

# SCHOOLS ORGANISATION, CAPITAL AND ADMISSIONS GROUP

## Notes of meeting on 24 September 2019 at Larkbeare

### Items for DEF on 20 November 2019

<b>Item 2-6</b>	<b>Admissions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updates to be circulated to Headteachers highlighting key admissions issues around PAN, schools sharing pupil information prior to admitting a child and protocol around staggered entry at Reception.</li> </ul>			
<b>Item 9</b>	<b>School Organisation - Designated Area Protocol</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SOCA recommended that DEF approve the revised Designated Area Protocol.</li> </ul>			
		<b>Attendance</b>		
		<b>24/9/19</b>	<b>11/6/19</b>	<b>26/2/19</b>
<b>DCC</b>				
Neil Pateman (Chair)	Built Environments Capital Programme Manager	✓	✓	✓
Andrew Brent	Policy Officer	✓	✓	✓
Fran Butler	EY Childcare Sufficiency Lead	✓	✓	✓
Christine McNeil	School Organisation Policy Manager	<b>Apologies</b>	<b>Apologies</b>	<b>Apologies</b>
Heidi Watson-Jones	Service Support Officer (Education)	✓	✓	✓
<b>DAPH</b>				
Hilary Priest	The Grove Primary	✓	✓	✓
Colin Butler	Otter Valley Federation	✓	✓	✓
Penny Hammett	Fort Federation	✓	✓	✓
Mel Smallwood	Bishops Tawton Primary		✓	✓
<b>DASH</b>				
Daryll Chapman	Dartmoor MAT	✓	✓	<b>Apologies</b>
Rob Haring	Ivybridge Community College	<b>Apologies</b>	✓	<b>Apologies</b>
<b>SENTient Heads</b>				
Sam Barham	Lampard Community School	<b>Apologies</b>	✓	✓
Cherie White	Pathfield School		✓	
<b>DAG</b>				
Ian Rogers	DAG	✓	✓	<b>Apologies</b>
<b>Diocesan Representatives</b>				
tbc	Plymouth CAST	-	-	-
Christina Mabin	Exeter Anglican Diocese (Admissions)	✓	✓	✓
Richard Power	Exeter Anglican Diocese (Capital)		✓	-
<b>Union Representatives</b>				
Nigel Williams	Corporate Forum (Education) NASUWT	✓	✓	✓
<b>In Attendance</b>				
Simon Niles	Education Strategy Manager	✓		
Neil Keen	Admissions officer	✓		

<b>1. Item/Focus: Minutes and Matters Arising from meeting on 11 June 2019</b>	
<b>Discussion:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working Group to review criteria for allocation of capital maintenance funding to schools – in hand <b>NP</b></li> <li>Update report on Healthy Pupils Capital Fund to next meeting (<b>HWJ to agenda / Rachel Humphries</b>)</li> <li>Update on admissions / exclusions / AP and EHE / to next meeting (<b>S Niles / Marc Kastner</b>)</li> </ul>	
<b>Key Decision/ Issues for DEF:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minutes of previous meeting agreed as an accurate record.</li> </ul>
<b>Action:</b>	
<b>2. Item/Focus: Composite Prospectus – September 2019</b>	
<b>Discussion:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Statutory requirement For LA to compile.</li> <li>Step by Step guide to school admissions processes and school information available online.</li> <li>All schools to provide information by 8 August annually, but ongoing requirement for schools to keep information up to date.</li> <li>PANs must be reviewed regularly to ensure that they are both deliverable and meeting the needs of the local community, providing adequate school places and using available resources appropriately.</li> <li>Academies to note that a change of PAN will not automatically change capacity, which ensures that spaces are still available to the local authority where a PAN is reduced. Any capital work to increase capacity will also need to be highlighted to LA, and the Regional Schools Commissioner in line with the funding agreement.</li> <li>Requested that a reminder be circulated to schools about the additional intake of up to 3% of PAN which might be implemented through Fair Access Protocol.</li> </ul>	
<b>Key Decision/ Issues for DEF:</b>	
<b>Action:</b>	<b>AB</b> to draft clear guidance on legal practice for in year and fair access for HT Associations to distribute to their members and the 3% of PAN increase.
<b>3. Item/Focus: Admission Round 2019</b>	
<b>Discussion:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data was shared on the percentage of children being offered their first preference schools: 93.8% for 2019 secondary admissions, and 96.7% in primary admissions.</li> <li>Noted efforts of admissions team to engage families who have been difficult to reach and who traditionally do not submit admissions applications within timeframes.</li> <li>Considered vacant places – ideally around 5% in urban areas, and 10% vacant places in rural areas.</li> <li>Noted that new schools in areas of housing development will hold higher surplus of vacant places as the local community grows. Considered particular pressure of secondary places available in Exeter due to demographic growth.</li> <li>Noted feedback from Appeals Panel that some secondary schools seem to be reducing PAN to allow for in year admissions through Fair Access Protocol, rather than for educational reasons. The Local Authority will closely scrutinise any request to reduce PAN, and may challenge if there is not a clear educational attainment rationale schools to be clear on any differences in year group organisation. DASH requested that the LA follow up issues arising directly with the schools concerned.</li> </ul>	
<b>Key Decision/ Issues for DEF:</b>	Report noted
<b>Action:</b>	

4. Item/Focus: Admission Arrangements & Information Sharing	
<p><b>Discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AB reminded the group that sharing of information prior to a school making a decision to admit a child may be unlawful. A parent may make a complaint that information is shared without permission, or that it may have led to a refusal to admit.</li> <li>Where a vacancy is available, there are a very limited number of circumstances where a school may refuse to admit.</li> <li>Academies are reminded that their funding agreement includes an expectation that the Admissions Code will be adhered to.</li> <li>Concerns had previously been raised by Heads that relevant information is not routinely shared on a pupil by pupil basis prior to admission, which can leave the receiving school unprepared to meet additional needs which are later identified. This can be particularly challenging in secondary schools. Heads felt that this can be to the detriment to the child's progress.</li> <li>Advice is that information should be shared with a new school after the decision whether a place is available but before a child starts.</li> <li>Requested an update on this issue is circulated to all schools through DAPH and DASH.</li> <li>DASH requested that Inclusion report to next meeting includes data on incoming pupil numbers at different year groups.</li> <li>Suggested an Admissions input into November DAPH /DASH briefing would be helpful, along with more targeted information to schools that may not regularly attend.</li> </ul>	
<b>Key Decision/ Issues for DEF:</b>	Report noted
<b>Action:</b>	<p><b>AB</b> to draft update to circulate to schools through DAPH &amp; DASH on protocol for information sharing prior to admitting a child to school. (see above)</p> <p><b>N Keen</b> to include admissions trends are explored within Inclusion report at next meeting.</p>
5. Item/Focus: Proposed Admission Arrangements 2021-22	
<p><b>Discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposed determined admission arrangement documents now on Sharepoint site for all schools to review: <a href="http://devon.cc/schoolpolicy">http://devon.cc/schoolpolicy</a></li> <li>All Schools to be invited to be included in the LA consultation, from 1 November – 3 January.</li> <li>Own Admissions Authorities must have consulted and formally determined by 29 February 2020, and on website by 15 March 2020. A formal minute of agreement is required and may be viewed if there is a complaint or formal objection against the arrangements.</li> <li>Noted arrangements for schools with nurseries and expectation that capacity should be allowed for applications from children living out of area and with no siblings already at the school.</li> <li>Transport policy will be included in November consultation.</li> <li>PAN must be deliverable by the school and meet the needs of the local community. Any changes of PAN will be scrutinised by Strategic Planning Lead</li> <li>Noted suggested changes around Faith school criteria: – Proposed Admission Arrangements must be submitted to Diocese by 1 October 2019. Governing Boards and MAT Boards to share full admission arrangement documentation with Diocese, once agreed. Both the proposed and previously agreed admissions arrangements must be kept on the school website. Parish maps should be made available to parents where parish boundaries form part of the faith criteria.</li> <li>Noted that Faith based criteria have been reviewed and re-drafted for schools' consideration; particularly where existing faith criteria may disadvantage other local children or families moving into the area. Faith Schools are asked to consider these reviewed. Any queries about faith-based criteria should be directed to Christina Mabin (<a href="mailto:christina.mabin@exeter.anglican.org">christina.mabin@exeter.anglican.org</a>) at the Diocese, and not the Admissions Team.</li> </ul>	
<b>Key Decision/ Issues for DEF:</b>	Update noted
<b>Action:</b>	

<b>6. Item/Focus: LA Annual Report 2019</b>	
<b>Discussion:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Template to be issued in New Year.</li> <li>• Any concerns or issues for inclusion in next year's report to be sent to <a href="mailto:Andrew.brent@devon.gov.uk">Andrew.brent@devon.gov.uk</a></li> </ul>	
<b>Key Decision/Issues for DEF:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update noted</li> </ul>
<b>Action:</b>	
<b>7. Item/Focus: Delayed Admission to Reception</b>	
<b>Discussion:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents of summer born children may request delayed admission; the School must consider their request and make a decision.</li> <li>• Noted that primary heads felt that they generally know little about the incoming child and are unable to adequately evidence that the child's experience will be detrimental with a delayed start and subsequently are not be able to reasonably refuse a request. Some families are becoming better prepared to make a case for and insisting on a delayed admission.</li> <li>• Suggested that parents should be asked to bring the child into school to meet with the head and enable a more informed decision to be made by the school.</li> <li>• Noted the difficulties in maintaining children out of their chronological age group, particularly when a child reaches transition at year 6/7.</li> <li>• There were particular concerns for funding of post-16 provision, potential for a child to avoid sitting SATs at year 6 or taking GCSEs at Year 11. Delayed admission might mean that a place may no longer be available in the preferred school the following year. Some issues around mixed age groups for participation in contact sports.</li> <li>• Understand that DfE is drafting guidance which clearly outlines for parents the longer-term implications for children and unforeseen consequences of delayed entry to school.</li> <li>• Heads requested that a briefing note be circulated to Devon primary schools to highlight the implications and unforeseen consequences and to prepare Heads for conversations with parents requesting delayed entry.</li> <li>• LA steer is that schools agree requests where parents have engaged with the school and been able to make an informed decision, taking the school's provision into account.</li> <li>• Noted that parental requests for delayed admission are often supported by Early Years settings based on an assumption that the child is not ready for the school journey.</li> </ul>	
<b>Key Decision/Issues for DEF:</b>	SOCA recommended that Devon Primary Schools be reminded of the DCC guidance on delayed admission at Reception.
<b>Action:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>SOCA</b> members to review the DCC guidance on the topic at: <a href="https://www.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/school-information/apply-for-a-school-place/apply-for-a-primary-school-place/delayed-admission-to-reception-for-summer-born-children">https://www.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/school-information/apply-for-a-school-place/apply-for-a-primary-school-place/delayed-admission-to-reception-for-summer-born-children</a></li> <li>• <b>AB</b> to draft briefing note to Headteachers to highlight longer-term implications and unforeseen consequences of delayed school entry.</li> <li>• <b>AB/C Mabin</b> to discuss with DfE implications of non-educational issues be included in guidance to parents when published.</li> </ul>
<b>8. Item/Focus: Admissions Portal for Schools (Neil Keen)</b>	
<b>Discussion:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Admissions Portal (Provider Portal) has been used by Early Years for some time.</li> <li>• Go Live was 1 September 2019; schools have been informed of guidance and log-in details.</li> <li>• Provides more efficient and auditable data on admissions applications which can be interrogated by schools. DCC working with Capita to develop reports which will download directly to SIMS.</li> <li>• Primary Schools will be able see which children have applied for secondary places, and work</li> </ul>	

<p>more closely with families who have not submitted applications in good time. Considered number of appeals which may be avoided due to late submission of applications. Looking at use of social media to try to avoid these situations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical support is through ScoMIS, not Admissions team.</li> <li>• Queries about functionality of the system can be directed to <a href="mailto:neil.keen@devon.gov.uk">neil.keen@devon.gov.uk</a></li> <li>• Noted some ongoing issues around quality assuring the allocation process and enabling admissions team to verify school allocation of places prior to online updates being refreshed.</li> <li>• Primary heads looking forward to accessing live Reception application data.</li> </ul>	
<b>Key Decision/Issues for DEF:</b>	Report noted
<b>Action:</b>	
<b>9. Item/Focus: School Organisation Update (Simon Niles)</b>	
<p><b>Discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SN reiterated that the Designated Area Protocol generally calls for no changes unless there are particular concerns around enabling children to attend their local school.</li> <li>• Increasing concerns that capital investment is not possible at a number of sites, particularly at secondary level. This leaves the LA in difficult position where local children can be refused places at the local school and places must be secured at alternative schools which has knock on consequences for transport provision. In general, students living furthest from a school will be refused if there is a shortfall of places</li> <li>• Designated Area Protocol document has been updated.</li> <li>• Noted implications for Transport arrangements linked to designated areas. Academies are able to set their own catchment areas, which can overlap with those of maintained schools; Devon schools generally are working collaboratively to agree catchment areas.</li> <li>• Strategic Planning/Admissions team will approach affected schools as concerns become apparent through the admissions round.</li> <li>• Thanks to SFG colleagues for their work in the recent review of the growth fund criteria.</li> <li>• Ted Wragg MAT working closely with LA to look at a new Free School, particularly around additional primary provision in Cranbrook area.</li> <li>• LA has engaged with one MAT to look at small schools and demographics, based on NHS data</li> <li>• SOCA requested an update report on the demographic trends.</li> <li>• ACE Tiverton special free school opened on 9 September 2019, with good feedback so far. Glendinning Special school build now underway, and committed to open next September, probably with temporary accommodation. Both schools designated to support children with Autism.</li> <li>• Proposals to create an additional 30special school places are being developed, including plans for a new SEMH school. Mindful of renewed national interest in High Needs with additional revenue and capital funding expected. No capital funding has been secured as yet, in fact SEN capital funding (19/20) has not yet been released.</li> <li>• Noted updates on new school builds, relocations and re-designations.</li> <li>• Noted ongoing complexities around Community Infrastructure Levy and s106 arrangements.</li> <li>• Meeting on 23/9 with Office Schools Adjudicator. LA has recommended that OSA rejects Sidmouth primary school's request to reduce PAN.</li> </ul>	
<b>Key Decision/Issues for DEF:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report noted</li> <li>• <b>SOCA</b> recommended that DEF approve the updated Designated Area Protocol.</li> </ul>
<b>Action:</b>	<b>SN/N Keen</b> to circulate updated demographic data to SOCA
<b>10. Item/Focus: Early Years Update</b>	
<p><b>Discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Childcare Sufficiency Report approved by Cabinet on 11/9. Specific pressure points have been identified.</li> <li>• Provider self-update to be launched through the EY Provider Portal to enable providers to</li> </ul>	

<p>update information on age range, capacity etc. Launch has been delayed but expected in new year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early Years team happy to provide information and data if requested.</li> <li>• Disappointing that some schools continue to insist that Reception starters have a staggered entry. This is creating significant difficulties for families arranging childcare, particularly when young children are increasingly spending longer days at nursery.</li> <li>• Noted school proposing age range change from 3-11 to 4-11. Implications are that a qualified teacher is not required on site with a governor-run pre-school.</li> <li>• Noted number of small schools with surplus capacity extending age range to 2-11.</li> <li>• EY Infrastructure plan being drafted to sit alongside Education Infrastructure Plan. To be provided to SOCA for comment in due course.</li> <li>• Noted opening and closing of provision.</li> <li>• Capital applications for additional capacity for 3 and 4-year olds have been unsuccessful at Bearnas (Newton Abbot) and Littleham (Exmouth).</li> </ul>	
<b>Key Decision/ Issues for DEF:</b>	Report noted
<b>Action:</b>	
<b>11. Item/Focus: NPS Update</b>	
<p><b>Discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Property Review Group considering options for NPS contract. Awaiting outcome report of working group.</li> <li>• NP to request some information on the procurement process.</li> <li>• Noted that schools will be engaged in the discussions around the contract retendering for Learner Support Services to Schools (currently Babcock LDP). DAPH/DASH asked whether school engagement will be sought in the NPS contract renewal/re-tendering as school community is a significant end-user with valuable input to contribute.</li> <li>• Heads suggested that it would helpful for schools to be formally asked to provide feedback on the quality of services received through NPS.</li> <li>• Devon Maintenance Partnership – Reviewing subscription rates and level of services offered; proposing that subscriptions are maintained a current level. Noted that schools seem to be under-utilising the available professional advice services.</li> </ul>	
<b>Key Decision/ Issues for DEF:</b>	Report noted
<b>Action:</b>	NP to provide feedback to SOCA on the progress and timeline of the re-procurement or renewal of the contract currently held by NPS.
<b>12. Item/Focus: Capital Programme Update</b>	
<p><b>Discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summer Maintenance Programme has been broadly successful, with some outstanding issues including basic needs schemes at Tiverton and Honiton.</li> <li>• Ongoing maintenance works due to be completed during autumn and winter as agreed with individual schools.</li> <li>• Awaiting further information on Priority Schools Building Programme.</li> </ul>	
<b>Key Decision/ Issues for DEF:</b>	Report noted
<b>Action:</b>	NP to share proposed 2020/21 maintenance programme at January SOCA.
<b>13. Item/Focus: Next meetings</b>	
<p><b>Discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreed future meetings will be scheduled from 9.30am – 12noon</li> <li>• Next meeting to be rescheduled to December to avoid first day back from Christmas school</li> </ul>	

break.	
<b>Key Decision/ Issues for DEF:</b>	Report noted
<b>Action:</b>	HWJ to circulate new date for next meeting.
<b>NEXT MEETINGS</b>	
<p><b>Tuesday 3 December 2019 9.30am (venue tbc)</b>  Tuesday 3 March 2020 9.30am at Larkbeare (Exe Room)  Tuesday 9 June 2020 9.30 am at Larkbeare (Exe Room)  Tuesday 22 September 2020 9.30am – venue tbc  <b>Tuesday 5 January 2021 9.30am at Larkbeare (Exe Room) – suggested reschedule to Tues 1 Dec 2020</b>  Tuesday 2 March 2021 9.30am – venue tbc</p>	