

PROPOSED CHANGES TO ADMISSIONS CRITERIA AND PAN FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Committee name	Children, Families & Education Select Committee
Officer reporting	Lynda Poole - Head of School Place Planning and Improvement
Papers with report	Proposed Change to the Published Admissions Number (PAN) for a Community Schools - Cabinet Report
Ward	All

HEADLINES

1. Hillingdon Council has a statutory responsibility to secure sufficient early years and school places for children resident in Hillingdon. Over the last ten years the Council has worked closely with schools in Hillingdon to successfully deliver an ambitious programme of school expansion to ensure every child living in Hillingdon can be offered a school place as close to home as possible.
2. The proposed changes to the school admissions criteria contained in the cabinet report will ensure that we continue to provide fair placement and review the impact, so that priority is given to children to access places at schools as close to their home as possible.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:

1. **Review the proposed changes to Hillingdon's Admissions Arrangements detailed in the report.**
2. **Review the responses from the consultation on a PAN change to a community primary phase school that are provided in the report below.**
3. **Provide comments to be included in the Cabinet report which will be presented in February.**

SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF THE RESPONSES TO THE CONSULTATION

4. There were a total of two responses (a total of five responses were received for the consultation that was carried out in Autumn 2021, to reduce the PAN of four schools to take effect from September 2023). One respondent agreed and the other disagreed. This reflects the school being contacted by the LA from November 2021 onwards with plans being discussed and prepared, including for the headteacher to brief governors and parents informally on the possibility of proposals to change PAN. In this case the school was operating partly at the proposed reduced number now. The change will have no impact

on current pupils, their siblings and other local parents wishing for future places at the school, though it will improve the use of resources to benefit pupils at the school. There have been similar discussions with the Foundation schools who have decided to propose reductions, as well as academies who may consider reducing their PAN's in the future and the same points apply. All the schools will continue to be above average size, sustainable, viable and successful in their community.

5. One of the respondents raised concern at all the schools that choice and access would be reduced for residents. Coteford Infant School have large levels of vacancies and has a handful of pupils travelling from outside the priority distance radius. Officers remain clear that all the proposed arrangements will still ensure that parents for whom it is their local school will all be able to secure a place and there will also be local choice. It is likely that some who live further away will also be able to secure a place, beyond the distance priority radius, which is set at 750m for a two form entry school. No schools can afford to keep many empty places just in case parents from far away seek places. The School Admissions Brochure sets out in full the criteria that apply if schools that are oversubscribed.
6. Coteford Infant School has been graded Good by Ofsted following a school inspection in April 2022. As Coteford Infant School is a community school it will continue to be supported by the school improvement team to ensure they offer quality education.
7. To conclude, it is clear the consultation responses do not indicate any local residents would be unable to secure a place at their local preferred school, or than any particular group will be disproportionately affected by the proposed changes.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

8. A public consultation was open between Monday 24 October 2022 and Monday 19 December, 12pm 2022. A summary of consultation responses is detailed below in Appendix 1.

Implications on related Council policies

9. A role of the Select Committee is to make recommendations on service changes and improvements to the Cabinet who are responsible for the Council's policy and direction.

How this report benefits Hillingdon residents

10. Over the past year Officers have reviewed all schools and discussed the proposal with the headteacher of Coteford Infant School. The Headteacher at Coteford Infant School had updated parents over the Summer term in a newsletter that a reduction in PAN was being considered, referencing that the school already had a year group operating at the proposed lower PAN, with two other year groups operating very close to this. This proposal would give stability to classes and benefit pupils, and that siblings and other local parents would still be able to access the school. Only one parent expressed a concern that a reduction in PAN would increase class sizes. This was in advance of the formal consultation.

11. Once proposed changes are agreed it will ensure fair placement and that priority is continued to be given to children to access places at schools as close to their home as possible.

Financial Implications

12. The financial implications are centred around staffing. The school is working with their commissioned HR provider to review the staff structure to reflect the PAN reduction. This will help in future planning to help reduce the financial pressure on the school and the risk of the school running into deficit. The spare physical space can be used in future if rolls rise in the relevant areas and will be used by the school meanwhile.

13. It is important that the Committee considers cost effective proposals that benefit resident taxpayers in relation to this review, which would ultimately be determined by Cabinet as part of the Council's broader budget planning process.

Legal Implications

14. The proposals for changes to the Council's admissions criteria, which the Cabinet have been invited to consider comply with the DfE School Admissions Code 2021. Therefore, it is lawful for the Council to have commenced a consultation exercise in relation to these proposals.

APPENDIX 1:

Consultation Responses

Two responses were received in total during the consultation period. All were submitted via the online questionnaire. A summary of responses is detailed below:

1. Two respondents stated that they had children under the age of 18 living in their household. Respondents were also given the opportunity to provide information on their interest in the proposals.
 1. Parent/carer/guardian - 2
2. Respondents were invited to state which school(s) their child(ren) currently attend and the responses were as follows:
 - Riverside Nursery, Windsor - 1
 - Did not specify - 1
3. Respondents were invited to state why they had chosen their child(ren)'s current school(s) and the responses were as follows (where a response was received):
 - Performance of the school - 2
4. One respondents gave contact details, neither of these respondents had made comments to which required further explanation. Both responses have been given due consideration and have assisted with a review of additional improvements which can be implemented.

Below are the responses to specific questions on each individual change proposed:

Do you agree with the proposed admission arrangements for Hillingdon Community Schools?

- Agree: 1
- Disagree: 1

Proposal 1: Published Admissions Number (PAN) Coteford Infant School

The Local Authority is consulting to reduce the PAN for Coteford Infant School from 81 to 60 from September 2024.

- Do you agree with this proposed change to the above admissions criteria?
 - Agree: 1
 - Disagree: 1*

**The respondent who disagreed with the changes stated:*

1) that the reduction in PAN may disadvantage residents to access a preferred school.

- Do you think this proposed change will disadvantage any residents in Hillingdon?
 - Yes: 1
 - Don't know: 1

BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Consultation on changes to School Admissions Arrangements](#)

[Community School's Proposed Admission Arrangements 2024-25](#)