



Walsall Council

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Walsall Children's Services

Mr S Flynn
St Thomas More Catholic School
Darlaston Lane
Willenhall
WV14 7BL

Your Ref:
Our Ref: JT/LJH
Date: 24 August 2012
Ask for: Julie Taylor
Direct Line: 01922 686212

Dear Sean,

Procedural Errors and Admissions

Unfortunately there were a relatively small number of processing errors made by the Admissions Team during the 2012 primary admissions round which resulted in infant class sizes of 30 for the primary or nursery schools affected.

The Admissions Team processed approximately 3,500 primary preference forms and from these forms seven sibling input errors were made and four system errors. Where the Admissions Authority makes a genuine procedural error then the children affected are offered their place of preference. From a school's perspective, these children are classified as 'excepted pupils' in relation to the infant class size limit for the whole of their infant education as long as they remain at the school, or until the class goes back to its admissions limit. From the School Forum's perspective, there is no financial disadvantage to affected schools by having to employ an additional class teacher, for a very small number of pupils, or even just one pupil.

In some instances, where there are infant classes of over 30, as a result of procedural errors, the number of pupils will revert back to the class admission number of 30 before the start of the academic year in question. This is already the case for two schools with 'excepted pupils' for September 2012.

All parents have the right of appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel if they wish to challenge the LA's decision not to offer their child their Community of Voluntary Controlled schools of preference. The LA will always make this decision on the grounds that the school is full. If it is the decision of the Independent Appeal Panel to overrule the decision of the LA, then the school must admit the children. However, as far as admissions to reception is concerned, these pupils would again be exempted from the class size limit as 'excepted pupils'. Therefore, the school would not be entitled to additional funding to employ another teacher to work with a very small number of pupils, or just one pupil, in most cases.

The table below details the number of excepted pupils in infant and primary schools for September 2012:

	Processing Errors	Independent Appeals
Infant Schools	6	3
Primary Schools	5	10
Secondary Schools	0	0
Total	11	13

As far as I am aware, there were no procedural errors affecting the secondary admissions round for September 2012. However, I am aware that there was an issue affecting one Academy in relation to the cross border information, late on in the admissions process. However, this had no significant impact on schools.

As you are aware, I have set up an Admissions Sub Group to review the admissions procedures for 2013, in order to make improvements to the systems and improve information flows whenever possible.

The work of the Admissions Team is a high priority for all parties involved in the educational system, but particularly for parents and their children. The Team are hard working and diligent and they are keen to introduce changes to their working practices which will minimise the risk of future procedural errors for 2013, as well as improving the flow of information.

I trust that the information answers the question raised by the Schools Forum.

Yours sincerely,



Julie Taylor
Head of Service