

Report to:	EDUCATION ATTAINMENT IMPROVEMENT BOARD
Date:	18 January 2022
Reporting Officer:	Catherine Moseley - Head of Access Services
Subject:	SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS AND SCHOOL PLACE PLANNING
Report Summary:	<p>The report sets out the proposed admission arrangements for Tameside community, and voluntary controlled schools for admission in September 2023. There has been no change to these from September 2022. There are proposed changes to the Published Admission Number at two community primary schools. The latest information on school place planning is presented which concludes that there are currently sufficient places to meet expected demand. The school place planning process must continue to be dynamic particularly in view of significant housing development that is predicted within the borough and the impact that will have on demand and travel to learn patterns. Consideration also needs to be given to predicted rising levels of surplus capacity in some areas of the borough and the need to consider reducing admission numbers in future years. There is consideration of a proposal to commence consultation on adding a resource base for children with additional needs at Corrie Primary and Nursery School.</p>
Recommendations:	It is recommended that the Board note the contents of the report
Corporate Plan:	The proposals contained within this report will support the delivery of the Community Strategy, through the delivery of sufficient and suitable places to meet anticipated demand in 2023/24.
Policy Implications:	The admission arrangements for 2023/24 academic year for all voluntary controlled and community schools are the same as for 2022/23 as determined on 27 January 2021.
Financial Implications: (Authorised by the statutory Section 151 Officer & Chief Finance Officer)	<p>All schools places are funded from the ring-fenced Dedicated Schools Grant which must be fully allocated to all schools and Academies in the borough.</p> <p>Mainstream Schools and Academies are funded on a per pupil basis, schools with falling numbers of pupils on roll face financial pressures with small class sizes.</p> <p>Specialist resource bases in mainstream school provide a good value for money proposal in terms of cost to the High Needs Block, a special school place costs £10,000 where a specialist resource base in a mainstream school costs £4,000.</p>
Legal Implications: (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)	<p>The council has a statutory duty to provide sufficient school places to meet the needs of the residents of Tameside. Failure to meet this duty ultimately can result in intervention by The Secretary of State.</p> <p>This duty requires the council to predict future demand for places as a result of demographic changes in Tameside but also taking into account other factors such as the demand for places arising from housing developments.</p>

The project officers consider that the admission arrangements set out in the appended document meet the statutory duty whilst looking forward by way of the consultation process to address the delivery of places for children with cognition and learning and/ or communication and interaction and / or social, emotional and mental health needs. The outcome of that consultation will require careful consideration as part of the decision making processes going forward.

Risk Management:

Failure to determine admission arrangements and a coordinated admissions scheme by 15 March 2022 could result in the Secretary of State imposing admissions arrangements on the Council and lead to the displacement of children from community high schools.

Access to Information:

NON-CONFIDENTIAL

This report does not contain information which warrants its consideration in the absence of the Press or members of the public.

Background Information:

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting Catherine Moseley, Head of Access Services



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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 All admission authorities are required to consult on their coordinated admission scheme and on changes to admission arrangements. Where no changes are proposed to the coordinated admissions scheme or admission arrangements, there is no requirement to consult. Admission authorities must ensure that their determined admission arrangements comply with the mandatory requirements of the School Admissions Code 2021.
- 1.2 Admission authorities must consult once every seven years as a minimum.

2. ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS IN COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED SCHOOLS

- 2.1 For entry to community or voluntary controlled primary, junior and secondary schools in September 2023, no changes were planned from the admission arrangements determined in July 2021 for September 2022 and therefore consultation on the full admission arrangements was not necessary. The last time that the admission arrangements were consulted upon was in autumn term 2019 for entry in September 2021.
- 2.2 Admission arrangements must be determined by 28 February and must be published by 15 March. Following determination of the admission arrangements objections to those arrangements must be made to the Schools Adjudicator by 15 May.
- 2.3 The proposed admission arrangements for entry in September 2023 for community or voluntary controlled primary, junior and secondary schools are set out in **Appendix 1**.
- 2.4 The Council consulted on changes to the Published Admission Number at two primary schools, those being Buckton Vale Primary School in Stalybridge and Holden Clough Primary School in Ashton. The consultation process followed a timetable determined by the Department for Education (DfE)

3. CONSULTATION ON ADMISSION NUMBERS FOR SEPTEMBER 2023

Buckton Vale Primary School

- 3.1 Buckton Vale Primary School requested a reduction in their Published Admission Number from 45 to 30. This was the subject of a variation request to the School Adjudicator in May 2021. The School Adjudicator approved the proposal to reduce the Published Admission Number at the school for September 2022 and the Council undertook to consult on a permanent change.

Holden Clough Primary School

- 3.2 Holden Clough Primary School requested a reduction in their Published Admission Number from 60 to 30. This followed a sustained period of falling rolls in the school. Holden Clough wished to take action to avoid a potential budget deficit in future years.
- 3.3 Holden Clough Primary School have a published admission number of 60 but have had significantly lower numbers over recent years, which have affected their future budget projections. Infant Class Size legislation means that Key Stage 1 classes must have one teacher for every 30 pupils. Holden Clough is now in the position of having a Published Admission Number of 60 but are attracting significantly less than their PAN into the school with little prospect of this increasing in the next few years due to falling birth rates in the area. In order to comply with Infant Class Size legislation, the school is required to have a teacher for every 30 Key Stage 1 pupils. Across KS1 currently, the school have 142 pupils across six classes necessitating at least six teachers with significantly less funding than 180 pupils would bring.

3.4 Following several meetings with the school, the Council was happy to support the school in consulting on reducing their Published Admission Number to 30.

Consultation

3.5 On 14 October 2021, the Local Authority circulated the proposed published admission numbers and admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools for consultation. The closing date for the consultation was 25 November 2021.

3.6 The following organisations were consulted:

- The Headteacher and Governors of all Tameside maintained schools;
- Parents;
- Derbyshire Local Authority;
- Manchester Local Authority;
- Oldham Local Authority;
- Stockport Local Authority;
- Tameside Local Authority;
- Chester Diocese;
- Manchester Diocese;
- Salford Diocese;
- Shrewsbury Diocese; and
- Local MPs

3.7 A Public Notice was also published in the Tameside Reporter on 14 October 2021 in order to notify parents and other groups in the area of their rights to be consulted and the consultation was posted on the Tameside MBC website.

3.8 No responses were received to the consultation and it is recommended to amend the Published Admission Numbers at Buckton vale Primary School and Holden Clough Primary School as set out below:

School	Current Admission Number	Proposed Admission Number	Published Admission Number
Buckton Vale Primary School	45	30	
Holden Clough Primary School	60	30	

4. SCHOOL PLACE PLANNING

4.1 School place planning in the borough is reviewed on an annual basis and forms part of the annual report on admission arrangements that is reported to Executive Cabinet in February. **Appendix 2** sets out the latest information.

4.2 All local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places to meet demand in the area. These may be school places available at provision maintained by the local authority, academies, or other non-maintained schools. In order to carry out this statutory duty, Councils need to carry out school place planning and forecasting.

4.3 Planning for fluctuations in demand for school places is an important function which needs to be carried out at a local level and will differ depending on the phase of learning, for example, pupils will travel further to secondary schools than primary schools. The compact geography of the borough and the mix of types of school eg single sex means that place planning happens at a level higher than wards or towns.

4.4 School place planning is a complex process, that takes account a range of factors including the number of births in the borough, in year movement and cohort survival rates as well as parental preference and planned housing development. With rapid shifts in economic

conditions for families and changing patterns of migration, planning for basic need for school places requires a proactive approach to best respond to both short and medium-term demand for places.

- 4.5 By being proactive and working in partnership with all our schools over a number of years, the Council has been able to meet the demand for places in spite of significant variations in pupil numbers.
- 4.6 Whilst there are currently sufficient places to meet expected demand, the school place planning process must continue to be dynamic particularly in view of significant housing development that is predicted within the borough and the impact that will have on demand and travel to learn patterns.

5. CONSULTATION ON STATUTORY SCHOOL ORGANISATION PROPOSALS

- 5.1 As outlined in the School Place Planning and in the SEND report, there is an urgent need to develop additional specialist places in the borough for pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan. This proposal is to formally establish a 10 place resource base at Corrie Primary and Nursery School.
- 5.2 The resource base will be appropriate for children with cognition and learning and/ or communication and interaction and / or social, emotional and mental health needs.
- 5.3 The resource base opened at the school on a pilot basis in September 2021 and this consultation is to formally establish the resource base.
- 5.4 Statutory guidance has been published by the Department for Education with regard to School organisation regulations (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-organisation-maintained-schools>). Local authorities must have regard to the guidance when making a significant change to a school, known as a prescribed alteration.
- 5.5 The prescribed alteration in the case of Corrie Primary and Nursery School is to establish special educational needs provision at the school. This requires the local authority to consult on the proposal and the statutory process to make a prescribed alteration to a school has four stages as set out below:

Stage	Description	Timescale	Comments
Stage 1	Publication (statutory proposal / notice)		
Stage 2	Representation (formal consultation)	Must be 4 school weeks	As set out in the 'Prescribed Alterations' Regulations
Stage 3	Decision	The Council should decide a proposal within two months otherwise it will fall to the School Adjudicator to decide	Any appeal to the adjudicator must be made within four weeks of the decision
Stage 4	Implementation	No prescribed timescale	It must be as specified in the published statutory notice, subject to any modifications agreed by the decision-maker

- 5.6 The prescribed alteration statutory proposal must include:
- school and Council details;
 - description of the alteration and evidence of demand;
 - objectives (including how the proposal would increase educational standards and parental choice);

- the effect on other educational institutions within the area;
- project costs and indication of how these will be met, including how long-term value for money will be achieved;
- implementation plan; and
- a statement explaining the procedure for responses: support, objections and comments

5.7 It is proposed to commence the consultation on 27 January 2022 and it will run until 3 March 2022.

5.8 The proposed consultation document is attached as **Appendix 3**. This will be published on the Council's website; in a local newspaper and also sent to:

- The Headteacher and Governors of all Tameside maintained schools;
- Parents of children at Corrie Primary and Nursery School;
- Local elected members
- Local MP
- Tameside Parent Carer Forum through Our Kids Eyes

5.9 As set out in the timescale above, the Council will be required to make a decision in the proposal within two months of the end of the consultation period. Therefore, a key decision report will be presented to Executive Cabinet on 27 April 2022.

5.10 In line with the SEND Sufficiency Strategy 2021-2031 and the School Place Planning report, further school organisation proposals may be considered to ensure that the designation of special schools accurately reflects the needs of the pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans in the school.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 As set out at the front of the report.