

**Presentation to Admission Forum 01.10.09 on Behalf of Austhorpe Primary,
Colton Primary, Swillington Primary & Woodlesford Primary**

Background

Historically a large percentage of children from our schools have transferred to Garforth Community College (GCC) at the end of year 6. The majority of these places have been offered according to the Education Leeds (EL) admissions policy criteria. See Appendix A. Following the formation of the School Partnership Trust (SPT) and the subsequent change to the admission policy for GCC, parents are now choosing to seek places for their children at the primary schools within the SPT to gain advantage of the GCC admission policy under criteria three. See Appendix B.

This issue was recently highlighted following the transfer of a substantial number of children, in one year group, from Colton Primary, within one week. As a result of this Viv Buckland was invited to meet with parents at the school to answer questions concerning admissions. Parents, governors and staff attended this meeting. Consequently it was agreed that representation be made to the Admission Forum, on behalf of the parents, to contest the GCC admission policy in the interest of fairness and transparency. Following this, as a part of our working in collaboration with local schools, we agreed to make joint representation on behalf of Austhorpe Primary, Colton Primary, Swillington Primary and Woodlesford Primary. All of whom have experienced the migration of their children to the SPT primary schools, without families actually moving to Garforth.

Openness and Transparency

- Distance – EL Admission Policy offer places at a high school based on a straight line distance between the high school and the residence of the pupil under priority 4 and 5.
- The GCC admission policy currently offers places to children who are on the role at a primary school within the SPT giving them an advantage to gaining access to the GCC. This is very understandable in so far as supporting primary schools within the SPT in maintaining a common learning platform and continuity throughout their education. An assumption is being made that this admission policy supports local schools for local children. We wish to dispute this based on the following information. See Appendix C. (Information to date only includes data from Austhorpe Primary and Colton Primary, revised information will be presented to the Admissions Forum to include Swillington Primary and Woodlesford Primary)

This illustrates the straight line distance between the residences of children that have left Austhorpe Primary and Colton Primary and the GCC. In some instances children remaining at our primary schools may live nearer to GCC than those having left to go to primary schools within the SPT. Is this fair that

children living further away from the GCC than those remaining at our schools will be offered places before them?

- We would now like to contest GCC having criteria three within its admission policy. We believe parents are manipulating the system by moving their children to primary schools within the SPT, therefore gaining a place at the GCC under criteria three. Consequently contradicting the tie break criteria which clearly states that “children living closest to the college will, therefore, be allocated a place before those who live further away”.

Funding

Twenty four children have transferred to Garforth primary schools from Austhorpe Primary and Colton Primary over the past year following the formulation of GCC admissions policy. See Appendix D. As illustrated the budget impact of this is quite substantial and has long term repercussions on staffing, future planning, teaching and learning. This is causing uncertainty and affecting staff morale. Parents are asking question about the effects on staffing levels and the emotional effects on pupils remaining in our schools. Our concern relates to the impact this may have in the long term on our sustainability.

Collaborative Working

Within our clusters we are currently exploring options for collaborative working. Our parents have expressed negative views about working in Trust based upon their recent experiences surrounding admissions. This also mirrors the views and feelings of staff and governors. All of these people whom are stakeholders will influence any future consultation processes undertaken. Collaborative working is not about admissions, never the less as a result of recent events it is having an impact on forming partnerships.