

Report of Director of Children's Services

Report to Executive Board

Date: 12 October 2011

Subject: Admissions Round 2011

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. Secondary offers continue to be made on the national offer day of 1 March. Just under 5000 parents applied on line and received their email offer on 1 March. There were 7624 offers made of which 86% received their first preference.
2. Primary school offers are made in mid April and the increasing birth rate in the City, as well as the work to support as many parents as possible to apply on time, resulted in offers rising by over 500 from last year. On 20 April 8756 offers were made for Reception places with 84.4% of parents offered their first preference school.
3. Since September 2010 the local authority has been required to coordinate all in year transfer requests for all schools and academies, and with other local authorities. Parents must apply to the local authority in which they live for a school place, and the local authority must check availability of places before offering the parent the highest preference possible. The team have received 8555 transfer requests during the last academic year. Approximately 70% of these requests are for primary school places.

4. During the last admissions application round when 11,000 parents applied online, and many more visited the website, we hosted a questionnaire about the choice of schools available in Leeds. There was a total of 175 respondents, although not all went on to answer all of the questions available to them. We asked a range of questions to find out more about why parents choose, or do not choose, from the range of schools available, and whether that range of schools is appropriate. This was done to assist in the Local Authority duty to promote choice and diversity.

Recommendations

5. That Executive Board note the statistical information on the Admissions round including
 - Percentage of first preferences achieved was 85.4%, with 95.3% achieving one of their three preferences
 - The increasing number of primary appeals, and the further 6% improvement in the successful defence of in year appeals
 - The continued increase in use of the online application system with 70% of parents now choosing to apply online (up from 44% last year)

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report provides statistical information on Admissions into Reception and year 7 for September 2011, as well as entry into Junior school. The government introduced coordination of in year transfers from September 2010 and this reports provides further statistical information in this respect.
- 1.2 The local authority has a duty to promote choice and diversity in schools. In order to gather information on parental views a survey was undertaken on why parents choose particular schools, and their views on the choices available to them. The findings of that survey are also summarised in this report.

2 Background information

- 2.1 The Admissions team are responsible for allocating children to primary, infant, junior and secondary schools and defending admission appeals for community and voluntary controlled schools, including co-ordinating admissions between the voluntary-aided and foundation schools, the four neighbouring LEAs and the Academies.
- 2.2 The birth rate has been rising and the number of children entering Reception continues to grow, although the number entering Secondary school is at its lowest point for many years. This will begin to rise from next year. The team continue to explore more ways to let parents know about the need to apply for a primary school place. Last year 480 parents applied between the offer day and the start of term, and this has reduced to 250 this year. Parents who apply on time have a much greater chance of gaining one of their preferences, or a local school.
- 2.3 The online service continues to increase in popularity with a total of 11,000 parents applying online, representing 70% of applications. It was during the application period that we hosted the survey on School Choice on the same area of the website to attract as much interest as possible from parents. A summary of the survey findings is presented later in the report.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 Secondary offers continue to be made on the national offer day of 1 March. Just under 5000 parents applied on line and received their email offer on 1 March. There were 7624 offers made of which 86% received their first preference (appendix 3), up 2% from last year. A number of these offers are to children living in another local authority applying for Leeds schools. The percentage of Leeds parents who received their first preference was 90%. There were just over 200 fewer applications this year as the cohort entering secondary school is the smallest Leeds has. There will be a small increase in the number of children entering secondary school in September 2012 and a much larger increase in 2013 and beyond.
- 3.2 Primary school offers are made in mid April and the increasing birth rate in the City, as well as the work to support as many parents as possible to apply on time, resulted in offers rising by over 500 from last year. On 20 April 8756 offers were made for Reception places with 84.4% of parents offered their first preference school

(appendix 4), down 3% on last year. There are approximately 9270 places available in the City as a whole.

- 3.3 The number of appeals for primary school places has risen again this year, although as most are defended on the basis of the infant class size legislation, very few are successful. The overall number of secondary appeals has fallen although this is increasingly difficult to monitor as schools become academies and foundation schools. This change of status places governing bodies in the position of admitting authority for the school or academy, and as such, responsible for defending their own appeals. The table in appendix 2 therefore does not contain information for academies, aided or foundation schools, unless they have recently converted and we have handled their appeals centrally. In year appeals continue to fall and the success of the local authority in defending those appeals continues to improve. Much of this is due to the success of the Fair Access Protocol in Leeds which deals not only with children with challenging behaviour, but also those who have moved into an area where there is a shortage of places.
- 3.4 Since September 2010 the local authority has been required to coordinate all in year transfer requests for all schools and academies, and with other local authorities. Parents must apply to the local authority in which they live for a school place, and the local authority must check availability of places before offering the parent the highest preference possible. The team have received 8555 transfer requests during the last academic year. Approximately 70% of these requests are for primary school places.
- 3.5 The Fair Access Protocol continues to prove very successful in Leeds. Any child who may face difficulty in gaining a school place is covered by the Protocol and all children who are without a school place are made an offer through this process. The Protocol covers about 20% of all transfer requests and every child is made an offer of a school place, whilst ensuring that no school has to take more than their fair share of children with challenging behaviour.
- 3.6 During the last admissions application round when 11,000 parents applied online, and many more visited the website, we hosted a questionnaire about the choice of schools available in Leeds. There was a total of 175 respondents, although not all went on to answer all of the questions available to them. We asked a range of questions to find out more about why parents choose, or do not choose, from the range of schools available, and whether that range of schools is appropriate.
- 3.7 Almost 80% of the respondents were parents of children aged between 0 and 7, many of whom also had other children of primary school age. The parents applying for primary school places told us that their top priority (25%) was that academic performance of the school, with ease of location and reputation coming in second and third. These three considerations scored most highly as both second and third priority, with good behaviour also scoring strongly. Interestingly, although childcare is the most commonly cited reason for wanting a school during the appeals, not a single parent put before and after school care as their highest priority in choice of school. Parents applying for secondary school placed academic performance as their first priority, with location of the school. Discipline and behaviour scored highly as second and third priorities.

3.8 The majority of parents felt there was a good range of schools available. Almost 60% of parents who responded stated that they held a religious belief but only 34% would ask only for a school of their own faith. Of those parents who have no religious belief, 60% would ask for a faith school. With the government's introduction of Free Schools we asked parents how they felt about different groups running schools and 94% felt that parent groups running a school was a good or very good thing. As yet we do not have any parent groups proposing Free Schools in Leeds.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

4.1.1 The Admission Policy is consulted on each year, usually between 1 December and early February. During the last consultation, as well as local elected members, headteachers, governing bodies and Diocesan Bodies responding there were also 99 responses from parents. This was an excellent response from parents in particular and the Admissions Forum were able to provide guidance before Executive Board determined the admissions arrangements.

4.1.2 It is proposed that we also continue to host the survey on school choice during the application round when so many parents are accessing the website. This survey can help to inform the local authority's statutory duty to promote choice and diversity.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

4.2.1 The admissions policy has had an equality impact assessment carried out. The policy allows for priorities to be given to children with exceptional mobility or physical difficulties. The transport policy ensures that children with disabled parents are appropriately supported. The admission policy is based on local schools for local children, and is regularly checked to ensure that where children are unable to gain access to their nearest (priority) school, that the house prices of families who can gain access to the school are not significantly higher than those who are unable to gain a place.

4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities

4.3.1 The admission policy is based on priority for local schools supporting community cohesion, sustainable travel, attendance and health and wellbeing. Children are provided with priority for schools that they are able to access within a reasonable distance, or provided with zero fare transport if there are no places available within an appropriate distance. Children in Public Care are the highest priority in all admission policies.

4.4 Resources and Value for Money

4.4.1 The online application process is proving popular with parents and allows a streamlining of the process for handling admissions. A summary booklet is provided for all parents outlining the essential information necessary to apply for a school place. The full booklet is provided on the website, along with a range of other information, and in hard copy only on request.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- 4.5.1 All admission policies must be legally determined by 15 April each year, following a period of consultation, where required. Notices are published by 1 May to advise the public of their right to object to the Schools Adjudicator. No such objections were raised.
- 4.5.2 Local Authorities were placed under a duty to promote diversity and increase parental choice in planning and securing the provision of school places in the Education and Inspections Act 2006. This built on the existing requirement that local authorities seek to maximise parental preference for school places. The government agenda is to actively promote choice for parents, supported by the choice advisers, and extended transport arrangements for many families, encouraging parents to be aspirational in their requests. The School Choice survey is a means of collecting information from parents to support this duty.

4.6 Risk Management

- 4.6.1 The increasing birth rate in the City is leading to a slight fall in the percentage of parents being offered their first preference school. There is the potential for children to be offered places some significant distance from their home, particularly if they apply after the deadlines given. It will be necessary to continue to increase the number of places available to enable parents to access a local school.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 The number of applications dealt with in the primary and junior rounds continues to increase, whilst there has decrease in secondary applications. Overall the Admissions team have dealt with 25,250 applications for starting school or in year transfers. The percentage of appeals being successfully defended for primary and for in year transfers continues to improve. As more schools adopt academy and foundation status fewer appeals are defended by the local authority.
- 5.2 The admissions policy is fully compliant with all legislation. All allocations processes are carried out in line with the published policy. The volume of in year transfers being handled by the team has approximately doubled, through the introduction of coordination and the increase of transfers into and around the City.
- 5.3 The survey carried out on parents views of the choices of schools available indicates that they particularly want a school with good academic standards, that is easily accessible, and has good discipline and behaviour. Parents indicated that they were most influenced on school choice by friends and relatives, the school's open day and the Ofsted report. Up to 35% of respondents did not understand the different types of school available, for example, academy, free school, Foundation school.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 That Executive Board note the statistical information on the Admissions round including

- Percentage of first preferences achieved was 85.4%, with 95.3% achieving one of their three preferences
- The increasing number of primary appeals, and the further 6% improvement in the successful defence of in year appeals
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7 Background documents

7.1 Executive Board paper 30 March 2011

Appendix 1

Admission numbers and percentages for September 2011									
	Total	1 ST	%	2 ND	%	3 RD	%	Placed	%
Secondary	7624	6557	86%	612	8%	137	1.8%	318	4.2%
Primary	8756	7392	84.4%	701	8%	193	2.2%	470	5.4%
Junior	313	306	97.9%	3	1%	3	1%	1	0.1%
Total	16693	14255	85.4%	1316	7.9%	333	2%	789	4.7%

Placed is where no preference could be met or the form was not returned. In these cases the children were placed into a school against any preference.

The total column does not include those parents who have been offered a late preference. 'Late preferences' are where parents have requested additional schools after the offer day.

Percentage of first preferences achieved

	2011	2010	2009	2008
Secondary	86.0	83.9	83.7	86.7
Primary	84.4	88.1	83.2	88.6
Junior	97.9	96.2	96.9	95.3
Total	85.4	86.2	83.7	87.8

Percentage of parents who achieved one of their three preferences

	2011	2010	2009	2008
Secondary	96	96.5	95.5	97.0
Primary	96.9	91.3	95.1	98.8
Junior	97.9	97.3	97.3	96.1
Total	95.3	96.7	93.5	96.1

Appeals

	Granted	Not Granted	Total	% Granted
Secondary	64	148	212 (400)	30% (26%)
Primary	19	369	388 (317)	4.9% (7.5%)
In year	93	176	269 (309)	34.6% (40.8%)
Total	176	693	869 (1026)	

Last years figures in brackets

Appendix 2 SECONDARY SCHOOLS APPEAL RESULTS

School Name	Granted			Not Granted			Total		
	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011
Allerton Grange	0	0	1	0	0	4	0	0	5
Allerton High	2	6	7	4	38	28	6	44	35
Benton Park	2	4	3	17	4	5	19	8	8
Boston Spa (F)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Brigshaw (F)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bruntcliffe	0	3	0	0	3	0	0	6	0
Carr Manor	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
City of Leeds	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cockburn (F)	4	17	8	33	12	12	37	29	20
Crawshaw (F)	0	0	0	1	5	0	1	5	0
Farnley Park	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grangefield (F)	2	10	4	36	27	9	38	37	13
Guiseley	0	3	4	0	0	7	0	3	11
Horsforth	6	3	8	14	23	7	20	26	15
John Smeaton	0	13	1	0	30	3	0	43	4
Lawnswood	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Morley (A)	7	5	n/a	36	28	n/a	43	33	n/a
Otley Prince Henry	1	4	0	7	8	0	8	12	0
Parklands (A)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Priesthorpe	0	1	0	0	4	0	0	5	0
Primrose (A)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ralph Thoresby	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rodillian	0	4	12	12	11	0	12	15	12
Roundhay	7	12	16	50	71	73	57	83	89
Royds	7	1	0	5	0	0	12	1	0
Swallow Hill	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0
Temple Moor (F)	5	12	0	8	10	0	13	22	0
Wetherby (F)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Woodkirk	10	6	0	12	21	0	22	27	0
Total	53	104	64	236	296	148	289	400	212
	18%	26%	30%	82%	74%	70%			

Aided Schools and Academies conduct their own appeals and are not included in this information. Schools with (F) have converted this year to Foundation status and those with (A) have converted to academy status. Data may not be available for these schools next year.

Appendix 3

Secondary Preference data

This table shows the summary of initial demand, that is, preferences received from parents by the beginning of December 2010 after we have received information from other local authorities.

School	Admission number	1 st pref	2 nd pref	3 rd pref
Abbey Grange CE	205	2469	130	114
Allerton Grange	240	151	241	129
Allerton High	180	226	160	183
Benton Park	232	244	276	132
Boston Spa	300	157	180	157
Brigshaw	240	181	170	71
Bruntcliffe	240	167	200	205
Cardinal Heenan Catholic	180	206	135	88
Carr Manor	180	122	84	121
City of Leeds	150	22	23	38
Cockburn	210	231	159	74
Corpus Christi Catholic	184	186	126	81
Crawshaw	195	126	192	130
David Young Community Academy	180	179	76	63
Farnley Park	210	135	82	48
Garforth (Foundation)	300	343	259	118
Guiseley	225	241	226	133
Horsforth	225	240	189	141
John Smeaton	180	169	108	110
Lawnswood	270	108	89	124
Leeds West Academy	240	148	60	68
Morley	252	280	297	86
Mount St Mary's Catholic	180	157	107	101
Parklands Girls	140	59	70	47
Priesthorpe	195	125	111	169
Primrose	180	80	52	79
Prince Henry's Otley	225	218	136	133
Pudsey Grangefield	195	248	242	93
Ralph Thoresby	180	106	132	92
Rodillian	210	225	158	87
Roundhay	250	417	269	114
Royds	220	170	159	85
South Leeds	210	142	53	49
St Mary's Catholic Menston	180	207	134	89
Swallow Hill	240	174	97	54
Temple Moor	210	186	119	105
Wetherby	170	120	128	116
Woodkirk	300	281	221	234

Appendix 4

Primary Preference data

This table shows only those primary schools who were oversubscribed with first preferences at the beginning of March when all on time preferences were being considered.

School	Admission number	1 st pref	2 nd pref	3 rd pref
Aberford	14	17	2	7
Adel	30	46	54	27
All Saints Richmond Hill	30	43	16	15
Alwoodley	60	79	47	40
Beecroft	30	53	28	9
Beeston Hill St Luke CE	45	85	45	26
Birchfield	30	50	42	11
Broadgate	30	35	16	28
Calverley Parkside	30	47	29	27
Carr Manor	60	87	53	61
Churwell	60	67	34	36
Collingham LEH	30	37	22	16
Colton	30	53	29	43
Cookridge	45	46	42	34
Corpus Christi Catholic Primary	50	53	32	14
Cottingley	40	42	3	1
Cross Flatts	30	42	43	17
Crossley Street	30	43	34	18
Deighton Gates	30	31	32	9
East Ardsley	45	46	13	19
Farsley Westroyd Infant	60	94	31	13
Fieldhead Carr	30	34	15	5
Five Lanes	60	80	61	11
Garforth Green Lane	50	55	44	25
Gledhow	60	112	101	62
Greenmount	60	63	37	31
Greenside	45	60	90	27
Guiseley Infant	90	91	36	27
Harehills	90	92	70	40
Harewood CE	13	22	24	21
Hawthornthwaite CE Primary	15	17	19	24
Hilltop	30	39	60	20
Holy Family Catholic	30	33	17	5
Holy Name Catholic	30	37	28	17
Holy Rosary and St Anne Catholic	30	40	12	14
Hunslet St Mary CE	30	37	24	11
Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic	60	70	29	26
Lady Elizabeth Hastings Thorp Arch	20	28	15	12
Lawns Park	30	37	20	25
Little London	30	46	23	13

Lower Wortley	45	47	52	25
Lowtown	30	34	34	36
Meanwood CE	30	62	36	15
Morley Victoria	60	71	101	68
Oakwood	60	68	37	35
Otley All Saints	30	32	28	20
Pool in Wharfedale	30	35	11	10
Pudsey Primrose Hill	45	54	44	61
Pudsey Tyersal	30	34	3	5
Rawdon Littlemoor	45	58	76	42
Rawdon St Peters CE	45	53	27	14
Raynville	60	66	23	14
Robin Hood	45	65	38	27
Rothwell St Mary's Catholic	30	41	24	6
Roundhay St John CE	30	69	24	35
Seacroft Grange	30	32	7	12
Shadwell	30	40	32	34
Sharp Lane	60	67	43	17
SS Peter and Paul Catholic	30	37	12	12
St Anthony Catholic	30	38	36	8
St Augustine Catholic	60	66	40	38
St Chad CE	30	47	21	13
St Edwards Catholic Boston Spa	22	24	13	10
St Francis of Assisi	25	29	18	15
St Josephs Pudsey Catholic	30	43	9	6
St Josephs Wetherby Catholic	30	33	11	11
St Margarets CE	60	68	77	62
St Marys Horsforth Catholic	30	41	35	13
St Marys CE Boston Spa	24	21	41	16
St Matthews	60	62	58	28
St Nicholas Catholic	40	67	71	28
St Patricks Catholic	30	60	28	26
St Pauls Catholic	30	31	35	18
St Peters CE	30	38	19	14
St Theresa Catholic	60	84	27	23
St Urbans Catholic	30	51	34	30
Stanningley	30	41	27	25
Summerfield	30	37	25	18
Talbot	60	93	66	48
Templenewsam Halton	60	76	50	34
Tranmere Park	45	55	65	19
Weetwood	30	39	52	38
Westbrook Lane	30	41	59	47
Westerton	90	100	64	14
Westgate	30	32	31	25
Whingate	60	64	24	30
Whinmoor St Pauls	30	32	13	5