

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: 6 February 2020	Decision maker: Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Adult Care
Report title:		Southwark coordinated admission schemes for primary, junior and secondary admissions 2021	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Strategic Director of Children's and Adults Services	

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Adult Care notes the Primary (Reception), Junior and Secondary (Year 7) coordinated admission schemes have worked effectively for Southwark residents during the last academic year, which have not changed for the 2021/22 admissions year.
2. That the Cabinet Member agrees the Primary (Reception), Junior and Secondary (Year 7) coordinated admission schemes for 2021/22 admissions attached as Appendix 1, Appendix 2 and Appendix 3 of this report.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. The coordination 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.
4. 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 the Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Adult Care this year as there are no proposed changes made to the coordinated admission schemes for 2021.
5. 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.
6. 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 2021 intake, is 1 March 2021 for Secondary and 16

April 2021 for Reception and Junior applications. The exception to this coordinated admissions process would be applications to any new free schools currently being established for September 2021 which are not able to be included in the coordinated admissions process which will begin in September 2020.

7. There are currently no new free schools due to open within Southwark for 2021. Should any new free schools with an opening date of September 2021 be subsequently confirmed, it will be expected to operate a separate application process alongside the Council's co-ordinated primary and secondary admission schemes. This will enable families to submit an expression of interest directly to the schools in addition to listing up to six preferences via Southwark's Primary (Reception) and Secondary (Year 7) coordinated admission schemes. The Council would then work collaboratively with the free school after national offer day to contact families to determine a single school place i.e. (the offer through co-ordination or at the new school). This method worked successfully for Haberdashers' Aske's Borough Academy which opened in September 2019.
8. Local authorities like all other admission authorities must determine their final admission arrangements and coordinated admission schemes (Primary - Reception, Junior and Secondary - Year 7) by 28 February 2020 for September 2021 admissions, and notify the Secretary of State if a coordinated scheme has been secured also by this date.
9. There are no proposed changes to the council's coordinated admission schemes (Primary, Reception, Junior and Secondary -Year 7) for September 2021.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Co-ordinated admissions schemes

10. 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 3, Year 7 and 14-19 UTC transfer). A co-ordinated admissions scheme for 2021 admissions must be in place with details of how this will operate within each local authority.
11. Coordinated admissions schemes must enable parents in a home local authority to apply to any school in England. The coordinated 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 (Reception), Junior and Secondary (Year 7). Any offer of a school place must be made by the home local authority.
12. Coordinated admission schemes provide a fair and efficient school admissions process whilst almost entirely eliminating the risk of multiple offers being made to individual families.
13. Local authorities across London developed the key principles, including a mix of mandatory and optional clauses for each for coordinated scheme to be considered and implemented by each individual local authority. Coordinated admission schemes for Primary (Reception), Junior and Secondary (Year 7) which meet the PAN London requirements are attached respectively as appendices 1, 2 and 3 of this report.

14. The current coordinated admission schemes for Primary (Reception), Junior and Secondary (Year 7) 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 2021 academic year.

Policy implications

15. The Council Plan for 2018-22 was approved by the Council Assembly in November 2018 and presents a set of commitments, which will help the Council deliver the vision of "A Fairer Future for All". It is a requirement that reports to Cabinet now explicitly refer to the Council Plan and how the report and or the actions outlined will help deliver key aspects of the plan. One of the Council Plan's eight themes is "*A great start in life*" – and, amongst the targets to deliver this, states a commitment to "*make sure all schools in Southwark are Good or Outstanding*" and to "*drive up standards so that every school exceeds London averages at every stage*".

Community impact statement

16. The coordinated 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 must also implement clear admission arrangements that achieve equity and fair access for all pupils in line with the School Admissions Code 2014.
17. Additional support is made available to families who may need support with understanding of the application process and selecting schools of their preference through the Southwark Information, Advice and Support Team and the school admissions team. This involves a significant amount of training, outreach support and drop in sessions for families throughout the year, some for specific English as an additional language (EAL) communities with interpreters. Southwark residents also have direct access to one to one support from the school admissions team during the application stage of the admissions process. This is on request and through referrals from schools and other agencies.
18. For families without access to a computer or internet at home, Southwark libraries and one stop shops also offered free internet usage. 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, therefore improving the service as a whole and in particular for those families who may have difficulty navigating the admissions system.

Resource implications

19. All costs shall be contained within existing budget provisions.

Legal implications

20. Please see concurrent from Director of Law and Governance

Financial implications [CAS19/020]

21. 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.

Consultation

22. There has been no consultation on this report.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Director of Law and Democracy

23. 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.
24. The Cabinet Member 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.
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 the Cabinet Member 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 [CAS19/020]

26. This report seeks approval from the Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Adult Care to the Primary (Reception), Junior and Secondary (Year 7) coordinated admission schemes for 2021 admissions attached as appendix 1, appendix 2 and appendix 3 of this report. Paragraph 20 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	Legislation Services Team at The National Archives, Kew, Richmond Surrey TW9 4DU	Glenn Garcia 0207 525 2717
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/31/contents		
The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012	Legislation Services Team at The National Archives, Kew, Richmond Surrey TW9 4DU	Glenn Garcia 020 7525 2717
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/31/contents		
The School Admissions Code 2014	Department for Education	Glenn Garcia 020 7525 2717
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-code--2		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Southwark Council's Scheme for co-ordination of admissions to primary (Reception) in maintained schools and academies in 2021/22
Appendix 2	Southwark Council's Scheme for co-ordination of admissions to junior in maintained schools and academies in 2021/22
Appendix 3	Southwark Council's Scheme for co-ordination of admissions to secondary (Year 7) in maintained schools and academies in 2021/22

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	David Quirke-Thornton, Strategic Director of Children's and Adults Services	
Report Author	Glenn Garcia, Assistant Director, Education Access and Statutory Services, Children's and Adults' Services	
Version	Final	
Dated	5 February 2020	
Key Decision?	Yes	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Director of Law and Democracy	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	Yes	Yes
List other officers here	N/A	N/A
Cabinet Member	Yes	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	5 February 2020	