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## REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF EDUCATION LEEDS

**EXECUTIVE BOARD: 14 October 2009**

**SUBJECT: REPORT ON THE SEPTEMBER 2009 ADMISSION ROUND**

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### Executive Summary

#### Purpose of this report

- 1 The report gives statistical information on:
  - the percentage of first preferences achieved, the headline figure is 83.7%;
  - the percentage of parents who received one of their three preferences, the headline figure is 93.5%;
  - information on school appeals;
  - the percentage of first preferences by black and ethnic minority categories.

#### Background Information

- 2 Education Leeds is responsible for allocating children to primary, infant, junior and secondary schools and defending admission appeals for community and voluntary controlled schools. The company is also responsible for co-ordinating admissions between the voluntary-aided and foundation schools, the four neighbouring LEAs and the David Young Community Academy.
- 3 Over recent years there has been an increase in the birth rate, both nationally, and locally. There are around 600 more allocations to primary school this year than at the same time last year. Whilst we still have some surplus places in a small number of primary schools, these are in a limited number of areas of the City. It has been possible to allocate all parents who applied on time a place, however each year there are a significant number of parents who apply late and it is increasingly difficult to place these children within a reasonable distance. These factors are adversely affecting the number of parents being offered their preferred school.
- 4 The number of secondary school allocations on 1 March was approximately the same as last year. There remain a small number of schools where children are unable to gain a place in their nearest school. However all nearest children were offered a place in Roundhay school this year, following the changes to the admission policy reflecting the David Young Community Academy as a nearest school.
- 5 The on-line service has once again proved popular with parents, with 26% of on time applications using this method to apply for a school place. Statutorily, we must send offers out on 1 March each year. As this was a Sunday in 2009, parents who applied

on line received their offer on the Sunday, several days ahead of those who applied on the traditional paper form.

- 6 The ethnicity data for primary applications is not sufficiently robust to allow a trend analysis of the information. The secondary ethnicity data continues to show that White / British is the largest ethnic group. Black Caribbean children have been the least successful at gaining their first preference over the last three years. The majority of these children have City of Leeds and Primrose as their nearest schools, where they could have been allocated places if they had requested them. The number of Pakistani children applying for secondary school is increasing as is their relative success at gaining their first preference.
- 7 There have been fewer block appeals this year despite a fall in the percentage of parents gaining their first preference. The number of in year appeals has significantly increased although the percentage that were successful has reduced by 30%.

### **Recommendations**

- 8 Executive Board is asked to note the statistical content of the report including:
- percentage of first preferences achieved, where 84% of parents are offered the school of their first preference and 94 parents out of 100 received one of their preferences;
  - the fall in the number of block appeals, but rise in the number of in year appeals, and the 30% improvement in the successful defence of in year appeals.
  - continued increase in use of the on-line service for parents to 24% of on time applications.
  - A further increase in birth rate and the corresponding slight decline in successful preferences for primary.

**Agenda Item:**

**Originator: Viv Buckland**

**Telephone: 3950907**

## REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF EDUCATION LEEDS

**EXECUTIVE BOARD: 14 October 2009**

**SUBJECT: REPORT ON THE SEPTEMBER 2009 ADMISSION ROUND FOR COMMUNITY AND CONTROLLED SCHOOLS**

<p><b>Electoral Wards Affected:</b></p>   <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <input style="width: 40px; height: 20px; margin-right: 10px;" type="checkbox"/> <p>Ward Members consulted (referred to in report)</p> </div>	<p><b>Specific Implications For:</b></p> <p>Equality &amp; Diversity <input style="width: 40px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Community Cohesion <input style="width: 40px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Narrowing the Gap <input style="width: 40px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/></p>
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Eligible for Call-in

Not Eligible for Call-in  
(Details contained in the Report)

### 1.0 PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

- 1.1 The report gives statistical information on:
- the percentage of first preferences achieved, the headline figure is 83.7%;
  - the percentage of parents who received one of their three preferences, the headline figure is 93.5%;
  - information on school appeals;
  - the percentage of first preferences by black and ethnic minority categories.

1.2

### 2.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 Education Leeds is responsible for allocating children to primary, infant, junior and secondary schools and defending admission appeals for community and voluntary controlled schools. The company is also responsible for co-ordinating admissions between the voluntary-aided and foundation schools, the four neighbouring LEAs and the David Young Community Academy.

2.2 The Admission and Transport Team manage transfers into Reception and Year 7 for approximately 17,000 families each year and offer each parent the highest

preferred school available within the admission policy. Many of these issues are considered in more depth in Section 3.

**2.3 Secondary preferences**

We are required to report to the DCSF on the number of successful secondary applications from parents resident in Leeds. The percentage of successful first preferences is 85.4% if we look only at parents actually living in Leeds. The percentage is only 83.7% when we look at all preferences including those living outside of Leeds who are asking to come to Leeds schools. The percentage of all first preferences is a slight decrease on last year's figures, although for Leeds parents it is actually a 1% rise.

**2.4** There were as many secondary places allocated on 1 March as last year. There has been a reduction of the number of places available in the west of the City with the closure of West Leeds and Wortley, and the opening of Swallow Hill, however there are more than sufficient secondary places for all of the families living in the west of the City. There have also been some changes in the patterns of parental preference with, for example, John Smeaton now significantly over subscribed and many first preferences for the school being turned down.

**2.5 Primary places**

The rising birth rate is affecting the number of successful preferences with many parents now no longer able to gain places in popular schools further from their home. There were around 600 more allocations to primary school this year than at the same time last year. Whilst we still have some surplus places in a small number of primary schools, these are in a limited number of areas of the City. It has been possible to allocate all parents who applied on time a place, however each year there are a significant number of parents who apply late and it is increasingly difficult to place these children within a reasonable distance. There were 15 primary schools this year where we were unable to offer all nearest children who expressed a preference a place at the school.

**2.6 Percentage of first preferences achieved**

	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2006</b>
<b>Secondary</b>	83.7	86.7	86.6	86.9
<b>Primary</b>	83.2	88.6	94.5	93.3
<b>Junior</b>	96.9	95.3	94.6	97.4
<b>Total</b>	83.7	87.8	90.5	90.1

Full details are given in appendix 1.

**2.7** The admission policy within Leeds allows parents to try for a school out of their local area because they have the safety net of their local school if they are unsuccessful. As an equal preference policy it allows parents to be as aspirational as possible. It enables parents to ask for their favourite school, despite knowing their chances may not be high, without prejudicing their chance of obtaining a place in their nearest school, so long as they put it on the preference form. Given this is our agreed policy a further measure is the percentage of parents who received one of their three preferences.

**2.8 Percentage of parents who achieved one of their three preferences**

	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2006</b>
<b>Secondary</b>	95.5	97.0	97.5	96.9

<b>Primary</b>	91.3	95.1	98.8	97.3
<b>Junior</b>	97.3	96.1	98.8	99.3
<b>Total</b>	93.5	96.1	98.2	97.2

2.9 This indicates that very high numbers of parents were given one of their three preferences. The percentage of those offered one of their preferences in the junior round has risen slightly and this may be connected to the change in policy which gave higher priority to children in the linked infant school. There has been a slight fall in the percentage for secondary applications, of those obtaining one of their three preferences. It is worth noting that 20% of parents only express one preference with 42% expressing only two preferences.

2.10 **Percentage of first preferences by ethnic categories.**

Details are given in appendix 2. The secondary information over three years shows very little by way of any trends. White/British is the largest ethnic group and the variations are very slight, whereas many other ethnic groups are subject to much greater variations. In 2008 one of the most successful groups at gaining their first preference was Gypsy Roma whereas in 2009 they are the least successful. The number of Pakistani children applying for secondary school is steadily increasing, as is their relative success at being offered their first preference. Black Caribbean children over the last three years have been consistently the least successful at gaining their first preference. The majority of these children have City of Leeds or Primrose as their nearest school, where they could have been offered places if they had been their preference, suggesting that they are seeking school places out of their local area.

2.11 The ethnicity data for children seeking primary school places is somewhat less reliable. There has been a significant increase in the number recorded as 'unknown', as well as a significant reduction in the number of White /British, whilst there are twice the number of 'other white background'. It is evident that all ethnic groups are experiencing a decline in their likelihood of gaining their first preference.

2.12 **School appeals**

Whenever a parent is refused entry to a school they have a right to appeal against the decision. The appeal is heard by an independent panel which is organised by Governance Services as the process needs to be fully independent.

2.13 The figures below are based on the period from National Offer day on March 1st to the end of July for secondary and primary appeals. The in year appeals cover those appeals that have taken place within the academic year 08/09.

	<b>Granted</b>	<b>Not Granted</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>% Granted</b>
<b>Secondary</b>	53	236	289	18.3%
<b>Primary</b>	13	298	311	4.2%
<b>In year</b>	177	185	362	48.9%
<b>Total</b>	243	719	962	

2.14 Details for secondary school block appeals are given in appendix 4. This year has seen a further fall in the number of secondary school appeals heard, even though the percentage of parents obtaining their first preference has also fallen. This suggests that whilst parents are not always offered their preferred school they are relatively happy with the school that has been offered. The Choice Adviser offers an advocacy service for parents who need support with their appeal, and the offer letter sent to parents also directs them to the Advisory Centre for Education for

further free and impartial advice on appeals.

- 2.15 The number of primary appeals has fallen slightly from last year although the number of successful appeals has not changed. Most primary appeals are governed by the infant class size legislation where there are only very limited grounds on which a parent can succeed.
- 2.16 In year appeals throughout the year now comprise more than either primary or secondary block appeals. This is a combination of a reduction in both primary and secondary block appeals, but also a marked increase in the number of in year appeals, with almost 100 more than last year. Despite this increase the number of in year appeals granted by the panels has fallen by almost 50, reducing the percentage of successful appeals by parents from 78.2% to 48.9%.
- 2.17 The Admissions team have undertaken a great deal of work to ensure that the written statements used to defend schools at appeal have been significantly improved. Changes to the Appeals Code mean that fewer school representatives now attend appeals and the significant majority of appeals are defended solely by representatives of Education Leeds.
- 2.18 The increasingly effective operation of the Fair Access Protocol does mean that many parents are offered a more appropriate school place, sometimes above the admission number of the school, removing the need for an appeal. Changes introduced by new legislation in February 2009 will see families who move into an area where there are no appropriate places available within a reasonable distance also placed through the Fair Access Protocol, further reducing the need for appeals.

### 3.0 **MAIN ISSUES**

- 3.1 Over recent years there has been an increase in the birth rate, both nationally, and locally. There are around 600 more allocations to primary school this year than at the same time last year. Whilst we still have some surplus places in a small number of primary schools, these are in a limited number of areas of the City. It has been possible to allocate all parents who applied on time a place, however each year there are a significant number of parents who apply late and it is increasingly difficult to place these children within a reasonable distance. These factors are adversely affecting the number of parents being offered their preferred school.
- 3.2 The number of secondary school allocations on 1 March was approximately the same as last year. There remains a small number of schools where children are unable to gain a place in their nearest school. However all nearest children were offered a place in Roundhay school this year, following the changes to the admission policy reflecting the David Young Community Academy as a nearest school.
- 3.3 The on-line service has once again proved popular with parents, with 26% of on time applications using this method to apply for a school place. Statutorily, we must send offers out on 1 March each year. As this was a Sunday in 2009, parents who applied on line received their offer on the Sunday, several days ahead of those who applied on the traditional paper form.
- 3.4 The ethnicity data for primary applications is not sufficiently robust to allow a trend

analysis of the information. The secondary ethnicity data continues to show that White / British is the largest ethnic group. Black Caribbean children have been the least successful at gaining their first preference over the last three years. The majority of these children have City of Leeds and Primrose as their nearest schools, where they could have been allocated places if they had requested them. The number of Pakistani children applying for secondary school is increasing as is their relative success at gaining their first preference.

- 3.5 There have been fewer block appeals this year despite a fall in the percentage of parents gaining their first preference. The number of in year appeals has significantly increased although the percentage that were successful has reduced by 30%.

#### 4.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNCIL POLICY AND GOVERNANCE**

- 4.1 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. In line with this, the government have also sought to encourage schools to exercise more freedom from the Authority, particularly in terms of admissions, and to encourage the expansion of popular and successful schools. It should be noted that this has led to a dip in the percentage of successful first preferences as parents seek schools further afield.

- 4.2 The rising birth rate in the City is also affecting the previously very high success rate for meeting parents' first preferences in Primary. There were around 600 more children applying for places this year. It is expected that significant expansion will be required over the next few years to accommodate the rapidly rising growth of the City.

- 4.3 The Fair Access Protocol is locally agreed with schools, closely monitored by the Admission Forum and is operating increasingly effectively. It has been extended from a focus on hard to place young people with challenging behaviour to cover a much extended range of children who may have difficulty in gaining a school place. Its extension to cover families moving into an area where there is no appropriate available place within a reasonable distance will reduce the need for appeals and will facilitate school places more quickly.

#### 5.0 **LEGAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The local Admissions Policy in Leeds fully complies with the necessary legislation. Changes to the Appeals Code brought deadlines for hearing appeals, particularly primary appeals, forward. However, all statutory deadlines were met throughout the process. From September 2010 the local authority will fully coordinate all applications for all schools and academies, including in year transfers. This will be a significant increase in workload but will ensure that all statutory duties are fully compliant.

- 5.2 Each year the Local Authority are required to submit the policy and coordination schemes to the Schools Adjudicator to ensure that they are compliant. Leeds has complied with all requests made by the Schools Adjudicator for amendments to the

policy. These were only of a minor nature around clarity and resulted in no changes of significance.

## 6.0 **CONCLUSIONS**

- 6.1 There has been a general increase in the number of applications for admission that have been received in the last year. The birth rate is rising both locally and nationally and around 600 more primary allocations were made on 1 March than at the same time the previous year. Despite this increase the number of primary and secondary block appeals has fallen this year suggesting that whilst the percentage of parents being offered their first preference school has fallen, parents are relatively happy with the school they have been offered.
- 6.2 The number of in year appeals has significantly increased although there has been a fall of 30% in the success rate. This indicates that the independent panels do not consider the cases being put forward by parents are strong enough to warrant offering places in schools that are already full. A change in the Appeals Code has meant that fewer schools now send representatives to assist Education Leeds in defending the appeals, however the preparatory work undertaken on the written statements has proved effective.
- 6.3 We continue to have some pockets of the City where demand for a child's nearest school cannot be met, and although this has improved in the secondary sector the number of primary schools where the issue exists has risen from 7 to 15.

## 7.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 Executive Board is asked to note the statistical content of the report including:
- percentage of first preferences achieved, where 84% of parents are offered the school of their first preference and 94 parents out of 100 received one of their preferences;
  - the fall in the number of block appeals, but rise in the number of in year appeals, and the 30% improvement in the successful defence of in year appeals.
  - continued increase in use of the on-line service for parents to 24% of on time applications.
  - A further increase in birth rate and the corresponding slight decline in successful preferences for primary.

### Background papers

School Admissions Code – DCSF 2009  
School Admission Appeals Code – DCSF 2009  
Leeds Admission Policy  
Leeds Fair Access Protocol  
Leeds School Organisation Population tables  
Education and Inspection Act 2006





<b>APPENDIX 1</b>	<b>Admission numbers and percentages for September 2009</b>								
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1<sup>ST</sup></b>	<b>%</b>	<b>2<sup>ND</sup></b>	<b>%</b>	<b>3<sup>RD</sup></b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Placed</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Secondary</b>	8196	6863	83.7	732	8.9	234	2.9	367	4.5
<b>Primary</b>	8360	6955	83.2	511	6.1	170	2.0	724	8.7
<b>Junior</b>	263	254	96.9	2	1	0	0	7	2.7
<b>Total</b>	16819	14072	83.7	1245	7.4	404	2.4	1098	6.5
<p>Placed is where no preference could be met or the form was not returned. In these cases Education Leeds placed the children into a school against any preference.</p> <p>The total column does not include those parents who have been offered a late preference; 99 secondary, 132 primary and 0 junior. 'Late preferences' are where parents have requested additional schools after 1 March.</p>									

## APPENDIX 2

### FIRST PREFERENCE BY ETHNICITY (Secondary)

Ethnicity	2007		2008		2009	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
White British	4938	89.8	5266	89.9	5413	90.8
Unknown	360	73.9	231	84.6	347	78.5
Pakistani	165	80.9	203	80.6	243	81.5
Black African	113	74.8	125	71.0	163	79.9
Indian	103	73.6	126	82.9	114	82
Mixed Black Caribbean and White	106	77.9	112	88.2	101	85.6
Black Caribbean	58	73.4	75	72.1	73	75.3
Kashmiri Pakistani	138	84.7	103	78.0	92	82.1
Bangladeshi	55	72.4	57	78.1	59	88.1
Any Other Ethnic Group	45	79.0	62	81.6	67	83.8
Any Other White Background	51	82.3	68	86.1	56	91.8
Any Other Mixed Background	38	73.1	75	75.8	75	81.5
Other Asian	51	76.1	51	85.0	64	88.9
Any Other Black Background	29	59.2	49	87.5	38	79.2
Mixed Asian and White	45	84.9	50	80.7	61	89.7
White Irish	19	95.0	26	86.7	22	91.7
Refused To Answer	623	87.8	37	82.2	42	84
Chinese	29	87.9	29	82.9	27	87.1
Mixed Black African and White	16	66.7	19	82.6	19	76
Gypsy Roma	13	81.3	21	95.5	18	66.7
Traveller of Irish Heritage	5	71.4	10	90.9	12	92.3
Kashmiri Other	8	88.9	10	83.3	4	100
White Western European	5	100.0	11	100.0	15	93.8
White Eastern European	3	75.0	20	95.2	27	73

## APPENDIX 3

### FIRST PREFERENCE BY ETHNICITY (primary)

Ethnicity	2007		2008		2009	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
White British	4610	96.2	4170	93.1	3319	90.5
Unknown	1489	90.6	1445	84.1	2615	85.9
Pakistani	228	92.7	264	90.4	264	90.4
Black African	120	89.6	165	85.1	172	81.9
Indian	115	90.6	89	84.8	117	78.5
Mixed Black Caribbean and White	80	89.9	76	89.4	47	72.3
Black Caribbean	28	90.3	46	85.2	28	82.4
Kashmiri Pakistani	146	96.7	134	91.2	132	89.2
Bangladeshi	87	93.6	92	93.9	69	94.5
Any Other Ethnic Group	55	90.2	102	89.5	78	88.6
Any Other White Background	60	98.4	51	91.1	114	85.7
Any Other Mixed Background	62	91.2	85	90.4	68	91.9
Other Asian	47	95.9	82	91.1	93	84.5
Any Other Black Background	25	100.0	27	87.1	33	89.2
Mixed Asian and White	61	98.4	59	89.4	46	86.8
White Irish	16	94.1	9	81.8	9	100.0
Refused To Answer	246	95.7	135	91.2	35	81.4
Chinese	17	85.0	28	73.7	28	84.8
Mixed Black African and White	24	92.3	25	89.3	25	75.8
Gypsy Roma	7	87.5	16	94.1	11	78.6
Traveller of Irish Heritage	6	100.0	5	83.3	4	66.7
Kashmiri Other	13	100.0	6	100.0	9	81.8
White Western European	6	100.0	8	88.9	9	100.0
White Eastern European	3	75.0	21	75.0	30	85.7

## APPENDIX 4

### SECONDARY SCHOOLS APPEAL RESULTS

School Name	Granted			Not Granted			Total		
	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009
Allerton Grange	2	0	0	3	0	0	5	0	0
Allerton High	3	3	2	30	16	4	33	19	6
Benton Park	6	1	2	17	11	17	23	12	19
Boston Spa	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Brigshaw	0	3	0	0	4	0	0	7	0
Bruntcliffe	1	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	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	11	10	4	29	34	33	40	44	37
Crawshaw	5	1	0	24	8	1	29	9	1
Farnley Park	5	3	0	25	7	0	30	10	0
Garforth *	4	6	0	7	17	0	11	23	0
Grangefield	8	7	2	59	30	36	67	37	38
Guiseley	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Horsforth	4	6	6	7	5	14	11	11	20
John Smeaton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lawnswood	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Morley	6	6	7	19	16	36	25	22	43
Otley Prince Henry	13	12	1	0	0	7	13	12	8
Parklands	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Priesthorpe	3	0	0	33	1	0	36	1	0
Primrose	7	2	0	23	9	0	30	11	0
Ralph Thoresby	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Rodillian	5	1	0	14	1	12	19	2	12
Roundhay	6	8	7	86	81	50	92	89	57
Royds	0	0	7	13	0	5	13	0	12
South Leeds	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Swallow Hill	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Temple Moor	4	5	5	23	11	8	27	16	13
Wetherby	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Woodkirk	9	3	10	23	19	12	32	22	22
<b>Total</b>	103	77	53	436	270	236	539	347	289
	19%	22%	18%	81%	78%	82%			

\* Garforth Community College are a Foundation school and conduct their own appeals