

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 20 February 2017	<b>Decision taker:</b> Cabinet Member for Children and Schools
<b>Report title:</b>		Admission Arrangements for Community Primary Schools - September 2018	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Strategic Director of Children's and Adults Services	

## RECOMMENDATION

1. That the cabinet member agrees the Southwark Community Primary Schools Admission Arrangements ("the Arrangements") for September 2018 as set out in Appendix 1 of this report.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. The Council is the admission authority for community primary schools within Southwark. It must, before the beginning of each school year, determine the admission arrangements for those schools which are to apply for that year.
3. The School Admissions Code 2014 ("the Code"), which applies to all maintained schools, academies and free schools came into force on 19 December 2014. When determining admission arrangements, admission authorities are required to act in accordance with all mandatory provisions contained in the Code.
4. Admission arrangements must also adhere to the requirements of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 ("the SSFA 1998"), the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) ("the Regulations") and the School Admissions (Infant Class Sizes) (England) Regulations 2012.
5. 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 admission arrangements for community primary schools for 2015 admissions and onwards where there were no changes made from the previous year. This report is being brought to the Cabinet Member for Children and Schools for determination because there are no changes proposed to the Arrangements for September 2018.
6. The Regulations and paragraph 1.42 of the Code require all admission authorities to consult when proposing to change their admission arrangements. Where admissions arrangements have not changed from the previous year, there is no requirement to consult.
7. Admissions authorities must as a minimum consult on their admissions arrangements at least once every seven years, even if there are no changes to their existing arrangements. Consultation on admission arrangements must run for a period of at least six weeks and be completed by 31 January in the year

preceding the year the change is to be effected (i.e. 31 January 2017 for September 2018 admissions).The Council has written to all admission authorities in Southwark with a reminder of this.

8. The Admission Arrangements for community primary schools remain unchanged from the previous year when the Council last consulted. A consultation was not carried out this year. The Arrangements are similar to those of our neighbouring boroughs Lambeth and Lewisham.
9. Final admission arrangements for September 2018 admissions (irrespective of whether or not an admission authority has consulted) must be determined by 28 February 2017. The Arrangements will be confirmed to the Secretary of State by 28 February 2017.
10. Full details of the Arrangements, along with those of all other admission authorities in the borough, will be included in the Starting Primary booklet for September 2018. Many families will use this booklet as a main source of information when selecting a primary school and will be able to download the booklet from the school admissions web page or view a hard copy upon request.
11. The full admission arrangements, including supplementary information forms and any proposed changes for all Southwark admission authorities consulting on their 2018/19 arrangements have been checked by officers to ensure compliance with the Code. Formal written comments were provided in respect of any issues of non compliance or, where a proposed change could adversely impact on the community. All comments provided must be considered before determination of arrangements. Any serious breach of compliance may be referred to the Office of the Schools' Adjudicator if not remedied through discussion with the admission authority directly.
12. A list of the published admission numbers for all Southwark primary schools for the September 2018 intake is attached at Appendix 2.

### **Coordinated primary admissions for September 2017**

13. The coordinated primary school admissions process is underway across London for children to be admitted to Reception class in September 2017. Families make a single application to their home borough for up to six schools of their preference through the co-ordinated process. On National Offer Day they will receive a single offer of a primary school place.
14. Parents and carers are able to express up to six school preferences on their application forms and will be offered the highest preference possible through the pan-London system. Offer letters will be sent to parents and carers on 18 April 2017.
15. A total of 3,164 on-time primary school applications have been received (as at 7 February 2017) for September 2017 admissions from Southwark residents, a decrease of 216 applications. During the process, admissions officers worked collaboratively with Southwark schools and nurseries to provide 'Apply online' information sessions for families. During the sessions parents and carers had the opportunity to complete their online application with admissions officers at hand to assist with any queries they may have.

16. 3,995 reception places will be available across the borough in order to meet demand in September 2017. A list of the Published Admission Numbers for Southwark's primary and secondary schools for September 2018 intake can be viewed at Appendix 2 and Appendix 3.

### **Community impact statement**

17. The Arrangements, together with the Council's participation in the co-ordinated admissions scheme for primary admissions, is designed to produce fair and equitable access to school places for all children. Allocation of places is delivered through strict application of admissions and oversubscription criteria of each school in Southwark through a central (pan-London) computerized system.
18. Additional support is provided to families that find it difficult to navigate the admissions system through the Admission Officers and the Southwark Information, Advice and Support Team. This involves a significant amount of outreach support and drop in sessions throughout the year at surgeries, schools and libraries, in order to engage EAL communities with the use of interpreters as well as parents / parents of children, who may have a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. There is also a weekly drop in to provide support on admissions issues at a Southwark one stop shop.
19. The Public Sector Equality Duty, at section 149 of the Equality Act, requires public bodies to consider all individuals when carrying out their day to day work – in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to their own employees. It requires public bodies to have due regard when carrying out their activities to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between people with protected characteristics and those with none. The council's Approach to Equality ("the approach") commits the council to ensuring that equality is an integral part of our day to day business.
20. We have had due regard in preparing the arrangements and will have due regard when carrying out the proposed activities, for the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between people with protected characteristics and those with none. Provision of new school places and fair and equitable admissions policies:
  - a) *"advances the cause of the elimination of discrimination" by removing potential discrimination based on the protected characteristics*
  - b) *"advances equality of opportunity" by ensuring that all groups, irrespective of background, have equal access to school places*
  - c) *"fosters good relations" by implementing a demonstrably fair and equitable policy for school admissions across the borough for people with protected characteristics and those without.*

### **Finance implications CAS17/004**

21. All costs associated with the admissions process are chargeable to the Schools Budget and, are, therefore, met from 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**

22. The Cabinet Member is advised that they are enabled to agree the recommendation by virtue of the delegation by the Leader of the Council agreed at the Cabinet meeting dated 19 March 2013.
23. The Cabinet Member is advised that school admissions arrangements are governed by the SSFA 1998, together with the Regulations and Code, as stated within the body of the report. The Cabinet Member is advised that the proposed Arrangements for 2017 comply with the applicable law.
24. The Cabinet Member is asked to note that the Council is not required to consult on proposed admission arrangements so long as they remain unchanged, for the period of up to 7 years from the last consultation. The most recent consultation was carried out between December 2015 and January 2016 for the 2017 arrangements. Nonetheless, the Council must determine future admission arrangements on an annual basis, even if there has been no consultation.
25. The Cabinet Member 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 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**

26. This report seeks approval from the Cabinet Member for Children and Schools to the Southwark Community Primary Schools Admission Arrangements for September 2018 as set out in Appendix 1 of the report. Paragraph 21 confirms that the costs associated with the admissions process are met from the Dedicated Schools Grant, and that there is no direct financial implication on the council's revenue budgets.

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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

## APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Southwark Community Primary Schools Admission Arrangements for September 2018
Appendix 2	Southwark Primary Schools – Published Admission Number for September 2018 intake
Appendix 3	Southwark Secondary Schools – Published Admission Number for September 2018 intake

## AUDIT TRAIL

<b>Lead Officer</b>	David Quirke-Thornton, Strategic Director of Children's and Adults Services	
<b>Report Author</b>	Glenn Garcia, Head of Education Access 0-25	
<b>Version</b>	Final	
<b>Dated</b>	20 February 2017	
<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>	20 February 2017	