

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

MAINSTREAM SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides a brief outline of Mainstream Admissions during the most recently fully completed 2021-2022 admission year.

2.0 Mainstream Admissions

2.1 Statutory roles of the Mainstream Admissions team include the administration and allocation of places in all primary and secondary schools, and representing the Council in school place appeals.

For entry to primary/secondary school in September 2022 there were over 3,300 applications for primary school (Foundation 2) and 3,600 for secondary schools (Year 7). The team co-ordinates admission to school with all own admission authority schools within Wirral and other admission authorities in England.

	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	Any Preference	None	No Application offer
Foundation 2	3,120 (95%)	101 (3%)	13 (<1%)	3234 (99%)	46 (1%)	43
Year 7	3275 (90%)	228 (6%)	31 (1%)	3542 (97%)	119 (3%)	37

On-time applicant offers by preference rank and non-applicant offers as at National Offer Day 2022. Wirral residents only, excludes late applications and pupils with an EHCP. "None" indicates a place was offered at a school not given as a preference.

2.2 The team produces appeal statements and presents appeals on behalf of all community and voluntary controlled (VC) schools as a statutory function. Academy, Aided and Foundation/Trust schools prepare and present their own appeals.

For information, the outcomes for the community and VC school appeals handled by the team are shown below.

	Withdrawn (%)	Refused (%)	Agreed (%)	Total
2019-2020	39 (42%)	53 (56%)	2 (2%)	94
2020-2021	44 (44%)	53 (53%)	3 (3%)	100
2021-2022	36 (46%)	42 (53%)	1 (1%)	79

Outcome of appeals lodged for community and voluntary controlled primary and secondary schools by academic year. Withdrawn includes resolved and withdrawn appeals.

The outcome of appeals was similar to previous years.

2.3 The team administers the grammar school selection tests on behalf of the four non-Catholic grammar schools. Around 1,900 children are tested each year. The team is responsible for disseminating the outcome of the selective tests to parents.

2.4 As well as admissions to Foundation 2 and Year 7, the team also processes around 2,000 in-year transfers between and into/out of Wirral schools.

2.5 The Council's Fair Access Protocol applies to "hard to place" young people in specific categories, principally children without a school place due to being new to the area with no place available locally. 74 young people were placed at Wirral

secondary schools and 2 in Wirral primary schools, through the Fair Access Protocol in 2021-2022, compared to 82 secondary and 2 primary in the previous year. This figure excludes placements into Alternative Provision, placements into mainstream schools from the Progress School, or Managed Move decisions.

Of the 76 placements in 2021/22 via Fair Access, 75% related to children who were new to Wirral without a school place, 18% to children returning from elective home education and 7% to transfers between Wirral schools for other Fair Access reasons.

- 2.6 The role of the Fair Access Panel, with a wide membership including officers with responsibility for alternative provision, special educational needs and educational psychology, exclusions etc. and includes decisions on Managed Move destinations, as well as re-integration decisions for young people with a single permanent exclusion.

3.0 Finance

- 3.1 The overall budget for School Admissions in 2023-2024 is £402,604. The costs include:

Staffing (8.6 FTE)	£306,498
Overheads	£1,200
Software & Third Party	£94,479
Selection	£43,400
Income/recharges	(£42,974)
Total	£402,604

- 3.2 Forum should note that there are from time to time unavoidable increases in staffing costs due to nationally agreed public sector pay awards and third party costs which may necessitate a concurrent rise in the Admissions budget to avoid an overspend.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Forum notes the report.

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