

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of School Admissions Forum held at 1.30pm on
Friday 6 February 2015

Present:

Members: Councillor D Kershaw (Chair)

Other Members:

P Burns
P MacDonald
I Rose
R Tonks
N Wicks
R Williamson

Employees (by Directorate):

People: S Cassidy, S Heawood

Resources: E Atkins, G Paddan

Apologies:

Councillor J Blundell
Rev T Colling
H Quinn
D Riat

10. Introduction and Welcome

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and this was followed by introduction of the membership of the Forum.

11. Minutes

- a) The minutes of the meeting held on 23 October 2014 were agreed as a true record.
- b) There were no Matters Arising.

12. Consultation on School Admission Arrangements for 2016

The Forum received a report on the admissions consultation for 2016 by Coventry schools. It was noted that only two schools had consulted on changes to their admissions policies for 2016 – President Kennedy School and Eden Girls School.

Concerns were raised about the failure of Eden school to meet the timescales for consultation. It was agreed that representations should be made to the school about withdrawing their consultation in the current circumstances.

Details were provided about changes in the School Admissions Code published in December 2014 which needed to be taken into account by all schools and incorporated within the co-ordinated admissions scheme.

These changes relate to definitions of previously looked after children, and applications for admission out of the normal age group.

RESOLVED that the report be noted and concerns raised be expressed accordingly.

13. Primary Co-ordinated admission scheme 2016 and Community and Voluntary controlled schools admission policies

The primary co-ordinated scheme is published in accordance with the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) England) Regulation 2012. There were amendments to the document and these amendments were highlighted for ease of reference. They related to dates and the changes required by the updated School Admissions Code.

It was noted that the governors of Templars primary school had requested to increase their intake from 75 to 90. This request had been considered and rejected by the local authority. The governors may lodge an objection with the Schools Adjudicator. The decision not to agree to an increase and to maintain the consistent pattern of other schools in the city managing phased expansion was supported by the Forum.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

14. Secondary Co-ordinated admissions scheme 2016

The Secondary school Co-ordinated admission scheme is similar to the scheme for primary schools. Therefore similar changes were highlighted relating to dates and the changes required by the updated School Admissions Code.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

15. Expanding Schools

Judith Applegarth circulated an update on increasing secondary school places. The main points covered:

- There are currently 4,148 Year 7 places available at 21 schools. By September 2024 there will be a requirement for a further 660 (22FE) Year 7 places.
- The options for delivering the additional places required are extending existing schools, opening new schools or a combination of expansion and new schools.
- Feasibility studies identified potential additional 30FE across 19 schools
- Future challenges include – seeking consensus from secondary Headteachers regarding expansion, securing capital funding and

ensuring that strategy is sufficiently flexible to adapt to further free schools.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

16. New Schools update

The Forum was updated on the new schools in the City:

Eden Girls School – this secondary Muslim faith school for girls has gone out to consultation to increase their PAN from 100 to 120 from 2016.

Seva School – the site and school building arrangements for Seva School which opened in September 2014 was still a 'work in progress'. A new planning application was currently pending for the school to move to premises on the Walsgrave business Park for the start of the 2015/16 academic year. It was noted that this school is part of the co-ordinated scheme for 2015 which means that no one would be holding two places this year.

Sidney Stringer primary Academy – this school is not part of the co-ordinated scheme in its first year of opening and it has 60 places in reception from September 2015. The pre-opening consultation has recently taken place but the funding agreement has not yet been signed. Once agreed they will be working with the local authority to liaise over the double offers which will be in place in April.

Finham Park 2 – This new free school was approved on 30 September 2014 for opening in September 2015 as a secondary school with 120 places in year 7. Unfortunately no permanent site has yet been confirmed but it is expected to be in the South West section of Coventry bordered by the A45, Kenilworth Road and up to the boundary with Solihull. The school is currently oversubscribed which means that 120 pupils who will be offered places by the local authority on 2 March would receive a second offer from Finham Park 2. As with Sidney Stringer any funding agreement is still pending and liaison on dealing with double offers would be worked on.

Sue Heawood was thanked for the report.

17. Free school meals and pupil premium

The Forum was advised that there has been an 8% decrease in the number of people who had applied for free school meals in Reception classes following the introduction of universal free school meals from Reception to Year 2. Schools had shared good practice on encouraging take up before the January 2015 census, and the Admissions and Benefits Team had issued a revised application form which would highlight the need to apply to assist the schools with pupil premium payments.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

18. Any other Business

Members discussed the possibility of having hard copies of the agenda and background papers being made available at the meeting rather than being posted out, to avoid postal delays.

RESOLVED that the agenda and background papers be emailed to individuals and hard copies to be made available to all at the meeting.

19. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held 6 November 2015 at 1.30pm.

(The meeting closed at 3pm)