

## SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

## CABINET

DATE: 26 FEBRUARY 2013



REPORT OF: MRS LINDA KEMENY, CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND LEARNING

LEAD OFFICER: CLAIRE POTIER, PRINCIPAL MANAGER ADMISSIONS AND TRANSPORT

SUBJECT: CONSULTATION ON SURREY'S ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR SEPTEMBER 2014 FOR COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED SCHOOLS AND COORDINATED SCHEMES

**SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

Following the statutory consultation on Surrey's admission arrangements for September 2014, Cabinet is asked to consider the responses and make recommendations to the County Council on admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools and Surrey's coordinated schemes for September 2014.

This report covers the following areas in relation to school admissions:

- Banstead Community Junior School - Recommendation 1
- Reigate Priory School – Recommendation 2
- Southfield Park Primary – Recommendation 3
- St Ann's Heath Junior School – Recommendation 4
- St Ann's Heath Junior School and Trumps Green Infant School – Recommendation 5
- Tatsfield Primary School – Recommendation 6
- Thames Ditton Junior School – Recommendation 7
- Published Admission Number for Thames Ditton Junior – Recommendation 8
- Published Admission Numbers for other schools – Recommendation 9
- Increase to number of preferences allowed under Surrey's primary coordinated scheme – Recommendation 10
- Coordinated Admissions Schemes – Recommendation 12
- Surrey's Relevant Area – Recommendation 11
- Admission arrangements for other schools – Recommendation 13

Recommendations are set out on pages 1 to 6 and further details of each proposal are set out on pages 9 to 18.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

It is recommended that Cabinet make the following recommendations to the County Council:

**Recommendation 1**

A feeder link is introduced for Banstead Community Junior School for children from Banstead Infant School for September 2014, as follows:

- a) Looked after and previously looked after children

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- b) Exceptional social/medical need
  - c) Children attending Banstead Infant School
  - d) Siblings not admitted under c) above
  - e) Any other children

#### **Reasons for Recommendation**

- It would provide continuity and a clearer transition for parents, children and schools and would reduce anxiety for parents
- It would be in line with the criteria that exist for most other schools which have a feeder link and reciprocal sibling links
- It would enable families to benefit from a sibling link for Reception even if they had a child who was due to leave the infant school before the younger child was admitted
- It would maximise the opportunity for families to keep children together or at schools within a close proximity
- It is consistent with Surrey's planning principles set out in the School Organisation Plan
- It is supported by the Governing Body of the school
- Eligibility to transport is not linked to the admission criteria of a school and as such attendance at Banstead Infant School would not confer an automatic right to transport to Banstead Junior School

#### **Recommendation 2**

The introduction of a feeder link for Reigate Priory for children from Holmesdale and Reigate Parish is deferred until alternative options are considered.

#### **Reasons for Recommendation**

- There were notable concerns regarding the proposals which the Local Authority would wish to explore fully before progressing
- It would allow more time to consider alternative proposals
- It would allow any proposal to be considered in the light of future school place planning considerations in the area

#### **Recommendation 3**

The admission criteria for Southfield Park are changed so that, for September 2014, children who have Southfield Park Primary School as their nearest school would receive a higher priority when allocating places **outside** the catchment area, as follows:

- a) Looked after and previously looked after children
- b) Exceptional social/medical need
- c) Siblings
- d) Children living in the defined catchment of the school with priority being given to children living furthest away from the school
- e) Other children for whom the school is their nearest school
- f) Any other children

#### **Reasons for Recommendation**

- It would ensure that families living outside the catchment who have Southfield Park as their nearest school are given priority ahead of those who do not
- It would not displace children living on the Horton Park development, for whom the catchment was originally introduced to serve
- A further review of the admission criteria for this school should be carried out once decisions have been made on expansion proposals at other local schools

#### **Recommendation 4**

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That a feeder link is introduced for St Ann's Heath Junior School for children from Trumps Green Infant School for September 2014, as follows:

- a) Looked after and previously looked after children
- b) Exceptional social/medical need
- c) Siblings
- d) Children attending Trumps Green Infant School
- e) Children for whom St Ann's Heath Junior School is the nearest school with a Junior PAN
- f) Any other children

**Reasons for Recommendation**

- It would provide continuity and a clearer transition for parents, children and schools and would reduce anxiety for parents
- It would maximise the opportunity for families to keep children together or at schools within a close proximity
- It would reduce the likelihood of families removing their children from the infant school during Year 2 in favour of a primary school
- It is consistent with Surrey's planning principles set out in the School Organisation Plan
- It is supported by the Governing Bodies of both schools
- Eligibility to transport is not linked to the admission criteria of a school and as such attendance at Trumps Green Infant School would not confer an automatic right to transport to St Ann's Heath Junior School

**Recommendation 5**

A reciprocal sibling link between St Ann's Heath Junior School and Trumps Green Infant School is introduced for September 2014 so that the schools would be described as being on a shared or adjoining site for applying sibling criteria.

**Reasons for Recommendation**

- It would support families with more than one child as families with a sibling at one school would benefit from sibling priority to the other school
- It would provide continuity for parents, children and schools and reduce anxiety for parents
- It would enable families to benefit from a sibling link for Reception even if they had a child who was due to leave the infant school before the younger child was admitted
- It would maximise the opportunity for families to keep children together or at schools within a close proximity
- It is supported by the Governing Bodies of both schools

**Recommendation 6**

A catchment area based on the Parish of Tatsfield and a phased tiered sibling priority based on the catchment is introduced for Tatsfield Primary School for September 2014, as follows:

- a) Looked after and previously looked after children
- b) Exceptional social/medical need
- c) Children who will have a sibling on roll at the school at the end of the 2013/14 academic year and that sibling will still be expected to be on roll at the school on the date of the child's admission
- d) Siblings who live within the catchment area
- e) Other children who live within the catchment area
- f) Siblings who live outside the catchment area

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g) Other children who live outside the catchment area

**Reasons for Recommendation**

- It provides transitional arrangements for families who do not have Tatsfield Primary School as their nearest school but who already have children at the school
- Whilst the nature of this proposal means that in the future some families might not be able to get younger siblings in to the same school, this will only apply if it is not their nearest school and those families would have been aware of this policy when they applied
- The pressure on places and the proximity of the school to the County border means that on balance a greater disadvantage might be caused to local families than to future siblings if this proposal is not agreed
- It reduces the likelihood of local families having to travel to schools that are further away
- In time it would support families within the local area as they will not be displaced in favour of siblings living further away
- It provides a clear and historic boundary for the catchment area

**Recommendation 7**

Tiered arrangements are introduced for Thames Ditton Junior School for September 2014 so that siblings, children at the feeder school and other children who have the school as their nearest receive priority ahead of those who do not, as follows:

- a) Looked After and previously looked after children
- b) Exceptional social/medical need
- c) Children with a sibling attending Thames Ditton Junior School at the time of the child's admission for whom the school is the nearest school to their home address
- d) Children attending Thames Ditton Infant School for whom the school is the nearest school to their home address
- e) Other children for whom the school is the nearest school to their home address
- f) Other children with a sibling attending Thames Ditton Junior School at the time of the child's admission for whom the school is not the nearest school to their home address
- g) Other children attending Thames Ditton Infant School for whom the school is not the nearest school to their home address
- h) Any other children

**Reasons for Recommendation**

- It would help ensure that a school within a reasonable distance could be offered to all children within the area
- Whilst the nature of this proposal means that some families might not be able to get younger siblings in to the same school, this will only apply if it is not their nearest school
- The pressure on places and the proximity of the school to the County border means that on balance a greater disadvantage might be caused to local families than to future siblings if this proposal is not agreed
- It does not disadvantage families who choose a different infant provision or if those who are unable to obtain a place at the infant school
- It reduces the likelihood of local families having to travel to schools that are further away
- It has the support of Thames Ditton Junior School
- There is not currently a reciprocal sibling link between these two schools but this

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will be reviewed for 2015 and if proposed, will be subject to consultation

### **Recommendation 8**

The PAN for Thames Ditton Junior School is decreased from 120 to 90 for September 2014.

#### **Reasons for Recommendation**

- There were no major objections to the changed PAN
- School Commissioning and the school support this change
- The school can't sustain the admission of 120 pupils each year and the increase in 2013 was only intended to be temporary

### **Recommendation 9**

That the Published Admission Numbers (PAN) for all other Community and Voluntary Controlled schools are determined as they are set out in Annex 1 of Appendix 1 which include the following changes:

- i) Banstead Infant to increase its Reception PAN from 80 to 90
- ii) Bell Farm Primary to increase its Reception PAN from 60 to 90
- iii) Bell Farm Primary to decrease its Junior PAN from 120 to 30
- iv) Earlswood Infant to increase its Reception PAN from 90 to 120
- v) Earlswood Junior to increase its Junior PAN from 90 to 120
- vi) Grovelands Primary to decrease its Reception PAN from 90 to 60
- vii) Salfords Primary to increase its Reception PAN from 45 to 60
- viii) Spelthorne Primary to increase its Reception PAN from 60 to 90
- ix) Trumps Green Infant to increase its Reception from 30 to 60
- x) West Ewell Infant to increase its Reception PAN from 90 to 120

#### **Reasons for Recommendation**

- Where a decrease in PAN is proposed the decrease has already been agreed through statutory proposals following expansion to a primary school
- The increase in Reception PAN at Bell Farm Primary has already been agreed through statutory proposals following expansion to a primary school
- Where other increases in PAN are proposed the schools are increasing their intake to respond to the need to create more school places and will help meet parental preference
- The School Commissioning team and the schools support these changes
- All other PANs remain as determined for 2013 which enables parents to have some historical benchmark by which to make informed decisions about their school preferences

### **Recommendation 10**

The number of preferences permitted under Surrey's Primary Coordinated Scheme is increased from three to four.

#### **Reasons for Recommendation**

- There is likely to be demand for four preferences as in the 2012 admission round 8,157 parents (62.8% of applicants) named three preferences
- It would be likely to increase the number of parental preferences met and to decrease the number of children who could not be offered a preference school
- It may reduce the number of parents who wish to change or add new preferences after the offer date
- Given the pressure on school places it would help to alleviate the anxiety of parents where local schools are oversubscribed and they are uncertain which schools they might be offered
- Parents would not be obliged to name four preferences but it would give those

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parents who choose to the opportunity to do so

- It should support less popular undersubscribed schools as parents would not have to give up one of their more preferred schools
- As most applications are submitted online it will not have a significant administrative impact
- It helps to reduce potential for disadvantage for Surrey parents where neighbouring Local Authorities allow their parents to name more than three preferences

### **Recommendation 11**

That the Coordinated Admission Schemes for 2014/15 are agreed as set out in Annex 4 to Appendix 1.

#### **Reasons for Recommendation**

- The coordinated schemes for 2014 are similar to 2013
- The coordinated schemes will enable the County Council to meet its statutory duties regarding school admissions
- The coordinated schemes are working well

### **Recommendation 12**

Surrey's Relevant Area is agreed as set out in Appendix 2.

#### **Reasons for Recommendation**

- The Local Authority is required by law to define the Relevant Area for admissions
- The Relevant Area must be agreed every two years although no changes have been proposed
- It ensures that any schools who might be affected by changes to the admission arrangements for other local schools will be made aware of the changes

### **Recommendation 13**

That the remaining aspects of Surrey's admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools for September 2014, for which no consultation was required, are agreed.

#### **Reasons for Recommendation**

- This will ensure stability and consistency for the majority of Surrey's parents, pupils and schools
- The arrangements enable parents to have some historical benchmark by which to make informed decisions about their school preferences
- The existing arrangements are working reasonably well
- The arrangements enable the majority of pupils to attend their nearest schools and in doing so reduces travel and supports Surrey's sustainability policies

<b><u>DETAILS:</u></b>
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#### **Consultation**

1. On 21 November 2012 the Cabinet Member for Children and Learning agreed to consult on proposed changes to the admission arrangements for some Community and Voluntary Controlled schools and Surrey's coordinated schemes for September 2014.
2. Full details of the proposed admission arrangements for Surrey's Community and Voluntary Controlled schools, Surrey's coordinated admission schemes and the proposed Relevant Area, including the arrangements for which there is no change proposed, are attached as **Appendix 1** and its Annexes and **Appendix 2**.

3. A document which sets out a summary of the changes which were consulted on and which was available to schools and parents is attached as **Appendix 3**.
4. The consultation was sent directly to Headteachers, Chairs of Governors and Parent Governors of all Surrey schools, Diocesan Boards of Education, neighbouring Local Authorities, out of County Voluntary Aided and Foundation Schools within 3 miles (primary schools) or 5 miles (secondary schools) radius of the Surrey border, Surrey County Councillors, Parish Councillors, members of Surrey's Admission Forum, Early Years establishments and Local MPs.
5. Schools were also sent a suggested form of wording for parents, which they were encouraged to put on their websites, on their noticeboards and in newsletters.
6. Notice of the consultation was also published on Surrey County Council's website along with an online response form. The closing date for responses was 22 January 2013.
7. Education Select Committee was consulted on the proposals at their meeting on 28 January 2013.
8. By the closing date 138 individual response forms had been submitted of which 134 had been submitted online and 4 had been submitted by email. In addition, 3 respondents supplemented their online response with more information within an e-mail.
9. A summary of the responses to questions within the consultation is set out below in Table A.

**Table A - Summary of responses to admission consultation for September 2014**

<b>Question Number</b>	<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Document</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
1	Banstead Community Junior School - introduction of feeder link for children at Banstead Infant School	Appendix 1	15	1
2	Reigate Priory - introduction of tiered feeder link for children at Holmesdale and Reigate Parish with priority being given to children who have the school as their nearest school ahead of those who do not	Appendix 1	80	23
3	Southfield Park - introduction of a higher priority for children who have the school as their nearest school when allocating places to children who live outside the catchment	Appendix 1	19	6
4	St Ann's Heath Junior School - introduction of a feeder link for children at Trumps Green Infant School	Appendix 1	17	3
5	St Ann's Heath Junior School and Trumps Green Infant School - introduction of a reciprocal sibling link	Annex 2	17	5
6	Tatsfield Primary School - phased introduction of a catchment and a	Appendix 1	23*	3#

	tiered sibling priority based on the catchment			
7	Thames Ditton Junior School - introduction of tiered arrangements so that siblings, children at the feeder school and other children who have the school as their nearest receive priority ahead of those who do not	Appendix 1	17	7
8	Thames Ditton Junior School - reduction in PAN from 120 to 90	Annex 1	9	7
9	Primary Coordinated Scheme - increase to the number of primary preferences that a parent can name, from three to four	Annex 4	51	32
10	Relevant Area	Appendix 2	31	2

\* including representation from Tatsfield Parish Council and Tandridge District Councillor for Tatsfield and Titsey

# including representation from Chair of Governors at Tatsfield Primary School

10. Further analysis of the responses is included in **Appendix 4**.

11. Details of recommendations have been shared with the local Members for each area, where appropriate.

### **Tiered sibling arrangements**

12. Recommendations 6 and 7 relate to the introduction of tiered sibling criteria, either on an immediate or phased basis. These relate to Tatsfield Primary and Thames Ditton Junior schools. When tiered sibling criteria are in place it means that children living closer to a school (including siblings) will receive a higher priority for a place than other children (including siblings) for whom it is not the nearest school.

13. In this way, families with children already at the school may not get a younger child in to the same school if it is not their nearest school and if the school is oversubscribed with children for whom it is the nearest school. Each year the admission intake for each school will vary depending on the number of applicants and where they live. Owing to this, using tiered sibling criteria, it is possible for a family to legitimately get one child into a school but to fail to get a younger child in to the same school. This can create:

- uncertainty and anxiety for parents with one more than one child
- difficulties for families in getting their children to different schools
- lack of continuity for families and schools
- an increase in traffic as families have to drive their children to different schools

14. In Surrey, tiered sibling criteria are not part of the standard admission arrangements used by most Community and Voluntary Controlled schools. This is because Surrey's general approach is that, as far as possible, admission arrangements should support families getting their children into the same school. However tiered sibling criteria have been introduced for specific schools to respond to a very specific need, usually relating to pressure of places in an area or the introduction of extra classes which disproportionately increases the number of siblings in future years.

15. Of the Community and Voluntary Controlled schools in Surrey only 4 Community schools will operate tiered sibling criteria for the 2013 admission round. These are Hinchley Wood



Primary School, Thames Ditton Infant School, Wallace Fields Infant School and Wallace Fields Junior School.

16. Whilst there is generally a strong case for retaining full sibling priority within admission arrangements there are very occasionally circumstances which warrant introducing tiered sibling criteria for either a fixed period of time or indefinitely, subject to periodic review.
17. Cabinet is recommended to take into account the following factors when considering whether or not it wishes to introduce such arrangements:
  - Whether a school has been asked to admit an extra class above PAN and if so in how many year groups, as this can lead to an increase in the number of siblings applying for the school in the future
  - Whether a school historically admits a high number of siblings and whether the sibling numbers have increased following the admission of an extra class
  - The distance that the school traditionally allocates places to and whether all children for whom the school is nearest would normally be offered a place
  - The availability of other schools within the area and the accessibility of those schools
  - The impact on local residents versus the impact on families if tiered sibling criteria are introduced

#### **Proposed changes to local admission arrangements**

##### **Recommendation 1 - Introduction of a feeder link to Banstead Community Junior School from Banstead Infant School**

18. The number of responses was low but there was overall support for this proposal with 15 respondents in support and one opposed. However none of the respondents appeared to have any link with either school or to be affected by the outcome.
19. Whilst in the past two years all children who have wanted to transfer from the infant to the junior school have been able to, the introduction of a feeder link would provide continuity and a clearer transition for children and would reduce anxiety for parents.
20. This proposal is consistent with Surrey's planning principles set out in the School Organisation Plan which undertake to consider sympathetically the desirability of separate infant schools feeding into joint junior or primary provision where this reduces transport needs for young children.
21. In line with Surrey County Council policy, due to the reciprocal sibling link between the infant and the junior schools, the introduction of a feeder link would also enable sibling priority to be given to a child who is applying to start at the infant school in Reception even if they have a sibling who would have left the infant school by the time the younger child starts. This is because the admission criteria provides for them to be admitted to the junior school thereby retaining their sibling priority.
22. This proposal is supported by the Governing Body of Banstead Community Junior School.
23. Eligibility to transport is not linked to the admission criteria of a school and as such attending the feeder school would not confer an automatic right to transport to Banstead Junior School.

##### **Recommendation 2 - Introduction of a tiered feeder link to Reigate Priory School from Holmesdale Community and Reigate Parish Church infant schools**

24. There was overall support for this proposal with 80 respondents in support and 23 opposed.
25. Reigate Priory is an oversubscribed junior school in Reigate. Whilst historically most children who want to have been able to transfer to Reigate Priory from Holmesdale Community Infant School and Reigate Parish Church Infant School, with the increased pressure on school places in Reigate, increasingly, there are children who have found it difficult to access a place at this school, despite having it as their nearest junior provision.
26. This is especially the case for children living to the north of Reigate, many of whom attend one of these feeder infant schools. Despite having Reigate Priory as their nearest school they are often not eligible for a place because other children who live closer to Reigate Priory have a higher priority. However in many cases, children living to the north of Reigate live much further away from their next nearest school than children who live closer to Reigate Priory and, if they are not offered a place at Reigate Priory, they subsequently end up having to travel some distance to another school.
27. The proposed feeder school criteria would help to provide continuity and clearer transition for children, parents and schools. However it is acknowledged that whilst it would provide priority for children from one of the feeder schools who had Reigate Priory as the nearest school, based on data from 2011 and 2012, there may only have been approximately six places remaining for other children who had Reigate Priory as their nearest school but who did not attend a feeder school. The consequence would therefore be that children who did not attend a feeder school but who lived approximately half a kilometre from the school may not be offered a place.
28. Whilst it might be argued that this is reasonable if those children have nearer 'next nearest' schools, throughout the consultation some alternatives to the proposed criteria were put forward. As such, it is recommended that these other solutions should be reviewed before moving forward on any proposal which should also take account of future school place planning considerations in the area. It is therefore recommended that any decision is deferred until next year. At that time further consultation would have to be carried out if a change was to be proposed for 2015 admission.
29. After the end of the consultation period, letters were also received from the Accord Coalition for Inclusive Education and the National Secular Society expressing a concern that a faith school was being proposed as a feeder school to a non-faith school, albeit on a tiered basis, and suggesting that such an arrangement might be unlawful.
30. Advice from Surrey's Legal and Democratic Services is that a feeder link between a faith and a non faith school is not automatically unlawful, but would depend on the rationale for the link in each case. This proposal was intended to deal with a specific local situation and the need to provide junior school places for all children in the area, given that there is a faith infant school but no faith junior school. The proposal to introduce the feeder link would mean that some children who had been admitted to Reigate Parish on faith grounds would be offered a place at Reigate Priory, but only if it was their nearest school. This was considered to be a reasonable approach because, had they not been given a place at Reigate Parish on the grounds of their faith, the Local Authority would still be looking to place them at Reigate Priory as their nearest junior school.

**Recommendation 3 - Introduction of a higher priority for children who have Southfield Park Primary School as their nearest school when allocating places outside the catchment area for this school**

- 31. The number of responses was low but there was overall support for this proposal with 19 respondents in support and 6 opposed.
- 32. The existing catchment for Southfield Park Primary School is used as part of the oversubscription criteria to prioritise applicants when there are more applicants than places available, with priority being given to applicants who live within catchment ahead of those who live outside of it. If there are more applicants within catchment than places available, then priority is given to those who live the furthest distance from the school.
- 33. This existing arrangement ensures that the children living in the Horton Park development can access their nearest school as they have no reasonable alternative.
- 34. Representation has been made by some families living on the Parkview estate that they should also be within catchment. These families also have Southfield Park Primary School as their nearest school but are not within the catchment area. However these families have an alternative accessible school of Epsom Primary, which they would be offered if they applied.
- 35. Historically, Southfield Park School has not been oversubscribed by applicants from within catchment and each year the school has admitted some children from outside the catchment area. The number allocated from outside the catchment and the distance allocated to for the past four years is as follows:

2009	15 (2.93 km)
2010	21 (3.19 km)
2011	15 (0.85 km)
2012	7 (0.44 km)

- 36. Information provided by parents living on the Parkview estate indicates that there will be the following number of applications from that estate each year, although these numbers do not cover all properties on the estate and so the numbers are likely to be higher:

2013 intake	11
2014 intake	7
2015 intake	14
2016 intake	19

- 37. This data has not been validated and perhaps not all parents would apply for a place at Southfield Park Primary School from the Parkview estate. However, it is clear that if the catchment for Southfield Park was extended to include the Parkview estate, the Local Authority would risk there being more applications from within catchment than places available. If this were the case, with priority currently being given to families who live furthest from the school, the children who would be displaced would be those who live nearest.
- 38. Whilst the Local Authority could give priority to those families within catchment based on who lived nearest the school, the families which would then be displaced would be those living furthest away on the Horton Park development. However it is these families which the catchment was developed to provide places for, as they do not have another school within a reasonable distance.
- 39. This proposal offers an alternative to amending the catchment for the school and would ensure that any places still available after allocating to children who live within catchment would first be allocated to children who had Southfield Park as their nearest school.

40. Whilst the proposal does not guarantee a place for children living on the Parkview estate, it would mean that those children would receive a higher priority than other applicants who perhaps have Epsom Primary or Stamford Green as a nearest school.
41. Currently there are proposals to expand Stamford Green Primary School by 30 pupils in either 2014 or 2015, depending on demand. If that expansion goes ahead there may then be a need to have a more fundamental review of the catchment area for Southfield Park which would take in to account the likely admissions to Stamford Green.
42. This proposal has received support from the Governing Body of Southfield Park Primary School.

**Recommendation 4 - Introduction of a feeder link to St Ann's Heath Junior School from Trumps Green Infant School**

43. The number of responses was low but there was overall support for this proposal with 17 respondents in support and 3 opposed.
44. On the basis that the proposed changes should not lead to children being disadvantaged, the Governing Bodies of both schools also support this proposal.
45. Historically, the majority of children wishing to progress to St Ann's Heath from Trumps Green Infant School do so. However St Ann's Heath currently also admits children to Year 3 from other schools.
46. The proposed PAN for St Ann's Heath for September 2014 is 64 (although a separate consultation on expansion has determined that the school would have a PAN of 90 from September 2015) and the proposed PAN for Trumps Green Infant School for September 2014 is 60.
47. The schools supported retaining priority for siblings above the feeder link to ensure that families who had chosen alternative infant provision were not disadvantaged.
48. Subject to the number of siblings, the establishment of a feeder link would be likely to mean that all children who want to would be able to transfer to the junior school from Trumps Green Infant School. This will especially be the case in 2015 when the PAN for St Ann's Heath increases to 90.
49. In this way this proposal would provide continuity and a clearer transition for children and would reduce anxiety for parents.
50. This proposal is consistent with Surrey's planning principles set out in the School Organisation Plan which undertake to consider sympathetically the desirability of separate infant schools feeding into joint junior or primary provision where this reduces transport needs for young children.
51. Eligibility to transport is not linked to the admission criteria of a school and as such attendance at Trumps Green Infant School would not confer an automatic right to transport to St Ann's Heath Junior School.

**Recommendation 5 - Introduction of a reciprocal sibling link between St Ann's Heath Junior School and Trumps Green Infant School**

52. The number of responses was low but there was overall support for this proposal with 17 respondents in support and 5 opposed.

53. This proposal is subject to the establishment of a feeder link from Trumps Green Infant School to St Ann's Heath Junior School. If agreed, Trumps Green Infant School and St Ann's Heath Junior School would be described as being on a shared or adjoining site for applying sibling criteria (see **ANNEX 2 of Appendix 1**). Such an arrangement would mean that families with a sibling at one school would benefit from sibling priority to the other school.
54. In line with Surrey County Council policy, due to the reciprocal sibling link between the infant and the junior schools, the introduction of a feeder link would also enable sibling priority to be given to a child who is applying to start at the infant school in Reception even if they have a sibling who would have left the infant school by the time the younger child starts. This is because the admission criteria provides for them to be admitted to the junior school thereby retaining their sibling priority.
55. The introduction of a reciprocal sibling link between the two schools would provide a greater chance of families keeping their children together or at schools in close proximity.

**Recommendation 6 - Introduction of a catchment area at Tatsfield Primary School and a phased tiered sibling priority based on the catchment**

56. There was overall support for this proposal with 23 respondents in support and 3 opposed. Those in support included Tatsfield Parish Council and the Borough Councillor for Tatsfield and Titsey. Those opposed included the Chair of Governors at Tatsfield Primary School whose response represented a personal view.
57. 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.
58. However in 2011/12 the number of siblings increased and the knock on effect was 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.
59. Analysis of admission data 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 the Local Authority made a decision not to seek a review of the admission arrangements. This assessment was correct and the number of siblings who applied for entry in 2012 was 14.
60. However, although the sibling numbers were not unduly high, in 2012 there were still 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.
61. In rebuilding Tatsfield Primary School it was the intention of Surrey County Council that it would serve the children living within Tatsfield village.
62. An earlier consultation, in the summer term 2012, found that the majority of respondents supported introducing a catchment (68 out of 72 respondents in support) and of those, 41 respondents were in favour of giving priority on a tiered basis based on whether or not they lived within the catchment area.
63. It is the view of Tatsfield Parish Council and the District Councillor that in future years there will be more children requiring a school place from within the parish as new houses are built and large houses, previously occupied by single residents, are sold to families.

Whilst this cannot be corroborated, it is the view of the School Commissioning team that the numbers in this area will at very least remain static.

64. Even a small increase in numbers is likely to lead to places being unavailable for children living within Tatsfield parish and, due to its bordering and rural location, the consequence of this is that Surrey is likely to have difficulty in identifying alternative places for these children.
65. Introduction of tiered sibling priority would mean that children living within the proposed catchment (including siblings) would receive a higher priority for a place than other children (including siblings) who live outside of the catchment. However it would be intended to phase this proposal in so that children already at the school during the 2013/14 academic year would not lose their sibling eligibility. More information regarding the operation and introduction of tiered sibling links in Surrey is set out in paragraphs 11 to 16 of this report.
66. The Governing Body of the school remain concerned that the introduction of these criteria might act as a deterrent to families living outside of Tatsfield from applying. On the basis that just less than 50% of the school population is made up of children from outside the area, they are concerned at the impact this might have on the school. However Tatsfield Primary School is a successful and popular school that is oversubscribed. Whilst there is no evidence that families would cease to apply for the school from outside the area, the phasing in of the amended sibling rule would mean that the impact would be gradual and during that time the Local Authority could monitor any unintended consequence of the change if application numbers from within Tatsfield parish do not increase.

**Recommendation 7 - Introduction of tiered arrangements at Thames Ditton Junior School so that siblings, children at the feeder school and other children who have the school as their nearest receive priority ahead of those who do not**

67. The number of responses was low but there was overall support for this proposal with 17 respondents in support and 7 opposed.
68. Thames Ditton Infant School admitted an extra class in 2012 and due to previous extra classes in 2009 and 2010, has admitted siblings from beyond the normal catchment of Thames Ditton Junior School.
69. As a result of these 'bulge' classes, the admission criteria for the Infant school were changed in September 2012 to give priority to children who have the school as their nearest school ahead of children who do not.
70. Currently, after providing for looked after children, exceptional social/medical cases and siblings, Thames Ditton Junior School provides for all children at the infant school to transfer to the junior school.
71. However, due to the pressure of places in this area, in order to ensure that families living locally to Thames Ditton Junior School are not disadvantaged if they choose a different infant provision or if they are unable to obtain a place at the Infant school, it is proposed to align the criteria for the two schools.
72. This proposal has the support of Thames Ditton Junior School.
73. This change in admission criteria would mean that places would be offered to children for whom the school was nearest (including siblings) ahead of other children (including siblings) for whom it was not, thus helping to ensure that a school within a reasonable

distance could be offered to all children living in the area. More information regarding the operation and introduction of tiered sibling links in Surrey is set out in paragraphs 11 to 16 of this report.

74. It is not currently intended to introduce a reciprocal sibling link between the infant and junior school but this may be considered for 2015 admission.

**Recommendation 8 - Proposal to decrease the Published Admission Number (PAN) for Thames Ditton Junior School from 120 to 90**

75. Admission authorities are no longer required to consult on proposed increases to PANs but are required to consult on any decrease to PAN. As such the Local Authority has consulted on a decrease in PAN for Thames Ditton Junior School.
76. There were 16 responses to this proposal with 9 in support and 7 opposed.
77. The PAN for Thames Ditton Junior School was increased for one year only for September 2013 to accommodate a 'bulge' class moving through from the Infant school. However the school cannot sustain the admission of 120 pupils each year and as such it is proposed to decrease the PAN from 120 back to 90 from September 2014.
78. This proposal will not disadvantage children transferring from the infant school as in September 2014 there will only be 90 children leaving Thames Ditton Infant School.

**Recommendation 9 - Proposed Published Admission Numbers (PAN) for other Community and Voluntary Controlled schools**

79. **Annex 1 of Appendix 1** sets out the proposed admission numbers for all Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools for 2014 admission. Changes are highlighted in bold.
80. It is proposed to increase the PAN for the following schools in September 2014 but these increases **have not been subject to consultation**:

**Elmbridge**

Bell Farm Primary – increase Reception PAN from 60 to 90 as agreed by statutory proposals

**Epsom and Ewell**

West Ewell Infant – increase Reception PAN from 90 to 120

**Reigate and Banstead**

Banstead Infant – increase Reception PAN from 80 to 90  
Earlswood Infant – increase Reception PAN from 90 to 120  
Earlswood Junior – increase Junior PAN from 90 to 120  
Salfords Primary – increase Reception PAN from 45 to 60

**Runnymede**

Trumps Green Infant – increase Reception PAN from 30 to 60

**Spelthorne**

Spelthorne Primary – increase Reception PAN from 60 to 90

81. It is also proposed to decrease the PAN for the schools named below in September 2014. As these have been subject to consultation through statutory proposals these decreases **have not been subject to further consultation**:

**Elmbridge**

Bell Farm Primary – decrease Junior PAN from 120 to 30 (as agreed through statutory proposals following expansion to a primary school)

Grovelands Primary – decrease Reception PAN from 90 to 60 (as agreed through statutory proposals following expansion to a primary school)

82. Where an increase in PAN is proposed, the school is increasing its intake to respond to the need to create more school places which in turn will help meet parental preference.
83. The School Commissioning team and the schools support these changes.
84. It is proposed that the PANs for all other Community and Voluntary Controlled schools for 2014 should remain as determined for 2013 and this would enable parents to have some historical benchmark by which to make informed decisions about their school preferences.

**Recommendation 10 - Increase in Surrey's Primary Coordinated Scheme of the number of primary preferences that a parent can name, from three to four**

85. There was overall support for this proposal with 51 respondents in support and 32 opposed.
86. Paragraph 2 of the draft primary scheme proposes to allow parents to name up to four preferences. To date Surrey has only allowed parents to name three preferences as part of their application for admission to primary school. This is the minimum requirement under the Coordination Regulations. However with the current pressure on primary school places, parents are faced with a difficult choice if they expect their local schools to be oversubscribed.
87. This situation is exacerbated by the fact that some of Surrey's neighbouring Local Authorities, including each of the London boroughs, allow parents to name more than three primary preferences. This is significant because it means that parents who live in another Local Authority who name a Surrey school as their fourth, fifth or sixth preference must have it considered, even though Surrey parents do not have the opportunity to name that many schools.
88. Surrey does not propose to introduce six preferences for primary school as given its mixture of rural and urban areas and the generally high primary preference satisfaction rate it is not felt that six preferences are needed. However an increase in the number of primary preferences to four would increase a parent's opportunity to get a school of their preference at the initial allocation and may reduce the number of parents wishing to add additional preferences after the allocation date or appeal for other schools.
89. Parents would not be obliged to name four preferences and many would not wish to do so, but it would give those parents who wish to, the opportunity to apply for an extra school. This in turn is also likely to support undersubscribed schools, as parents might be more willing to name those schools lower down in their preference list.
90. In the 2012 admission round 8,157 parents (62.8% of applicants) named three preferences, demonstrating that there is likely to be demand for four preferences.
91. As most applications are submitted online it will not have a significant administrative impact.

**Recommendation 11 - Surrey's Primary and Secondary Coordinated Admission Schemes**



92. The Local Authority has a duty to determine its primary and secondary coordinated admission schemes by 15 April each year, even if there are no changes proposed.
93. The coordinated admission schemes are working well with all schools participating, as they are legally required to.
94. The coordinated schemes provide for all preferences to be named on one application form and for applications to be coordinated to ensure that each child only receives one offer of a place.
95. Paragraph 32 of the primary and secondary schemes now provide for parents to name additional preferences after the offer day so that a parent's right to name a preference for a school is not restricted. This wording has been updated following a successful complaint to the Ombudsman.
96. There are no other changes proposed to the coordinated admission schemes other than that set out in Recommendation 10, to change the number of primary preferences that Surrey parents can name, from three to four.

### **Recommendation 12 - Determination of Surrey's Relevant Area**

97. The Relevant Area is the area in which admission authorities must consult with schools regarding their proposed admission arrangements before finalising them.
98. The Education Act 2002 requires that Local Authorities consult on and review the Relevant Area every 2 years.
99. There was overall support for the proposal to retain Surrey's existing Relevant Area with 31 respondents in support and 2 opposed.
100. The Relevant Area requires own admission authority schools to consult on admission arrangements with schools within a designated distance thus ensuring any schools that might be affected will be made aware of any changes.

### **Recommendation 13 - Admission arrangements for which no changes are proposed**

101. The Local Authority has a duty to determine the admission arrangements for all Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools by 15 April each year, even if there are no changes proposed.
102. Consistent admission arrangements that do not change enable parents to have a historical benchmark with which to assess their chances of success in future years and provides some continuity for schools and parents.
103. The admission arrangements are generally working reasonably well.
104. The admission arrangements enable the majority of pupils to attend their nearest schools and in doing so reduces the need for travel and supports Surrey's sustainability policies.
105. The existing admission arrangements provide for, on average, 84% of pupils to be offered their first preference school and 95% to be offered one of their top three preference schools.

### **RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:**

106. The risks of implementing these changes are low and the majority of local residents are likely to welcome the proposed changes. However, any parents who feel unfairly disadvantaged by the proposals can object to the Office of the Schools' Adjudicator.

### **Financial and Value for Money Implications**

107. The admission criteria for the majority of Community and Voluntary Controlled schools in Surrey conform to Surrey's standard criteria. The more schools that have the same admission criteria the more the processes can be streamlined and thus present better value for money. However, where required, the admission criteria for some schools vary from Surrey's standard but these can currently be managed within existing resources.

### **Section 151 Officer Commentary**

108. The Section 151 Officer confirms that proposed changes to admission arrangements outlined in the report do not impact on cost to any material effect.

### **Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer**

109. The admission arrangements comply with legislation on School Admissions and the School Admissions Code.

### **Equalities and Diversity**

110. The Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed in full and is attached in **APPENDIX 5**. The adoption of determined admission criteria is a mandatory requirement supported by primary legislation. The policy relating to Community and Voluntary Controlled schools does not discriminate according to age, gender, ethnicity, faith, disability or sexual orientation.
111. Measures have been taken to reference vulnerable groups both in terms of exceptional arrangements within admissions, the SEN process and the in-year fair access protocol. In addition a right of appeal exists for all applicants who are refused a school place.

### **Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children implications**

112. The proposed admission arrangements give top priority to children who are Looked After by a Local Authority and to those children who have left care through adoption, a residence order or a special guardianship order.

### **Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults implications**

113. The efficient and timely administration of the schools admission process coupled with the equitable distribution of school places in accordance with the School Admission Code and parental preference contribute to the County Council's priority for safeguarding vulnerable children.

### **Climate change/carbon emissions implications**

114. The County Council attaches great importance to being environmentally aware and wishes to show leadership in cutting carbon emissions and tackling climate change.

115. The admission arrangements enable the majority of pupils to attend their nearest school and in doing so reduces travel and supports policies on cutting carbon emissions and tackling climate change.

#### **WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:**

- The September 2014 admissions arrangements as agreed by the Cabinet will be ratified by the full County Council on 19 March 2013.
- The new arrangements for September 2014 will be circulated to all Surrey schools via a bulletin in the early Summer Term 2013.
- Schools will be advised of the wording of these arrangements so they can publish them in their school prospectus.
- These arrangements will be published in the primary and secondary Information on School Admissions and Transfers booklets in July-August 2013, which will be made available to parents in September 2013.
- The Information on School Admissions will be circulated to the Contact Centre, Surrey County Council Libraries and Early Years.
- The Information on School Admissions will also be published on Surrey County Council's website in September 2013.

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#### **Contact Officer:**

Claire Potier Principal Manager Admissions and Transport (Strategy)  
Tel: 01483 517689

#### **Consulted:**

Nick Wilson, Strategic Director for Children, Schools and Families  
Peter-John Wilkinson, Assistant Director - Schools and Learning  
Sarah Baker, Legal and Democratic Services  
School Commissioning Team  
Education Select Committee  
School Admissions Forum  
Headteachers, Chairs of Governors, Parent Governors of all Surrey schools  
Early Years establishments in Surrey  
Diocesan Boards of Education  
Neighbouring Local Authorities  
Out of County Voluntary Aided and Foundation Schools within 3/5 miles radius of the Surrey border  
Surrey County Councillors, Parish Councils, Local MPs,  
General public consultation via the website/schools/contact centre

#### **Annexes:**

- Appendix 1** Admission arrangements for Community & VC schools  
**Annex 1** Proposed Published Admission Numbers  
**Annex 2** Schools to be considered as adjoining/shared sites for sibling priority  
**Annex 3** Schools to be considered to admit local children  
**Annex 4** Coordinated Schemes  
**Annex 5** Catchment map for Esher High  
**Annex 6** Catchment map for Southfield Park Primary  
**Annex 7** Catchment map for Woodmansterne Primary  
**Annex 8** Catchment map for Oxted  
**Annex 9** Catchment map for Tatsfield Primary  
**Appendix 2** Proposed Relevant Area

- Appendix 3** Proposed changes to admission arrangements – consultation document  
**Appendix 4** Outcome of Consultation  
**Appendix 5** Equality Impact Assessment

**Sources/background papers:**

- School Admissions Code
  - Cabinet Member for Children and Learning report and decision - 21 November 2012
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