

Committee:	Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability.
Date:	28 February 2017
Title of Report:	Admission arrangements for the 2018/19 school year
By:	Director of Children's Services
Purpose of Report:	To determine the final school admission arrangements for the 2018/19 school year

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Lead Member is recommended to:

- 1) agree the proposed admission arrangements for the 2018/19 school year, including the following changes to the existing arrangements:**
 - **To make a change to the community area for Eastbourne primary schools so that the Polegate and Willingdon area outside the borough boundary becomes a separate community area as detailed in paragraphs 2.1 – 2.5 below;**
 - **To change the definition of 'Looked After Children' in the County Council's admission arrangements to include children accommodated under section 20 of the Children Act 1989; and**
 - **Approve an application being made to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator for an in-year variation to enlarge the community area for Iford & Kingston CE Primary School to encompass the community area currently served by Rodmell CE Primary School in the event that a decision is taken by Cabinet in September 2017 to close Rodmell CE Primary School on 31 August 2018.**

- 2) agree the following:**
 - **The admission priorities as set out in Appendix 1**
 - **The admission numbers as set out in Appendix 3**
 - **The co-ordinated schemes as set out in Appendix 4**

1. Background Information

1.1 The School Admissions Code 2014 states that admissions authorities must determine their admissions arrangements annually. It is also a requirement that relevant proposed changes to these arrangements are consulted on.

1.2 Consultation on the proposed admission arrangements as outlined in Appendix 1 was therefore carried out between 7 November 2016 and 15 January 2017. This satisfied the duty to consult for at least six weeks and end the consultation period by 31 January 2017. Eight responses were received during this period and the results are outlined in Appendix 6.

2. Supporting Information

Eastbourne and Polegate/Willingdon community areas

2.1 The Lead Member is asked to create a separate community area for Polegate and Willingdon primary schools by taking the boundary for the Eastbourne schools community area to the Eastbourne borough boundary in that area. This would create a separate area as shown on the attached maps (see Appendix 2).

2.2 There are three streets in the Hampden Park area which are outside the Eastbourne borough boundary (Wheelwright Close, Dutchells Way and Regnum Close). However the

Lead Member is asked to keep these within the community area for Eastbourne Primary Schools. This is because families living there would have a difficult journey through the Eastbourne area to access Polegate or Willingdon, and would not consider these to be their local schools.

2.3 This change is being proposed due to the large amount of new housing being built in the Polegate area. There is a need for additional school places in the locality, which is likely to be supplied by the provision of an extra one form of entry (1FE) at either Polegate or Willingdon schools, or the opening of a new school in the area. However, depending on where the new provision is situated, there is a risk that some Eastbourne children living close to alternative schools within Eastbourne borough would have priority for the new provision ahead of children living further afield within Polegate or Willingdon, as their homes would be geographically closer. This would result in children having to travel past their local school in order to access more distant schools within Eastbourne borough.

2.4 The community area change should help ensure that children are able to attend their nearest local school. This may result in a reduction to the Home to School Transport (HTST) budget as a number of children are transported to schools in Eastbourne at the authority's expense because there are no places at their nearest local school in Polegate or Willingdon. It may also reduce the number of appeals as parents are more likely to accept an allocated school if it is local to them.

2.5 Should this recommendation be adopted, siblings currently living in Polegate/Willingdon but attending school in Eastbourne (and vice versa) would ordinarily not benefit from the priority for siblings living in the area. However, the Lead Member is asked to treat these children as 'in area siblings' if they were admitted before these changes take effect (i.e. before 1 September 2018) to avoid disadvantaging existing pupils.

Changes to the definition of Looked After Children in the County Council's admission arrangements.

2.6 The Lead Member is also asked to agree to a change to the definition of 'Looked After Children' in the County Council's admission arrangements, to include children accommodated under section 20 of the Children Act 1989. The definition used in the current admission arrangements matches that in the School Admissions Code. This refers to section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 and states that:

'A looked after child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions'.

2.7 However it is clear that children accommodated under section 20 of the above mentioned act must also be considered as 'looked after children'. Section 20 states that 'A child is defined as looked after if he/she is in the authority's care because of a Care Order (including an interim Care Order) or if the child is provided with accommodation under Section 20 for more than 24 hours, with the parents' agreement, or with the child's consent if they are over the age of 16 years'.

2.8 It is therefore proposed that the revised definition makes reference to those children also accommodated under section 20 of the act (the wording used within the published admission arrangements is set out in Appendix 1). This change will align with the wording set out in the Children's Services Operational Instructions.

2.9 The Lead Member is advised that there are currently 77 children of statutory school age in East Sussex who are looked after under section 20 of the Act.

Application to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator

2.10 The Lead Member is advised that the governors of Rodmell CE Primary School unanimously agreed in January 2017 that the school should close on 31 August 2018 as it does not believe there is a sustainable future for the school. Before the local authority can make a final decision on closure it must follow a process, set out in legislation, which requires the publication of a statutory notice. The notice must provide the reasons for closure and the date on which it is intended the school will close. The final decision on closure will rest with Cabinet, which is likely to consider the proposal in September 2017.

2.11 In the event that a decision is taken by Cabinet in September 2017 to close Rodmell CE Primary School, the Lead Member is asked to approve an application being made to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator. The application would seek approval for an in-year variation to enlarge the community area for Iford & Kingston CE Primary School, so that it encompasses the community area currently served by Rodmell CE Primary School. This change would safeguard the interests of the pupils living in the relevant area in the future.

Other supporting information

2.12 **Appendix 3** shows the proposed admissions numbers for community and voluntary controlled schools for the 2018/19 school year. The Lead Member is asked to approve these. For ease of reference, the proposed admission numbers for own admission authority schools (as far as they are known to the county council) are included in italics. The Lead Member is asked to note that this is for information only and subject to change.

2.13 **Appendix 4** outlines the co-ordinated admission schemes for the 'normal' years of entry, i.e. reception classes, transfer between infant to junior schools and on transfer between primary and secondary school.

2.14 The Lead Member is advised that an Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken as part of the consultation process and is attached as Appendix 5.

2.15 The Lead Member is advised that, following consultation and in light of revised pupil number forecasts, the published admission number for Meridian Community Primary School will remain at 60 for 2018/19 rather than increasing to 90.

3 Conclusion and Reason for Recommendations

3.1 The county council is required by law to carry out consultation on admission arrangements every seven years, or sooner if there are any changes to those arrangements for the schools where the local authority is the admission authority. The Lead Member is recommended to determine the attached admission arrangements for 2018/19 including the following two changes to the existing policy. These are:

- **To make a change to the community area for Eastbourne primary schools so that the Polegate and Willingdon area outside the borough boundary becomes a separate community area as detailed above;**
- **To change the definition of 'Looked After Children' in the County Council's admission arrangements to include children accommodated under section 20 of the Children Act 1989; and**
- **Approve an application being made to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator for an in-year variation to enlarge the community area for Iford & Kingston CE Primary School to encompass the community area currently served by Rodmell CE Primary School in the event that a decision is taken by Cabinet in September 2017 to close Rodmell CE Primary School on 31 August 2018.**

3.2 The determined admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools will be published on the East Sussex County Council website by 15 March 2017 as

required under current legislation. Any objections to these arrangements can then be made to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator until 15 May 2017. The final arrangements will be published in the composite prospectus both online and in hard copy by 12 September 2017 as required by the School Admissions Code 2014.

STUART GALLIMORE

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Background Documents:

- School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- The School Admissions (Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012
- The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2014
- The School Information (England) Regulations 2012
- School Admissions Code 2014
- [Lead Member report – October 2016 – Admission arrangements for 2018/19 year](#)

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Proposed Admissions criteria

Appendix 2 - Maps showing the area in question

Appendix 3 - Admission numbers

Appendix 4 - Co-ordination Admission Schemes – normal year of entry

Appendix 5 – Equalities Impact Assessment

Appendix 6 - Summary of consultation responses