

**REPORT TO:** Executive Board

**DATE:** 26 March 2015

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director – Children & Enterprise

**PORTFOLIO:** Children, Young People and Families

**SUBJECT:** School Admission Arrangements 2016

**WARDS:** Borough-wide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 This report fulfils the Local Authority's statutory requirement to consult upon and then determine Halton's School Admissions Policy for Local Authority maintained community and voluntary controlled schools, and Coordinated Admission Schemes for all primary and secondary schools in Halton, for the September 2016 intake.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That Executive Board**

**(1) approves the attached School Admissions Policy, Admission Arrangements and Coordinated Schemes for admission to primary and secondary schools for the 2016/17 academic year; and**

**(2) endorses the Department for Education School Admissions Code, and requires all Halton Schools, including academy and free schools to ensure that their admissions criteria are reasonable, clear, objective, procedurally fair, and comply with all legislation.**

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 In January 2015 Halton Local Authority issued a statutorily required consultation paper on the proposed admission arrangements and co-ordinated admission schemes for the September 2016 intake (attached as Appendix 1). The full consultation was available on the Council's website, was issued to Chairs of Governing Bodies, the four Diocesan Authorities responsible for voluntary aided schools in Halton, and to neighbouring authorities.

3.2 The consultation ran until 13<sup>th</sup> February 2015 and no changes were proposed to the current oversubscription criteria for admission to Local Authority maintained community and voluntary controlled primary schools, and no change to the current oversubscription criteria for admission to Local Authority maintained community secondary schools.

- 3.3 The Local Authority's consultation advised that there would be no individual response to any submission made, but any responses submitted would be considered by the Council's Executive Board. No response to the consultation was received.
- 3.4 The Local Authority as commissioner of school places must ensure that the admission arrangements are fair, clear and objective, and fully comply with all statutory requirements. The arrangements proposed for the 2016/17 academic year reflect those requirements.

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The Admissions Policy has been drawn up to maximize parental preference for Halton Local Authority maintained community and voluntary controlled schools. The oversubscription criteria contained within the Policy reflect the criteria which are considered good practice and acceptable by the Department for Education.
- 4.2 Parents/carers may express a preference for any school and must complete an application form which allows them the opportunity to express a preference for any school. If the school of preference is undersubscribed then all applications will be successful. If the school is oversubscribed then the oversubscription criteria will be applied and places allocated in accordance with the criteria.

#### **5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 None.

#### **6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

##### **6.1 Children and Young People in Halton**

The proposed policy complies with statutory requirements in ensuring that the admission arrangements are fair and do not disadvantage, either directly or indirectly, a child from a particular social or racial group, or a child with disability or special educational needs, thereby ensuring that the educational provision for children & young people in the borough is inclusive and accessible.

##### **6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton**

Educational achievement is critical to the life chances of all children in the borough and the School Admissions Policy detailing school admission arrangements in Halton underpins the requirement to promote fair access to educational opportunity.

### **6.3 A Healthy Halton**

The School Admissions Policy is aligned to the Council's Sustainable School Travel Policy which promotes and supports measures that encourage local communities to use environmentally sustainable forms of travel, especially walking, cycling, and public transport.

### **6.4 A Safer Halton**

The alignment of the School Admissions Policy and the Sustainable School Travel Policy promotes the safe travel and transfer of pupils to school.

### **6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal**

The proposed admissions policy reflects the school reorganisation programme intended to ensure that 21<sup>st</sup> century provision is in place across both the primary and secondary sectors.

## **7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

- 7.1 The admission arrangements and co-ordinated schemes are proposed to maximise parental preference for Halton schools. Any amendment to the current arrangements at this time may reduce parental preference and lead to an increased number of admission appeals, adversely affecting the intake at some schools. Furthermore, any amendments may affect the Local Authority's School Organisation planning.

## **8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

- 8.1 The proposed admission arrangements reflect any requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

## **9.0 REASON(S) FOR DECISION**

- 9.1 The decision is statutorily required and any revision to the proposed arrangements may adversely affect school place planning as detailed in 7.1 above.

## **10.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

- 10.1 Other options considered and rejected include the allocation of places through random allocation (lottery) as this method could be seen as arbitrary and random.

## **11.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE**

- 11.1 The Policy applies for the September 2016 academic intake.

**12.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

<b>Document</b>	<b>Place of Inspection</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>
<b>School Admissions Code 2014</b>	<b>Children &amp; Young People's Directorate</b>	<b>Martin West</b>
<b>School Standards &amp; Framework Act 1998</b>	<b>Children &amp; Young People's Directorate</b>	<b>Martin West</b>
<b>Education Act 2002</b>	<b>Children &amp; Young People's Directorate</b>	<b>Martin West</b>
<b>Education &amp; Inspections Act 2006</b>	<b>Children &amp; Young People's Directorate</b>	<b>Martin West</b>