

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 11 February 2016

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – People & Economy

PORTFOLIO: Children, Young People and Families

SUBJECT: School Admission Arrangements 2017

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 2017 intake.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Board approves the attached School Admissions Policy, Admission Arrangements and Coordinated Schemes for admission to primary and secondary schools for the 2017/18 academic year.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 In November 2015 Halton Local Authority issued a statutorily required consultation paper on the proposed admission arrangements and co-ordinated admission schemes for the September 2017 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, to all schools in Halton who are their own admission authority, and to neighbouring local authorities.

3.2 The consultation ran until 11th December 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 responses to the consultation were 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 2017/18 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

N/A

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 2017 academic intake.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
School Admissions Code 2014	People & Economy Directorate	Martin West
School Standards & Framework Act 1998	People & Economy Directorate	Martin West
Education Act 2002	People & Economy Directorate	Martin West
Education & Inspections Act 2006	People & Economy Directorate	Martin West