

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

PEOPLE CABINET MEMBER

**SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2014/15
COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED SCHOOLS**

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Cabinet Member of the outcome of recent consultation regarding proposed admission arrangements for 2014/15.
- 1.2 To seek approval to implement the proposed admission arrangements for 2014/15.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Admission arrangements for all mainstream maintained schools and academies are governed by the Department for Education's (DfEs) 'School Admissions Code'. The purpose of the code is to ensure that all school places are allocated and offered in an open and fair way.
- 2.2 In order to achieve this, all local authorities are required to determine their admission arrangements and admission numbers each year for community and voluntary controlled school.
- 2.3 All schools must have admission arrangements that clearly set out how children will be admitted, including the criteria that will be applied if there are more applications than places at the school. The code confirms that oversubscription criteria must be reasonable, clear, objective and procedurally fair, and comply with all relevant legislation, including equalities legislation.
- 2.4 The admission number refers to the number of places that the admission authority must offer in the relevant age group for each school. In determining proposed admission numbers consideration is given to the following:
 - The physical capacity within schools as denoted by the Net Capacity Assessment.
 - The need to set a number that is organisationally manageable, which is particularly relevant to primary and infant schools, which must comply with infant class size regulations.

- 2.5 Through the Admissions Working Group and individual governing body meetings, governing bodies of relevant schools were asked if they wanted any changes to the council's admission arrangements. No schools requested any changes.
- 2.6 The governing bodies were also consulted regarding their admission numbers for 2014/15. Five schools agreed to set higher admission numbers and two schools requested reduced admission numbers (see Appendix B), all other schools stayed the same. Where schools request a reduction in their admission number, the code requires a public consultation to take place.

3. **OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

3.1 There are two options for consideration:

3.1 **Option 1:** To approve the arrangements proposed in Appendix A, and the revised admission numbers listed in Appendix B.

3.2 **Option 2:** To amend the arrangements proposed in Appendix A and the revised admission numbers listed in Appendix B.

4. **ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

4.1 **Option 1:**

- 4.1.1 The proposed admission arrangements shown in Appendix A are fully compliant with the School Admissions Code.
- 4.1.2 The admissions criteria (eg catchment, siblings and distance) are well established and clearly understood. North Lincolnshire has excellent track record of meeting parental preferences, which suggests the key principles of the admission arrangement are working well.
- 4.1.3 Following the consultation exercise, the council has not received any requests to amend the proposed arrangements. In addition, the proposed arrangements are supported by the Admissions Working Group.
- 4.1.4 With regard to the proposed increases in admission numbers for community and voluntary aided schools, these arrangements will allow the council to improve capacity, which could lead to an increase in the number of parents receiving a school of their preferred choice.
- 4.1.5 The proposal to decrease two admission numbers - Frodingham Infant School (from 15 to 14) and Gunness and Burringham Church of England Primary School (from 75 to 72) - will help improve class organisation within these specific schools.

4.1.6 The code confirms that a presumption exists in favour of schools wishing to increase their admission number, which supports the DfE's desire to maximise parental preference at popular schools.

4.2 **Option 2:**

4.2.1 Whilst amendments could be made to the proposed admissions criteria, this may not be supported by parents and governors or the Admissions Working Group.

4.2.2 If changes are proposed, it may be more appropriate to consider them for the 2015/16 admissions cycle, which would allow time to undertake an impact assessment.

4.2.3 If the admission numbers in Appendix B were not approved, as recommended, this would reduce the LA's ability to maximise parental preference and / or optimise school organisation.

5. **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)**

5.1 **Finance** - Nil

5.2 **Staffing** - Nil

5.3 **Property** - Nil

6. **OTHER IMPLICATIONS (STATUTORY, ENVIRONMENTAL, DIVERSITY, SECTION 17 - CRIME AND DISORDER, RISK AND OTHER)**

6.1 **Statutory** – The proposed admission arrangements meet the requirements as set-out in the DfE's School Admissions Code.

7. **OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION**

7.1 The following groups have been consulted on the 2014/15 admission arrangements:

- Each school governing body
- Admissions Working Group
- Each Diocese (Sheffield, Nottingham and Lincoln)
- Other Admission Authorities within the area of North Lincolnshire

As a result of this consultation no changes were proposed

7.2 The following groups have been consulted on the proposal to reduce admission numbers for two schools for 2014/15:

- Each school governing body
- Admissions Working Group
- Each Diocese (Sheffield, Nottingham and Lincoln)
- Other Admission Authorities within the area of North Lincolnshire
- Neighbouring Admission Authorities, ie. Doncaster, North East Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire.
- Relevant parents and other stakeholders (council website and press release)

The public consultation with stakeholders ran from 17 December 2012 to 15 February 2013. No responses were received.

8. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

8.1 That the Cabinet Member approves option 1, maintaining the current admission arrangements as identified in Appendix A, and revising the admission numbers listed in Appendix B.

DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE

Civic Centre
Ashby Road
Scunthorpe
North Lincolnshire

Author: Steve Piper

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

- Admissions Working Group Minutes, 18th September 2012
- School Admissions Code (2012), Department for Education

Summary of Current Admission Arrangements for 2014/15 (Oversubscription Criteria)

OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA FOR COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED SCHOOLS

Where applications for places at a particular school exceed the published admission number set for the school the following factors will be taken into account in priority order when deciding which pupils will be allocated places in accordance with receipt of their online submission or a common application form.

Children with Statements of Special Educational Needs

Children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs will be dealt with in accordance with the Code of Practice on Special Educational Needs. Where a school is named in a child's statement the school has a duty to admit the pupil, this will reduce the number of places available

Factor 1

Looked after children and previously looked after children

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 (see the definition in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school.

A "previously looked after child" is a child who:

- (a) ceased to be looked after because they were adopted (under the terms of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 Section 46 (adoption orders)), or
- (b) became subject to a residence order (under the terms of the Children Act 1989 Section 8 - an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live), or
- (c) became subject to a special guardianship order (see Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 - an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians)).

Factor 2

Children who live in the school's designated catchment area.

Parents can see which catchment areas cover their address by entering their postcode in the "My Area" section on the council's home page at www.northlincs.gov.uk, then selecting their house from the list given. Alternatively, they can contact the Admissions Team on 01724 297133.

For Infant, Junior and Primary Schools the address taken under this factor will be that on the 21 February 2014.

For Secondary Schools the address taken under this factor will be that on the 17 January 2014.

Parents who move after submitting their preference **must** inform the Admissions Team of any change of address.

For admission purposes, the home address is where a child usually lives with their parent or carer. You must not give the address of a childminder or relative. Where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility, each for part of the week, the Admission Officer will apply the address of the parent who claims the child's benefit as the pupil's address for determining this criterion. If it is found that you have given a false address your child may lose their school place.

Factor 3

Children who will have a sibling attending the school at the time of their admission.

Included in this factor are siblings (step-brothers and sisters and half-brothers and sisters) living at the same address and who will be attending the school at the expected time of admission. In the event of two applications for one vacancy using the above criteria, the Authority will apply a tie breaker decision based on geographical distance.

Siblings for the same year group (twins/ multiple birth children)

Where there are twins/multiple birth children to be admitted to a school in the same year group. If there are insufficient places available for all siblings, and one can be allocated a place, the admission number will be exceeded to allow them to be placed in the same school.

Factor 4

Children who live closest to the school.

The distance will be determined by measuring the shortest available route using the public road network from the pupil's home to the main school gate, as determined by the LA. The distance will be measured by using a computerised geographical information system (GIS). Priority will be given to those living nearest to the school using this system. Pupils living in flats where the distance measures the same, priority will be given in ascending order of flat number/letter/floor.

Tie Breakers

Where the offer of a place would lead to oversubscription under any of the above factors places will be allocated by reference to subsequent factors in order. In exceptional circumstances where it has not been possible to decide between applications, because they have the same distance measurements, the place will be allocated by drawing lots independently verified.

Summary of Consultation Regarding Admissions Numbers

School	Published Admission Number 2013/14	GB Proposed Admission Number 2014/15	LA Proposed Admission Number 2014/15
Secondary Schools			
Brumby Engineering College (Community)	160	172	172
Primary Schools			
Bowmandale (Community)	45	50	50
Frodingham Infant (Community)	75	72	72
Gunness & Burringham (VC)	15	14	14
Kirmington (VC)	7	8	8
Scunthorpe CE (VC)	34	38	38
Willoughby Road (Community)	50	52	52

Note:

For a community or voluntary controlled school, the council (as the admissions authority) must consult at least the governing body of the school where it proposes to increase or keep the same PAN (School Admissions Code, Section 1 Paragraph 1.3).