

FEEDBACK RECEIVED FROM COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED SCHOOLS FOR THE 2025 TO 2026 ADMISSIONS CONSULTATION

The annual consultation also takes place with Community and Voluntary Controlled Governing Bodies, which were consulted on the Proposed Admission Numbers for their schools for 2025/2026 school year. The requests of the governors and background information are provided below.

The PANs are set by reference to the school's net capacity. The net capacity assessment is a national measuring tool provided by the Department for Education. In primary schools, the net capacity is calculated on the basis of the number and size of teaching spaces designated as 'class-bases'.

In secondary schools, it is based on the number, size and type of teaching spaces and the age range of the school.

The net capacity formula provides a maximum and minimum number of workplaces, to guide the setting of the admission number. The formula produces an indicated admission number [IAN]. It is permitted to set an admission number higher or lower than the indicated admission number.

The consultation took place from 10 November to 22 December 2023.

FEEDBACK ON PROPOSED ADMISSION NUMBER:

School name	Tatham Fells CE (VC) Primary	District	1
Current Admission Number	8		
Indicated Admission Number	8		
Proposed Admission Number	8		
Governors' Proposal	6		

Comments made by the School

The school has 2 classrooms and a small hall area. One classroom is for the Reception/ KS1 and part time nursery pupils and the other classroom is for Y3/4/5/6 pupils.

We currently have 29 pupils in KS2 and feel this is too many in the space with the different ages- with the current admission numbers we would have 32 children in there if full.

The KS1 Class needs to accommodate nursery/ reception Y1 and Y2 pupils and with the current 8 admission that would be 32 pupils aged 2-7 in one classroom.



The capacity assessment has not been undertaken on the school for many years – 2006 I think.

Officer Comments

It is noted that the governors at Melling St Wilfrid's are also seeking to reduce their PAN from 8 to 6 from September 2025.

Both of these schools are in the Lunesdale Primary Planning area. This is not an area with excessive surplus or an area of need for additional places. The School Planning Team produce a data dashboard that provides insight into the pupil projections used for planning the provision of school places in Lancashire.

The combined PAN is 55. If both schools reduced by 2 each that would take the combined PAN to 51.

The Autumn 23 Forecast show that if both schools reduced their PAN by 2 then by Year 6 there is only just enough places in this planning area particularly in Sept 25 cohort. The numbers of pupils is forecast to increase from reception as the cohorts moves through the schools to Year 6, due to housing and migration. It is healthy for a planning area to have some surplus to facility movement of pupils and parental choice. The forecasts can change particularly longer term as there may be additional housing applications agreed or migration changes over time.

Intake Year	PAN	Reception	Year 6
2025/26	55	41 +14	50 +5
2025/26	If reduced to 51	41 +10	50 +1
2026/27	55	40 +15	48 +7
	If reduced to 51	40 +11	48 +3

Both schools are seeking to reduce their PAN to help with planning and finances.

The School Planning Team would not object to the proposals on the proviso that extra pupils (over a PAN of 6) are admitted if they materialise as the cohorts move through the schools. In addition, there would be an expectation that the PAN is increased if the places are needed going forward.



It is noted that the head teacher is in agreement with this condition.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the PAN is reduced to 6 for the September 2025 intake.

School name	Thornton Cleveleys Manor Beach Primary School	District	2
Current Admission Number	45		
Indicated Admission Number			
Proposed Admission Number	45		
Governors' Proposal	27		

Comments made by the School

Our numbers have significantly reduced over the past few years.

Our current Y2 cohort has 18 pupils

Our current Y1 cohort has 20 pupil

Our current Reception cohort has 9 pupils

There is no new housing in the area and new building work is unlikely. As we are now very much a one-form entry school with the likelihood of moving to mixed aged classes in 23/24. It is not appropriate to have a PAN of 45. Therefore, based on our current numbers, we would like to reduce our PAN to 27.

Officer Comments

The School Place Planning Team have provided the forecast data below. Officers have met with the head teacher to look at future projections and surplus places.

Autumn Forecast 2023

Intake Year	PAN	Reception	Year 6
2024/25	260	201 +59	217 +43
2025/26	260	209 +51	223 +37
2026/27	260	188 +72	199 +61

There are more than sufficient school places within the primary place planning area.



Recommendation

It is recommended that the PAN is reduced to 27 for the September 2025 intake.

School name	Asmall Primary School	District	8
Current Admission Number	20		
Indicated Admission Number			
Proposed Admission Number	20		
Governors' Proposal	23		

Comments made by the School

We would like to increase our admission number to 23 from 1st January 2024. I understand that the school previously requested 25 but I have taken on board everything that you listed last time as to why you didn't agree with increasing the capacity. There is a real need though for school to grow which I have listed below, which I hope you will take into consideration when making your decision.

Impact of staffing

I understand that Ormskirk West End Primary school has places available. I understand that this needs to be taken into consideration but would ask that Asmall is not impacted by this. We have the staffing capacity already in place. Full time staff and a forecasted deficit budget. I want to ensure as the Headteacher that I am future proofing the school and that includes retaining the staff I already have. The provision we provide our children and families is of a high quality and having to do a restructure due to not being able to increase our school capacity would have a detrimental impact on our school, children, staff and community.

School Fire

Unfortunately, after the school fire, through no fault of the school, the school lost 14 children and we have never been able to get back up to that capacity again in school. This lost of funding has had a significant impact on the school budget over the past two years.

Pupil Premium

Our PP numbers have significantly reduced due to the changes in formula, however this has not changed the children and families who require additional support. The loss of the PP funding has again impacted on the school.

School Feeder

School has an external nursery provision on site which works very closely with the school. Their capacity in 22/23 of preschool children moving up to reception was 22, this academic year is 27 and academic year 24/25 is 26. Their current number on



roll is 68 children with capacity for 14 children per day in baby room and 24 children per day in preschool. Families who attend Asmall Nursery look to transition their children into reception due to how closely both the nursery and reception work together. We have shared outdoor provision, staffing that works across both settings and follow progressive schemes such as phonics to make the transition as smooth for the families as possible. Nursery have a waiting list in place.

As a school we want to be able to offer places to children who attend the onsite nursery as transition for children, especially those with additional needs need to be carefully managed and is vitally important to consider. It helps children to form relationships, continue with routines and feel a sense of connection and belonging in the setting. It is very difficult for our families when they don't get Asmall Primary School as their child/ren have made those friendships and connections. Positive transitions across early childhood have long- lasting benefits and help lay the foundation for future learning success and are vital for all children's emotional wellbeing and achievement. As a school we not only have the capacity to intake more children but want to intake more children to continue all the foundations and relationships and fundamentally allow families to select the school that is right for their families.

Family Housing

There have been a number of new build homes in a variety of styles to suit families, being built in the local area. Greetby Hill in Ormskirk being one. In addition, Edgehill University have created more student accommodation on site allowing houses in Ormskirk that were once student accommodation to be sold as family homes, seeing hopefully a continued upward turn of families moving back into the area.

School Capacity

Our school net capacity assessment is 157-175 and therefore an intake of 23 would fit within this.

School Finance

We have 7 single aged classes with admission of 20 (Rec-Year4) and 25 (Years5&6). Our Year 5 and 6 classes are not full as once children start school in reception they naturally progress throughout the school, therefore it is very difficult for us to fill the year 5 and 6 classes as our intake in reception-year 4 doesn't match year 5 and 6. School really has little movement once children start school, so we are confident that if we had the capacity increased to similar as in year5 and 6 then we would see that filter through in each class and gradually increase across the school.

The cost of living, rates, resources and wages has had an impact on our school budget and the school is forecast to have a deficit budget over the next three years. What is vitally important to us is to keep single aged classes and the benefits for children that come with this. We want to be able to keep the high-quality provision that we provide for our children and to do this and for the financial viability of the school would need to increase capacity.

Pupil Projection

The number of births in West Lancashire increased from 2020 (946) to 1013 in 2021.



I ask that you would reconsider your previous decision in support of my application to raise numbers up to 23.

Officer Comments

The Local Authority would like to provide the following information:

- A small primary school sits within the Ormskirk primary planning area, which the current forecasts show will have 258 pupils in reception for a combined PAN of 310. These numbers are lower than last year (272 pupils in reception) as September 2024 is a low birth year.
- This shows there is not a need for additional places in this planning area. Any additional places created, could negatively impact on other schools in this planning area.
- Ormskirk primary planning area is an 'importer' which means, that some pupils want places at schools within Ormskirk, who do not live in the Ormskirk area. Therefore any additional places may not actually provide places for local children.
- All the primary planning areas that surround Ormskirk planning area, do not need additional places. In fact, in Skelmersdale there is a need to reduce the amount of excess of surplus places.
- We have taken into account births, housing and migration. We predict there will be enough places for September 2025 reception pupils and enough places as that cohort works all the way through the school to Year 6.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the PAN remains at 20 as an increase may have a detrimental effect on neighbouring schools and as there are surplus places in the planning area.

School name	Great Harwood Primary School	District 11	
Current Admission Number	45		
Indicated Admission Number			
Proposed Admission Number	45		
Governors' Proposal	30		

Comments made by the School

The school numbers on roll have not supported the 45 admission number for ten years and the birth rate in the local area does not indicate the potential need to keep the additional 15 places in this locality:

The 2010/2011 enrolment was the last time the school had an intake of nearly 45 and 2013/2014 was the last year the reception class was above 30.

2010/2011 NOR:



Year R 44 students

Year Y1 35 students

Year Y2 31 students

Year Y3 34 students

Year Y4 29 students

Year Y5 41 students

Year Y6 36 students

Since 2011, the reception class size has only been above 30 once (in 2013/2014)

Number on roll for subsequent Reception classes since 2011:

2011/2012 :27

2012/2013: 24

2013/2014: 38

2014/2015:29

2015/2016: 27

2016/2017: 19

2017/2018: 28

2018/2019: 25

2019/2020: 24

2020/2021:24

2021/2022: 25

2022/2023: 14

2023/2024: 24

Whilst the capacity of the building could afford the space for a PAN of 45, there is not the demand in the area due to the number of schools and how many places are currently needed. I also feel that the current PAN has a negative impact on the capacity for the long-term budget, staffing and curriculum planning.

Following the low in-take in 2022/2023, the governors decided to maintain one class per year to avoid mixed classes. Whilst we have agreed with the authority to allow year 2 to be at 31, this is the only class that are above the proposed number of 30.

Current NOR in each year group:

Year R 24 students

Year Y1 16 students

Year Y2 31 students

Year Y3 20 students

Year Y4 26 students

Year Y5 29 students



Year Y6 26 students

This proposal has been considered by governors for a number of years and, although our NOR has increased by 14 children this term, we are still a long way from the capacity that even a PAN of 30 would provide: current NOR 172 with capacity for an additional 38 pupils if the PAN was 30 or 143 with the current PAN.

Officer Comments

Information from the School Place Planning Team evidences surplus primary places in the planning area going forward.

Intake Year	PAN	Reception	Year 6	Reception +5%
2024/25	240	171 +69	187 +53	180 +60
2025/26	240	190 +50	171 +69	200 +40
2026/27	240	201 +39	203 +37	211 +29

As there is sufficient accommodation at the school to take more children, the school would be expected to agree to an increase in the PAN if there is significant housing or inward migration that means more places are required in the future.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the PAN is reduced to 30 for the September 2025 intake.

FEEDBACK ON PROPOSED ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS – QUERY REGARDING GEOGRAPHICAL PRIORITY AREA RELATING TO BROUGHTON HIGH SCHOOL:

Response 1.

I attended the open evening at Broughton High School on 14th September 2023 as my daughter is due to apply for a high school place for her starting in September 2025. Whilst at the event I spoke with a member of the pupil access team regarding the Geographical Priority Area for the school.



We currently reside in Barton. The parish of Barton is within the GPA for Broughton High School, however we reside on a new build development which is within the Bilsborrow and Myerscough parish boundary. The properties directly across the A6 from our house are within the boundary, but we apparently are not.

I have attached a copy of the GPA map for the school, with the approximate location of my house. As you can see it is right on the boundary for the GPA and Broughton High school is our nearest high school to where we live.

The lady I spoken to at the Broughton High school event explained that proposed admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled secondary schools for 2025/2026 are being reviewed, so am writing to asked that the following is taken into account when reviewing the admission criteria and GPA for Broughton High school.

The current Geographical priority areas for Broughton high school are as follows

Parishes of Barton, Broughton, Inskip with Sowerby, Lea (part of), Preston (part of**) and Woodplumpton*

**The area bounded by Lea Lane, Sidgreaves Lane, Hoyles Lane and the Woodplumpton parish boundary. This area is shared with Ashton Community Science College's Geographical Priority Area.*

***The area bounded by the Woodplumpton parish boundary, the West Coast Main Line (railway line), and the B6241 (Lightfoot Lane/Tom Benson Way) in a westerly direction back to the Woodplumpton parish boundary. This area is shared with Ashton Community Science College's Geographical Priority Area.*

There are other areas within the GPA for Broughton high school which are much further away and I am surprised that living in Barton, the GPA has not been updated to reflect our development being built. I am aware that our home comes under Wyre Borough Council, however also aware that Inskip with Sowerby comes within the Wyre Borough Council boundary and it is included within the GPA for the school. From discussions with the pupil access team I have been made aware that areas such as Inskip with Sowerby were originally included within the GPA for Broughton high school to save children having to travel substantial distances to school. Whilst I fully understand this, by not including the area of Barton where we currently reside in the GPA is now having the same effect on my child, which I understand is what the local authority are trying to avoid happening. The address where I reside is much closer to Broughton High School, than some of these other areas included in the GPA and also, as shown on the attached map children that reside further away from our address, but in the same village are within the GPA for the school.

Broughton high school is just over 1 mile away from our home and if this isn't amended it will mean that my child will have to travel much further to get to a high school, which will not only have a significant impact on her wellbeing, but also environmentally as additional journeys will need to be made. If she was able to secure a place at Broughton High School, which would be more likely if we were in the GPA then she could walk or cycle each day which would have a physical and emotional benefit to



my child and a positive environmental impact. My child has friends in the area and no friends in other areas meaning that she would have to attend a high school with others she does not know, impacting on her emotional and mental health and wellbeing.

I am aware that the GPA for Broughton High school has been raised by Ben Wallace to Angie Ridgwell and have seen Angie's response dated 12th June 2023 which confirmed that reviews to GPA have been conducted to review the impact of new housing developments. I am aware from Angie Ridgwell's response that the current GPA's were established 10 years ago to give children priority access to their closest community school. Whilst I am aware that GPA are not amended annually but reviews are conducted when there is a concern that a group of pupils may not be able to secure a place at a school within reasonable distance from their home and that reason reviews have been driven by housing developments. The letter also detailed that that the impact of new housing developments on the admission arrangements for Preston secondary schools was currently under review. If GPA's were introduced to give children priority access to their closest community school I am wondering therefore why my address is not included within the GPA under the recent review. I would be interested to read details regarding the current GPA review for Broughton High school if this can be shared.

There have been a large number of new houses built since the original GPA were put into place and therefore, I would be grateful if the GPA for Broughton high school could be reviewed and updated to reflect some of these new house developments within the Barton area to ensure the best secondary school start for children in the local area.



Response 2 – received two hours after the closing date

My family moved to Barton in 2021 to a new development. Our address is Fairlie Drive, Barton PR3 5EE. Given the close proximity to our 'local' school (Broughton High School), I find myself in a state of utter disbelief that we are not in the catchment area and that Garstang High School would be my daughter's designated secondary school, which is approximately 5 miles away from our home.

What surprises me is that the GPA is based on Parish Council boundaries opposed to the distance to the school itself. I understand following dialogue with LCC that this is to ensure those families who reside in a rural setting are not detrimented by having to travel significant distances when attending secondary school. However, this decision will detriment my family as my daughter will have to travel a significant distance to attend secondary school. Broughton High School is approximately one mile from our home. That is 4 miles closer than Garstang High School!

The current Geographical priority areas for Broughton High School are:

Parishes of Barton, Broughton, Inskip with Sowerby, Lea (part of), Preston (part of**) and Woodplumpton*

**The area bounded by Lea Lane, Sidgreaves Lane, Hoyles Lane and the Woodplumpton parish boundary. This area is shared with Ashton Community Science College's Geographical Priority Area.*

***The area bounded by the Woodplumpton parish boundary, the West Coast Main Line (railway line), and the B6241 (Lightfoot Lane/Tom Benson Way) in a westerly direction back to the Woodplumpton parish boundary. This area is shared with Ashton Community Science College's Geographical Priority Area.*

Our home is north of Broughton, within the Bilsborrow and Myerscough Parish, and is located immediately on the west side of the A6. Properties on the east side of the A6, directly across from where we live, fall within the Broughton High School catchment area. The catchment area continues north up the A6, which means that there are children currently attending Broughton High School who travel south along the A6 past the end of my road, who are essentially located at a much further distance away from the school than where we reside.

If my daughter was to attend Broughton High School she could walk or cycle each day. In the current regime she would need to travel to Garstang High School by bus or car, covering approximately 1,950 miles annually.

This is at odds with the Walks to School Day to mark the Coronation in May this year, which promoted the benefits of walking over getting dropped off in the car. May I remind you that a Notice of Motion was agreed by LCC on Thursday 23rd February 2023 which committed to holding the event to "combine our commitment to the priority of protecting the environment, together with celebrating the historic Coronation of our new Monarch." I quote from the LCC website that "Lancashire Walks to School Day aims to build on support already provided by the county council to schools to encourage walking and cycling..."



County Councillor Jayne Rear, cabinet member for education and skills said "Choosing to walk compared with a car journey has very real benefits for our physical and mental health and making this change on one day could be the start of a new habit for everyone involved...", and "we already have support available for schools who are keen to work with students and parents on walking and cycling..."

County Councillor Michael Green, cabinet member for health and wellbeing stated "There are so many benefits of a short outdoor walk over taking the car, and I'm keen that as many children as possible get to experience this on Lancashire Walks to School Day. As well as the physical and mental benefits of exercise for those taking part, more people walking to school and for other short journeys helps everyone by reducing congestion and air pollution and is a good habit for people to start early and keep up throughout their lives."

It was also highlighted that "King Charles' concern for our environment is very well-known and this event will be a particularly fitting way to mark his Coronation."

Given the current circumstances this feels like lip service to a very real problem. My family are supporters of initiatives to save our environment and my daughter, Mia, has been raised in a family of keen walkers and cyclists. I am horrified that I am now in a situation where I must consider putting her on a bus for a 10 mile round trip on a daily basis when her 'local' school is in such close proximity.

My main concern is my daughter's health and wellbeing. Preventing her attending her 'local' school impacts this in multiple ways:

- The physical and mental health benefits that walking and cycling to school provide;
- Obesity in children is a well documented issue and creating a situation that forces a child to travel on public transport or by car to school because of outdated boundary rules will only exacerbate this;
- Inability to participate in out of school activities due to transport access. Mia is a keen athlete and currently participates in multiple clubs before and after school;
- Isolation and alienation from friend groups outside of her local community, as she will live too far away from school friends to socialise outside of school hours;
- The environmental impact, which is in conflict to the positive affect Mia strives to achieve (she is currently an Eco Councillor at her primary school).

The landscape has changed significantly since Parish Council boundaries were set and, in recent years, planning has been approved for multiple developments that are family focused. I am therefore at a loss to understand why such outdated measures are utilised in this day and age. It is hypocritical to encourage families to occupy such developments when the Council do not support this by providing access to local schools for local children to walk or cycle to.

In respect of community and voluntary controlled schools, your website states that LCC "will consult with parents and the local community to make sure our admission



arrangements meet future needs." In the 2.5 years that I have resided at my current address I am not aware of any consultation and, given my Barton address, I would consider myself to be part of the local community. I have also been observing the LCC website, specifically in relation to schools consultation, since September and there has been no reference to Broughton High School.

There is a much bigger picture here and whilst the Council continues to support the building of family homes in new developments, I would respectfully request that LCC revisits their Notice of Motion and the drive behind Walks to School Day and what this stands for. I would like to believe that LCC has a commitment to more than just one day and is keen to ensure that all children have the opportunity to walk or to cycle to their local school.

To this end I would be grateful if the GPA for Broughton High School could be reviewed.

FEEDBACK TO THE CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

For the 2025 to 2026 admissions round, the Authority consulted upon changes to its published admission arrangements; no significant changes made to the admission criteria for these schools in the last 10 years.

LCC is the Admission Authority for community and voluntary controlled schools within Lancashire.

In November 2022, the Ministry of Defence issued statutory guidance on the Armed Forces Covenant with an expectation that county council's take all possible steps to support Forces families in the delivery of their services.

Also, the Department for Education's School Admissions Code allows admission authorities to give priority in their admission criteria to the children of staff.

To reflect both pieces of statutory guidance, changes were consulted upon to the admission criteria applied when considering applications for community and voluntary controlled schools to provide support for Forces families and to assist community and voluntary controlled schools with the recruitment and retention of staff.

The consultation took place from 10 November to 22 December 2023.

The responses received to the consultation are listed below:

Response number 1

Just a quick email to say how pleased I am with the Proposed C&VC Admission Arrangements, particularly with regard to children of staff.

I think this change will be particularly helpful for the recruitment and retention of staff.

Thank you for proposing this change.



Response number 2

Governors are fully supportive of the changes and wish it to be noted. They feel strongly that staff children should be given this priority, and that in times of challenging recruitment this is advantageous to the school.

Response number 3

Whitworth Community High School Response to consultation: Oversubscription criteria - Children of Staff

As a school and as a Governing Board we are very supportive of the proposal to include Children of Staff as priority 3 in the admissions oversubscription criteria.

This is something we have been advocating for several years and we are delighted and relieved that it is now being proposed.

With particular reference to Whitworth Community High School, but also to maintained schools generally, we believe this change to the admissions criteria will have massive benefits:

In a climate where staff recruitment and retention, not just of teachers but of associate staff, is a significant challenge, the prioritising of Children of Staff will be a significant benefit to current staff, and an attractive proposition for potential staff. Some of our Lancs schools are relatively difficult to access - Whitworth is 20 mins from the nearest motorway, 25 mins away from the nearest Lancs secondary school, on the edge of the County, and in a location which suffers considerable disruption during adverse weather - and this exacerbates the issues around recruitment and retention.

Existing staff and new candidates often ask what chance their child will have of getting a place here. For existing staff, it will be massively reassuring to know that their child is more likely to be given a place here, if they believe we are the best school for their child: resolving the early morning and evening childcare issues associated with travelling a distance to work, and reducing the stress of juggling work/home commitments. For Lancashire schools we strongly believe this will be supportive of recruitment and retention.

Our staff are very proud to work at Whitworth. I am fortunate to have such a skilled and committed team who really believe in our values and ethos and who work tirelessly to ensure our young people, many of whom come from disadvantaged backgrounds, have the best possible life chances. We offer a strong academic curriculum, great pastoral support and a full range of extra-curricular opportunities. It's a source of pride that our staff want their children to come here - to benefit from the holistic experience they are providing for other people's



children. This is a real vote of confidence in our school - and is also a real driver for further improvement. Likewise, it's really useful for us in terms of parent voice and school improvement to have the 'insider' view from our staff.

Currently, the admissions system is inherently unfair with regard to Children of Staff. Faith schools, academies, free schools, foundation schools - can all prioritise Children of Staff. This means staff in community schools, who, like us, have made and keep on making the decision to stay firmly within the local authority, are disadvantaged. One of my experienced colleagues has considered seeking a post elsewhere, at a school in a neighbouring authority where Children of Staff are listed in the oversubscription criteria, in order to have the security of knowing their child will be likely to get a place. One of the key 'selling' point when we have been in any discussion with academy chains has been the inclusion of children of staff within their oversubscription criteria.

It is on these grounds that Whitworth Community High School and its Governing Board strongly support the proposal to amend the admissions oversubscription criteria to include Children of Staff.

With regard to Children eligible for Services Premium, the school is also supportive.

Response number 4

Thank you for the opportunity to express our views on the proposed changes to the admission arrangements for Lancashire schools for 2025-26.

I write on behalf of the Governing Board of Forton Primary School following a detailed discussion of the proposals at the Full Governing Board meeting on 30 November 2023.

Regarding the proposal to include children eligible for Services Premium, the Board noted the requirements in the School Admissions Code (September 2021) to remove disadvantage for service children and supported the proposal.

Regarding the proposal to prioritise children of staff, the Board noted that this is not a requirement of the School Admissions Code but just an option. The Code says that "Admission authorities may give priority in their oversubscription criteria to children of staff . . ." in particular circumstances. The Board also noted that the one argument (namely attracting staff) for giving priority to children of staff appeared to be based on conjecture and a concern about what might happen rather than being based on specific evidence of a significant problem.

The Board felt that giving priority to children of staff may seem appealing to schools/governing boards in the first instance but the negative and any unintended consequences may not be appreciated or considered.



The Board agreed unanimously with the following arguments against prioritising children of staff in the oversubscription criteria:

- a) LCC admission arrangements, rightly, emphasise that their purpose is to ensure places are allocated in a “fair, clear and objective way”. The inclusion of children of staff does not appear fair. The perception among parents would certainly be that the system is showing unfair favouritism toward members of staff.
- b) All other working parents have to manage getting their children to school/pre-school prior to going to their own place of work, so there is little argument for favouring members of staff while discriminating against local children.
- c) The Headteacher and governors would find it extremely difficult to explain to parents of children who live close to the school, but who miss getting a place at the school, that their child’s place has been filled by a child of a member of staff who lives some greater distance from the school.
- d) The Headteacher and governors would find such an explanation even more difficult if the child who missed getting a place at the school already has siblings at the school, making transportation for that family doubly difficult.
- e) In broad terms, the teachers’ role is to serve the children and the community, not themselves, so an incentive such as this at the expense of the local community feels quite wrong.
- f) This issue will affect schools in so-called “hot spots”, where demand for school places is greater than the number available. It seems counter-intuitive to allow children from a “cold spot” to add additional challenges to school numbers in an already hot spot at the expense of the local children themselves.
- g) The single argument in favour of the proposal does not appear to be supported by hard evidence and it is not clear whether or not it will make a significant difference to the ability of schools to recruit staff.

The Board noted that if the school is not oversubscribed or the staff member lives very close to the school, then their children would be able to attend that school anyway under the current admission arrangements.

There is a final point which of course is one for parents to decide; however, there is a wide consensus that children are generally better off attending a local school rather than travelling to a more remote one where contact with friendship groups would become more difficult.

In summary, the Full Governing Board was unanimous in its view that prioritising children of staff members:

- crosses the boundary of fairness
- is extremely difficult to justify to relatively local parents of children who miss out on a school place
- appears to be a solution to a problem which does not appear significant and which does appear to be based on conjecture rather than proven data



Therefore the Board finds the proposal to prioritise children of staff unacceptable and strongly opposes its inclusion.

Thank you for considering the concerns of our Governing Board.

Response 5.

The Headteacher of Fishwick Primary School responded to say that nursery pupils should be included, too. A request for additional information was submitted, nothing further was received.

