

Appendix 3

Consultation responses IYA 2021-22

Community/Controlled school responses received total 3 as at 27 September 2021:

Primary School 1:

LA hold waiting lists and refusing children admission if that child takes child numbers over PAN (pupil admission numbers) does not consider if child is in area and if the school can meet child's needs. Therefore, this could damage/reduce 'community'. No recognition of issues faced by schools located on a county border, indeed seems emphatically against any children requesting a place from outside LA. There are children in neighbouring authorities without sufficient school places who are within 1 mile of another school, which is in a different authority.

No consideration about the implications of children going to a secondary school in a different LA (within whose catchment we sit), therefore the benefit to them to be attending primary school with their future peers.

Document does not consider wider context of financial, organisational and learning implications of PAN's that result in mixed age classes.

Admissions does not sit as an island (in reality).

Department response:

Thank you for this response. I hope I can reassure your governors that we are not against schools admitting extra students if there are vacant places, wherever they live. What we would wish to avoid, is schools admitting out of area children over numbers to the detriment of schools in their local area.

I am not aware of any current or forecast shortfall of places across the border in the immediate environs of your school although I know this has historically been the case.

I appreciate that admissions does not sit as an island, but this is an admissions policy document, not a finance or places planning document, and is designed to operate county-wide. School organisation is a matter for individual schools, rather than the county council, and usually reflects numbers on roll, rather than the PAN, anyway. For example, undersubscribed schools (those who do not attract sufficient applications to fill to PAN in reception) often re-organise from year 1 onwards to reflect this situation (eg a 2FE school with a reception cohort of 36 and a year 1 cohort of 38 might take the decision to re-organise those cohorts into 3 year 1/year 2 classes with a 30 maximum, as this would still leave a total of 16 places available across the two year groups to enable any in year admissions to be accommodated within the class size limit).

Primary School 2:

How will admissions know when we get places? We do fill in regular forms - but sometimes a child leaves 2 days after we fill the form in! Will we be required to let

you know every time a child moves away and the ctf is downloaded by the new school?

Will we still see in SAM who/how many children are requesting places or on a waiting list? Even if we don't administer it?

This will make more work for the LA - will the staff team be given additional hours to support this?

Will there be a guaranteed response time for parents? As soon as we get a place here for example - we offer- often within a couple of hours of doing the ctf. I worry about parents waiting a long time and then being offered a place at a school that was lower on their preference list because staff at admissions don't know we have a space!

I personally don't mind it all being co-ordinated by Admissions - I am always frightened to make a wrong offer (we always seem to have competition for our very few places that come up) and this will avoid our school making any mistakes!

Department response:

Thank you for your swift response. I am answering them in the wrong order to try to explain more clearly:

SAM will remain available, so you will be able to see if you have a live applicant and/or waiting list. If you have and you have a leaver, by all means tell us as soon as you have a confirmed leaver (you can do this by email or phone or whatever means seems sensible, it doesn't have to be a ctf), then we will allocate the place and send the decision electronically or in the post- you will get a copy.

We won't be able to guarantee an instantaneous response but we will do it as quickly as possible. It may create additional work in the case of schools like your own which prioritise offering places but this will be offset by the reduced need to chase decisions from schools whose staff are less confident of the process. Because we will know the priority order of preferences for parents we will be able to avoid giving parents their second preference when their first is also able to offer, as we will have this information.

If we are not sure whether there is a space available then we will check with the school. We aim to please, and refusing places is not what we are here for.

Thank you for the vote of confidence in our team, I hope this has allayed your concerns.

Primary school 4:

Verbal response from headteacher via telephone who felt that the scheme should apply to all admission authorities in the county, otherwise it would not be co-ordinated.

Secondary school:

The only comment I would make is on Appendix 2 page 3 around school offers. I think it needs to stipulate that the home school puts in the CME form and notify the LA. I read it as the new proposed school has to do this, perhaps it just needs some clarification.

Department response:

With respect to your point around CME referrals, this is the current procedure as agreed with CME- that the school offered should make the referral, as if the child has moved from out of county it will need to be the East Sussex CME team that receives the referral. However essentially it does not matter who makes the referral, the point is that somebody needs to do it and it would be better for both schools to do so than neither.

A response was also received expressing concerns about the proposal to charge VA schools for the enhanced co-ordination package which is outside the scope of the scheme (and which has been operating for a number of years as a traded service).

A reply was sent to clarify that it is possible to opt in free of charge to the partial co-ordination which operates at the moment, and it is only the enhanced service, which is more complicated for own admission authority schools, which attracts a charge.