

# **SCHOOL ADMISSIONS FORUM**

**King Charles Centre, Surbiton**

**Wednesday 16 Feb 2011**

## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

Present:

Sinead Noble (Chair)

Councillor David Ryder-Mills

Councillor Denis Doe on behalf of Andrea Craig

Pam Dryden

Tracey Coton

Rev Fr Martin Hislop.

Carol Jerwood

Keith Burleton

Tom Cahill

Marianne Cohen

### **Officers:**

Hatija Bhatia (Principal Admissions & Governance Officer)

Julie Ely (Strategic Manager SEN Assessment & Support for Learning)

Tina Herring (Service Director Learning & School Effectiveness)

## **AGENDA**

### **1. APOLOGIES**

Michael Reading, Sunil Chotai, Michael Hall, Andrea Craig

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

### **3. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR**

Following the resignation of Janice Anastasi, Marianne Cohen was proposed and duly selected as the new Vice Chair of the SAF.

### **4. MINUTES**

After a point of clarification on unplaced children, the minutes of the previous meeting of 12 October 2010 were approved.

### **5. UPDATE ON THE EXPANSION OF PRIMARY & SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES (Appendix A)**

The Service Director Learning & School Effectiveness updated the Forum on the two phased permanent expansion programme agreed by Executive on 30

June and explained that Plans are progressing for the new primary school in Surbiton which is expected to open in September 2012.

In Phase 1, construction is underway and will continue into 2012 to ensure those children admitted from September 2011 can be taken through their primary education. She highlighted the call in process which involved discussion at Scrutiny on 24 Feb 2011 and consideration by the Council's Executive in early March 2011. A planning application for development of the whole Surbiton hospital site was submitted on 3 December 2011 and a decision is expected in early March 2011. Subject to planning permission, building is expected to start summer 2011.

In line with government requirements a competition to decide the provider for the new school was launched in January 2011. A School Competition notice was published on 14 January inviting proposals to provide a new Primary School based on part of the Surbiton Hospital site by 16 May 2011.

A period for representations is expected to be held during June and July 2011 when interested parties will be able to submit their views on the proposals that have been received. A public meeting will also be held for members of the public to meet the prospective providers of the new school and question them on their proposals. A final decision on who will provide the new school is anticipated by the end of September 2011.

It was noted that Maple Infant and Tolworth Infant & Nursery schools were hosting extra Reception classes. In respect of Phase 2, it was clear that there is a need for additional classes above the 8.5 extra classes already announced.

By 2011 there will be 1770 permanent places available for Year Reception entry in September 2011. This is an increase of 195 places compared to the previous permanent capacity. The Local Authority (LA) has received the agreement of the Office of the Schools Adjudicator (OSA) to change the Published Admission Numbers of schools that have been permanently expanded from September 2011.

Phase 2. Decisions on expanding a further five schools; Corpus Christi Catholic Primary, Christ Church New Malden CoE Primary, King Athelstan Primary, Lovelace Primary and Malden Manor Primary & Nursery were deferred by the Council in June 2010 pending a review of the need for further permanent expansion of primary places in Kingston in February 2011. This was timed to allow for revised birth data/population statistics, pupil forecasts and greater clarity over the funding position to be available and enable better informed decisions to be made.

The Local Authority is unable to underwrite any further financial commitments beyond the £46 million already earmarked for phase 1 of the expansion programme, so at this time is unable to proceed with any of the projects to expand schools listed in phase 2 of the programme.

Officers are exploring a range of options to ascertain how the demand for places can be met within the current financial constraints.

### **New Secondary School**

On 4 January 2011 the Office of the Schools Adjudicator (OSA) determined that a new secondary school based on the North Kingston Centre site will be provided by the Kingston Educational Trust, a partnership between the Local Authority, Kingston College and Kingston University. This bid was preferred over a proposal submitted by the Southwark Diocesan (Church of England) Board of Education. Subject to the necessary planning permission being obtained and confirmation (not yet received) that capital funding will be made available, the school is scheduled to open to Year 7 pupils only on 1 September 2015.

## **6. RESPONSE TO THE CONSULTATION ON ADMISSIONS ARRANGEMENTS FOR SEPTEMBER 2012/13 (Appendix B)**

There were no proposed changes to existing criteria for community schools in Kingston Borough. However, there were proposed changes to the admission numbers of seven community primary schools due for permanent expansion for 2012/13.

The Principal Admissions & Governance Officer presented the report informing Members that there had been no responses. The Service Director Learning & School Effectiveness explained that the OSA had congratulated the Council on its In year variation documentation.

## **7. CONSULTATION BY FOUNDATION & VOLUNTARY AIDED SCHOOLS FOR 2012/13 (Appendix C)**

The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2008 requires all admission authorities to consult on their proposed admission arrangements every three years unless they are proposing to make a change to their admission arrangements, in which case they must consult on those changes before they are implemented

Kingston Foundation and Voluntary Aided schools as their own admission authorities that consulted on their proposed admission arrangements for 2012/13 were:

Primary Schools:

Christ Church New Malden CoE Primary School

Christ Church CoE Primary School (Surbiton)

Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Primary School

St Agatha's Catholic Primary School

St Luke's CoE Primary School

St Mary's CoE Primary School  
St Matthew's CoE Primary School  
St Paul's CoE Junior School  
St Paul's CoE Primary School

Secondary Schools:  
The Holy Cross School  
The Hollyfield School  
Richard Challoner School  
The Tiffin Girls' School  
Tiffin School

It was noted that following the recommendations from the OSA to amend Richard Challoner's admissions arrangements to replace feeder schools with a catchment approach, the Governing Body of Richard Challoner School had given this their consideration but had decided against the recommendation; although it seemed likely that they would be agreeing 12 places for Catholics who are not on the roll of a feeder primary school. Members of the Forum supported the school's decision to continue the feeder school approach because it put in place safeguards for pupils residing in the north of the borough, and those attending St Agatha's Catholic Primary School. It was noted that some responses on this were received from Sacred Heart.

Members of the Forum asked whether the OSA decisions appeared to be indicating an underlying objection to the principle of feeder schools and The Service Director Learning & School Effectiveness explained that this was unlikely as the Code enables feeder schools and criteria, giving choice and diversity to more residents.

Richmond LA has advised that they will be reconsidering their link school criteria. It is anticipated that data showing analysis of the Year 7 and Y8 intakes to Grey Court School are likely to be available for the next SAF meeting.

## **8. SUPPORT FOR TRANSFER FROM PRIMARY TO SECONDARY SCHOOL (Appendix D)**

Section 42 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a duty on all Local Authorities (LAs) to commission an independent Choice Advice Service for parents who find it hardest to engage with and navigate the admissions process to make informed decisions about which schools will best meet their child's needs

The Government's 'Schools White Paper – The Importance of Teaching' which specifies that the duty on LAs in relation to Admissions is to ensure fair access to all schools for every child.

For secondary admissions in September 2011, a total 78 referrals were received initially (compared with 132 for September 2010) and out of these, 39 families (compared to 45 in 2010) have been supported to make an application for secondary school.

## **9. INFORMATION ITEMS (Appendix E)**

The Principal Admissions & Governance Officer gave an update on the secondary admissions for 2011, explaining that there had been 80 fewer RBK resident applicants that the previous year and it was anticipated that all boys would be offered a place by the allocation date and although it would not be possible to offer all girls a place initially. This was a similar position to previous year and there were no apparent or foreseen difficulties.

For primary admissions, the Principal Admissions & Governance Officer highlighted changes to the primary co-ordinated admissions process which has and explained that across London there were variations in the number of preferences applicants could express; in RBK parents were invited to express 6 preferences, and it was too early to comment on the implications this has had in terms of other LA applicants.

The Service Director Learning & School Effectiveness informed the Forum that under White Paper proposals, there would no longer be a statutory obligation to have a SAF in place, but that given the valuable role the SAF had played, the Council was keen to continue to have arrangements in place for the foreseeable future. Members of the Forum confirmed that there were aware of similar decisions in other LA areas.

The Forum asked for clarification on the continuing statutory duty to provide places and co-ordination responsibility of the Council. The Service Director Learning & School Effectiveness set out that the duty is to use the market to be suppliers of good school places and the Principal Admissions & Governance Officer explained the duty to co-ordinate primary and secondary admissions is set to continue.

## **10. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

6 July 2011  
11 October 2011  
22 February 2012

All meetings will be held at King Charles Centre at 6:30 pm