
**SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2018/2019 AND CO-ORDINATED
SECONDARY SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2018-2020 –
DRAFT CABINET REPORT**

Purpose of Report

1. To provide Members with the opportunity to consider and review the Draft Cabinet Report for School Admission Arrangements 2018/19 and co-ordinated secondary schools admission arrangements 2018 - 2020 (copy attached at **Appendix A**).
2. This report is to inform the Cabinet of responses received following consultations on:
 - the Council's School Admission Arrangements 2018/18
 - the proposed implementation of Co-ordinated Secondary School Admission Arrangements for the period 2018-2020

Background

School Admission Arrangements 2018/19

3. The Council is required to annually review its School's Admission Policy, to ensure that the Council meets its statutory responsibilities. In order to comply with the legislation, the School Admission Arrangements for implementation in the 18/19 academic year (ie. From September 2018) must be determined on or before 15 April 2017.
4. The Council's draft School Admissions Policy 2018/19, (see Appendix 1), was issued for consultation on 5 December 2016 and closed on 23 January 2017. There was minimal change to the policy for 2018/19. The change made was as follows:

- Clarification of the proximity measurement of pupils living in the same building i.e. flats/apartments. In such instances, the route assessment will be determined from the front entrance of each dwelling.

Coordinated Admission Arrangements Pilot

5. In conjunction with the consultation on the School Admission Arrangements 2018/19, a public consultation on the proposed introduction of co-ordinated admission arrangements for the Year 7 age group for intakes in September 2018, September 2019 and September 2020 was undertaken. This change does not constitute a change to policy but proposes a revised system for administering the admissions process in conjunction with other admission authorities operating in Cardiff.
6. There are currently no formal co-ordinated admission arrangements in Wales despite the Welsh Government recognising Cardiff has 30 Admissions Authorities (far more than any other Local Authority in Wales) of which 23 are Primary School Governing Bodies, 6 are Secondary School Governing Bodies and 1 is the Council.
7. At present parents, apply for secondary education places by submitting a school admission form to the Admission Authority of their preferred school. Any request for admission to a Faith or Foundation school must be made directly to the Governing Body of that school. Requests for admission to any Community school must be made to the Council.
8. Whilst parents may apply for multiple schools and inform the Council of which community schools are their preferred option(s), they are not required to confirm whether they have made applications to other admission authorities nor which non-community school is their higher or lower preference. As a result, parents could be offered more than one school place for their child with some parents choosing to 'hold' offers for more than one school, preventing other children being offered these places.
9. As a result of this, whilst some parents receive offers for their child at multiple schools, other parents have been unsuccessful in securing a place at any of their school preferences. Consequently, there is uncertainty

as to which pupils will start at which schools as the order of parental school preferences is unclear at the time of application and some pupils remain unallocated after the first round of allocations.

10. The aim of this proposal is to create a fairer, more equitable system of allocating school places in Cardiff.

Previous Scrutiny

11. The Committee was previously informed of the idea of a co-ordinated school admissions plan at its meeting on 15 March 2016. The Members agreed to write to the Diocesan Officers to gauge their views on the possibility of having an informal co-ordinated admissions process. The Committee subsequently received positive responses from all three letters.

Draft Cabinet Report

12. The draft Cabinet report sets out details of the consultation, which was been undertaken between 5 December 2016 and 23 January 2017. A total of 47 responses were received, however the views largely related to Marlborough Primary School and Cardiff High School.

13. The draft Cabinet report recommends that :

- note that the attached Council's draft School Admission Arrangements 2018/19 have been determined and to agree the Admission Policy 2018/19.
- authorise officers to consider further the Council's school admission oversubscription criteria including wider research to be undertaken into alternative options and the impact of each, in advance of consultation on the Council's School Admissions Policy 2019/20.
- note that prior to consultation on the Council's School Admissions Policy 2019/20, a further report will be provided to the Cabinet providing details of any proposed changes to the Council's school admission oversubscription criteria.

- agree the implementation of Co-ordinated Secondary School Admission Arrangements for the Year 7 age group intakes in September 2018, September 2019 and September 2020.

Scope of Scrutiny

14. The scope of this scrutiny is for Members to:

- To provide the Committee with the opportunity to review and assess the school admission arrangements, together with the pilot co-ordinated admissions arrangements with Faith or Foundations schools for a period of three years;
- Pass on any observations, comments or recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education prior to the consideration of the Draft report by Cabinet.

Way Forward

15. Councillor Sarah Merry (Cabinet Member for Education), and Nick Batchelar (Director of Education and Lifelong Learning), will present the report to the Committee, and will be available to answer any questions Members may have.

16. This report will also enable Members to provide any comments, concerns or recommendations to the Cabinet Member prior to its consideration by Cabinet.

Legal Implications

17. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council

will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

Financial Implications

18. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is recommended to:

Review the information contained in the draft Cabinet Report, attached at **Appendix A**, together with information provided at the meeting and provide any recommendations, comments or advice to the Cabinet Member and / or Director of Education and Lifelong Learning prior to the report's consideration by Cabinet.

Davina Fiore

Director of Governance and Legal Services and Monitoring Officer

1 March 2017