

COUNCIL

15 January 2018

SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2019

Report of the Director for People

Strategic Aim:	Creating a brighter future for all		
Exempt Information		No	
Cabinet Member(s) Responsible:		Mr D Wilby, Portfolio Holder for Lifelong Learning	
Contact Officer(s):	Gill Curtis, Head of Learning and Skills	01572 758460 gcurtis@rutland.gov.uk	
Ward Councillors	N/A		

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council:

1. To approve Rutland County Councils Admission Arrangements 2019.
2. To authorise the Director for People, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Lifelong Learning, to approve Admission Arrangements annually if no changes are to be made.

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report is to inform Council of the outcomes of the formal consultation on Rutland County Council Admission Arrangements 2019 for maintained voluntary controlled schools in Rutland so that Council can approve the Arrangements.
- 1.2 There are no substantial changes to the admission arrangements for 2019 apart from the annual date changes within the primary school admissions process timetable. However, it is seven years since the last consultation was carried out therefore there was a statutory requirement to consult on the 2019 document.

2 BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

- 2.1 Rutland County Council, as admission authority for voluntary controlled maintained schools in the Local Authority area, has a statutory duty to determine and publish admission arrangements that are compliant with the 'School Admissions Code - statutory guidance for admission authorities, governing bodies, local authorities, schools adjudicators and admission appeal panels' (December 2014). Section

88P of the 'School Standards and Framework Act 1998' requires LAs to make reports to the Schools Adjudicator about such matters connected with relevant school admissions as required by the Code which ensures that LAs remain compliant as an admission authority.

- 2.2** The School Admissions Code states that when changes are proposed to admission arrangements (admission policy), admission authorities must first publicly consult on those arrangements. If no changes are made to admission arrangements, they must be consulted on at least once every 7 years.
 - 2.2.1** Changes could include setting different school holiday patterns such as significantly extending or reducing length of school holidays over the year, whilst still maintaining the statutory attendance expectations. The holiday patterns for the five schools within Rutland County Council's admissions authority align with other schools in the county and would not benefit from a significant change in holiday pattern unless this was to be a county wide decision.
 - 2.2.2** Changes could be made to the criteria for determining the preference ranking if the school is over-subscribed which could include how the home to school distance is measured. In Rutland this is measured, using an electronic mapping programme, by calculating the distance that would be travelled from home to school by foot or transport. Admission authorities could measure this 'as the crow flies' but this would not align with Rutland's method for determining if a child is eligible for school transport.
- 2.3** There has been no change to Rutland County Council's Admission Arrangements since the last consultation in 2010; therefore there has not been a requirement for consultation during that time. However, in light of the requirement for admission authorities to review their arrangements, Rutland County Council has undertaken formal consultation on the admission arrangements for 2019.
- 2.4** Rutland County Council's Admission Arrangements only apply to the schools where Rutland County Council is the admission authority; all other admission authorities within Rutland will determine their own admission arrangements.
- 2.5** Rutland County Council is the admission authority for maintained voluntary controlled schools within Rutland and, at the time of the report, this refers to Empingham C of E Primary School, Exton and Greetham C of E Primary School, Great Casterton C of E Primary School, Oakham C of E Primary School and Uppingham C of E Primary School.
- 2.6** The Local Authority will cease to be the admission authority for these schools when they convert to academy status and therefore the number of schools to which the RCC Admission Arrangements relates is likely to be reduced by the time the 2019 arrangements are put into practice.
- 2.7** Should all schools convert to academy status prior to these arrangements becoming active, the Local Authority will still retain duties in relation to school admissions; these duties are:
 - 2.7.1** to provide advice and assistance to parents when deciding on a school place and allow parents to express a preference (s86 (1A) School Standards and Framework Act 1998);

- 2.7.2 to publish each year a composite prospectus for all state funded schools in the area;
- 2.7.3 to formulate, publish and adopt a scheme to co-ordinate administration of admissions for state funded schools in the local authority area;
- 2.7.4 to establish and manage a Fair Access protocol for in-year admissions;
- 2.7.5 to annually write to parents of prospective schools in their locality with information about schools with atypical admission ages within the local authority or within reasonable travelling distance;
- 2.7.6 to include details of schools with atypical admission ages in the local authority or within reasonable travelling distance in their composite prospectus;
- 2.7.7 Parent/carers should be able to look at a set of arrangements and understand easily how places for that school will be allocated. In drawing up their admission arrangements, admission authorities must ensure that the practices and the criteria used to decide the allocation of school places, including the oversubscription criteria should there be more applications for a school than places available, are fair, clear and objective.

3 CONSULTATION

- 3.1 The School Admissions Code (2014) states that consultation must be for a minimum of 6 weeks and must take place between 1 October and 31 January in the determination year; Rutland County Council carried out the consultation between 2nd October 2017 and 30th November 2017. As per the requirements of the Code the following were consulted:
 - 3.1.1 parents of children between the ages of two and eighteen via Rutland Early Years settings, primary and secondary maintained schools and academies and sixth form college;
 - 3.1.2 other persons in the relevant area who in the opinion of the admission authority have an interest in the proposed admissions including Parish and Town Councils and relevant Trade Unions;
 - 3.1.3 all other admission authorities within the local authority area;
 - 3.1.4 whichever of the governing body and the local authority who are not the admission authority;
 - 3.1.5 any adjoining neighbouring local authorities where the admission authority is the local authority; and
 - 3.1.6 in the case of schools designated with a religious character, the body or person representing the religion or religious denomination.
- 3.2 Full consultation took place and was promoted through Rutland County Council website. No responses were received thus indicating that no changes are required to the draft Admission Arrangements for 2019.
- 3.3 Admission authorities must determine admission arrangements for entry in

September 2019 by 28 February 2018. Once admission authorities have determined their admission arrangements, they must notify the appropriate bodies and must publish a copy of the determined arrangements on their website displaying them for the whole offer year (the school year in which offers for places are made).

- 3.4** Following determination of arrangements, any objections to those arrangements must be made to the Schools Adjudicator. Objections to admission arrangements for entry in September 2019 must be referred to the Adjudicator by 15 May 2018.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1** There are no alternative options. Admission Arrangements are a statutory requirement and therefore, if not provided, the Council would not be fulfilling its statutory function as an admission authority.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1** There are no financial implications associated with the Admission Arrangements 2019.

6 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1** The Authority has a duty to comply with the mandatory requirements imposed by all relevant legislation including the School Admissions Code (or by statutory provisions). The School Admissions Code has been issued under Section 84 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 ('SSFA 1998') Chapter 1 of Part 3 of the School Standards and Framework Act (SSFA) 1998 contains the key provisions regarding schools admissions, including the statutory basis for the Code. The Code reflects changes to the law made by the Education Act 2011 and Regulations.
- 6.2** The Regulation that applies for the purpose of this report is the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2014.

7 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1** An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been completed. No adverse or other significant issues were found. A copy of the EqIA can be obtained from Gill Curtis.

8 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1** There are no community safety implications identified within this report.

9 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1** Rutland County Council Admission Arrangements 2019 will have minimal implications on social, economic and environmental living conditions that would indirectly affect health.

10 CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1** All admission authorities must review their Admission Arrangements every seven years even if no changes are being proposed.
- 10.2** Following consultation, there is no requirement to make any changes to 2019 arrangements for admissions for Rutland maintained voluntary controlled schools.
- 10.3** If no changes are made within the seven year cycle, the Director for People, in consultation with the Cabinet Member with Portfolio for Education, is authorised to continue to formally approve annual Admission Arrangements.
- 11 BACKGROUND PAPERS**
- 11.1** There are no additional background papers to the report.
- 12 APPENDICES**
- 12.1** Appendix A - Draft Admission Arrangements 2019.

A Large Print or Braille Version of this Report is available upon request – Contact 01572 722577.