

Pre-consultation on admission arrangements for Tatsfield Primary School for September 2014

Background

1. Tatsfield Primary School is a Community School and, as such, Surrey County Council is responsible for determining the admission arrangements for the school. The admission arrangements include the number of children the school will admit each year and, if there are more applications than places available, what criteria will be used to allocate applicants to the school.
2. The admission arrangements for each school must be determined by 15 April in the calendar year prior to admission. The admission arrangements for 2013 admission were determined by Cabinet on 28 February 2012, over one year before children will be allocated to the school. The earliest intake that Surrey County Council could now determine a change to admission arrangements would be for September 2014 admission.
3. In accordance with the capacity of the school, Surrey County Council has determined a Published Admission Number of 30 for Tatsfield Primary School. This means that it will seek to offer 30 places into Reception at the school each year.
4. The admission criteria used to allocate applicants to Tatsfield Primary School are in line with Surrey's standard admission criteria, which are as follows:
 - a. Looked After Children
 - b. Exceptional medical/social need
 - c. Siblings
 - d. Children for whom the school is nearest to their home
 - e. Other children
5. Historically all children living in Tatsfield have always been offered a place at the school, even if other children from outside the village have been offered a place under a higher priority, e.g. if they had a sibling attending the school.
6. However for admission in 2011/12 the number of siblings increased (from 11 in 2010/11) to 23. The knock on effect of this increase in siblings meant that three children with a Tatsfield postal address would not have been eligible for a place had the school kept to its Published Admission Number of 30.
7. Due to infant class size legislation that stipulates that no class should consist of more than 30 children with one teacher, Surrey County Council exceptionally agreed to fund an extra teacher so that the school could admit the three children who lived within Tatsfield village.
8. Analysis of data last year and feedback from the school indicated that the number of siblings was unusual and this situation was not expected to repeat itself in 2012. As a result Surrey County Council made a decision not to seek a review of the admission

arrangements for the school. This assessment was correct and the number of siblings who applied for entry in 2012 was 14.

9. However, although the sibling numbers were not unduly high, for September 2012 admission there were two children who lived within Tatsfield Parish who were not eligible for a place within the school's Published Admission Number of 30 on the date of the initial allocation.
10. The first child was offered a place at Tatsfield Primary School on the basis that there was not another school with a vacancy that could be offered which was within a reasonable distance of the home address. Although Surrey County Council initially allocated 31 places to offer a place to this child, it was not anticipated that it would need to fund an extra teacher as natural fall out was expected to bring the class back to 30 by September 2012. This has now happened and the number allocated to the school has dropped back to 30. The second child was offered a place at an alternative preference school.
11. In rebuilding Tatsfield Primary School it was the intention of Surrey County Council that it would serve the children living within Tatsfield village. Therefore, on the basis of the allocations in 2011 and 2012, Surrey County Council believes that it would now be prudent to consider whether the admission arrangements for the school should be varied to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that they allow for all children in the village to be offered a place.
12. The breakdown of the 2012 allocation is as follows:

Siblings	14
Nearest School	16
13. Of the 14 siblings, 9 did not have Tatsfield Primary School as the nearest school and 10 did not live in the Parish of Tatsfield. All of these were within a safe walking distance of another school.
14. Of the 16 applicants who were offered a place according to their nearest school, two lived outside of Tatsfield Parish and both of these were within a safe walking distance of another school.

Options for consideration

15. It is the view of Surrey County Council that the options for future admission arrangements to the school set out in paragraphs 16 to 18 should be considered. The earliest a change could be implemented would be for September 2014 admission.
16. **Introduce a catchment area for the school**

Priority could be given to siblings and then other applicants living within a catchment area, ahead of other children who live outside of the catchment area. The admission criteria in this case would be as follows:

- i. Looked After Children
- ii. Exceptional medical/social need
- iii. Siblings

- iv. Children who live within the Tatsfield catchment area
- v. Other children based on straight line proximity to the school

Advantages

- It would maintain priority for siblings
- After siblings it would provide priority for families who live within a defined Tatsfield catchment area ahead of other children living outside the defined catchment area
- Other children living outside the catchment would only be considered after siblings and other children who live within catchment
- It would mean that local families would be less likely to be displaced in favour of children who lived further away
- The school would be unlikely to deter applications from outside the area because if a family from outside the area were able to get one child in to the school there would be no uncertainty regarding younger siblings, This would support the future viability of the school
- A catchment area can be clearly defined and parents would be able to see how their application would be considered without having to consider distances to different schools

Disadvantages

- In a year of high siblings it could still mean that some Tatsfield families might not be able to get children into the school. However, had these criteria applied in 2012 and had the catchment been defined as the Tatsfield Parish boundary, all children within Tatsfield Parish would have been offered a place
- It is a variation from Surrey's standard admission criteria thus increasing the overall complexity of admissions

17. Introduce a catchment area for the school and a tiered sibling policy

This would have the effect of giving a lower priority to siblings who live outside of the catchment area. The admission criteria in this case would be as follows:

- i. Looked After Children
- ii. Exceptional medical/social need
- iii. Siblings who live within the catchment area
- iv. Other children who live within the catchment area
- v. Other siblings who live outside the catchment area
- vi. Other children who live outside the catchment area

Advantages

- It would maximise priority for families who live within the Tatsfield catchment area
- It would mean that local families would not be displaced in favour of siblings who lived out of the catchment

Disadvantages

- It might mean that some families would not be able to get siblings into the same school. However, had these criteria applied in 2012 and had the catchment been defined as the Tatsfield Parish boundary, all siblings would have still been offered a place

- It might dissuade parents from applying if they have more than one child and if they do not live within the catchment area. This could affect the future viability of the school
- It is a variation from Surrey's standard admission criteria thus increasing the overall complexity of admissions

18. Make no change

Surrey County Council could decide to make no change to the admission criteria and to accept that some children living in Tatsfield might not always be offered a place at Tatsfield Primary School.

Advantages

- The arrangements would remain in line with Surrey's standard criteria thus not adding to the complexity of admissions
- Families would continue to be able to get siblings into the same school
- The school should see no drop in application numbers

Disadvantages

- Some Tatsfield families may not be offered a place at their village school each year

The way forward

19. Surrey County Council is seeking the views of parents and the local community on what, if any, change should be made to the admission criteria for Tatsfield Primary School.
20. Parents and members of the local community are asked to respond on the attached response sheet **by Friday 29 June 2012**.
21. A meeting will be held at Tatsfield Primary School at 6.30 pm on Thursday 21 June 2012 so that parents and members of the local community might ask questions on the consultation.
22. If Surrey County Council decided to propose a change to the admission arrangements for 2014 the County Council would be required to consult on the change as part of its statutory consultation during the Autumn and Spring terms 2012/13.
23. If as part of that process the County Council proposes to introduce a catchment area it would enter into full consultation on where the catchment boundaries would lie.
24. The admission arrangements for the school for admission in September 2014 must be determined by Surrey County Council by 15 April 2013.

Consultation on Admission arrangements for Tatsfield Primary School – Summer 2012

RESPONSE FORM

1. Do you think Surrey County Council should propose a change to the admission arrangements for Tatsfield Primary School? YES / NO

If **NO**, please go straight to Question 4 and indicate your reasons

2. If you support a change to the admission arrangements please indicate what your preferred change would be (please tick box):

Catchment area only

Catchment & tiered sibling

3. Please indicate whether or not you would support the catchment area being defined as the Tatsfield Parish boundary:

I **support** the use of the Tatsfield Parish boundary as the catchment area

I **do not support the** use of the Tatsfield Parish boundary as the catchment area

4. Please provide reasons for your response so that Surrey County Council might fully take into account the views of parents and the local community:

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Name:

Address:

.....Post Code:

Please indicate the category that best describes your interest in this consultation:

Parent / Local Resident / Family Member / School employee / Governor / Other

Signature: Date:

Please complete this form by **Friday 29 June 2012** and return it to Claire Potier, Principal Manager Admissions and Transport, Quadrant Court, 35 Guildford Road, Woking, GU22 7QQ

Pre-Consultation Tatsfield Primary 04/05/12

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