

SCHOOLS ORGANISATION, CAPITAL AND ADMISSIONS GROUP 27 SEPTEMBER 2016

ISSUES FOR DEF ON 19 OCTOBER 2016

Item 3.	Impact on outcomes for children held back or repeating a school year Phase Associations encouraged to highlight recent research findings with schools, and fully consider the longer-term implications when admitting children out of their chronological year.
Item 4.	Children Missing Education and in-year admissions compliance Phase Associations requested to highlight to schools the expectation of full compliance with Admissions Code relating to in-year admissions procedures, and timeframes to avoid a delay in admitting children to school.
Item 6.	Early Years – revision of nursery oversubscription criteria SOCA recommended approval of revised oversubscription criteria for nursery admission, to remove priority for children in receipt of Early Years Pupil Premium, and to reduce parental confusion in this area.
Item 9.	School Organisation – changing school age ranges (re. Early Years) Phase Associations requested to highlight to all schools that they must follow the formal process for applying to extend the age range and secure LA approval prior to amending details on EduBase.

SCHOOLS ORGANISATION, CAPITAL AND ADMISSIONS GROUP Notes of meeting on 27 September 2016 at Larkbeare

		Attendance		
		27/9/16	7/6/16	23/2/16
DCC				
Chris Dyer (Chair)	Head of Built Environments	✓	✓	✓
Andrew Brent	Policy Officer	✓	✓	✓
Fran Butler	EY Childcare Sufficiency Lead	✓	✓	✓
Christine McNeil	School Organisation Policy Manager	✓	Apologies	✓
Heidi Watson-Jones	Service Support Officer (Education)	✓	✓	✓
DAPH				
Hilary Priest	The Grove Primary	✓	-	-
Jonathan Bishop	Broadclyst Primary	-	Apologies	Apologies
Caroline Boother	Hatherleigh Primary	Apologies	Apologies	Apologies
Alun Dobson	Marwood Primary	✓	Apologies	✓
Jan Reid	Yeo Valley Primary	✓	✓	✓
DASH				
Daryll Chapman	Okehampton College	✓	Apologies	✓
Paul Cornish	Newton Abbot College	✓	-	-
Rob Haring	Ivybridge Community College		✓	Apologies
SHAD				
Bronwen Caschere	Southbrook School	✓	Apologies	✓
DAG				
Ian Rogers	Secondary	✓	✓	✓
David Treharne	Primary	-	✓	✓
John Thorndyke	Special	-	-	Apologies

Diocesan Representatives				
Mary Cox	Plymouth CAST	✓	-	-
Tricia Blyth	Plymouth RC Diocese	-	Apologies	Apologies
Christina Mabin	Exeter Anglican Diocese (Admissions)	Apologies	✓	Apologies
Richard Power	Exeter Anglican Diocese (Capital)	✓	Apologies	✓
Union Representatives				
John Staddon	TCC	✓	✓	✓
Steve Ryles	JCC			
In Attendance				
Nigel Coleman	NPS		✓	✓

1. Item/Focus: Minutes and Matters Arising from meeting on 7 June 2016	
<p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marie Stone had provided an update on Free School Meals for children attending nursery, calculated through take up during head count week. Any questions to be directed directly to marie.stone@devon.gov.uk AB to circulate 2016 admissions data. No further comments had been received for inclusion in the annual report. Noted some schools had been in contact to update the online admissions directory. Delayed admission to schools - considered possible disadvantage for primary schools in terms of over-subscription, DASH considered potential impact on attainment data, but would consider context of individual cases when making a decision. Noted that LA Admissions will encourage parents to carefully consider the longer term implications (e.g. around funding post-16 provision) CD outlined that three trust transfers had now been completed, with several currently being processed in the system. Noted backlog of legal work relating to VC schools transferring to Diocesan Education Board. Priority is given to schools converting to Academy status. Noted that Academies are expected to pick up legal costs relating to transfer. 	
Key Decision/ Issues for DEF:	Minutes of previous meeting agreed as an accurate record.
Action:	AB to circulate 2016 admissions data
2. Item/Focus: LA Annual Admissions Report (Andrew Brent)	
<p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report was submitted in June 2016. Positive report overall, with good inclusivity and response times most of the time. Admissions applications in year seem to be taking longer to process. Percentage of applications refused and going to appeal is currently manageable. 	
Key Decision/ Issues for DEF:	Report noted
Action:	
3. Item/Focus: Impact on outcomes for children held back or repeating a school year (Andrew Brent)	
<p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research has been undertaken in Devon recently following a discussion at the CME 'Missing Monday' meeting. Noted that research does not seem to support holding children back, particularly in Key Stage 	

4. DASH colleagues encouraged to share the research findings. LA position is not in favour of educating children out of year.

- Considered delayed primary admission for summer born children; Devon policy to be reviewed in the light of the report, particularly re. Community and VC schools. Noted national Admissions Code has not been reviewed as expected, but note DfE stance to increase parental right to delayed admission. DASH highlighted that decisions are made in the context of the individual child's personal circumstances and curriculum (varying from a previous school), and a policy review should include reference to seeking professional advice from the school during the decision process.
- Noted position in Special Schools where multi-agency advice can be given to families to encourage them to keep the child in primary school for a further year, which can have admissions implications for oversubscribed maintained special schools, and children can miss out on a place. Will be raised at next SHAD meeting with Dawn Stabb.
- Research completed by Dr Natasha Ellis of Babcock and colleague.

Key Decision/ Issues for DEF:	Research findings noted
Action:	Phase Associations to disseminate the research report and consider implications SHAD to discuss concerns relating to special school admissions with Dawn Stabb

4. Item/Focus: Children Missing Education and In-Year Admissions Compliance (Andrew Brent)

Discussion:

- Noted Admissions Code states that schools may not 'interview' children and families during an in-year admissions application or insist on seeing reports from previous schools. This, and lengthy local decision making processes are resulting delays in admitting a number of children in-year; except in very exceptional circumstances, every mainstream school should be admitting mainstream applicants if under PAN or admissions number. Decisions whether a place is available to another child are expected to be made by the governing body within 5 school days.
- Expectation is that if a place is available, then the child's admission would be agreed with a support package where appropriate. DASH outlined that there can be circumstances where full background information and assessment of additional need is not available immediately, which can cause issues where appropriate support package is not anticipated and planned. This may delay admission itself but not the decision itself to admit.
- Noted many children moving school in-year will have with additional needs but might not have an EHCP, and obtaining funding or information, particularly through the 0-25 SEN team can be time consuming.
- A school place can often be identified in advance of the child starting at the school, allowing time for a support package to be put in place, but unnecessary bureaucratic delay in offering a place is not appropriate.
- Noted that LA does monitor schools where there are significant delays or refusal in offering a place, and can refer these concerns to the Regional Schools Commissioner.
- In secondary schools, if a child is new to the area and the local school is full, then Fair Access Protocol will expect the catchment school to admit the child if within 3% over capacity in that year group.
- **Phase Associations** to share the information with schools, highlight expectations around timeframes for decision making, and to refer parents seeking to admit in-year to LA Admissions team for advice and guidance.
- Considered PAN (at reception) and Admission numbers (in other year groups) and implications around accepting additional admissions where it can prejudice the education of a mixed year group class in smaller schools.

Key Decision/ Issues for DEF:	Report noted and Recommendations as set out in section 3.2 of the report were agreed.
Action:	Phase Associations to disseminate information to schools and highlight expectation of compliance with the Admissions Code relating to in-year admissions procedures.

5. Item/Focus: Syrian Resettlement – update on arrangements and funding (Andrew Brent)	
Discussion:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update from previous report considered at SOCA. Noted that a number of children have been admitted to Devon schools, with a range of support requirements. 	
Key Decision/ Issues for DEF:	Report noted SOCA re-confirmed its commitment that all schools support the resettlement programme.
Action:	
6. Item/Focus: Early Years Update report (Fran Butler)	
Discussion:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted around 60 children delaying entry to school in 2016/17, evenly spread across the county, with no obvious patterns emerging. Noted a range of reasons for delaying, including medical and social care issues. Considered how schools can sometime more easily manage re-integration into the chronological age group particularly where there is a Foundation Unit. 30 new funded childminders this year, with 15 closing. Noted issues around Ofsted registration for Dartmouth pre-school. Noted new pre school provision now open in Dawlish Warren and Marsh Barton, Exeter. Several schools are now running EY provision away from main school sites, which poses unique challenges. Extended entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds to 30 hours from September 2017. FB to provide eligibility information to the group. Single funding formula for Early Years expected from April 2017. Funding rates for 2 year olds and 3 and 4 year olds expected to be notified in Spring term. Noted five capital project bids have been submitted to DfE where additional need for 30-hour childcare places has been identified – notification of outcome expected in December. Citizen's Portal is now open; enabling parents to check eligibility for funded 2 year old places. Considered success of 'Golden Ticket' initiative. Discussed how this might also work for Free School Meals eligibility, particularly where a family with an eligible 2 year old might have older children at school that could be entitled to FSM / Pupil Premium. Noted in-house processes exist to ensure take up for children in care, adopted children and Syrian refugees. Support for childminders will revert to the LA from 1 October 2016 at the end of the contract currently held by Noel Quinn. Local Authority advisors will act as a first point of contact for Child minders to ensure that they understand and can meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and SEND code of Practice to meet the needs of all children including those with additional needs and SEND. Babcock LDP Early Years Consultants team will support this role where a child is identified with more significant SEND to ensure that appropriate provision is provided and additional actions to secure effective entry to school are taken. Babcock LDP Early Years Consultants team will continue to provide the Area SENCo role to all Private, Voluntary Independent and maintained Nursery provision. Noted that in North Devon area there are cases where SEN needs have not been identified within EY settings until entry into reception. Would be helpful to highlight availability of additional training or support where needs are identified. FB to follow up on this. Nursery admissions oversubscription criteria have been revised to remove priority for children in receipt of EY Pupil Premium, as parents often do not know if they are eligible. SOCA approved proposed revision and posting online. 	
Key Decision/ Issues for DEF:	SOCA Agreed recommendation to revise nursery oversubscription criteria and for changes to be posted online.
Action:	FB to circulate extended childcare / early education eligibility criteria. FB to consider how information about SENCo support for Early Years settings can be shared.
7. Item/Focus: NPS Update report (Nigel Coleman)	

Discussion:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contractors were appointed in April and there have generally been good relationships between schools and the contractor. Use of Connect 2 system has been successful. Devon Academies Maintenance Agreement (DAMA) operating well, with Academies appointing their own contractors. NC to provide details of membership in next report. Service Term Contracts – DCC performance threshold of 95% has been maintained. Thanks to Phase Associations for encouraging schools to update installations database. Noted DMP currently includes 196 schools remaining in the scheme, and noted that contractors continue to be keen to cover sites close to each other. 	
Key Decision/ Issues for DEF:	Report noted
Action:	NC to provide details of the number of schools within the DAMA scheme.
8. Item/Focus: Capital Programme Update (Chris Dyer)	
Discussion:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant amount of works completed over summer break. Some contractors still on site with agreement of the schools, but all schools opened on time. Considering priority for 2017/18 programme setting which will be available for SOCA consideration in the new year. Prudent programme will be set initially, to ensure that all prioritised work is completed and allowing possible capacity to complete further projects if funding allows. Noted completion of in-year schemes relating to urgent DDA, structural repair and Health & Safety works. 	
Key Decision/ Issues for DEF:	Report noted
Action:	CD to prepare 2017/18 capital maintenance programme for consideration at January SOCA.
9. Item/Focus: School Organisation Update (Christine McNeil)	
Discussion:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 Free Schools approved – Western Barnstaple, SW Exeter All-through (Ted Wragg Trust with Exeter Creative School) and East of Exeter Primary School (Monkerton). Sites to be acquired with possible 2017/18 start. Sutcome Primary closed at end August. Noted updates for schools expanding and changing their age ranges. Noted a number of schools are not following DfE statutory procedure for changing age-ranges to include Early Years. Phase Associations to highlight to schools that they may not alter Edubase without completing the formal process and securing LA approval. Cross-border liaison group for school place planning and organisation will be meeting on 14/10/16 if any issues are to be raised, contact C McNeil. Education Investment Plan was circulated – to be considered at October Cabinet. Suggested that EIP clarifies priority for allocation of maintenance funding for Special Schools, which would be considered as at full admissions capacity for prioritisation processes. 	
Key Decision/ Issues for DEF:	SOCA approved EIP to be submitted to Cabinet for approval.
Action:	Phase Associations to highlight to schools that they may not alter Edubase to reflect a change in age-range to include EY without completing the formal process and securing LA approval.

10. Item/Focus: AOB - Admissions Consultation 2018-19 (Andrew Brent)

Discussion:

- Consultation documents for 2018/19 admissions policy for all own-admission authority schools is available online on Google Drive. Additional documents will also be made available. Church of England schools will need to respond to the Diocese within agreed timescales.
- Formal consultation from 1 November 2016 until New Year.
- Governing Body or Directors meetings must take place in February for own admissions schools to agree policies.

Key Decision/ Issues for DEF:

Action:

Own Admission Authority Schools to carefully consider the policy documentation held on Google Drive and ensure Governing Body / Board of Directors approval within require timeframe.

NEXT MEETING

9.30am on Tuesday 10 January 2017 at Larkbeare House