

Consultation Findings: School Admissions Criteria

Appendix 1

A. Sibling and Distance Priority

Proposal

For those situations where there are more applications for a school place than there are places available, the Cabinet was asked to consider the introduction of awarding a higher priority to applications for children who live within a specified priority distance from a local school. This change will help to safeguard access for residents to their local school.

The proposed change to the admissions criteria would take the form of a priority distance radius for children living a certain distance from a school and is proposed to be applied to all community schools (with the exception of Heathrow Primary School and Harmondsworth Primary School where boundary area arrangements already exist to prioritise applications).

The current admissions criteria set out that higher priority is awarded to all siblings of children attending the preferred school based on distance from home before priority is considered based on distance for those children who do not have a sibling attending the school. Based on the proposal presented to Cabinet in October 2015, priority would be given to applications from siblings and those children without siblings living within a set distance from the school before consideration was given to applications for children (siblings and those without siblings) beyond the priority radius from the school.

The following distance priority radii (from the home address of the applicant to the preferred school) are proposed for different sizes of schools. The distance radii have been determined from an analysis of applications for Reception places to schools in Hillingdon.

- 500 metres from the school for a 1 form entry school
- 750 metres for a 2 form entry school
- 1000 metres for a 3 form entry school
- 1250 metres for a 4 form entry school
- 1500 metres for a 5 form entry school (currently no community schools have a full intake of 5 forms of entry, but this provision would be included in the proposed arrangements to future proof against rising demand for primary school places)

Analysis of Consultation Findings

Do you agree with this proposed change to the admissions criteria?

No. of responses	69
'Yes' responses	26
'No' responses	39
'Don't know' responses	3
Spoilt responses	1

To be fair and reasonable, for those children who were admitted to full time school prior to 31st August 2017, it is proposed that the existing sibling priority would still remain. In effect, this will mean that parents who already have a child(ren) at a school would continue to access sibling priority as set out in the current school admissions criteria.

- Of the 26 respondents who indicated 'Yes' and agreed to the proposal, 1 respondent commented that the LBH should consider giving individual schools the freedom to opt out - or delay the introduction of the change.
- Of the 'No' responses, 10 respondents specifically raised concerns that their younger children would not get into the same school as their older sibling(s).
- Of the 'No' responses, 2 respondents specifically raised concerns about not being able to secure a sibling place at schools which are not affected by the change as they are not community schools.
- Of the 'No' responses, 1 respondent suggested making alternative changes which seemed to match the changes being proposed.
- Of the 'No' responses, 18 respondents raised concerns that the new arrangements will lead to siblings having to attend different schools.
- Of the 'don't know' responses:
 - 1 respondent felt that the scale of the problem is not that high to warrant this approach.
 - 1 respondent raised the concern of getting children to two different schools.
 - 1 respondent made reference to the lack of opportunity for applicants to gain entry to popular secondary schools (this does not apply under the consultation - they will not be affected as they are not community schools).
- Spoilt responses - respondent indicated both 'yes' and 'no'.

Do you think this proposed change will disadvantage any residents in Hillingdon?

No. of responses	69
'Yes' responses	41
'No' responses	22
'Don't know' responses	4
Spoilt responses	1
Didn't indicate option	1

- The Council did not receive any comments from the 22 respondents who indicated 'No' that they did not feel the proposal would disadvantage any Hillingdon residents.
- Of the 'Yes' responses, 3 respondents felt that residents would be disadvantaged where they have little control over where they live, e.g. low income families forced to move due to rent rises.
- Of the 'Yes' responses, 8 respondents felt that residents would be disadvantaged because they may not be able to get siblings in the same school.
- Of the 'Yes' responses, 2 respondents felt that Hillingdon residents would be disadvantaged as out of borough residents would be able to secure places in Hillingdon schools. The existing and proposed admissions criteria do not give priority to a pupil based on the borough they live in.
- Of the 'Yes' responses, 2 respondents felt that the proposed changes would cause house prices in the priority distance radii to increase.
- Of the 'Yes' responses, 1 respondent specifically raised concerns about not being able to secure a sibling place at a specific school (which is not affected by the proposal as it is not a community school).
- Of the 'Yes' responses, 5 respondents felt that the proposed arrangement would limit their choice of a primary school.
- Of the 'Don't know' responses, all 4 respondents did not provide a reason.
- Spoilt responses - respondent indicated both 'yes' and 'no'.

In responding to the consultation findings it is important to note that priority cannot be given to Hillingdon residents over children living outside of the Borough when allocating school places and must be administered in accordance with the published admissions criteria if more applications are received than places available. A decision in the High Court called the 'Greenwich Judgement' means that a Council cannot give preference to its own residents. Admission decisions have to be made according to the published arrangements, which cannot include the borough of residence. Therefore the proposals will not disadvantage parents living in our outside of Hillingdon.

It is also worth noting that the proposals are not set out to limit parental choice as parents will continue to have the option to apply to any school. However, subject to agreement by Cabinet, parents will need to consider the new criteria and consider whether their sibling will be offered a place.

The priority radii are designed so that they are reasonable and clearly defined. Priority radii do not prevent parents who live outside the radii of a particular school from expressing a preference for any school.

Based on the feedback that was received for the proposal, 39 responses did not agree with the proposed changes. However, as set out above, 10 of responses seemed to misinterpret the proposal regarding children that are currently attending the school and priority for a school place for siblings. 2 respondents specifically raised concerns about not being able to secure a sibling place at specific schools which are not affected by the change as they were not community schools. Also 1 respondent gave reasons of support but had indicated that they disagreed with the proposal.

In summary, it seems a number of responders interpreted the proposal as to have the effect of removing the sibling priority which could lead to siblings attending different schools. The risk of siblings attending a different school from the proposed change is low because:

- The sibling priority is not being removed. The sibling priority will continue to apply in a priority distance radius from the school.
- Subject to agreement, the implementation of proposed changes to distance priority and siblings will be phased in and will not affect families during the period of transition where a child in a family is already attending a school and a sibling applies for a place at the same school – priority will still be awarded for the sibling in this situation as is the case under the current school admissions criteria.
- Parents applying for a school place in their priority distance radius from their local school would receive greater priority for their sibling children than families living outside the priority radius in the event that there were more applications for a school place than places available – and therefore minimise the likelihood that their siblings would attend different schools.

Overall, the change proposed in distance priority will help to safeguard access to school places for children to their local schools which are oversubscribed or may become oversubscribed in the future.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the proposal is approved and the sibling and distance radii criterion is implemented.

Appendix 2

B. Schools with Historical Boundary Areas

Proposal

Analysis of admissions to Heathrow Primary School and Harmondsworth Primary School indicates that the application and implementation of an alternative distance priority radius will make no change to the places that would have been offered. The use of a defined boundary area rather than awarding priority based on distance from the school provides a stronger safeguard for families living locally to these schools to secure a school place. This is because there are limited alternative school options for local families should a place at one of these two schools not be available due to oversubscription from people who live outside the defined area. The specific boundary areas for these two schools were originally created due to the 'barrier' of the M4 motorway which restricted reasonable access for residents living in these areas to other schools north of the motorway.

The continued use of a defined priority boundary area also means that the admissions arrangements for parents living in these two areas remain easy to understand. The proposal, therefore, is to continue with the use of the priority boundary area for admissions criteria for Heathrow Primary School and Harmondsworth Primary School. Priority will be given to applications from siblings and those children without siblings living within the boundary before consideration will be given to applications for children (siblings and those without siblings) beyond the defined priority boundary area.

Analysis of Consultation Findings

Do you agree with this proposed change to the admissions criteria?

No. of responses	69
'Yes' responses	27
'No' responses	6
'Don't know' responses	6
'Not applicable' responses	25
Spoilt responses	4
Didn't indicate option	1

- The Council did not receive any comments from the 27 respondents who indicated 'Yes' and agreed to the proposal.
- Of the 'No' responses, 2 respondents were concerned that siblings would have to attend different schools.
- Of the 'No' responses, 1 respondent raised concerns about lack of choice.
- Of the 'No' responses, 2 respondents stated they were not aware of the area and did not know why these schools should have different criteria to other schools.
- Of the 'Not applicable' responses, all 25 respondents did not provide a reason.
- Of the 'Don't know' responses, 2 respondents advised they were not aware of the schools or live in an area near the schools.
- Spoilt responses, respondent indicated both 'yes' and 'no'.

Do you think this proposed change will disadvantage any residents in Hillingdon?

No. of responses	69
'Yes' responses	8
'No' responses	23
'Don't know' responses	36
Spoilt responses	1
Didn't indicate option	1

- The Council not receive any comments from the 23 respondents who indicated 'No' that they did not feel the proposal would disadvantage any Hillingdon residents.
- Of the 'Yes' responses, 2 respondents were concerned that siblings would have to attend different schools.
- Of the 'Yes' responses, 1 respondent raised concerns about lack of choice.
- Of the 'Yes' responses, 1 respondent felt that anyone living outside the boundaries would be disadvantaged.
- Of the 'Yes' responses, 1 respondent suggested that if they were to apply to these schools that a clearer definition would be required.
- Of the 'Don't know' responses, 4 respondents provided comments which were not in relation to the specific boundary criteria and were an extension of the changes to the sibling criteria.
- Spoilt responses, respondents have indicated both 'yes' and 'no'.

The Local Authority has a statutory duty to provide a school place to all children residing in Hillingdon and has a duty to make travel arrangements for children of compulsory school age (5-16) in an authority's area if their nearest suitable school is:

- beyond 2 miles (if below the age of 8); or
- beyond 3 miles (if aged between 8 and 16)

To avoid inconvenience for families and additional travel for children, safeguarding school places as close to home as possible is important.

The risk of a sibling(s) attending another school is low as explained in the response to proposal A, above.

The majority of respondents who were able to respond 'Yes' or 'No' stated they did agree with the proposal and that the proposed changes would not disadvantage Hillingdon residents.

Recommendations:

As this current criteria already applies the proposal is that this criterion is still applicable. Cabinet is asked to agree to this proposal.

Appendix 3

C. Nodal Point (Deanesfield Primary School)

Proposal

The need for nodal points has been considered for all community schools. From the analysis undertaken of school admissions the evidence suggests there is a need for the introduction of nodal points at only two schools to ensure that the schools serve not only pupils close to the school but others living (or forecast to live based on future demand) a further distance from the school with little or no priority access to other schools.

Deanesfield Primary School, South Ruislip - the Cabinet has the option to introduce a nodal point at South Ruislip Station for this school with 15 of the 90 school places allocated to pupils who live closest to this nodal point. This is because there is a new development of dwellings planned nearby on the former Arla Dairy site and in the event that local schools become significantly oversubscribed there is a residual risk that a small number of children may not be prioritised for a school place if they do not live within a priority radius for surrounding local schools. The introduction of the proposed nodal point will help to 'fine tune' school admission arrangements and therefore mitigate the risk of children not having access to a school place in this area.

In proposing the introduction of a nodal point consideration has also been made to ensure that local residents surrounding Deanesfield Primary School are still served appropriately by their local school. The proposal therefore is that only a proportion of the total available school places at Deanesfield Primary School are assigned to the proposed nodal point.

In considering what proportion of school places at Deanesfield Primary School should be assigned to the nodal point, consideration was made of similar sized developments in Hillingdon to the former Arla Dairy site to provide a guide. A comparable sized development is at the former Hayes Stadium site and at primary allocation in 2015, 19 applications were received from residents who had moved into this new residential development. Therefore an allocation of 15 places for reception places at Deanesfield Primary School using the proposed priority nodal point is considered to be reasonable, fair and easy to understand.

Analysis of Consultation Findings

Do you agree with the introduction of a nodal point at South Ruislip Station for Deanesfield Primary?

No. of responses	69
'Yes' responses	25
'No' responses	3
'Don't know' responses	9
'Not applicable' responses	28
Spoilt responses	3
Didn't indicate option	1

- The Council did not receive any comments from the 25 respondents who indicated 'Yes' and agreed to the proposal.
- Of the 'No' responses, 1 respondent felt there should be more nodal points.
- Of the 'No' responses, 1 respondent felt that the distance measurement point should remain at the school.
- Of the 'No' responses, 1 respondent felt the Council should be building more schools with each housing development and felt that the nodal point was not a reasonable distance from the school.
- Of the 'Not applicable' responses, all 28 respondents did not provide a reason.
- Of the 'Don't know' responses, 1 respondent questioned why more nodal points were not being considered.
- Spoilt responses, respondents have indicated both 'yes' and 'no'.

Do you think this proposed change will disadvantage any residents in Hillingdon?

No. of responses	69
'Yes' responses	8
'No' responses	20
'Don't know' responses	39
Spoilt responses	1
Didn't indicate option	1

- The Council did not receive any comments from the 20 respondents who indicated 'No' that they did not feel the proposal would disadvantage any Hillingdon residents.
- Of the 'Yes' responses, 1 respondent felt that siblings within the priority radius may struggle to get an offer.
- Of the 'Yes' responses, 1 respondent felt the proposed changes limited choice.
- Of the 'Yes' responses, 1 respondent felt that they would be unfairly forced to send their children to Harrow schools.
- Of the 'Yes' responses, 1 respondent felt that it was unfair to give priority to residents in new build houses over residents who have lived in the area for a long time. This resident also had concerns about lack of knowledge in the community regarding the proposed arrangements.
- Of the 'Don't know' responses, all 39 respondents did not provide a reason.
- Spoilt response - respondent indicated both 'yes' and 'no'.

The Local Authority has a statutory duty to provide a school place to all children residing in Hillingdon and has a duty to make travel arrangements for children of compulsory school age (5-16) in an authority's area if their nearest suitable school is:

- beyond 2 miles (if below the age of 8); or
- beyond 3 miles (if aged between 8 and 16)

To avoid inconvenience for families and the additional travel for children, safeguarding school places as close to home as possible is important.

The majority of respondents who were able to respond 'Yes' or 'No' stated they did agree with the proposal and that the proposed changes would not disadvantage Hillingdon residents.

Recommendations:

That the proposal is approved and a nodal point is introduced as an additional measuring point in the criterion for Deanesfield Primary School.

C. Nodal Point (Frithwood Primary School)

Frithwood Primary School - the Cabinet has the option to introduce a nodal point for Frithwood Primary School. From recent trends in the admissions round, there are a small number of residents in this area of Northwood who are at risk of not securing access to a local school place. This is because their home address is not within the current furthest distance offered radius for Frithwood Primary School and live further than two miles from their next nearest community school. There is another local school (Holy Trinity C of E) offering 1 form of entry which is a faith-based school, of which 2 places (of the 30 reception places available each year) are offered to children on distance criteria alone. Holy Trinity is a Voluntary Aided School and therefore they determine their own admissions arrangements.

Subject to agreement from the Cabinet, a nodal point could be introduced at the junction of Ducks Hill Road and Northgate (Ordnance Survey co-ordinates 508112 (X) / 191240 (Y)) and combined with a boundary area for the school to prioritise residents for school places at Frithwood Primary School. The proposed nodal point and boundary area includes or is near to recent and planned residential developments.

The proposal is to offer 5 school places as a priority to the applicants living closest to the nodal point within the boundary area. If there are less than 5 applicants within the proposed boundary the remaining places will be prioritised to pupils outside the boundary but living closest to the nodal point. The decision to allocate 5 school places within this boundary is based on the number of applications received in 2015 in this area which remained on the waiting list for Frithwood Primary School. These 5 pupils were offered a lower preference school or decided to pursue other forms of education. The figure of 5 school places assigned to the nodal point and boundary area is therefore considered reasonable, fair and easy to understand.

Analysis of Consultation Findings

Do you agree with the introduction of a nodal point at the junction of Ducks Hill Road and Northgate for Frithwood Primary School?

No. of responses	69
'Yes' responses	22
'No' responses	1
'Don't know' responses	9
'Not applicable' responses	32
Spoilt responses	4
Didn't indicate option	1

- The Council did not receive any comments from the 22 respondents who indicated 'Yes' and agreed to the proposal.
- Of the 'No' responses, we only received 1 where the respondent stated they did not agree with the distance criteria.
- Of the 'Don't know' responses, 1 respondent was not familiar with the school.
- Of the 'Not applicable' responses, all 32 respondents did not provide a reason.
- Spoilt responses, respondents have indicated both 'yes' and 'no'.

Do you think this proposed change will disadvantage any residents in Hillingdon?

No. of responses	69
'Yes' responses	3
'No' responses	19
'Don't know' responses	45
Spoilt responses	1
Didn't indicate option	1

- The Council did not receive any comments from the 19 respondents who indicated 'No' that they did not feel the proposal would disadvantage any Hillingdon residents.
- Of the 'yes' responses, 1 responder felt that the proposed arrangements disadvantaged the 5 pupils who would not receive a distance offer because these places were allocated to the nodal point.
- Of the 'Don't know' responses, all 45 respondents did not provide a reason.
- Spoilt responses, respondent indicated both 'yes' and 'no'.

From recent trends in the admissions round, there are a small number of residents in this area of Northwood who are at risk of not securing access to a local school place. This is because their home address is not within the current furthest distance offered radius for Frithwood Primary School and live further than two miles from their next nearest non-faith school.

The Local Authority has a statutory duty to provide a school place to all children residing in Hillingdon and has a duty to make travel arrangements for children of compulsory school age (5-16) in an authority's area if their nearest suitable school is:

- beyond 2 miles (if below the age of 8); or
- beyond 3 miles (if aged between 8 and 16)

To avoid inconvenience for families and the additional travel for children, safeguarding school places as close to home as possible is important.

The majority of respondents stated they did agree with the proposal and that the proposed changes would not disadvantage Hillingdon residents.

Recommendations:

That the proposal is approved and a nodal point is introduced as an additional measuring point in the criterion for Frithwood Primary School.

Appendix 4

D. Measurement Point - Field End Schools

Proposal

The proposal is to change the measurement point at the Field End Schools from the existing location at the school front gate to the back gate on Mount Pleasant. The measurement points will be moved from Ordnance Survey coordinates 511794 (X) / 186560 (Y) to 511680 (X) / 186447 (Y) which are 161.12 metres closer to local residents. Based on allocation 2015 data, if the new measurement point was applied, 3 residents living more locally to the school would have been prioritised for an offer of a school place.

Analysis of Consultation Findings

Do you agree with the proposed change to the measurement point at the Field End Schools?

No. of responses	69
'Yes' responses	30
'No' responses	5
'Don't know' responses	7
'Not applicable' responses	24
Spoilt responses	2
Didn't indicate option	1

- The Council did not receive any comments from the 30 respondents who indicated 'Yes' and agreed to the proposal.
- Of the 'No' responses, 1 resident was concerned about the impact of the change to the sibling criteria rather than the movement of the measurement point.
- Of the 'No' responses, 1 respondent disagreed that more people use the back gate and another suggested we should measure to the front and back gates.
- Of the 'No' responses, 1 respondent claimed that the co-ordinates were not clear to the public and a map should be provided.
- Of the 'Don't know' responses, 1 respondent mentioned they do not live close to this school.
- Of the 'Don't know' responses, 1 respondent commented that both points should be taken into consideration.
- Of the 'Not applicable' responses, all 24 respondents did not provide a reason.
- Spoilt responses, respondents have indicated both 'yes' and 'no'.

Do you think this proposed change will disadvantage any residents in Hillingdon?

No. of responses	69
'Yes' responses	10
'No' responses	25
'Don't know' responses	33
Spoilt responses	0
Didn't indicate option	1

- The Council did not receive any comments from the 25 respondents who indicated 'No' that they did not feel the proposal would disadvantage any Hillingdon residents.
- Of the 'Yes' responses, 3 respondents felt that parents would be disadvantaged where their new distance measurement to the school is further away than their existing measurement.
- Of the 'Don't know' responses, 1 respondent questioned whether this would change the acceptance of residents living close to the current location.

The majority of respondents who were able to respond 'Yes' or 'No' stated they did agree with the proposal and that the proposed changes would not disadvantage Hillingdon residents.

The proposed new measuring point is the back entrance to the school site which leads on to an area with a higher number of dwellings. There are over 120 residential properties within 150 metres of the back gate which provides clear evidence that moving the measurement point would serve the immediate local community more effectively.

In order for the admissions criteria to be clear and easy to understand the Council will include coordinates for all Hillingdon community schools in the admissions criteria. The Council can include maps and will develop a distance calculator where applicants can put in their address and the name of the school. This would calculate a straight line distance to the school. A map can become distorted and the distance calculator will be more accurate to use than looking at a map.

Recommendations:

The proposal is approved to amend the measuring point for Field End Infant and Field End Junior School.

Appendix 5

E. Children of Staff Working at a Community School

Proposal

Cabinet were asked to consider awarding children of staff working at a school a degree of priority where the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage. This could assist with the current recruitment difficulties in some schools.

Analysis of Consultation Findings

Do you agree with this proposed change to the admissions criteria?

No. of responses	69
'Yes' responses	43
'No' responses	19
'Don't know' responses	2
'Not applicable' responses	4
Spoilt responses	0
Didn't indicate option	1

- The Council did not receive any comments from the 43 respondents who indicated 'Yes' and agreed to the proposal.
- Of the 'No' responses recorded, 6 respondents felt it was unfair to give children of school staff higher priority than other children.
- Of the 'No' responses, 3 respondents were concerned about the vagueness surrounding the term 'demonstrable skills shortage' and which staff the criteria will apply to. This will be clarified in the final arrangements.
- Of the 'Don't know' responses, 1 respondent questioned what would happen if they lived in another borough.
- Of the 'Not applicable' responses, all 4 respondents did not provide a reason.

Do you think this proposed change will disadvantage any residents in Hillingdon?

No. of responses	69
'Yes' responses	16
'No' responses	31
'Don't know' responses	21
Spoilt responses	0
Didn't indicate option	1

- Of the 'No' responses recorded, 1 respondent felt that if all staff were given this priority this would increase staff retention and continuity for residents.
- Of the 'Yes' responses, 9 respondents felt that local children would be disadvantaged if a child of a staff member were given priority over them.
- Of the 'Don't know' responses, 1 respondent commented that it may disadvantage Hillingdon residents as it depends on how many teachers from neighbouring towns apply to have their children at the school they work at.

The majority of respondents who responded either 'Yes' or 'No' stated they did agree with the proposal and that the proposed changes would not disadvantage Hillingdon residents. Subject to agreement from Cabinet, as part of the implementation of this proposal, the Council will provide a statement as to what is considered a staff shortage and how this is measured. The Schools Adjudicator has challenged other Admissions Authorities in regards to the 'children of staff' admissions criterion where it is not clearly defined. It needs to be clear for parents applying as to whether they will be considered under this criteria.

Recommendations:

The proposal is approved and the children of staff criterion is implemented.

Appendix 6

F. Medical Criteria

Proposal

To provide greater clarity to local residents in understanding this aspect of the admissions criteria it is proposed to provide further information to clarify how and under what circumstances the criteria are applied. No changes in the priority given to medical criteria when considering an application for a place at an oversubscribed school are proposed.

Analysis of Consultation Findings

As the Council was not proposing any changes the consultation did not include a question for respondents to answer. On the consultation page website it included contact details for the Senior Admissions and Access Officer to provide the opportunity for respondents to make any further comments. No enquiries were received.

Recommendations

This criterion is still applicable and a clearer definition will be provided in the admissions arrangements so that applicants will be able to recognise if their child will be considered under this criterion. This definition will manage expectations and give parents an opportunity to include realistic preferences on their applications.

Appendix 7

G. Pupil Premium

Proposal

Analysis of access to school places in the Borough shows that there is no benefit to introduce a higher priority for children in receipt of 'Pupil Premium' funding as all children living in the Borough are within a reasonable distance of a school graded as 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted.

There is an option to introduce higher priority for pupils in receipt of a service premium, i.e. families who are in the UK Forces. This would, however, only have the benefit that forces families would move towards the top of a school's waiting list when it is already full and it still may not guarantee an offer at a preferred school. Given that high priority is already awarded for children from service families to secure a school place without delay, no further changes are proposed for service families.

Analysis of Consultation Findings

As the Council was not proposing any changes the consultation did not include a question for respondents to answer. On the consultation page website it included contact details for the Senior Admissions and Access Officer to provide the opportunity for respondents to make any further comments. No enquiries were received.

Recommendations:

A higher priority for pupils in receipt of a pupil or service premium is not included in the admissions criteria.