

REPORT TO LEEDS ADMISSION FORUM

DATE: 16 November 2010

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF THE PUBLISHED ADVICE TO PARENTS AND CHOICE ADVICE

1. Background

1.1 Admissions Forum are required to consider the comprehensiveness and accessibility of the admissions literature and information produced for parents by each admission authority within the area of the forum, both through the published composite prospectus and the delivery of Choice Advice.

2. Guide for parents

2.1 The secondary prospectus runs to approximately 80 pages of information. This includes maps of all secondary schools to help parents consider their likelihood of gaining a place at any given secondary school. The secondary booklet also contains all of the admission policies for the Aided and Foundation schools and Academies. As schools continue to change their status it may become increasingly difficult for the booklet to contain all policies. This year we have included more information on sustainable travel and included a summary of the Fair Access Protocol, rather than the whole protocol. There were new regulations due to come into force that would have further extended the information in the booklet, but were revoked by the new government prior to their implementation.

2.2 The primary prospectus runs to approximately 50 pages of information. This has reduced in size because we have taken out the maps of all oversubscribed primary schools due to the number of oversubscribed schools increasing. We have now shown information about offers that were made for community and voluntary controlled schools under each oversubscribed primary school. The primary booklet would be more than twice its current size if all admission policies were included in the booklet. All admission policies are published on the Education Leeds website for parents, and hard copies of any policy are provided for any parent who requests one. The maps have also been made available on the website.

Both the primary and the secondary booklets have a copy of the common preference form at the back.

2.3 We also publish a ten page summary booklet for parents giving all key information. This summary is sent out to all parents with a letter advising them of their nearest school. The summary highlights the fact that there is a much larger booklet available free from any school, open evening or directly from the admissions team, and also available on the website. Feedback suggests this smaller summary document is all the majority of parents need, or want, in order to make their preferences. We have updated the summaries and the main booklets to make it clearer whether or not an Aided school requires a Supplementary Information Form.

- 2.4 Admissions officers attended the majority of secondary school open evenings to provide on site advice for parents. This year we have been promoting on-line applications with our pop up stand at all these secondary open evenings and early indications suggest that over 60% of parents have applied on-line for secondary places. Admissions officers are also meeting staff at Children's Centres to help them understand the process. A range of primary schools host an information event for parents and admissions officers are invited to provide information and advice.
- 2.5 Where parents have difficulty with English, rather than provide translated documents, interpreters and use of language line to communicate and answer queries is provided.
- 2.6 We have included copies of all supplementary information forms from Aided schools on our website to assist parents.
- 2.7 Details of sustainable travel and transport facilities available in schools, using sustainable travel symbols, have been included in the booklets. In the primary booklet these sit alongside the guide to before and after school care.
- 2.8 The online service provides the greatest range of information, including links to school websites as well as external websites that may be of interest to parents, such as OfSTED and Advisory Centre for Education.
3. **Recommendation**
- 3.1 The Forum is asked to note the efforts being made to improve the quality and scope of information provided to parents on Admissions. Any feedback or comments would be particularly welcome.