



## **SCHOOL ADMISSIONS CONSULTATION WITH PARENTS AND CARERS Admission Arrangements for Brighton & Hove Schools 2013/14**

### **Final admission arrangements and right of objection**

Once the Council, Academies and Voluntary Aided schools have determined their admission arrangements following this consultation, the Council will publish a public notice in the Argus newspaper before 1 May 2012 confirming those arrangements and setting out where they can be viewed. Once they have been published then parents and carers will have a right of formal objection to the Schools Adjudicator. Details of that objection process will be given in the public notice.

### **Secondary Schools – Special Consultation for 2013/14**

Although there is a consultation process every year about the admission arrangements for Community Secondary Schools, this year the Council is asking more detailed questions seeking your views on how well the system works. When the Schools Adjudicator agreed to the current community secondary school admissions arrangements which were introduced in 2008, he recommended that a review should take place in 2012. This consultation will therefore be asking for views from parents, schools and school governors in the usual way, but it will also be asking a number of more specific questions about the oversubscription priorities and catchment areas. Parents are also encouraged to use the free text part of the response form to comment more generally about the community secondary admission arrangements.

The Council uses a catchment area system with random allocation being used as the tie breaker in each admission priority in the event of oversubscription. These arrangements are also used by Brighton Aldridge Community Academy and the Portslade Aldridge Community Academy. Cardinal Newman Catholic Secondary School has its own admission priorities which it is consulting on separately (please visit [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/schooladmissions](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/schooladmissions) for details).

The over subscription priorities are applied in the context of an equal preference system as required by the School Admissions Code. They are:

1. Children in the care of a local authority (looked after children).
2. Compelling medical or other exceptional reasons for attending the school (including children adopted away from their birth families).
3. A sibling link applied for those living within the designated catchment area only.
4. Those pupils living in the designated catchment area for the school(s).
5. Other children.

Within all these priorities, the tie break is random allocation.

The new (draft) School Admissions Code requires that priority 1 (Children in the care of a local authority) be extended to cover 'children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order). These children will therefore be included in this priority and priority 2 will cease to include adopted children.

The current catchment areas are set out in the [attached map](#). It also includes information about which post codes are in each of the catchment areas.

#### Background to the school catchment areas

The design of the catchment areas was based around the numbers of children living within the boundary and the number of places available at each school. Two catchments include two schools (Hove Park/Blatchington Mill and Varndean/Dorothy Stringer). Since the catchment areas were adopted it would have been possible to offer every pupil a place in their catchment area school, or in the dual catchment areas a place at one of the catchment schools in every admission year. In a few cases a place was not offered in the dual catchments because the applicant only gave one of the two schools as a preference, and that school was over subscribed. The catchments have therefore met the number of requests for places from children within the catchment area. Following a further consultation overseen by the Schools Adjudicator the catchment area for Patcham High School was changed to include Westdene, which had previously been in the Hove Park/Blatchington Mill catchment.

#### Proposal to change make changes to the current catchment areas for Dorothy Stringer/Varndean, Blatchington Mill/Hove Park and Portslade Aldridge Community Academy

Proposals have been put forward to alter the boundary between the catchment areas for Dorothy Stringer/Varndean and Blatchington Mill/Hove Park. [Proposal](#), [Map1](#) [Map2](#) & [Map3](#)

A separate proposal has been put forward to alter the boundary between the catchment areas for Portslade Aldridge Community Academy and Blatchington Mill/Hove Park. [Proposal](#), [Map](#)

Your comments are invited on both proposals.

#### The sibling link

Up until the proposed admission arrangements for 2013/14, the sibling link has been applied as an oversubscription priority to all secondary school applications regardless of home address. For example, a child living in the catchment area for say Varndean would have priority for admission to Longhill if they had a sibling already attending that school, and who would be there when the new pupil was due to start. At the time that the current secondary admission arrangements were adopted, it was decided that with effect from 2013/14 the sibling priority would only apply as an oversubscription priority within the designated catchment area for a child's home address. This delay in changing the sibling priority was intended to allow the link to be applied across catchment areas for those children already in secondary school at that time, as their parents/carers may have previously accepted places at schools anticipating that the sibling link would apply regardless of home address. The delay allowed those links to work through. It is proposed that the sibling link will only be applied as a priority within catchment areas from 2013/14.

The Westdene area of the City was switched from the Hove Park/Blatchington Mill catchment to the Patcham catchment area after the new admissions arrangements

had been implemented. As a result those living in Westdene will have the cross city sibling link allowed for one extra year (2013/14 admissions). Should the proposals above regarding catchment area changes be adopted, it is envisaged that there will be a similar transitional protection for siblings of existing pupils.

For the purposes of this priority a sibling is defined as a child living within the same household as another.

#### Random allocation

Random allocation is only used as a tie break within each of the over subscription priorities. So far it has only been used at priority 4 (children living in catchment area) when one of the schools in a dual catchment has had more applications than places left, or when there are places left over in a catchment which can be offered to pupils living outside. Random allocation is not used as a priority in itself, only in conjunction with the published over subscription priorities 1 - 5.

For a full description of how the over subscription priorities operate, please use this link to the [Admissions Booklet for 2012/13](#).

Please see the questions about admission arrangements for community secondary schools (also currently applied to the Brighton Aldridge Community Academy [BACA] and the Portslade Aldridge Community Academy [PACA]) set out at the end of this document. The council welcomes your comments on any aspects of the secondary school admission arrangements, suggestions as to how they might be improved and your views on how they have operated to date.

#### **Admissions Arrangements for Community Infant, Junior and Primary Schools**

Two changes are proposed for the admission arrangements to Community Infant, Junior and Primary schools. The over subscription priorities are applied in the context of an equal preference system as required by the Admissions Code. They are:

1. Children in the care of a local authority (looked after children).
2. Compelling medical or other exceptional reasons for attending the school. (Including children adopted away from their birth families).
3. The sibling link.
4. For junior schools only: children attending a linked infant school
5. Home to school distance (measured by the shortest available route).

Within all these priorities, the tie break is home to school distance (measured by the shortest available route).

The first change proposed is a legal requirement- the new (draft) School Admissions Code requires that priority 1 (Children in the care of a local authority) be extended to cover 'children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order). These children will therefore be included in this priority and priority 2 will cease to include adopted children.

The second proposed change is a change to the method of measuring distance (which is the tie-break in the admissions priorities for Infant, Junior and Primary School admissions). The proposal is to change from measuring via the shortest available route to measuring as the crow flies. The proposal is outlined [here](#).

Your views are sought on this proposal.

More detail about the primary admission arrangements can be found in the [school admission booklet](#). Schools have copies of the booklet which can also be viewed on the Brighton & Hove City Council web site. Your views about the primary school admission arrangements are invited.

### **Relevant Area for Consultation**

The relevant area for school admissions in the city is currently defined as the area within the city boundary. This is the area which the Local Authority (LA) uses when consulting on admissions arrangements, and can include other admission authorities and voluntary aided schools outside the city. The area can be larger than LA boundary, or smaller through the operation of a number of different relevant areas within the LA. The use of a relevant area was a requirement of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, and this requirement remains in force. It is currently defined as the area within the Brighton & Hove city boundaries, so all voluntary aided schools within the city are required to consult all schools within the city boundary about their proposed admission arrangements. No change is proposed to the relevant area for 2013/14.

### **Voluntary Aided Schools Consultation**

Voluntary Aided schools are required to consult with all other city schools, with the LA and with parents in the City who have children between the ages of 2 and 16 about their proposed admission arrangements for 2013/14 *unless the arrangements are unchanged from last year*. These proposed arrangements will be on the Council's website or available from the schools. Consultation, if taking place, must be completed by 1<sup>st</sup> March 2012 and the Governors must have settled the final version of their admission arrangements by 15 April 2012. Parents may wish to send their comments on VA school proposed admission arrangements direct to the school or can send them to the Council which will pass them on to the individual school governing bodies. Those governing bodies are responsible for deciding admission arrangements for their own school.

### **Published Admission Numbers**

The proposed admission numbers for each school are attached to this document. You are invited to comment on whether you agree with the number shown. These numbers are based on the net capacity range of each school, or in some cases a higher figure. The net capacity is a nationally required means of measuring how many pupils a school can take. As previously, this list includes the expected admission numbers for voluntary aided schools, which act as their own admission authorities and set their own admission number.

### **Co-ordinated Admission Schemes for 2013/14**

The coordinated schemes are attached for comment. They set out the arrangements, including dates, for the coordination of secondary and primary admissions and in-year applications. The purpose of this coordination is to ensure that all parents and carers receive one offer of a school place for their child within published timescales. The scheme applies to all maintained (ie state) schools in Brighton & Hove, including Academies and Voluntary Aided schools.

### **The Admission Timetable for 2013/14**

The dates for applications and allocations for admission for the 2013/14 school year will be:

Infant, Junior and Primary Schools:	Closing date	15 January 2013
	Letters to parents/carers	19 April 2013
Secondary schools:	Closing date	31 October 2012
	Letters to parents/carers	1 March 2013

These dates are set out in more detail in the co-ordinated schemes.

