

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

12th MARCH 2015

SUBJECT:	<i>Admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled Primary and secondary schools and coordinated scheme for 2016-2017</i>
WARD/S AFFECTED:	All
REPORT OF:	Director of Childrens Services
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	Councillor Tony Smith
KEY DECISION?	Yes

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report invites the Cabinet to determine the Authority's admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled primary and secondary schools and the coordinated schemes for 2016-2017. This is a statutory requirement.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 The Authority is required to determine admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled primary and secondary schools. The New School Admissions (England) Regulations (2003) also require the Authority to have in place a coordinated scheme for admissions to all primary and secondary schools including Academy schools, in 2016-17. The proposed schemes are attached along with proposed admission numbers for community and controlled schools (Appendices 1 and 2).
- 2.2 No responses to the consultation were received.
- 2.3 Subsequent to the commencement of the Wirral consultation on 26th November 2014, on 19th December 2014 the Department for Education issued a new version of the statutory guidance on school admissions, replacing the previous version dated 2012. Relevant sections of the Wirral co-ordinated schemes have therefore been updated accordingly in line with the new Code. For example, all paragraphs which previously referred to Statements of Special Educational Needs now also include reference to the new Education Health and Care Plans.

3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 3.1 It should be noted that the relevant co-ordinated schemes and the Fair Access Protocol apply to all Wirral primary and secondary schools, including Academy schools. A Voluntary Aided primary school and a Community primary school have already made the conversion to Academy status. This additional emphasis on the importance of school governing bodies to understand and apply the Admissions

Code, Wirral co-ordinated scheme and FAP correctly and fairly, otherwise schools will be open to challenge both at parental appeal and by the School's Adjudicator and/or Secretary of State.

- 3.2 Failure to determine the admission arrangements by 15th April of the preceding year would contravene the 2014 Admissions Code and associated guidance.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 None.

5.0 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Consultation on the co-ordinated scheme has taken place with all Wirral schools, other relevant admission authorities and all statutory consultees.
- 5.2 For information, in relation to future years, the new School Admissions Code 2014 has amended the consultation timetable for all admission authorities to bring forward key dates within the year. Under the 2012 Code which applies to the current consultation, the consultation on changes to admission arrangements took place for 8 weeks between 1st November and 1st March of the year before the arrangements applied. From 2015 onwards, the consultation period is reduced to 6 weeks, between 1st October and 31st January.

The date by which the arrangements must be determined has been amended from 15th April to 28th February. These admission arrangements must then be published on the Council's website by 15th March, formerly 1st May. Consequently, the deadline for objections against the admission arrangements to the Schools Adjudicator has also been brought forward from 30th June to 15th May.

6.0 OUTSTANDING PREVIOUSLY APPROVED ACTIONS

- 6.1 None.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 7.1 None.

8.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

- 8.1 The Fair Access Protocol requires a Local Authority Clerk to organise Fair Access Panels, prepare paperwork and disseminate Panel decisions to parents and schools. The cost of this is met from the Admissions budget which is part of the overall Schools budget.

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The arrangements comply with all statutory guidance.

10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?

- (a) Yes and impact review can be found via the following link:

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/community-and-living/equality-diversity-cohesion/equality-impact-assessments/eias-april-2014/eias-families-wellbeing>

11.0 CARBON REDUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 None.

12.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

12.1 None.

13.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

13.1 That Cabinet agree the proposed admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools and the Wirral co-ordinated schemes for 2016-2017.

14.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

14.1 There is a statutory requirement to determine admission arrangements.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Scheme for the coordination of admission arrangements for primary schools 2016-2017

Appendix 2 – Scheme for the coordination of admission arrangements for secondary schools 2016-2017

BACKGROUND PAPERS/REFERENCE MATERIAL

School Admissions Code 2014
School Admissions Appeals Code 2012

BRIEFING NOTES HISTORY

Briefing Note	Date

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Delegated Authority	6th November 2014
Cabinet	13th March 2014

Delegated Authority	7th November 2013
Cabinet	14th March 2013
Delegated Authority	7th November 2012