

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: 2 March 2015	Decision taker: Cabinet Member for Children and Schools
Report title:		Southwark Coordinated Admission Schemes for Secondary and Primary Admissions 2016	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Strategic Director of Children's and Adults Services	

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the cabinet member agrees the Primary and Secondary co-ordinated admission schemes for 2016 admissions attached as appendix 1 and appendix 2 of this report.

BACKGROUND

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 Codes 2012 and 2014. These arrangements apply to admission authorities of all maintained schools and non maintained state funded schools.
3. The Cabinet considered a report at its meeting on 19 March 2013, and agreed the 2014 coordinated admission schemes. The Leader of the Council also agreed to delegate authority to the cabinet member for children's and adults' services to agree the Secondary and Primary Admissions Schemes for 2015 admissions and onwards where there are no changes made from the previous year.
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 secondary or primary 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 2015 intake, is 2 March for Secondary and 16 April for Primary applications. The exception to this coordinated admissions process would be applications to any free schools currently being established for September 2015 which are not able to be included in the co-ordinated

admissions process which began in September 2014. The Belham School (a free school), which is due to open in September 2015, operated a separate application process alongside the Council's co-ordinated primary admission scheme. This enabled families to submit an expression of interest directly to the school in addition to listing up to six preferences via Southwark's primary co-ordinated admission scheme. The council intends to work collaboratively with the Belham School to coordinate the change of offers where families reject an offer received through the coordinated admissions scheme in favour of a place at the Belham School.

6. Local authorities like all other admission authorities must determine their final admission arrangements and co-ordinated admission schemes (primary and secondary) by 15 April 2015 for September 2016 admissions, and notify the Secretary of State if a coordinated scheme has been secured also by this date. The School Admissions Code 2014 sets out a new consultation timetable for all subsequent years (2017 admissions onwards) in which admission authorities must determine their arrangements by 28 February even if a consultation has not taken place due to there being no change to the arrangements. Local authorities have a duty to publish a public notice in a local newspaper confirming these arrangements where they can be viewed; this will take place in May 2015.
7. As there have been no changes to the council's co-ordinated admission schemes (primary and secondary) for September 2016 admissions there is no requirement to undertake a consultation.

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 2016 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 secondary and primary. 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 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. Co-ordinated admission schemes for secondary and primary are attached respectively as appendices 1 and 2 of this report.
12. The current co-ordinated admission schemes for secondary and primary 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 2016 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 a School Preference Adviser and 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 has dramatically reduced the amount of paperwork the School Admissions team has to process. As a result, they are now able to assist more families directly and advise them 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.

Resource implications

16. 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

Director of Legal Services

17. 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 19 March 2013 Cabinet meeting.
17. 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 Codes 2012 and 2014.
18. In consideration of the admissions schemes, the Cabinet Member is reminded of the public sector equality duty under s.149 Equality Act 2010. In particular the

Cabinet Member will note the services in place to assist families in accessing relevant information and support, as well as assistance with using the online service, as outlined in the Community Impact Statement.

Strategic Director of Finance Corporate Services FC14/048

19. The Strategic Director of Finance Corporate Services 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 2012	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-code	Glenn Garcia 020 7525 2717
The School Admissions Code 2014	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-code--2	Glenn Garcia 020 7525 2717
The School Standards and Framework Act 1998	www.legislation.gov.uk	Glenn Garcia 020 7525 2717
School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012	www.legislation.gov.uk	Glenn Garcia 020 7525 2717

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Southwark Primary Coordinated Admission Scheme for September 2016
Appendix 2	Southwark Secondary Coordinated Admission Scheme for September 2016

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	David Quirke-Thornton, Strategic Director of Children's and Adults Services	
Report Author	Glenn Garcia, Head of Pupil Access	
Version	Final	
Dated	2 March 2015	
Key Decision?	Yes	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments included
Director of Legal Services	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services	Yes	Yes
Cabinet Member	Yes	Yes
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	2 March 2015	