

Fairness of Admission Policies Sub Committee

Thursday, 3rd February, 2011

PRESENT: Mr P Forbes in the Chair

Councillor P Gruen, Mrs F Beevers and Mr
R Madeley

IN ATTENDANCE -

Mrs B Comiskey – Admissions Manager, Education Leeds

10 Chair's opening remarks

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting

11 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Ms Buckland

12 Declarations of interest

The Chair declared an interest in agenda item 5 - Garforth Academy Admission Policy through being the Chair of the Garforth Trust (minute 14 refers)

13 Minutes of the last meeting

That the minutes of the Fairness of Admission Policies Sub Committee meeting held on 16th December 2010 be approved

14 Garforth Academy Admission Policy

Further to minute 5 of the meeting held on 16th December 2010 Members received a report on the admission policy for Garforth Academy following a recognition that the Academy's policy had a significant impact on primary schools in the area and concerns over whether this system was fair

The report outlined the criteria; the primary schools within the learning partnership whose pupils were given priority under criteria 3 of Garforth Academy admission policy and stated that the policy operated by the Academy provided choice and diversity and so was compliant with the admissions code and was legal

An analysis had been undertaken of the possible numbers of pupils transferring from the named feeder schools and for the admission number of 300 at the Academy, there remained potentially 50 places which would be available under criteria 4, then 5. This number should therefore allow for children living in the Colton area of the city to qualify for a place at Garforth Academy

Members commented on the following matters:

- whether any of the named feeder schools were due to increase their admission numbers
- the amount of residential development planned for Aberford and the knock-on effect of this on primary and secondary places
- how frequently the admission arrangements for Academies were reviewed

- whether Academies were required to comply with the Local Authority's admission policy
- concerns at the effect of another primary school becoming a named feeder school for the Academy as this would reduce the potential available places for other pupils to just 20

The Admissions Manager, who was in attendance provided the following responses:

- that there were no increases proposed for any of the 6 primary schools which 'fed' into Garforth Academy
- that Colton Primary School had gone into partnership with Temple Moor High School which had become a Foundation Trust school as had Brigshaw High School
- that details regarding demographics and planning was dealt with by Lesley Savage in Education Leeds who could provide information, if requested
- that the admission arrangements for Academies were reviewed yearly but that if the Admissions Code remained unchanged, it was not likely that the policy would change
- that Academies did not have to comply with the LA Admissions Policy but were required to comply with the DfE Admissions Code

Concerns were raised that the changing status of so many schools in the area could lead in future years to the creation of a two-tier admissions system

RESOLVED - Whilst accepting the policy currently served the interests of children and parents in the area, it was felt the situation had to be monitored, particularly to ensure it continued to do so in the future

15 Update on Annual Consultation on Admission Arrangements for September 2012

Members received a report of the Admissions Manager providing information on the responses received so far to the annual consultation on admission arrangements for 2012

Paragraph 4.2 of the submitted report set out the number of responses received and these were updated at the meeting, with members being informed that 70 responses had now been received, with a further breakdown on the issues being:

- in year waiting lists – 26 responses in favour of these being introduced and 7 against
- sibling priority – high school – 13 responses in favour of altering this for high school admissions and 25 against
- sibling priority – primary school – with approx 60 responses on this matter and an overwhelming objection to altering this for primary school admissions

Some schools had encouraged parents to respond to the consultation which ended on 10th February 2011

Members discussed the responses received and were encouraged that there was support for in year waiting lists as it was felt by Education Leeds and the committee that this would result in a fairer system

Regarding the proposed changes to some admission numbers, a brief discussion took place on this in relation to specific schools

As members of the sub-committee had links with several schools and could encourage them to respond to the consultation a list of the schools which had already responded was requested

In terms of moving forward, the Admissions Manager stated the responses would be fed into a report to the Executive Board on 30th March 2011, with recommendations

RESOLVED-

- i) To note the report and the updated information provided
- ii) That the Sub-Committee was supportive of in year waiting lists being adopted; were of the view that the sibling priority for primary schools should remain and to note the information on high school sibling priority
- iii) That details of which schools had responded to the consultation be provided to all sub-committee members

16 Any other business

A request was made for a report to be submitted to the next Admissions Forum providing details on how Education Leeds' move into the Authority would impact on the Admissions Forum, particularly in terms of how the it would be serviced; how information would be presented to it and who would attend

17 Date and time of next meeting

RESOLVED - That dates for a future meeting be circulated to all members, for their consideration and agreement