

Cabinet - 21 March 2007

Determination of Admission Arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools for the 2008/09 School Year

Portfolio: Councillor Zahid Ali, Children's Services

Service: Education Walsall

Wards: All

Key decision: Yes

Forward Plan: Yes

Summary of report

Walsall Council is the admission authority for community and voluntary controlled schools in Walsall. Section 89 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 requires admission authorities to determine the admission arrangements by 15 April 2007 for the 2008/09 school year

Recommendations

That Cabinet:

- (1) Agree the admission arrangements for primary and secondary community and voluntary controlled schools for the academic year 2008/2009 as set out in this report.
- (2) Approve the publication of the associated statutory notice.
- (3) Ask Education Walsall to inform all consultees of the determination of the admission arrangements for 2008/09.

Resource and legal considerations

Walsall Council, as the admission authority, has a statutory duty to consult annually on the proposed admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools.

Admission authorities are statutorily required to complete consultation on their proposed admission arrangements for the 2008/09 school year by 1 March 2007 and must determine (or finalise) these by 15 April 2007.

The proposed admission arrangements comply with the School Admissions Code of Practice.

A school's Planned Admission Number (PAN) is set in line with the net capacity assessment for the school. A number of schools have a PAN which is lower than their Indicated Admission Number (IAN). Where this is the case, the Council is statutorily required to publish a notice stating the reason why the PAN is lower and informing parents that they may object to the PAN. Details of the schools where this applies are provided in Appendix 1.

The PAN for a small number of schools has been revised to take account of changes in their accommodation. These amendments are highlighted as shaded areas in the IAN column of the table in Section 1, Appendix 1.

The admission criteria may need to be revised to reflect locally agreed protocols on hard to place pupils which are currently being developed in line with guidance which has been recently issued by the DfES.

Sections 5 and 6 in Appendix 1 outline the admissions timetables. These have been revised to reflect the timescale of 6 weeks for parents to decide on their preferences in line with the School Information Regulations.

Citizen impact

The admission arrangements provide information for parents regarding admission to primary and secondary schools and will help them to decide upon their preferences when applying for a place for their child.

Community safety

There are no direct implications arising from this Report.

Environmental impact

There are no direct implications arising from this Report.

Performance and risk management issues

The admission arrangements will be included in the *Information Booklet for Parents*. The provision of clear information will help parents to decide upon their preferences when applying for a school place for their child and will contribute to a reduction in the number of appeals.

Equality implications

The Code of Practice requires Admission Authorities to consider the possible impact, direct or indirect, of their proposed oversubscription criteria on equal opportunities.

Consultation

Education Walsall consulted informally with all Walsall community and voluntary controlled schools during the Autumn Term 2006.

Formal consultation with all Walsall Schools, the Walsall Academy, neighbouring LAs, Diocesan representatives and the Walsall Admission Forum took place during the Spring Term 2007.

In accordance with Section 102 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, the Governors of Shelfield Sports and Community College have indicated that they wish to take advantage of this opportunity to give priority to up to 10% of children who can demonstrate an aptitude for sport. If there are not enough children to fill the proportion of selective aptitude places, those places will be filled by children using the school's published non-selective oversubscription criteria. This proposal has been the subject of consultation with stakeholders including other schools and the Local Admissions Forum. The Forum were supportive of this proposal, but emphasised the need for the school to ensure equality of access for all young people.

Vision 2008

The proposed admission arrangements contribute to the delivery of Walsall's vision for 2008 – *Section 4 Make Our Schools Great* by setting out clear information regarding admission to Walsall schools.

Background papers

DfES: School Admissions Code of Practice

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Signed:



Executive Director: David Brown

Date: 12 March 2007

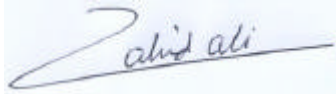


Signed:

Managing Director, Education Walsall

Date: 12 March 2007

Signed:



Portfolio Holder: Councillor Zahid Ali

Date: 12 March 2007

APPENDIX 1

Admission Arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools for 2008/09 Year

1. ADMISSION NUMBERS for PRIMARY and SECONDARY SCHOOLS

The following pages show the Admission Numbers and capacities proposed for community and voluntary controlled schools in 2008/09.

The Admission Number is the capacity of the school to admit children at the normal age of entry in the 2008/09 academic year, ie:

- admissions into Reception in infant and primary schools,
- admissions into Year 3 in junior schools and
- admissions into Year 7 in secondary schools.

Community or Voluntary Controlled Primary Schools	Indicated Admission Number (Based on net capacity assessment - NCA)	Proposed Admission Number	Reason for Proposing a Lower Admission Number
Abbey Primary	30	30	
Alumwell Infant	90	90	
Alumwell Junior	90	90	
Barcroft Primary	60	60	
Beacon Primary	45	45	
Bentley Drive JMI	60	60	
Bentley West Primary	60	60	
Birchills CE Primary Community	45	45	
Blackwood	90	90	
Blakenall Heath Junior	60	60	
Bloxwich CE JMI	45	45	
Brownhills West Primary	29	30	
Busill Jones Primary	45	45	
Butts Primary	30	30	
Caldmore Community Primary	30	30	
Castlefort JMI	30	30	
Christ Church CE (C) JMI	30	30	
Chuckery Primary	60	60	
County Bridge Primary	30	30	
Croft Community Primary	29	30	
Delves Infant	90	90	
Delves Junior	81	90	
Edgar Stammers Primary	45	45	
Elmore Green Primary	41	45	
Fibbersley Park Primary	60	60	

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1. ADMISSION NUMBERS

Name of Community or Voluntary Controlled Primary Schools	Indicated Admission Number (Based on net capacity assessment - NCA)	Proposed Admission Number	Reason for Proposing a Lower Admission Number
Green Rock Primary	34	30	Compliance with Infant Class Size legislation
Greenfield Primary	30	30	
Harden Primary	45	45	
Hatherton Primary	60	60	
Hillary Primary	60	60	
Holy Trinity CE Primary	29	30	
King Charles Primary	30	30	
King's Hill Primary	45	45	
Leamore Primary	30	30	
Leighswood JMI	70	70	
Lindens Primary	45	45	
Little Bloxwich CE (VC) Primary	30	30	
Lodge Farm JMI	36	45	
Lower Farm Primary	53	60	
Meadow View JMI	55	60	
Millfield Primary	30	30	
Moorcroft Wood Primary	30	30	
Mossley Primary	30	30	
New Invention Infant	90	90	
New Invention Junior	84	90	
North Walsall Primary	30	30	
Old Church CE (C) Primary	42	45	
Palfrey Infant	90	90	
Palfrey Junior	90	90	
Pelsall Village	51	60	
Pinfold Street JMI	58	60	
Pool Hayes Primary	30	30	
The Radleys Primary	30	30	
Rosedale CE (C) Infant	60	60	
Rough Hay Primary	45	45	
Rushall JMI	30	30	
Ryders Hayes	55	60	
Salisbury Primary	45	45	
Short Heath Junior	60	60	

1. ADMISSION NUMBERS

Name of Community or Voluntary Controlled Primary Schools	Indicated Admission Number (Based on net capacity assessment - NCA)	Proposed Admission Number	Reason for Proposing a Lower Admission Number
St Giles CE Primary	45	45	
St James Primary	45	30	It is intended to use some of the school accommodation for a Children's Centre
St John's CE Primary	45	45	
St Michael's CE (C) Primary	45	45	
Sunshine Infant and Nursery	60	60	
Walsall Wood	30	30	
Watling Street JMI	30	30	
Whetstone Field Primary	30	30	
Whitehall Nursery and Infant	86	90	
Whitehall Junior Community	80	80	
Woodlands Primary	55	60	

Name of Community Secondary Schools	Indicated Admission Number (Based on net capacity assessment - NCA)	Proposed Admission Number	Reason for Proposing a Lower Admission Number
Alumwell Business & Enterprise College	195	195	
Brownhills Community Technology College	182	182	
Darlaston Community Science College	245	245	
Frank F Harrison Community School	180	180	
Joseph Leckie Community Technology College	240	240	
Pool Hayes Community School	191	213	
Rushall Community College	90	90	
Sheffield Sports and Community College	242*	242	
Sneyd Community School	245	250	
Willenhall School Sports College	252	270	

*It is proposed to reserve a maximum of 10% of these places as specialist sports places.

2. OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

If there are more applications than there are places available, places will be allocated using the Oversubscription Criteria in the following order of priority:

1. Children in Public Care (looked after children).
2. Children who have an older brother or sister already in attendance at the school or paired junior school, when the application is made.
3. Children for whom a place at the school is essential on medical or social grounds and supported in writing by a medical practitioner or a social worker. (Applications will be subject to verification by the Managing Director, Education Walsall).
4. *For applications to junior schools only.* Attendance by the child at the relevant paired infant school, when the application is made.
5. *For applications to voluntary controlled Church of England primary schools only.* 25% of places to be allocated as 'Church Places' to children, regardless of distance between home and school, whose parents are regular worshippers at a Christian church and whose application is supported in writing by the minister of the church where they worship.
6. Distance between the home address and the school as measured in a straight line with priority given to those living closest.

If there is oversubscription in criteria 2 to 5, priority will be given to those living closest to the school as measured in a straight line.

2a. Explanatory notes for Oversubscription Criteria

Criterion 1 - The definition of children in public care (looked after children) is:

Children who are in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by a local authority.

Criterion 2 - The definition of a brother or sister is:

A brother or sister sharing the same parents;
half-brother or half-sister, where two children share one common parent;
step-brother or step-sister, where two children are related by a parent's marriage;
This includes any adopted or fostered children.

A brother or sister must be resident at the same address.

2a. Explanatory notes for Oversubscription Criteria

Criterion 2 & 4 Paired infant and junior schools are:

Alumwell Infant	paired with	Alumwell Junior
Delves Infant	paired with	Delves Junior
New Invention Infant	paired with	New Invention Junior
Palfrey Infant	paired with	Palfrey Junior
Rosedale CE (C) Infant	paired with	Short Heath Junior
Sunshine Infant and Nursery	paired with	Blakenall Heath Junior
Whitehall Nursery and Infant	paired with	Whitehall Junior Community

Criterion 3 - Social or medical factors

Applications using social or medical factors will be subject to verification by the Managing Director, Education Walsall, to ensure these factors are fully relevant to the school preference expressed. The medical or social grounds must relate to the child. The social grounds criterion is only likely to apply to children in need as defined by The Children Act 1989.

Criterion 5 - Church Places at voluntary controlled Church of England primary schools

Voluntary controlled Church of England primary schools with an admission number of 30 will offer a maximum of 7 Church Places; schools with an admission number of 45 will offer a maximum of 11 Church Places; schools with an admission number of 60 will offer a maximum of 15 Church Places. If there is over-subscription for Church Places, priority will be given to those living closest to the school as measured in a straight line.

Criterion 6 - Definition of a home address

The home address of a child is considered to be the permanent residence of a child in a residential property when the place is offered. The address must be the child's only or main residence and is either:

- owned by the child's parent, parents or guardian;
- Leased to or rented by the child's parent, parents or guardian under lease or written rental agreement of not less than six months duration.

Documentary evidence of ownership or rental agreement may be required together with proof of actual permanent residence at the property concerned. In certain circumstances the child's current school may be asked to verify the address given.

Where parents have shared responsibility for a child and the child lives with both parents for part of the week, the main residence will be determined as the address where the child lives for the majority of the week. Parents may be requested to supply documentary evidence to support the address used for the application.

The offer of a place is based upon the address of the child when the offer is made. If a child is offered a place at an oversubscribed school the place may be withdrawn if it is found that the child moved (before the place was offered) to a new address which was further away from the school and would not have qualified for a place on the distance criterion.

3. MINIMUM ENTRY REQUIREMENTS FOR YEAR 12

Each school is required to publish in their school prospectus the minimum entry requirements for entry into Year 12.

Pupils will be considered for entry into Year 12 based upon their academic attainment and/or individual subject grade criteria and the availability and suitability of courses at the school. Entry to Year 12 is not dependent upon attendance or behaviour records.

No community secondary school admits into Year 12 as a normal year of entry and therefore Year 12 admission numbers are not appropriate.

Pupils refused a place in Year 12 in their own school are entitled to appeal to an independent appeal panel.

4. OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA FOR NURSERY SCHOOLS AND CLASSES

Applications for nursery places should be made direct to the school.

If there are more applications than there are nursery places available then places will be allocated using the Oversubscription Criteria in the following order of priority:

- A. Priority for nursery places will be given to children born between 1 September 2004 and 31 August 2005. If places are oversubscribed the following Oversubscription Criteria will apply:
1. Children in Public Care (looked after children).
 2. Children who have an older brother or sister already in attendance at the school or paired junior school, when the application is made.
 3. Children for whom a place at the school is essential on medical or social grounds and supported in writing by a medical practitioner or a social worker. (Applications will be subject to verification by the Managing Director, Education Walsall).
 4. Distance between the home address and the school as measured in a straight line with priority given to those living closest.
- B. Where places are still available schools may only offer places to children who have **attained** the age of 3. If the remaining places are oversubscribed the Oversubscription Criteria 1 - 4, shown above, will apply.

If there is oversubscription in criteria 2 and 3, priority will be given to those living closest to the school as measured in a straight line.

Cut off points for admission into nursery schools and classes are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August each year.

5. APPLICATION PROCEDURES AND TIMETABLES FOR TRANSFER TO SECONDARY SCHOOLS

From 2005, Education Walsall has taken part in an inter-LA co-ordinated admission scheme with a number of neighbouring LAs, namely Birmingham, Dudley, Sandwell, Staffordshire and Wolverhampton.

On Friday 13 July 2007 Education Walsall will issue the “Walsall Preference Form” to enable Walsall parents of Year 6 children (who will transfer to secondary education in September 2008) to name up to 5 secondary schools, rank them in order of preference and give reasons for their preference. The Walsall Preference Form may be used to apply for a place at any secondary school in or outside the borough.

Parents who name Queen Mary’s Grammar School, Queen Mary’s High School, The Walsall Academy, a Specialist Music Place at Aldridge School or a Specialist Sports Place at Shelfield Sports and Community College on the Preference Form must also complete the schools’ own Registration Form.

Parents who name Blue Coat CE Performing Arts Specialist College or St Francis of Assisi Catholic School on the Preference Form must also complete the schools’ own supplementary information form.

Parents who name St Thomas More Catholic Business and Enterprise College on the Preference Form must also complete the schools’ own supplementary information form and minister of religion support form.

The closing date for receipt of Walsall Preference Forms is Friday 12 October 2007.

All applications for named schools will be considered in accordance with each school’s published admission criteria. Schools which are their own admission authority will be informed of all applications naming their school, but not the rankings. These schools will inform Education Walsall of the order in which all applicants meet their admission criteria.

By 19 November 2007, Education Walsall will exchange application data and supporting documentation in respect of pupils resident in Walsall, who have applied for schools outside the borough, with the appropriate maintaining LAs. The information received will state which out of borough residents have expressed preferences for Walsall secondary schools.

By 11 January 2008, Education Walsall will input the results of all applications to Walsall schools and a list of potential offers will then be produced. These potential offers will then be exchanged with other LAs in respect of the results of out of borough applications. The information received will state which Walsall residents have the potential offer of a place in an out of borough school. This information will be transferred onto the Walsall database, compared to rankings and will result in a list of provisional offers.

By 25 January 2008, the provisional offers will be exchanged with other LAs in respect of out of borough applications. The information received will state which Walsall residents have a provisional offer of a place in an out of borough school. These will be transferred onto the Walsall database, compared to rankings and the results will be the final allocation of places at Walsall secondary schools.

By 15 February 2008, parents of children with statements of special educational needs will be advised of the secondary school it is proposed should be named on the statement with effect from September 2008.

By 15 February 2008 the final allocations will be exchanged with the other LAs in respect of the results of out of borough applications.

If a Walsall child does not meet the admission criteria for any of their ranked schools then Education Walsall will allocate a place at the nearest alternative community secondary school with vacant places.

On the National Notification Date, 1 March 2008, Education Walsall will, on behalf of the relevant admission authorities, write to all parents resident in Walsall, informing them of the outcome of their applications. This letter will also inform parents of the reason for refusal of places, their right of appeal in that event and will give contact details for appeals information.

6. APPLICATION PROCEDURES AND TIMETABLES FOR ADMISSIONS TO RECEPTION AND TRANSFERS TO YEAR 3 FROM INFANT SCHOOLS

On Friday 21 September 2007 Education Walsall will issue the “Preference Form for Walsall Primary Schools” through primary, infant and nursery schools to enable parents to name up to 2 Walsall primary schools, rank them in order of preference and give reasons for their preference, for children:

- who are eligible for admission to a reception class, or
- who are required to transfer from a Year 2 class in an infant school to a Year 3 class in a junior or primary school.

Preference Forms must be returned to the Planning, Admissions and Transport Unit by the closing date of Friday 9 November 2007.

All applications for named schools will be considered in accordance with each school's published admission criteria. Schools that are their own admission authorities will be provided with a list of information in respect of all applications naming their school, but not the rankings, together with copies of any supporting documentation. These schools will use the information provided to apply their admission criteria and will then inform Education Walsall of the order in which all applicants meet their admission criteria.

The following schools are their own admission authorities:-

Foundation Schools	Voluntary Aided Church of England Schools	Voluntary Aided Catholic Schools
Manor Primary School	Blue Coat CE (A) Infant School	St Anne's Catholic Primary School
Park Hall Infant School	Blue Coat CE (A) Junior School	St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School
Park Hall Junior School	Cooper and Jordan CE(VA) Primary School	St Francis Catholic Primary School
Pheasey Park Farm Primary School		St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
		St Mary of the Angels Catholic Primary School
		St Mary's the Mount Catholic Primary School
		St Patrick's Catholic Primary School
		St Peter's Catholic Primary School
		St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School

6. APPLICATION PROCEDURES AND TIMETABLES FOR ADMISSIONS TO RECEPTION AND TRANSFERS TO YEAR 3 FROM INFANT SCHOOLS

Where a child meets the admission criteria of more than one of the schools named on the Preference Form then Education Walsall will allocate a place at the highest ranked of those schools. Admission authorities will be advised of the pupils to be offered places.

On Tuesday 11 March 2008, Education Walsall will write to parents to notify them of the offer of one place in a Walsall primary school.

If a Walsall child does not meet the admission criteria for either of their ranked schools then Education Walsall will allocate a place at the nearest alternative community or voluntary controlled primary school with vacant places.

7. LATE APPLICATION POLICY

Preference Forms and, where appropriate, schools' own Registration Forms, received after the Closing Date, are classed as late applications. Any request to change the name or ranking of a school made after the Closing Date will be classed as a late application.

Late applications will normally be considered for places after applications that were received by the Closing Date. Therefore, late applicants may be less likely to be offered a place at one of their preferred schools.

If a Walsall Preference Form is received late the application will be passed to the appropriate admission authority for consideration under its Late Application Policy. Each admission authority is required to publish its own Late Application Policy which explains how late applications will be dealt with. The Late Application Policy for all Walsall community and voluntary controlled schools is shown below.

7a. Late Applications received up to 4 weeks after the Closing Date

Late applications received up to four weeks after the Closing Date may be considered but only where there are exceptional circumstances.

- Where the family were unable to complete the Walsall Preference Form by the Closing Date because they moved into the Borough of Walsall after the issue of the Walsall Preference Form
or
- The family were unable to comply with the admission timetable because of exceptional circumstances which prevented the Walsall Preference Form arriving on time
or
- When a single parent has been ill for some time

In either case the circumstances must be given in writing at the time of application and attached firmly to the Walsall Preference Form and will be subject to verification by the Managing Director, Education Walsall.

This applies to applications for secondary schools received between 13 October and 9 November 2007. For primary schools, this applies to applications received between 10 November and 7 December 2007.

7b. Late Applications received more than 4 weeks after the Closing Date

Applications for schools received more than 4 weeks after the Closing Date but before the Notification Date will be considered only after all other applications.

This applies to applications for secondary schools received between 10 November 2007 and 28 February 2008. For primary schools, this applies to applications received between 8 December 2007 and 10 March 2008.

7c. Applications Received After the Notification Date (once places have been offered)

Any late application for a place at an oversubscribed school which is received after places have been allocated will be added to the school's Waiting List in admission criteria order.

Any late application for a place at an undersubscribed school will be offered a place.

From September 2008, each oversubscribed Walsall school is responsible for starting and maintaining a new Waiting List. Parents should contact the school to be added to their Waiting List.

8. WAITING LIST POLICY

Waiting Lists for all Walsall schools except Walsall Academy will be maintained by Education Walsall until the last day of the summer term on 22 July 2008. Parents may enquire about their child's position on any Waiting List by telephoning Education Walsall (01922) 686357/686358.

Waiting Lists are kept of all children who have been refused a place at any school which was ranked higher than the school at which they have been offered a place, for example

- If a child is offered a place at the school that was ranked 2nd on the Walsall Preference Form then the child's name will only be placed on the Waiting List for the school that was ranked 1st.
- If a child is offered a place at their first choice school the child's name will not be added to any Waiting List kept for their other ranked schools.

After 1 March 2008 for Secondary transfers or 11 March 2008 for Primary admissions a parent may contact Education Walsall to apply for a place at an oversubscribed Walsall school. Their child's name will be placed on the school's Waiting List in admission criteria order. Any vacancies will be offered on the basis of the admission criteria for the school.

From September 2008, each oversubscribed Walsall school is responsible for starting and maintaining a new Waiting List. Parents should contact the school to be added to their Waiting List.

8a. Waiting List Policy for Casual Admissions to Nursery, Primary and Secondary Schools

A Waiting List is kept for any oversubscribed year group. The Waiting List will be kept in admission criteria order. Any vacancies will be offered on the basis of the school's published admission criteria.

A Waiting List is kept for one term only. On the last day of each school term the names of all children will be removed from the Waiting List. If a parent wants their child's name to be added to a new Waiting List they must write to the school at the beginning of the new school term.

Parents may enquire about their child's position on the Waiting List by contacting the school concerned.

9. DEFERRED ENTRY POLICY

Children reach compulsory school age on the first day of the term following their fifth birthday. However, all Walsall primary schools provide full time places for pupils in a reception class from September in the year before children reach their fifth birthday.

If parents prefer their child to start school later than 1 September 2008, they have the option of deferring the child's entry until later in the 2008/09 school year. Parents opting for this must notify the school in writing of the date they wish their child to start in a reception class.

Parents are not able to defer entry beyond the beginning of the term following their child's fifth birthday or beyond the academic year for which admission is sought. This is because the school place is held for that child and is not available to be offered to another child.

10. CASUAL ADMISSION POLICY

Nursery and Primary schools

Parents wishing to move their children to a nursery or primary school in Walsall, other than at normal transfer age, should contact the school direct.

A school should respond to a request for a place as soon as possible and normally within 10 school days. A school may ask parents to apply for a place in writing. If a place cannot be offered, the school will give reasons for this in writing and advise parents of their right of appeal.

Secondary schools

Education Walsall has introduced a coordinated approach to admissions to all maintained secondary schools. Parents should, in the first instance, approach the Secondary admissions team, who will provide advice. Parents may express up to three preferences, which will then be forwarded to schools. Some schools may require parents to complete their own admissions form.

The schools should respond to a request for a place as soon as possible and normally within 10 school days. If a place cannot be offered, the school will give reasons for this in writing and advise parents of their right of appeal.

Parents of children with a statement of special educational needs (SEN) must contact the SEN section of Education Walsall or the LA that issued the statement if they wish to move to a school that is not named in Part 4 of their child's statement.