
REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF EDUCATION LEEDS

ADMISSIONS FORUM: June 2010

SUBJECT: Report to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator

1.0 PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

1.1 This report is to inform the Admission Forum of the content of the report to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator.

2.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 The local Authority is required annually to report to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator by 30 June and Admission Forum are invited to offer any further input to the report contained at Appendix A. The data behind the report is contained at Appendix B. Admission Forum is also able submit a separate report should it wish to do so on the effectiveness of local arrangements.

2.2 The Schools' Adjudicator provides a template for the local Authority on which to report covering the matters required annually and any specific queries they may have each year. The data report contains school level data on Free School Meals, appeals and children taken through the Fair Access Protocol.

2.3 The commentary that accompanies the report confirms that all of the legal requirements around consultation and determination of policies has been met, that schools are complying with the Infant Class Size legislation, and how well the Fair Access Protocol is working. It also provides comments on whether or not Appeals Panels are complying with the School Admissions Appeal Code.

3.0 MAIN ISSUES

3.1 The operation of the Fair Access Protocols is an area where Admission Forum receive regular reports, and monitor comprehensively. The data shows that up to the end of April, when the data was produced, we had placed 716 children to whom the Fair Access Protocol criteria applied, during this academic year. This is approximately 20% of all in year transfers that we have received during that time. The schools and academies should be commended on their very positive approach to supporting the local authority Protocol.

3.2 We have no reason to refer any objections to the Schools Adjudicator on the admission policies. All policies and supplementary forms have been received

and considered by the Council's Legal Department. There were a number of changes necessary to some of the forms and policies' and these have been actioned.

- 3.3 Earlier this year the Office of the Schools Adjudicator released a report they had prepared on fraudulent applications by parents for school places. It recommended to the previous government some increased measures to detect and deter parents from this occurring. Whilst many of the recommendations were accepted it is not yet clear the approach the new government will take. In Leeds we have had to withdraw a significant number of places since offer were made on 1 March. We have requested in the report to the Adjudicator that the appeals Code be strengthened in support of the measures local authorities are required to take in these circumstances.
- 3.4 The percentage of children eligible for Free School Meals does not have a close correlation either to the number of appeals for the schools or to the numbers of children the schools take through the Fair Access Protocol. The appeals are related to whether or not the school is full and it is pleasing to see that families in areas with high FSM are still taking up their right to appeal. The local authority does wish to ensure that parents are able to fully access their rights in relation to admissions in all areas of the City. The number of pupils taken through FAP most closely relates to the general level of mobility in those schools.
- 3.5 The Choice Advice service in Leeds continues to operate out of the Parent Partnership Service, targeting their work to families who have the greatest difficulty in engaging with the admissions process. Admission Forum will be receiving a report from the Choice Adviser in their Autumn meeting with information on their work this year.

4.0 **CONCLUSIONS**

- 4.1 All admission authorities in Leeds are working positively with the local Authority with respect to all aspects of the School Admissions Code. There is no intention to refer any objections to the Schools Adjudicator this year.
- 4.2 All the required information will be submitted to the Schools Adjudicator, and Admission Forum may contribute to the report contained at Appendix A and submit an additional report of their own.

5.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 5.1 That Admission Forum note the positive way in which the local Authority, Diocese , Foundation, Academy and schools have worked together to ensure full compliance with the School Admissions Code.
- 5.2 That Admission Forum determine if they wish to submit an additional report on the effectiveness of local arrangements.