

10th February 2020

Agenda Item: 7

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, EDUCATION, LEARNING AND SKILLS

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2021-2022

Purpose of the Report

1. This report makes recommendation, following statutory consultation, to enable Committee to determine the following as detailed in **Appendix 1**:
 - arrangements for the admission of children to Nottinghamshire community and voluntary controlled schools for 2021-2022
 - Nottinghamshire County Council's qualifying scheme (admissions to a relevant age group)
 - Nottinghamshire County Council's in-year coordinated scheme for applications to Nottinghamshire schools outside the normal admission round (in-year admissions).

Information

2. All admission authorities must determine their school admission arrangements by 28th February every year, even if there have been no changes from previous years and consultation has not been required.
3. The County Council is also responsible for coordinating admission arrangements for all publicly funded schools in its area for children:
 - starting school for the first time (reception intake)
 - transferring from infant school to junior/primary education (Year 3 intake)
 - transferring from primary phase to secondary education (Year 7 intake)
 - applying to transfer to a school with an atypical age of admission, e.g. studio schools or university technology colleges (UTCs) (Year 9/Year 10 intake).
4. These requirements are described in the School Standards and Framework Act (SSFA) 1998 and the School Admissions Code (SAC) 2014 which are available from the Department for Education website www.education.gov.uk
5. Local authorities are not required to coordinate admissions outside the normal admission round (in-year admissions). However, the County Council continues to operate an in-year

coordinated scheme for community and voluntary controlled schools with an option for own admission authority schools to participate.

Statutory consultation

6. Where changes to admission arrangements are proposed, the admission authority must consult for a minimum of six weeks between 1st October and 31st January in the determination year on the admission arrangements for those schools for which they are responsible (School Admissions Code 2014, paragraphs 1.42-1.50).
7. Nottinghamshire County Council consulted on the proposed admission arrangements for 2021-2022 between 7th October 2019 and 24th November 2019.
8. The consultation was available for the full period on the Council's website and information about where to access the consultation was sent to:
 - parents of children between the ages of two and eighteen
 - other people in the area who may have an interest in the proposed admission arrangements
 - all other admission authorities within the relevant area
 - all community and voluntary controlled schools in Nottinghamshire
 - chairs of governing bodies of Nottinghamshire schools
 - diocesan representatives (relevant religious authorities)
 - admission authorities in neighbouring local authority areas
 - all registered early years providers within Nottinghamshire.
9. The consultation was promoted widely via the Council's social media accounts and by posters distributed to libraries, schools and children's centres throughout Nottinghamshire. Consultees were invited to respond online, by emailing or by writing to the County Council. All responses received by 24th November 2019 were considered.

Outline of Nottinghamshire County Council's consultation

10. The consultation asked eight questions about proposed changes to the following aspects of the admission arrangements: relevant areas, admission oversubscription criteria, admission numbers, timelines for the coordinated schemes and the in-year application process.

Responses to the consultation

11. Responses to the consultation were as follows:
 - 57 online responses
12. A summary of the consultation is presented in **Appendix 2**, with an analysis of responses. A redacted version of all the comments made by respondents is available as a background paper.

Other Options Considered

13. As the local authority, Nottinghamshire County Council is the admission authority for community and voluntary controlled schools in Nottinghamshire and is therefore responsible for determining the admission arrangements for those schools.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

14. To enable the County Council to meet its statutory responsibility to determine Nottinghamshire County Council's school admission arrangements for 2021-2022 by 28th February 2020.

Statutory and Policy Implications

15. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Implications for Service Users

16. Over 25,000 families express a school preference each year. In drawing up these school admission arrangements, Nottinghamshire County Council ensures that the practices and the criteria used to decide the allocation of school places are fair, clear and objective.
17. Own admission authority schools are responsible for determining their own admission arrangements and these may differ from those determined by Nottinghamshire County Council for community and voluntary controlled schools.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) That the school admission arrangements for 2021-2022 as detailed in **Appendix 1** are determined, including:
 - overall procedures and practices including oversubscription criteria for community and voluntary controlled schools, as detailed in Section 1
 - published admission numbers, as listed in Section 2
 - qualifying schemes in Section 3
 - in-year scheme in Section 4.

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Constitutional Comments (KK 08/01/20)

18. The proposals in this report are within the remit of the Children and Young People's Committee.

Financial Comments (SAS 13/01/20)

19. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Equalities Impact Assessment

<http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/jobs-and-working/equality/completed-equality-impact-assessments-eqias>

Consultation documents

https://consult.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/schools/admissionsconsultation/supporting_documents/FuII%20consultation%20document%20%20community%20and%20VC%20%20FINAL.pdf

Redacted version of comments made by respondents to the online consultation

School Standards and Framework Act (SSFA) 1998, available at www.education.gov.uk

School Admissions Code (SAC) 2014, available at www.education.gov.uk

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

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