

LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT**Executive – 12 April 2005****Report from the Director of Education, Arts & Libraries**

For action

Wards affected: ALL

**Report Title: Setting Admissions Arrangements for Brent
Community Schools – September 2006**

Forward Plan Ref: EAL-04/05-0076

1.0 Summary

1.1 This report advises members of the need to agree admissions arrangements for Brent's Community Schools for the September 2006 intake.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members to agree the proposed admissions arrangements for Community Primary Schools as outlined in Appendix A

2.2 Members to note the views of the Admissions Forum, the Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Panel and the Governing Body of Wembley High Technology College in respect of proposed arrangements for Wembley High Technology College.

2.3 Members to agree the proposed admissions arrangements for Community Secondary Schools (i.e. Wembley High Technology College) as outlined in Appendix B.

3.0 Detail**General**

3.1 The School Standards and Framework Act 1998, as amended by the Education Act 2002, sets the legal framework for school admissions.

The Council must also have regard to the Government's Code of Practice on School Admissions when considering its arrangements.

- 3.2 Section 3.2 of the Code of Practice on School Admissions, which applies to admissions arrangements for September 2006, outlines what must be included in Admissions Arrangements for Community Schools. The proposed Admissions Arrangements attached at Appendices A to C follow this recommended format.
- 3.3 In addition, consideration must be given to the fact that there is coordination of admissions to year 7 in Secondary Schools across London and eight of its surrounding authorities.
- 3.4 It will become a requirement that admissions to Reception in Primary Schools are co-ordinated from 2006. Each LEA will have to receive applications for its maintained schools and ensure that an applicant receives no more than one offer of a place in one of these schools for their child.
- 3.5 The School Standards and Framework Act imposes a duty on the Council to review annually the criteria and arrangements for admission to Community Schools. The Council is also required to consult the governors of all community schools prior to agreeing proposed admissions criteria. This consultation took place during September and October 2004 and informed the process of setting the admissions arrangements that went forward for statutory consultation.
- 3.6 The Council must also have carried out statutory consultation on its proposed admission arrangements, with all admissions authorities within its relevant area. This means the governing body of each of its Foundation and Voluntary Aided schools and also each of its neighbouring LEAs.
- 3.7 Following the final determination of admissions arrangements, there is a period of six weeks when those consulted may object to them to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator.
- 3.8 The Act required that consultation on admission arrangements for September 2006 was completed by March 2005 and that final admission criteria be determined in April 2005. The admission arrangements for 2005 were determined in April 2004.
- 3.9 The governing bodies of voluntary aided schools, foundation schools, and of the Capital City Academy, are responsible for determining their own admissions arrangements.
- 3.10 There were no formal responses to the consultation process, although further representations were received from Wembley High Technology College. These are considered in more detail below.

- 3.11 The Admissions Arrangements for Community Primary Schools, attached in Appendix A, remain the same as those put forward for consultation at the Executive meeting of 17th January 2005.

Wembley High Technology College

- 3.12 Admissions arrangements, proposed by the Governing Body of Wembley High Technology College were included in the consultation process along with those proposed by the LEA.
- 3.13 Wembley High Technology College is currently a Community School, but its Governing Body has indicated a desire to attain Foundation School status when this process is simplified, as detailed in the Government's Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners.
- 3.14 When Wembley High Technology College adopts Foundation School status it will have the right to set its own admissions arrangements. However, it would have to adopt the arrangements set by the LEA for 2006, or seek to have these altered by the Office of the Schools Adjudicator.
- 3.15 The main change that the Governors of Wembley High Technology College seek to make to the Admissions Arrangements is the suggested inclusion of 'feeder schools'.
- 3.16 Children attending one of these schools would be given consideration after 'looked after' children, those with significant needs that required admission to Wembley High, and those with a sibling at the College.
- 3.17 The College believes that there would be significant benefits to the process of transfer from year 6 to year 7 by creating links to schools with which it has Technology College partnerships and schools from which it receives the greatest proportion of its year 7 intake. These benefits would help to create a solid base for the children admitted and would help to continue the improvement in popularity and standards at the College.
- 3.18 It seeks in this to preserve and build upon its recent improvements in standards by strengthening the links with partner schools. As a Technology College, Wembley works with some of the local primary schools which are its Technology College Partners. The College also believes that the creation of links with partner and other traditional 'feeder' schools will increase its popularity with local parents which is currently affected by the proximity of other popular schools and parental beliefs which are based on outdated ideas of performance and behaviour at the school.
- 3.19 With regard to naming feeder primary schools, the governors would like to include this as a criterion because Wembley High works closely with four local schools as a mandatory part of its Technology College

status. The College's Sports Leaders have also made close links with these schools through a range of activities. Wembley High makes an investment in these pupils' learning and builds relationships with the staff and families to make it easier for the children to transfer to secondary school. It would, therefore, seem reasonable to include these partner schools in the admissions policy.

- 3.20 The College has consulted the partner primaries, they are willing to work closely with the College and have no objections to being named as feeders. Indeed, to demonstrate the close working relationship, the Head Teacher of one of these schools is a member of Wembley High's Governing Body.
- 3.21 It is generally accepted, and was given as one of the main drivers for change when Kingsbury High School adopted a 'feeder school' system, that parents send their children to a local primary school. Therefore the use of a 'feeder school' system for Wembley High could help to strengthen links with its local area and community. Currently the school draws children from a wide area, as it is traditionally undersubscribed in the first stages of the admission process into year 7.
- 3.22 This geographical diversity is believed to contribute to greater levels of pupil mobility within the College as parents take up, for their children, places that become available in year.
- 3.23 The use of 'feeder schools' for Wembley High Technology College is proposed as a pragmatic part of the solution to the College's aims to raise standards and parent's opinions of the college.
- 3.24 In the co-ordinated admissions process for September 2005's admission, there were vacancies available at the school after parents' preferences had been taken into account. This meant that places were offered to those who had not expressed a preference for the school.
- 3.25 If this situation continues, then there will remain significant numbers of places available for children who do not attend one of the 'feeder' primary schools.
- 3.26 The remaining admissions arrangements, proposed in Appendix C, tie in with those proposed by the LEA for the College.
- 3.27 It is the recommendation of the Libraries and Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Panel that Wembley High Technology College be allowed to adopt the use of 'feeder schools' as part of their admission arrangements.
- 3.28 The issue of 'feeder schools' has also been discussed in the Brent School Admissions Forum, most recently at the meeting of 8th November 2004, which takes a contrary view.

- 3.29 The Admissions Forum has a role in considering issues around school admissions in the borough and promulgating advice to admissions authorities. It considers the admissions arrangements in the Borough as a whole and aims to secure a balanced set of arrangements that best serve the interests of parents across Brent.
- 3.30 The Admissions Forum believes that the current arrangements concerning schools that operate a 'feeder school' system exist for pragmatic reasons. These are to enable oversubscribed schools in Brent, that also recruit significantly from outside of Brent, to give a preference to parents whose children named Brent primary schools. As many children will attend their local primary school, this is a legitimate way of allowing priority to children resident in Brent. If all Secondary Schools had 'feeder' arrangements that would prevent choice at Primary School level. Such arrangements would be uncoordinated and could lead to some Primary Schools having no links, thereby disadvantaging their parents. This is a concern raised by the Governors of Park Lane Primary school.
- 3.31 On this basis, the Admissions Forum believes there are sound grounds for not expanding the practice of 'feeder' primary schools any further.
- 3.32 'Feeder schools' give parents priority to a particular secondary school for their children. It is almost always the case that there are more children on roll at the combined 'feeder schools' than there are places in year 7 at the secondary school.
- 3.33 This means that parents will potentially be disadvantaged if their child's primary school is not one that has 'feeder' links to a particular, or indeed any, secondary school.
- 3.34 Parents may make decisions on which primary school their child attends that are sound, but then lead to them being denied a place for their child in what is the secondary school they consider most suitable, on the basis that their child does not attend the required primary school.
- 3.35 There are sound arguments for the position taken by the Admissions Forum, but equally the arguments put forward by Wembley High Technology College are sound given their particular circumstances.

4.0 *Financial Implications*

- 4.1 There are no financial implications in respect of this report, as the report deals with an existing and ongoing administrative requirement.
- 4.2 The report outlines the proposed arrangements by which schools will determine which applications for places are successful in the event of their receiving more applications than there are places available.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 To comply with the requirements of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998, the Council must determine Admission Arrangements for Community Schools in its area.
- 5.2 This determination must take place no later than 15th April 2005.
- 5.3 Following the determination there is a period of six weeks within which objections to the proposals may be made to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator.

6.0 Diversity Implications

- 6.1 Admissions arrangements must be clear, fair and objective and their operation must ensure equality of access to schools in the borough.
- 6.2 The process of consultation has considered the impact of admissions arrangements on 'looked after' children, on those with significant medical and social needs and those who are newly arrived to the borough. The arrangements are formulated to ensure that they do not disadvantage any groups in the borough.

7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)

- 7.1 There are no staffing implications in relation to these arrangements for the 2006 school intake, the report deals with an existing and continuing requirement and does not require any staffing changes.

Background Papers

The following papers were used in the compilation of this report:-

- i. School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- ii. Education Act 2002
- iii. The Education (Determination of Admission Arrangements) Regulations 1999
- iv. The Education (Determination of Admission Arrangements) (Amendment) Regulations 2002
- v. The Code of Practice on School Admissions

Appendices

Appendix A – Proposed 2006 Admissions Criteria for Community Primary Schools

Appendix B - Proposed 2006 Admissions Criteria for Wembley High Technology College

Appendix C – Alternative Proposed 2006 Admissions Criteria put forward by the Governing Body of Wembley High Technology College

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Report from the Director of Education, Arts and Libraries

Admissions Criteria - Community Nursery & Primary Schools

Admissions Arrangements for Brent Community Primary Schools to go forward for consultation for September 2006

1. Admissions Numbers to Brent Community Primary Schools

Anson Primary School 45
Barham Primary School 90
Braintcroft Primary School 90
Brentfield Primary School 60
Byron Court Primary School 80
Carlton Vale Infant School 60
Chalkhill Primary School 60
Donnington Primary School 30
Elsley Primary School 60
Fryent Primary School 60
Furness Primary School 60
Gladstone Park Primary School 83
Harlesden Primary School 30
Kensal Rise Primary School 90
Kingsbury Green Primary School 90
Leopold Primary School 60
Lyon Park Infant School 120
Lyon Park Junior School 120
Malorees Infant School 60
Mitchell Brook Primary School 60
Mora Primary School 60
Mount Stewart Infant School 90
Mount Stewart Junior School 90
Newfield Primary School 30
Northview Primary School 30
Oliver Goldsmith Primary School 60
Park Lane Primary School 30
Preston Park Primary School 90
Roe Green Infant School 120
Roe Green Junior School 120
Salisbury Primary School 90
Stonebridge Primary School 30
Sudbury School 90
Uxendon Manor Primary School 60
Wembley Manor Infant School 90
Wembley Manor Junior School 90
Wykeham Primary School 60

2. Application Procedure for Brent Community Primary Schools

Parents who wish to secure a place for their child at a Brent Community Primary school in the 2006/2007 school year must apply to the London Borough of Brent Admissions Team, who will co-ordinate applications to Brent Primary Schools.

Application forms will be available from January 2006 and the closing date for applications will be in February/March 2006 (the actual date will appear in the finally determined arrangements after consultation).

Parents may request that their child's admission to a reception class be delayed until the start of the January term but must apply as part of the ordinary process.

3. Late Applications

Initial offers will be made to those children whose parents applied before the 'closing date' for applications.

Late applications will be received but will not normally be considered for a place at the school until after this initial offer has been made. If some parents decline the initial offer of a place for their child, or vacancies become available, then all applications received, whether in time or late, will be considered for these places.

4. Waiting Lists

Community Primary Schools will maintain a waiting list. This will be maintained throughout the school year. A child's position on the waiting list does not depend upon the time they have been on the list but will be determined by how they meet the oversubscription criteria.

This means that a child's position on the list can go down as well as up, depending upon the child's circumstances and those of other applicants.

Proposed Oversubscription Criteria for Community Primary Schools September 2006

The criteria set out below apply to community primary schools only. There are 37 Community Primary schools in Brent. Voluntary aided or religious faith schools and foundation schools have their own admission policies. Parents should approach the headteacher or chair of governors of these schools directly.

Applications for children with a statement of Special Educational Need are made through the SENAS team at the LEA. The placement of children with such a Statement is made after a process of consultation between parents, the school and the LEA. Children with a statement of Special Educational Need receive priority over others for admission to the school named on their Statement.

Schools should not admit more than 30 pupils in each class for Reception, Year 1 & Year 2. This is to enable the LEA to meet its statutory duty of having no more than 30 pupils in each class at Key Stage 1.

The following criteria are clear, fair and objective. It is illegal for schools to discriminate against a pupil on the basis of his/her ethnicity.

Whenever and wherever possible, children are offered a school of their parents' preference and in practice the majority of children go to the school which their parents select for them.

Sometimes, however, there are more applications for a certain school than there are places available. Whenever this happens, pupils are offered places in the following order of priority:

1. Children in public care (looked after children)

An application for admission to school must be made by the person with parental responsibility and / or the child's social worker.

2. Children attending an infant school on the same site as a junior school.

This criterion will only affect admission to a junior school that is on the same site as the infant school the child attends immediately prior to the transfer.

3. Children for whom it is essential to be admitted to a *specific school* because of special circumstances to do with significant medical needs, social needs or special educational needs.

It is open to any parent to make an application under this criterion. The application should be supported, where possible, with a recommendation in writing from a recognized professional of senior status; medical consultant,

assistant director of social services, headteacher of current school or other appropriate officer.

The recommendation for this specific school should demonstrate knowledge of the school in terms of resources and organisation which deems it essential that the named pupil be admitted to the specific school.

4. Brothers or sisters of a child who attends the school, or an infant or junior school on the same or adjoining site, and who will continue to do so on the date of admission.

*This includes half and step brothers and sisters so long as they live at the same address - but **not** cousins. Siblings attending the same school should have priority over those attending a separate school on the same site.*

5. Children living within the school's catchment area.

The catchment area is the defined neighbourhood in which the school is sited. It is generally bounded by major roads and/or railway/tube. The catchment area is defined by the Local Education Authority and is designed to ensure that each address in the borough falls into the catchment area of one school. Information on which streets make up a catchment area can be obtained from the LEA, the school and the LEAs website.

6. Children living outside the school catchment area.

If there are more children in any of the above criteria than places, then priority for these places is determined by proximity to the school, judged by the shortest measured walking distance by public right of way from home to school.

Admissions to Nursery Schools and Classes.

The above criteria will apply but Nursery admissions arrangements will give priority to Brent residents

Proposed Admissions Arrangements Wembley High Technology College –

Admissions Arrangements for Wembley High Technology College

1. Admission Number

The Admissions Number for the School will be 210.

2. Application Procedure for Wembley High Technology College

Parents who wish to secure a place for their child at Wembley High Technology College in the 2006 school year must include the name of the school on the Common Application Form for the local authority in which they reside.

The closing date for this process in Brent is 21 October 2005. The LEA will coordinate applications for admission to school made by its residents and will inform parents of the outcome of this process on 1 March 2006.

3. Late Applications

Late applications will be considered in accordance with the agreed scheme for the Coordination of Secondary School Admissions in Brent.

4. Waiting Lists

Wembley High Technology College will maintain a waiting list. This will be maintained throughout the school year. A child's position on the waiting list does not depend upon the time they have been on the list but will be determined by how they meet the oversubscription criteria. This means that a child's position on the list can go down as well as up, depending upon the child's circumstances and those of other applicants.

5. Oversubscription Criteria

The criteria set out below apply to Wembley High Technology College. All other secondary schools in the borough are either Voluntary Aided or Foundation schools and have their own admissions policies, which are published by the schools and in the LEA's composite prospectus. All 14 secondary schools in Brent publish individual prospectuses, which give detailed information about each school. A copy of the prospectus may be obtained directly from the school.

Applications for children with a statement of Special Educational Need are made through the SENAS team at the LEA. The placement of children with such a Statement is made after a process of consultation between parents, the school and the LEA. Children with a statement of Special Educational Need receive priority over others for admission to the school named on their Statement.

The following criteria are clear, fair and objective. It is illegal for schools to discriminate against a pupil on the basis of his/her ethnicity.

Places at a school will be offered in accordance with the information provided in the LEAs Common Application Form and the way that the applicants meet the school's oversubscription criteria.

Where a child is eligible to be offered a place at more than one secondary school, the place offered will be that which the parent ranked highest on the Common Application Form.

Where none of the schools ranked by the parent on the Common Application Form are able to offer a place then the LEA will, as far as is reasonably practicable, offer a place at an alternative school.

Proposed Oversubscription Criteria Wembley High Technology College for September 2006

Wembley High Technology College is a popular college which is oversubscribed in all year groups. The annual intake in 2006 is limited to 210 pupils. We have 8 forms in Year 7 to ensure that class sizes are kept small.

Where applications for admission exceed the number of places available the following will be applied in the order set out below:-

Proposed Oversubscription Criteria Wembley High Technology College for September 2006

1. Children in public care (looked after children)

An application for admission to school must be made by the person with parental responsibility and / or the child's social worker.

2. Children for whom it is essential to be admitted to a specific school because of special circumstances to do with significant medical needs, social needs or special educational needs will be given priority.

It is open to any parent to make an application under this criterion. The application should be supported, where possible, with a recommendation in writing from a recognized professional of senior status; medical consultant, assistant director of social services, headteacher of current school or other appropriate officer.

The recommendation for this specific school should demonstrate knowledge of the school in terms of resources and organisation which deems it essential that the named pupil be admitted to the specific school.

3. Brothers or sisters of a child who attends the school and who will continue to do so on the date of admission

*This includes half and step brothers and sisters so long as they live at the same address - but **not** cousins*

4. Proximity to the School

Proximity to the school will be judged by the shortest walking distance by public right of way from home to school

Admissions Arrangements Proposed by the Governing Body of Wembley High Technology College –

Admissions Arrangements for Wembley High Technology College

1. Admission Number

The Admissions Number for the School will be 210.

2. Application Procedure for Wembley High Technology College

Parents who wish to secure a place for their child at Wembley High Technology College in the 2006 school year must include the name of the school on the Common Application Form for the local authority in which they reside.

The closing date for this process in Brent is 21 October 2005. The LEA will coordinate applications for admission to school made by its residents and will inform parents of the outcome of this process on 1 March 2006.

3. Late Applications

Late applications will be considered in accordance with the agreed scheme for the Coordination of Secondary School Admissions in Brent.

4. Waiting Lists

Wembley High Technology College will maintain a waiting list. This will be maintained throughout the school year. A child's position on the waiting list does not depend upon the time they have been on the list but will be determined by how they meet the oversubscription criteria. This means that a child's position on the list can go down as well as up, depending upon the child's circumstances and those of other applicants.

5. Oversubscription Criteria

The criteria set out below apply to Wembley High Technology College. All other secondary schools in the borough are either Voluntary Aided or Foundation schools and have their own admissions policies, which are published by the schools and in the LEA's composite prospectus. All 14 secondary schools in Brent publish individual prospectuses, which give detailed information about each school. A copy of the prospectus may be obtained directly from the school.

Applications for children with a statement of Special Educational Need are made through the SENAS team at the LEA. The placement of children with such a Statement is made after a process of consultation between parents, the school and the LEA. Children with a statement of Special Educational Need receive priority over others for admission to the school named on their Statement.

The following criteria are clear, fair and objective. It is illegal for schools to discriminate against a pupil on the basis of his/her ethnicity.

Places at a school will be offered in accordance with the information provided in the LEAs Common Application Form and the way that the applicants meet the school's oversubscription criteria.

Where a child is eligible to be offered a place at more than one secondary school, the place offered will be that which the parent ranked highest on the Common Application Form.

Where none of the schools ranked by the parent on the Common Application Form are able to offer a place then the LEA will, as far as is reasonably practicable, offer a place at an alternative school.

Where applications for admission exceed the number of places available the following will be applied in the order set out below:-

Proposed Admissions Statement – September 2006

Wembley High Technology College is a popular college, which is oversubscribed in all year groups. The annual intake in 2006 is limited to 210 pupils. We have 8 forms in Year 7 to ensure that class sizes are kept small.

Priority will be given to 'looked after children.' Special medical or social reasons can over ride the criteria below. Written evidence supporting these exceptional circumstances will be required from the appropriate agencies.

Where applications for admission exceed the number of places available the following will be applied in the order set out below:-

- Children who have a brother or sister attending the school at the time of admission (includes half and step brothers and sisters living at the same address)
- Those pupils attending one of the four Technology College partner primary schools (Sudbury, Barham, Byron Court and Wembley Manor). Where the number of applications arising from this criteria exceed the number of places available, those living nearest the College will be accorded a higher priority.
- Those living closest to the College, using shortest walking distance on public rights of way, from the child's permanent address to the College.

Where there are more applications in any of the above criteria than there are places available, the tie break will be proximity to the College. Proximity to the College will be judged by the shortest walking distance by public right of way from home to school