

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: 10 March 2015	Decision taker: Cabinet Member for Children and Schools
Report title:		Admission Arrangements for Community Primary Schools - September 2016	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
Cabinet Member:		Councillor Victoria Mills, Cabinet Member for Children and Schools	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Cabinet member agrees the Southwark Community Primary Schools Admission Arrangements (“the Arrangements”) for September 2016 as set out in Appendix 1 of this report.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. Southwark Council (“the Council”) is the admission authority for community primary schools within the London Borough of Southwark.
3. The revised School Admissions Code 2014 (“the 2014 Code”), which applies to all maintained schools, academies (including free schools, University Technical Colleges and studio schools) came into force on 19 December 2014. Admission authorities are required to act in accordance with all mandatory provisions contained in the 2014 Code. The 2014 Code applies to admission arrangements determined in 2015 for admission in school year 2016/17 and any future years. However, for this academic year only admission authorities must still follow the consultation timetable set out in the School Admissions Code 2012 (“the 2012 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. The Cabinet considered a report at its meeting on 19 March 2013, and agreed 2014 admission arrangements. The Leader of the Council also agreed to delegate authority to the cabinet member for children’s and adults’ services to agree admission arrangements for September 2015 admissions and onwards where there are no changes made from the previous year.
6. Admission authorities are required to consult on their admission arrangements at least once every seven years - September 2013 is the starting point in accordance with the School Admissions Code 2012. If there are no changes to existing arrangements they may remain in place for seven years. The

Arrangements remain similar to the arrangements of neighbouring authorities there are no proposed changes to existing admission arrangements for 2016.

7. Admission arrangements must be determined in 2015 for entry in September 2016, whether or not changes have been made. Final admission arrangements must then be determined by 15 April 2015 for September 2016 admissions.
8. Currently, any consultation on admission arrangements must run for a minimum of eight weeks and be completed by 1 March 2015. The 2014 Code sets out a new timetable for all subsequent years (2017 admissions onwards). The consultation period will be reduced to six weeks and admission authorities must determine their arrangements by the earlier date of 28 February.
9. Although no changes to the Arrangements are proposed, a consultation took place between 24 December 2014 and 27 February 2015, in line with the School Admissions Code 2012. The consultation was part of the Council's forward planning in relation to expansion of Ivydale Community Primary School ("Ivydale") which will become a four form entry school on a split site (subject to finalisation and approval). The consultation set out a proposal to calculate distance to Ivydale for all applicants using a straight line from each applicant's home address to the main gate of the nearest of either site. The purpose of this would be to promote fairness, equity and to be inclusive towards families. Such a change to arrangements cannot be proposed until planning permission for the new site has been confirmed. The Planning Committee is due to consider the Ivydale plans at its meeting on 23rd March 2015 and as such, no amendment to the admission arrangements is proposed at this time. Should this amendment to the Arrangements for 2016 in relation to Ivydale be considered necessary after determination and while they remain in force, the SSFA 1998 and the Regulations contain provisions to the variation of admissions arrangements after they have been determined. Approval will be sought from Cabinet to implement this amendment at the earliest opportunity, if planning permission for the Ivydale school expansion is agreed by the council's planning committee.
10. The consultation was available for viewing on the school admissions pages of Southwark Council's website and circulated to all maintained primary and secondary schools within Southwark, neighbouring local authorities and both the Anglican and Roman Catholic diocesan boards. A notice was also published in the South London Press to publicise the consultation. Five responses were received. All were in agreement except one response which proposed the use of multiple locations to measure home to school distance as an alternative. These locations included places in the community such as Peckham Rye Park Café, the Co-op shop and the dental surgery. All comments were considered but no amendments have been made to the original proposal.
11. The Arrangements will be confirmed to the Secretary of State by 15 April 2015. Full details of the Southwark determined community school admission arrangements alongside those of all other admission authorities in the borough will be included in the Starting Primary booklet for September 2016. Many families will use this booklet as a main source of information when selecting a primary school and will be able to download the brochures from the school admissions web page or view a hard copy at any Southwark school, nursery, library or one stop shop.

12. Once determined, Arrangements will be able to remain in place (without the requirement to consult if there is no change) until 2023.
13. Nine of Southwark's own admission authority schools and academies consulted on their admission arrangements for September 2016. The full admission arrangements including supplementary information forms and any proposed changes were checked by officers to ensure compliance with the School Admissions Code 2014 and the consultation timetable set out in the School Admissions Code 2012. Formal written comments were provided in respect of any issues of non compliance with the Code or, where a proposed change could adversely impact on the community.

Coordinated primary admissions

14. The coordinated primary school admissions process is underway across London for children to be admitted to Reception class in September 2015. 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.
15. 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 16 April 2015.
16. A total of 3545 on-time primary school applications have been received for September 2015 admission, an increase of 156 applications. This process was achieved by working in collaboration with Southwark schools, libraries and nurseries to arrange a number of 'Apply online' information sessions during the autumn term. During the sessions parents and carers had the opportunity to complete their online application with admission officers at hand to assist with any queries they may have.
17. In order to ensure that there are sufficient reception places in September 2015, ten primary schools in Southwark will have additional capacity which will supplement existing places across the borough. There will be 30 additional places each at Rotherhithe Primary School, Crawford Primary School, Gloucester Primary School, Albion Primary School, Bessemer Grange Primary School and Dulwich Wood Primary School (formerly Langbourne). There will be 15 additional places at Grange Primary School, Keyworth Primary School and Charles Dickens Primary School. An additional 60 places will be available at Phoenix Primary School and the opening of The Belham Primary School in the SE15 area will also create 60 places.
18. A list of the published admission numbers for all Southwark primary schools for the September 2016 intake is attached at Appendix 2.

Community impact statement

19. The co-ordinated process 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.

20. Additional support is provided to families that find it difficult to navigate the admissions system through the School Preference Adviser, 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 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.

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

Director of Legal Services

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 19 March 2013 Cabinet meeting.
23. The Cabinet Member is advised that school admissions arrangements are governed by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, together with associated Regulations and the School Admissions Codes 2012 and 2014, as stated within the body of the report. The Cabinet Member is advised that the proposed Arrangements for 2016 comply with the requirements set out in the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended), the School Admissions (Infant Class Sizes) (England) Regulations 2012 and the Codes.
24. The Cabinet Member is asked to note that the Local Authority 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. Nonetheless, the Local Authority must determine future admission arrangements on an annual basis, even if there has been no consultation.
25. In consideration of the recommendation, 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 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 Corporate Services FC14/048

26. 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 Standards and Framework Act 1998	www.legislation.gov.uk	Glenn Garcia 020 7525 2717
The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012	www.legislation.gov.uk	Glenn Garcia 020 7525 2717
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

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Southwark Community Primary Schools Admission Arrangements for September 2016
Appendix 2	Southwark Primary Schools – Published Admission Number for September 2016 intake
Appendix 3	Southwark Secondary Schools – Published Admissions Number for September 2016 intake

AUDIT TRAIL

Cabinet Member	Councillor Victoria Mills, Cabinet Member for Children’s and Schools	
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
	Director of Legal Services	Yes
	Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services	Yes
	Cabinet Member	Yes
	Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	10 March 2015