CONSULTATION ON ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2014

Where admission authorities are considering changes their admission arrangements they need to consult on the proposed changes. Ealing Council is the admission authority for Ealing Community Schools. This consultation relates to possible changes in the admissions arrangements for Ealing community schools for September 2014 at the earliest. The possible changes which we are considering are:

- Community Primary Schools: Giving the same priority to children with siblings at the school; and
- Community Primary and High Schools: Giving priority to children of staff employed at the school

Further information on these possible changes is set out in this document. A copy of the current admission arrangements are attached as appendix 1.

Have your say

Your views are important to us and will be taken into consideration when the Council makes the decision on whether to adopt any changes to the admission criteria for 2014. Please complete the attached response form before the end of February.

Giving Priority to children with siblings at the school

Where there are more applications for places at a school, the current arrangements give a higher priority to children living in the school’s catchment areas with siblings at the school at the time they will start school than those with siblings at the school, but who live outside the catchment area.

We estimate that in 2012 about 60 families who made on-time applications were affected. This means that the parent has to arrange for children to attend different schools or seek to move the older child to the same school. To avoid this situation, some parents who are able to do so move into the school’s catchment area.

Due to the growing demand for places it is more likely that the Authority may only be able to offer places to some children outside of their catchment area. Where this happens, under the current arrangements their younger brother or sister, when they start school, will have little chance of obtaining a place at the school attended by their older sibling and, if their home is on the far edge of a catchment area, at their catchment area school too.

If this change was implemented it would mean that in popular schools that some catchment children who had no sibling connection would not gain a place at that
school. As the pupil population increases this could affect more schools and therefore less children living in a school’s catchment would obtain a place.

In addition, parents without siblings at the school may feel that living in the catchment area of a school gives them a much better chance of obtaining a place and that if families move out of the catchment area, they should face the consequences of not gaining places at the same school as their older siblings.

Having said this, most parents do want their children to attend the same school. In the case of high schools, we do not have catchment areas. Siblings are given a higher priority than those without a brother or sister at the school.

We would welcome comments on the following options:

**Option 1:** Change the admission arrangements so that siblings are given the same priority irrespective of the catchment in which they live.

**Option 2:** Where the eldest child has been allocated a place at an out-catchment school, then that school is treated as the catchment school for their younger brothers and sisters, whilst this option addresses some of the criticisms of option 1 we think that it would be timely and difficult to implement.

**Option 3:** Retain the current arrangements

We are also proposing to change the name of catchment areas to priority admission areas. Changing the name from catchment area to priority area is less likely to give the impression that parents have a guarantee of a place.

Do you support this change in name?

**Give priority to children of staff employed at the school**

The Admission Code which came into force on 1 February 2012 allows schools to give priority to children of staff. The Authority already gives priority for newly appointed staff (see the appendix - admissions criteria).

Schools may be in favour of this criterion to aid the retention of staff. However, there are other issues that need to be considered with regard to this possible criterion. Children of staff would have to be defined, for example, does it cover all staff irrespective of their length of service, whether they were temporary sessional or permanent staff.

We would welcome your comments on this proposal.

Do you support the principle of giving priority to staff employed at the school?
If so, what staff should be covered?

What other criteria should be included – for example, length of service; type of contract; would it cover staff who based at a school but are not employed by the school, for example, some cleaning and premises staff
CURRENT ADMISSION CRITERIA FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

ADMISSION CRITERIA FOR COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOLS

The criteria listed in order of priority are:

1. Looked after children or children who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order.

CATCHMENT

2. Catchment children with a brother or sister who will be attending the main school (not the nursery class) at the time of admission*.

3. Catchment children with a brother or sister who will be attending the main school (not the nursery class) on the same site* (this refers only to Berrymede Infant and Junior schools) at the time of admission.

*NOTE

The words brother and sister refer to all blood, half, foster, step and adoptive brothers and sisters (not cousins) who live at the same home and in the same family unit as the child on a permanent basis or for the majority of time in any calendar year. A sibling relationship does not apply when the older child(ren) will leave before the younger one starts.

4. Catchment children with exceptional medical or social circumstances. The medical circumstances must relate to the child, and parents will be expected to provide supporting evidence from a consultant who is monitoring the child’s condition (not General Practitioner {GP}) in relation to medical circumstances, or a social worker (or other appropriate professionally qualified person) in relation to social circumstances. All supporting evidence showing why priority should be given to the first preference school must be submitted at the time of application. Priority under this criterion can only be given for the first preference school.

The Admissions Panel will consider all claimed exceptional medical or social circumstances in line with admissions criteria and inform parents of their decision.

5. Catchment children on the basis of distance from the child’s permanent home address to the preferred school.
The distance from home to school is measured by straight-line, from a point in the property to a point in the school determined by the grid references for the centre of the school's postcode.

The measuring system is an integral part of the admission software produced by Tribal Technology Ltd. It uses Ordnance Survey maps and the LLPG (Local Land Property Gazetteer) and is accurate to 1 metre.

It does not mean that we will be able to allocate a place at the school nearest to your address.

OUT CATCHMENT

6. Children living outside the catchment area with a brother or sister who will be attending the main school (not the nursery class) at the time of admission (as in 2)

7. Children living outside the catchment area with a brother or sister who will be attending the main school (not the nursery class) on the same site (this refers only to Berrymede Infant and Junior Schools)

8. Children living outside the catchment area with exceptional medical or social circumstances (as in 4)

9. Children living outside the catchment area on the basis of distance from the child’s permanent home address to the preferred school (as in 5)

Any combination of two or more criteria give higher priority than one criterion. For example, a brother/sister connection and agreed medical/social circumstances would give priority over a brother/sister connection.

If two or more children have equal priority under the criteria, the criterion of distance will then be applied.

TIE BREAK

In the event that the distances are equal the Local Authority will draw lots to determine which applicant should be offered the place.

TWINS, TRIPLETS OR OTHER CHILDREN FROM MULTIPLE BIRTHS

The Local Authority does not give priority under its admission criteria for twins, triplets or other children from multiple births, however, the Local Authority will admit twins and children from multiple births when one of the siblings is the thirtieth child admitted.

CHILDREN OF NEWLY APPOINTED STAFF
After the published offer date, where there is a demonstrable skills shortage for a vacant post (independent evidence is required), the admission authority will place the children of a new appointee for the post in question, at the top of the waiting list for places at the school.

**DEFERRED ENTRY TO PRIMARY SCHOOL**

If a child has not reached compulsory school age, the parent has the option of deferring their child’s entry. Parents can request that the date their child is admitted to the school is deferred until later in the school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age. If a child does not reach compulsory school age until September of the following year he/she will be placed in year 1.

Parents can also request that their child attends part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age.

NB Children reach compulsory school age the term after they are 5.

Apply by the closing date and when you receive your offer you need to inform the LA and the school that you want to defer entry or only attend school part-time.

**ADMISSION CRITERIA FOR COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOLS**

1. **CHILDREN IN PUBLIC CARE**
   Looked after children or children who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order. Children who are in public care are as defined in Section 22 of the 1989 Children’s Act (this includes foster children).

2. **BROTHER OR SISTER WHO WILL STILL BE ATTENDING THE SCHOOL AT THE TIME OF ADMISSION**
   The words brother or sister refer to all blood, half, foster, step and adoptive brothers and sisters (not cousins) who live at the same home and in the same family unit as the child on a permanent basis or for the majority of time in any calendar year. A sibling connection does not apply for children whose older sibling will/may be attending the 6th form in years 12 & 13.

3. **EXCEPTIONAL MEDICAL OR SOCIAL CIRCUMSTANCES FOR THE FIRST PREFERRED SCHOOL**
   The medical circumstances must relate to the child, and parents will be expected to provide supporting evidence from a consultant who is monitoring the child’s condition (not General Practitioner {GP}) in relation to medical
circumstances, or a social worker (or other appropriate professionally qualified person) in relation to social circumstances. All supporting evidence showing why education should be at the first preferred school must be submitted at the time of application. Priority under this criterion can only be given for the first preference school.

The Admissions Panel will consider all claimed exceptional medical or social circumstances in line with admissions criteria and inform parents of their decision.

4. DISTANCE FROM THE CHILD’S PERMANENT HOME ADDRESS TO THE PREFERRED SCHOOL
The distance from home to all community high schools, except Elthorne Park High School, is measured by straight line from a point in the property determined by Ordnance Survey to a point in the school determined by the grid references for the centre of the school’s postcode. The measuring system is an integral part of the admissions software produced by Tribal Technology Ltd. It uses Ordnance Survey maps and is accurate to 1 metre.

The distance from home to Elthorne Park High School is measured by shortest walking route. The distance is measured from a point in the property along the centre of the road (determined by Ordnance Survey) to the nearest gated entrance which is used by pupils to enter the school grounds.

It does not mean that we will be able to allocate a place at the school nearest to your address.

Any combination of two or more criteria gives higher priority than one criterion. For example, a brother/sister connection and agreed medical/social circumstances would give priority over a brother/sister connection.

If two or more children have equal priority under the criteria, the criterion of distance set out in point 4 will be applied.

TIE BREAK
In the event that the distances are equal the Local Authority (not the school) will draw lots to determine which applicant should be offered the place.

TWIN OR CHILDREN FROM MULTIPLE BIRTHS
The Local Authority does not give priority under its admission criteria for twins, triplets or other children from multiple births, however, the Local Authority will admit twins and children from multiple births when one of the siblings is the thirtieth child.
Issue A – possible change to community primary schools criteria

E FORM

Giving the same priority to children with siblings at the school

OPTION 1
Comments……………………………………………………………………………………
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OPTION 2
Comments……………………………………………………………………………………
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OPTION 3
Comments……………………………………………………………………………………
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Do you support the change of name? …………………

Do you support the principle of giving priority to staff employed at the school?
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If so what staff should be covered?
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What other criteria should be included?
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