is 1 March for Secondary and 18 April for Primary and Junior applications. The exception to this coordinated admissions process would be applications to any new free schools currently being established for September 2017 which are not able to be included in the co-ordinated admissions process which will begin in September 2016. There are currently no new free schools due to open within Southwark with a confirmed opening date of September 2017. If a new free school with an opening date of September 2017 is subsequently confirmed they will be expected to operate a separate application process alongside the Council's co-ordinated primary and secondary admission schemes. This would enable families to submit an expression of interest directly to the schools in addition to listing up to six preferences via Southwark's primary and secondary co-ordinated admission schemes. The Council would then work collaboratively with the free school to co-ordinate the change of offers where families reject an offer received through the coordinated admissions scheme in favour of a place at the new free school. This method worked successfully for Belham Free School which opened in September 2015 and is currently being used for Galleywall Primary School and the Charter School East Dulwich which are due to open in September 2016.
6. Local authorities like all other admission authorities must determine their final admission arrangements and co-ordinated admission schemes (primary, junior and secondary) by 28 February 2016 for September 2017 admissions, and notify the Secretary of State if a coordinated scheme has been secured also by this date.
7. No changes to the council's co-ordinated admission schemes (primary, junior and secondary) for September 2017 are proposed therefore, there is no requirement to consult. However, as good practice and for information to key stakeholders, the local authority circulated these co-ordinated admission schemes alongside its consultation on Community Primary Schools Admission Arrangements 2017 for comments and views from the public by 31 December 2015.

## **KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

### **Co-ordinated admissions schemes**

8. The School Admissions Code 2014 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, Year 7 and 14-19 UTC transfer). A co-ordinated admissions scheme for 2017 admissions must be in place with details of how this will operate within each local authority.
9. Co-ordinated admissions schemes must enable parents in a home local authority to apply to any school in England. The co-ordinated admission schemes must set out how information will be received, processed and transferred between the local authority, the applicants, the schools and neighbouring boroughs for primary, junior and secondary. Any offer of a school place must be made by the home local authority.

10. Co-ordinated admission arrangements provide a fair and efficient school admissions process whilst almost entirely eliminating the risk of multiple offers being made to individual families.
11. Local authority officers across London 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. Co-ordinated admission schemes for primary, junior and secondary which meet the PAN London requirements are attached respectively as appendices 1, 2 and 3 of this report.
12. The current co-ordinated admission schemes for primary, junior and secondary admissions have worked well and enabled successful management of school admissions. No changes have been made to these arrangements other than dates throughout the documents to reflect the 2017 academic year and the inclusion of the online application process.

### **Community impact statement**

13. 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. All admission authorities are expected to implement clear admission arrangements that achieve equity and fair access for all pupils in line with the School Admissions Code 2014.
14. Additional support is made available to families who may need support in understanding the application process and selecting schools of their preference through the Southwark Information, Advice and Support Team. This involves a significant amount of outreach support and drop in sessions throughout the year at schools and libraries, some for specific EAL communities with interpreters plus weekly drop in at a Southwark one stop shop. Support is also made available on a one to one basis on request and through referrals from schools and other agencies.
15. Southwark residents have also been supported directly by school admission officers during the application stage of the admissions process. 'Apply online' sessions were held at participating schools/nurseries across Southwark during the autumn term, aimed at families requiring additional one to one support. For families without access to a computer or internet at home, Southwark libraries and one stop shops also offered free internet usage with admissions staff on hand to help. The online application system enables a streamlined service to be delivered so officers are able to provide high quality direct assistance to families and advise on the admissions process in person, thus improving the service as a whole and in particular for those families who may have difficulty navigating the admissions system.

### **Finance implications (FI/1107/MS)**

16. All costs associated with the admissions process are chargeable to the Schools Budget and are therefore met from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). There are no direct financial implications for the council's revenue budgets.

## SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

### Director of Law and Democracy

17. Cabinet is advised that it is enabled to agree the recommendation under matters reserved to full Cabinet in Part 3C of the Council's Constitution.
18. Cabinet is advised that the legal framework surrounding the admissions schemes is set out in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) and the School Admissions Code 2014.
19. Cabinet is reminded of the public sector equality duty under section 149 Equality Act 2010 when making this decision. This requires that, when exercising any of the council's functions, due regard be given to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between people with protected characteristics and those with none. . In particular Cabinet will note the adjustments in place to enable full access to support and information for all communities in Southwark, outlined in the Community Impact Statement.

### Strategic Director of Finance and Governance

20. The Strategic Director of Finance and Governance confirms that all costs will be met from the Dedicated Schools grant. There are no direct financial implications for the council's revenue budgets.

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
The School Admissions Code 2014		Glenn Garcia 020 7525 2717
<b>Link:</b> <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-code--2">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-code--2</a>		
The School Standards and Framework Act 1998		Glenn Garcia 020 7525 2717
<b>Link:</b> <a href="http://www.legislation.gov.uk">www.legislation.gov.uk</a>		
School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012		Glenn Garcia 020 7525 2717
<b>Link:</b> <a href="http://www.legislation.gov.uk">www.legislation.gov.uk</a>		

## APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Southwark Primary Coordinated Admission Scheme for September 2017 (circulated separately)
Appendix 2	Southwark Junior Coordinated Admission Scheme for September 2017 (circulated separately)
Appendix 3	Southwark Secondary Coordinated Admission Scheme for September 2017 (circulated separately)

## AUDIT TRAIL

<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Victoria Mills, Children and Schools	
<b>Lead Officer</b>	David Quirke-Thornton, Strategic Director of Children's and Adults Services	
<b>Report Author</b>	Glenn Garcia, Head of Pupil Access	
<b>Version</b>	Final	
<b>Dated</b>	26 January 2016	
<b>Key Decision?</b>	Yes	
<b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER</b>		
<b>Officer Title</b>	<b>Comments Sought</b>	<b>Comments included</b>
Director of Law and Democracy	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	Yes	Yes
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Date final report sent to Constitutional Team</b>	26 January 2016	