

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**CABINET****DATE:** 31 JANUARY 2023**REPORT OF:** CLARE CURRAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND LEARNING**LEAD OFFICER:** LIZ MILLS, DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING**SUBJECT:** ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR SURREY'S COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED SCHOOLS FOR SEPTEMBER 2024 AND SURREY'S RELEVANT AREA**ORGANISATION STRATEGY PRIORITY AREA:** EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES

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SUMMARY OF ISSUE

Each year, Surrey County Council is responsible for processing approximately 30,000 applications for a school place from Surrey residents and coordinates offers for over 350 schools. The admission arrangements for each school determine which children will receive priority for a place.

Within Surrey, there is a mixture of community, voluntary controlled, academies, foundation, free, trust and voluntary aided schools.

Surrey County Council is responsible for setting the admission arrangements for 85 community and voluntary controlled schools for 2024. The remaining schools are academies, foundation, free, trust and voluntary aided schools and these are responsible for setting their own admission arrangements. As such their admission arrangements are not covered in this report.

Following statutory consultation on Surrey's admission arrangements for September 2024, Cabinet is asked to consider the responses set out in Enclosure 3 and make recommendations to the County Council on admission arrangements for Surrey's community and voluntary controlled infant, junior, primary and secondary schools for September 2024.

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

- Southfield Park Primary School – extension of catchment area and removal of 'nearest school' (Recommendation 1)
- Southfield Park Primary School - change to the tiebreaker within catchment (Recommendation 2)
- Stamford Green Primary School – introduction of catchment area and removal of 'nearest school' (Recommendation 3)
- Beauclerc Infant School - reduction of Reception PAN from 40 to 30 (Recommendation 4)
- Farncombe Infant School - reduction of Reception PAN from 50 to 30 (Recommendation 5)

- St Ann's Heath Junior School – not progressing - reduction of Year 3 PAN from 90 to 60 and removal of Meadowcroft Infant School as a feeder school at Year 3 (Recommendation 6)
- Published Admission Numbers for other community and voluntary controlled schools (Recommendation 7)
- Admission arrangements for which no change has been consulted on (Recommendation 8)
- Surrey's Relevant Area (Recommendation 9)

Recommendations are set out below and further details of each proposal are set out in paragraphs 1 to 74.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

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

Recommendation 1

That the catchment for Southfield Park Primary School is extended for 2024 admission to include the Parkview estate as a replacement for 'nearest school', as indicated in Enclosure 1 and Appendix 3 of Enclosure 1.

Reasons for Recommendation

- The removal of 'nearest school' will bring the admission criteria into line with the remaining community and voluntary controlled schools
- It will ensure that the admission arrangements for this school comply with the School Admissions Code
- It will simplify the admission arrangements
- It will enable parents to better understand how their application will be considered
- It will ensure the Parkview estate is still served by the school, which is the area that 'nearest school' was originally introduced to serve
- There are no other changes to the catchment boundary
- It is expected to have minimal impact on the intake to the school
- Where children might be displaced, a place at an alternative local school will be available
- The final distance criterion will still exist which will enable remaining applicants to be prioritised based on the distance they live from the school, ensuring children who live closer to the school are allocated ahead of children who live further away
- It is supported by the Headteacher and Governing Body of the school

Recommendation 2

That the tiebreaker within catchment for Southfield Park Primary School is changed to straight line distance from the school for 2024 admission, as indicated in Enclosure 1.

Reasons for Recommendation

- Based on current application numbers and forecasts, all children living within catchment who want a place are expected to be offered and so this change should not alter the intake
- It will reduce likelihood of error by removing a process that needs to be carried out manually
- It will reduce the resource and expertise needed to maintain the waiting list for this school
- It is supported by the Headteacher and Governing Body of the school

Recommendation 3

That a catchment area is introduced for Stamford Green Primary School for 2024 admission to replace 'nearest school', as set out in Enclosure 1 and Appendix 4 of Enclosure 1.

Reasons for Recommendation

- The removal of 'nearest school' will bring the admission criteria into line with the remaining community and voluntary controlled schools
- It will ensure that the admission arrangements for this school comply with the School Admissions Code
- It will simplify the admission arrangements
- It will enable parents to better understand how their application will be considered
- It will ensure most children who would ordinarily be offered the school are not displaced in favour of children who have another school that is nearer, especially those living on the Noble Park and Wells estates
- It is expected to have minimal impact on the intake to the school
- Where children might be displaced, a place at an alternative local school will be available
- The final distance criterion will still exist which will enable remaining applicants to be prioritised based on the distance they live from the school, ensuring children who live outside catchment but closer to the school are allocated ahead of children who live further away
- It is supported by the Headteacher and Governing Body of the school

Recommendation 4

That the Published Admission Number (PAN) for Reception at Beauclerc Infant School is reduced from 40 to 30 for 2024 admission, as set out in Appendix 1 of Enclosure 1.

Reasons for Recommendation

- It is supported by the Headteacher and Governing Body of the school, having been requested by them
- It is supported by Surrey's Education Place Planning team
- There will still be sufficient places for local children if the PAN is decreased
- It will help the school maintain financial viability as they will be able to operate with just one class
- It will have no impact on children who are currently on roll at the school

Recommendation 5

That the Published Admission Number (PAN) for Reception at Farncombe Infant School is reduced from 50 to 30 for 2024 admission, as set out in Appendix 1 of Enclosure 1.

Reasons for Recommendation

- It is supported by the Headteacher and Governing Body of the school, having been requested by them
- It is supported by Surrey's Education Place Planning team
- There will still be sufficient places for local children if the PAN is decreased
- It will help the school maintain financial viability as they will be able to operate with just one class
- It will have no impact on children who are currently on roll at the school

Recommendation 6

That the change to the Published Admission Number (PAN) and admission criteria for Year 3 at St Ann's Heath Junior School is not progressed, so that the admission arrangements for this school remain as determined for 2023, as set out in Enclosure 1 and Appendix 1 and 2 of Enclosure 1.

Reasons for Recommendation

- This change was subject to it being agreed for Meadowcroft Infant School to become an all through primary school by the end of December 2022. As this decision is not now expected to be made until February 2023, it is not yet possible to change the arrangements for St Ann's Heath Junior School
- If it is agreed to expand Meadowcroft Infant School into a primary school in February 2023, the local authority will consider submitting an in year variation to vary the admission arrangements for 2024 in line with the consultation

Recommendation 7

That the Published Admission Numbers (PANs) for September 2024 for all other community and voluntary controlled schools (except Beauclerc and Farncombe infant schools which are covered by Recommendations 4 and 5) are determined as they are set out in Appendix 1 of Enclosure 1.

Reasons for Recommendation

- Most other PANs remain as they were determined for 2023 which enables parents to have some historical benchmark by which to make informed decisions about their school preferences for 2024 admission
- The PAN for Ash Manor has been increased from 240 to 270 as part of a school expansion
- The Education Place Planning team supports the PANs

Recommendation 8

That the aspects of Surrey's admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools for September 2024 for which no change has been consulted on, are agreed as set out in Enclosure 1 and its appendices.

Reasons for Recommendation

- The admission arrangements are working well
- The arrangements enable the majority of pupils to attend a local school and in doing so reduce travel and support Surrey's sustainability policies
- The changes highlighted in bold in Section 12, Section 15 and Section 21 of Enclosure 1 have been made to add clarity to the arrangements and reflect existing practice

Recommendation 9

That Surrey's Relevant Area is agreed as set out in Enclosure 4.

Reasons for Recommendation

- The local authority is required by law to define the Relevant Area for admissions
- The Relevant Area must be consulted upon and agreed every two years even if no changes are proposed
- Setting a Relevant Area ensures that any schools who might be affected by changes to the admission arrangements for other local schools will be made aware of those changes
- No change has been made to Surrey's Relevant Area since it was last determined in February 2021

DETAILS

Recommendation 1 – That the catchment for Southfield Park Primary School is extended to include the Parkview estate as a replacement for 'nearest school'

1. The reasons for the change for this school are set out in Section 1 of Enclosure 2.
2. The number of responses was low, with three respondents in support and seven opposed (of which none indicated that they would be affected by the proposal).
3. The respondents who were opposed expressed concern that children living on the Parkview estate have other schools close by and that extension of the catchment might disadvantage children living within catchment but further away, such as those on the Clarendon Park estate. They were concerned that this might lead to children living in those areas not being offered a place and having to travel further distances to get to school.
4. Priority on the basis of 'nearest school' was introduced for Southfield Park Primary School in 2014 in recognition that children living on the Parkview estate had Southfield Park as their nearest school but were being displaced by other children who lived closer but who had another school as their nearest.
5. Given the determination by the OSA in October 2019, which raised concerns with the use of 'nearest school' and the objectivity and clarity regarding this, the local authority has already removed priority on the basis of 'nearest school' for all but two schools, Southfield Park and Stamford Green primary schools.
6. In order to ensure the arrangements for all community and voluntary controlled schools in Surrey are compliant with the School Admissions Code, the local authority has now undertaken this review for Southfield Park. In doing so, it has put forward a proposal that removes priority on the basis of 'nearest school' but which is not anticipated to significantly alter the pattern of admission to the school.
7. The extension of the catchment to include the Parkview estate is anticipated to have minimal impact on the intake to the school as, in the last three years (2020, 2021 and 2022), all children who lived in catchment and those who had Southfield Park as their nearest school have been offered a place.
8. Current forecasts indicate that there will be between 24 to 35 surplus places in the North West planning area of Epsom for five years from September 2023. As such, based on current application numbers and forecasts, it is not anticipated that the extension of the catchment will displace any child within catchment.
9. There was also a concern that the catchment excludes families living in 'poorer' areas and that children from less affluent areas would not be able to access a place at the school.
10. The indices of deprivation 2019 show that, whilst 22 out of 43 Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Epsom & Ewell are in the least deprived 10% in the country, there are pockets of deprivation in the borough. Southfield Park is in the 30-40% most deprived areas in the country, meaning there are higher levels of deprivation in this area than 60% of the country. The extension to the catchment area is in the same LSOA as the school.
11. Only 2 out of the 43 LSOAs in Epsom & Ewell are between 20-30% of the most deprived areas in the country, and this includes the area around Epsom Primary School which is the third school in the North West planning area. However, the change to the catchment area for Southfield Park is to ensure applicants who the school traditionally serves are not disadvantaged by the removal of 'nearest school' as a criterion. There is no justification for the catchment area for Southfield Park to move further towards Epsom Primary as this could encourage children living closer to that school to apply for

Southfield Park which could have a detrimental impact on Epsom Primary and displace children living on the other side of Southfield Park's catchment on the Clarendon Park estate, who would have limited access to another school.

12. The final criterion will still be home to school distance, with priority being given to children who live nearer the school. In this way, children who live some distance from the school will only be offered a place once all children who live nearer have been offered a place. This negates any concerns about longer journeys to school or increased traffic and associated pollution which is not expected to increase as a result of this proposal.
13. This change for 2024 will bring the admission arrangements for this school into line with the arrangements for the remaining community and voluntary controlled schools and will also ensure that the admission arrangements comply with the School Admissions Code in regard to catchments.
14. This change also serves to simplify the admission arrangements and will enable parents to better understand how their application will be considered.
15. The Headteacher and Governing Body support the change.
16. This change is reflected in the admission criteria set out in Section 8 and Appendix 3 of Enclosure 1.

Recommendation 2 – That the tiebreaker within catchment for Southfield Park Primary School is changed to straight line distance from the school

17. The reasons for the change for this school are set out in Section 1 of Enclosure 2.
18. The number of responses was low, with four respondents in support and six opposed (of which none indicated that they would be affected by the proposal).
19. The respondents who were opposed expressed concern that the change to the tie breaker might disadvantage children living within catchment but further away, such as those on the Clarendon Park estate. They were concerned that this might lead to children living in those areas not being offered a place and having to travel further distances to get to school.
20. Current forecasts indicate that there will be between 24 to 35 surplus places in the North West planning area of Epsom for five years from September 2023. In the last three years (2020, 2021 and 2022), all children who lived in catchment and those who had Southfield Park as their nearest school have been offered a place. As such, based on current application numbers and forecasts, it is not anticipated that the change to the tie breaker will displace any child from being offered a place from within catchment.
21. This change serves to simplify the admission arrangements and will enable parents to better understand how their application will be considered.
22. The current process of applying a tiebreaker using the reverse distance from the school has to be done manually as part of the new round processes and again each time a new applicant is added to the waiting list, whereas a tiebreaker that uses straight line distance from the school can be applied automatically by Surrey's Synergy Admissions system. This change will therefore reduce the likelihood of error by removing a process that needs to be carried out manually and reduce the resource and expertise needed to maintain the waiting list for this school.

23. The Headteacher and Governing Body support the change.
24. This change is reflected in the admission criteria set out in Section 8 of Enclosure 1.

Recommendation 3 – That a catchment area is introduced for Stamford Green Primary School to replace ‘nearest school’

25. The reasons for this change are set out in Section 1 of Enclosure 2.
26. The number of responses was low with three respondents in support and six opposed to it, with only one of those opposed indicating that they would be affected by the proposal.
27. A concern was expressed by several respondents who were opposed, that priority should be given to children for their nearest school, as happens now.
28. However, given the determination by the OSA in October 2019, which raised concerns with the use of ‘nearest school’ and the objectivity and clarity regarding this, the local authority has already removed priority on the basis of ‘nearest school’ for all but two schools, Southfield Park and Stamford Green primary schools.
29. In order to ensure the arrangements for all community and voluntary controlled school in Surrey are compliant with the School Admissions Code, the local authority has now undertaken this review for Stamford Green. In doing so, it has put forward a proposal that introduces a catchment area as an alternative to ‘nearest school’. However, the introduction of the catchment for Stamford Green is anticipated to have minimal impact on the intake to the school as it is modelled on the area created by ‘nearest school’.
30. Some concern was also expressed by a parent who would fall just outside of the proposed catchment to the south of the school so they felt they would be disadvantaged as the only other option was a faith school. However, for this parent (and others in the same area) who did not wish to apply for St Martin’s CofE Infant School, they would be able to apply for a place at The Greville Primary School which is nearer than Stamford Green by walking and road route.
31. There was also concern that the catchment excludes families living in ‘poorer’ areas and that children from less affluent areas would not be able to access a place at the school.
32. The indices of deprivation 2019 show that, whilst 22 out of 43 Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Epsom & Ewell are in the least deprived 10% in the country, there are pockets of deprivation in the borough. Stamford Green is in the 60-70% least deprived areas in the country, meaning that 60-70% of other areas in the country face higher levels of deprivation.
33. Only 2 out of the 43 LSOAs in Epsom & Ewell are between 20-30% of the most deprived areas in the country, and this includes the area around Epsom Primary School which is the third school in the North West planning area. However, the introduction of a catchment area for Stamford Green is to ensure applicants who the school traditionally serves are not disadvantaged by the removal of ‘nearest school’ as a criterion. There is no justification for the catchment area for Stamford Green to move further towards Epsom Primary as this may encourage children living closer to that school to apply for Stamford Green, which could have a detrimental impact on Epsom Primary and displace children living on the other side of Stamford Green’s catchment on the Noble Park and Wells estates, who would have limited access to another school.

34. This change for 2024 will bring the admission arrangements for this school into line with the arrangements for the remaining community and voluntary controlled schools and will also ensure that the admission arrangements comply with the School Admissions Code in regard to catchments.
35. This change also serves to simplify the admission arrangements and will enable parents to better understand how their application will be considered.
36. The Headteacher and Governing Body support the change.
37. This change is reflected in the admission criteria set out in Section 8 and Appendix 4 of Enclosure 1.

Recommendation 4 – That the Published Admission Number for Reception at Beauclerc Infant School is reduced from 40 to 30

38. The reasons for this change are set out in Section 2 of Enclosure 2.
39. The number of responses was low with no respondents in support and one respondent opposed to it, who indicated that they would not be affected by the proposal.
40. This decrease in PAN will have no impact on children who are currently on roll at the school.
41. This reduction in PAN had been formally requested by the Headteacher and Governing Body as it will provide the school with greater ability to maintain financial viability as they will be able to operate with just one class.
42. Surrey's Education Place Planning team are supportive of this proposal as there is currently a surplus of places in the Sunbury planning area. Whilst a reduction in PAN would leave the area forecast to have a surplus of only 2 or 3 places, there is also surplus in Ashford and Shepperton which could absorb any oversubscription in this area.
43. Children from Beauclerc Infant School often apply to Chennestone Primary School at Year 3. Chennestone Primary School currently has a Year 3 PAN of 40. The local authority and Governors at Chennestone will consider a reduction to their Year 3 PAN to 30 from September 2027, but this would be subject to separate consultation in autumn 2025.
44. Appendix 1 to Enclosure 1 has been updated to reflect this change.

Recommendation 5 – That the Published Admission Number for Reception at Farncombe Infant School is reduced from 50 to 30

45. The reasons for this change are set out in Section 3 of Enclosure 2.
46. The number of responses was low with no respondents in support and one respondent opposed to it, who indicated that they would not be affected by the proposal.
47. This decrease in PAN would have no impact on children who are currently on roll at the school.
48. This reduction in PAN had been formally requested by the Headteacher and Governing Body as it will provide the school with greater ability to maintain financial viability as they will be able to operate with just one class.

49. Place planning forecasts indicate that there is a significant surplus of places for reception provision in Godalming with a surplus of 2FE being forecast from 2024/25. After the reduction in PAN from 50 to 30 places at Farncombe Infant School, the forecasts indicate that there will be a 1FE surplus across the planning area until at least the end of the planning period. As such, this proposal would aid the sustainability of the school as well as the sustainability of other schools within the wider planning area.

50. Appendix 1 to Enclosure 1 has been updated to reflect this change.

Recommendation 6 – That the change to the Published Admission Number and admission criteria for Year 3 at St Ann’s Heath Junior School is not progressed

51. The reasons for proposing a change are set out in Section 4 of Enclosure 2.

52. This confirms that the proposed changes for St Ann’s Heath Junior School are intrinsically linked to a separate proposal to expand Meadowcroft Infant School to an all through primary school from September 2024.

53. However, as the proposal for Meadowcroft Infant School is not now due to be considered until February 2023, it is not intended to pursue the changes to the admission arrangements for St Ann’s Heath Junior School for 2024 at this time.

54. Instead, should a decision be made in 2023 to expand Meadowcroft Infant School to an all through primary school from September 2024, the local authority will consider submitting an in year variation to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator to vary the admission arrangements for 2024 in line with this consultation.

55. Enclosure 1 and Appendix 1 and 2 of Enclosure 1 have been updated to reflect the arrangements as they existed for St Ann’s Heath Junior School in 2023.

Recommendation 7 - Proposed Published Admission Numbers (PANs) for other community and voluntary controlled schools

56. Appendix 1 to Enclosure 1 sets out the proposed admission numbers for all community and voluntary controlled schools for 2024 admission, with changes highlighted in bold.

57. The reduction in Reception PAN at Beauclerc Infant School and Farncombe Infant School have already been referenced in Recommendations 4 and 5.

58. It is also proposed to increase the Year 7 PAN at Ash Manor School from 240 to 270 as part of an expansion of this school. This proposal did not require consultation.

59. It is proposed that the PAN for all other community and voluntary controlled schools for 2024 will remain as determined for 2023. This will enable parents to have some historical benchmark by which to make informed decisions about their school preferences.

60. The Education Place Planning team support the proposed PANs.

61. Each community and voluntary controlled school has been given the opportunity to comment on the proposed PAN if they wished.

Recommendation 8 – Admission arrangements for which no change has been consulted on

62. The local authority has a duty to determine the admission arrangements for all community and voluntary controlled schools by 28 February 2023, even if there are no changes proposed.
63. Other than changes already referenced in Recommendations 1 to 7, the only other changes are points of clarification as follows:
- As the local authority will no longer have any schools that will give priority on the basis of 'nearest school', the explanatory text relating to 'nearest school' has been removed from Enclosure 1. In addition, Appendix 3 of Enclosure 1 has been removed as this previously set out a list of academies and foundation, trust and voluntary aided schools that would be excluded when assessing nearest school and which is no longer relevant.
 - Section 12 of Enclosure 1 on siblings has been updated to clarify that a sibling at the nursery will not count towards sibling priority for the main school
 - Section 15 of Enclosure 1 on waiting lists has been updated to confirm that waiting lists will close on the last day of the summer term rather than the last day of July
 - Section 21 of Enclosure 1 has been updated to refer to Travel Assistance as opposed to Home to School transport
64. The admission arrangements for Surrey's community and voluntary controlled schools are generally working well. This is demonstrated by the fact that, in 2022, 85% of applicants for a place in Reception or Year 7 were offered a place at their first preference school and 96.7% were offered a place at one of their preference schools.
65. The admission arrangements enable the majority of pupils to attend a local school and in doing so this reduces the need for travel and supports Surrey's sustainability policies.
66. One respondent took the opportunity to make a comment about the admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools for which no change was proposed. This was a suggestion that the system should be standardised to remove pockets of exclusion and that a point-based system would probably be fairer than catchment areas / nearest school / distance as absolute criteria.
67. The local authority is responsible for setting the admission arrangements for the 85 community and voluntary controlled schools and these are standardised as much as is reasonably possible, such as ensuring all give priority to looked after and previously looked after children, social/medical need, children of staff and siblings. However, there is sometimes a need for school specific criteria to respond to local need, such as feeder links and catchments.
68. The School Admissions Code requires admission arrangements to be fair, clear and objective and for parents to be able to look at a set of arrangements and understand easily how places for that school will be allocated. A points based system may not be clear or objective and it may leave parents unable to understand how their applications will be considered.
69. The remaining schools are academies, foundation, free, trust and voluntary aided schools and these are responsible for setting their own admission arrangements. As such the local authority does not have the authority to standardize the arrangements for all

schools. That said, the admission arrangements for their admission arrangements are not covered in this report.

70. Recommendation 9 – Surrey’s Relevant Area

71. The Relevant Area that Surrey intends to publish for schools for the next two years is set out in Enclosure 4.
72. The School Standards & Framework Act 1998 requires local authorities to establish Relevant Area(s) for admission policy consultations. The Relevant Area is the area in which admission authorities must consult with schools regarding their proposed admission arrangements before finalising them.
73. The Education Act 2002 requires the local authority to review and consult on its Relevant Area every 2 years.
74. The proposed Relevant Area for 2023 remains as it was determined in 2021.

CONSULTATION

75. On 27 September 2022 the Cabinet Member for Education and Learning agreed to consult on proposed changes to the admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools for 2024.
76. A consultation on the proposed changes and the admission arrangements for which no change was proposed was published on Surrey Says on 5 October 2022.
77. Full details of the proposed admission arrangements for Surrey’s community and voluntary controlled schools, including the arrangements for which there is no change proposed, are attached as Enclosure 1 and its appendices.
78. A document which set out a summary of the consultation was made available to schools and parents and is attached as Enclosure 2.
79. The consultation was made available to Headteachers, Chairs of Governors and Parent Governors of all Surrey schools through Surrey’s Schools Bulletin. It was also sent by direct email to Diocesan Boards of Education, neighbouring local authorities, out of County academies, foundation, free and voluntary aided schools within a 3 mile (primary schools) or 5 mile (secondary schools) radius of the Surrey border, Surrey County Councillors, Borough and District Councillors, Parish and Town Councillors, Early Years establishments and Surrey MPs.
80. Surrey County Council Members and Borough and District Councillors were asked to draw the consultation to the attention of any local community or resident groups in their area who may have an interest in responding.
81. Nurseries and schools were asked to draw the consultation to the attention of parents with children at the nursery or school.
82. Schools and Councillors were also sent a flyer which they were encouraged to make available to parents.
83. Notice of the consultation was also published on Surrey County Council’s website along with an online response form.

84. In total, 13 respondents submitted a response to the consultation, some of whom answered more than one question.
85. A full analysis of the responses to the consultation is included as Enclosure 3.
86. A summary of the responses to the individual school related questions within the consultation is set out below in Table A.
87. In relation to Surrey's Relevant Area, the local authority consulted with all Surrey schools through the Schools Bulletin, Diocesan Boards and neighbouring local authorities but no comments were received. This is to be expected as the Relevant Area is very much an operational document for schools and the local authority in relation to consultation and does not influence how places are allocated.

Table A - Summary of responses to admission consultation

Question Number	Proposal	Document	Agree	Disagree	No Opinion
1	Southfield Park Primary School - extension of catchment area to include the Parkview estate as a replacement for 'nearest school'	Enclosure 1, Appendix 3	3	7	3
2	Southfield Park Primary School - amendment to tie breaker within catchment so that children living closer to the school receive higher priority	Enclosure 1	4	6	3
3	Stamford Green Primary School - introduction of catchment area as a replacement for 'nearest school'	Enclosure 1, Appendix 4	3	6	4
4	Beauclerc Infant School - reduction of Reception PAN from 40 to 30	Enclosure 1, Appendix 1	0	1	12
5	Farncombe Infant School - reduction of Reception PAN from 50 to 30	Enclosure 1, Appendix 1	0	1	12
6	St Ann's Heath Junior School – reduction of Junior PAN from 90 to 60 and removal of Meadowcroft Infant School as a feeder school (subject to it being agreed for Meadowcroft Infant School to become an all through primary school from September 2024	Enclosure 1, Appendix 1 and 2	0	0	13

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS

88. The risks of implementing these changes are low. 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

89. 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.

90. Normally schools are funded for the year based on the number of pupils on roll on previous October census date. However, where a school has reduced PAN there is often a planned reduction in the number of pupils and, where there is such a reduction, in previous years the Council has applied for a disapplication from the Secretary of State to reduce funding in year to reflect that planned reduction. The council will consider its policy on this issue for future years in due course in consultation with schools forum and those schools affected.

SECTION 151 OFFICER COMMENTARY

91. Although significant progress has been made to improve the Council's financial position, the financial environment remains challenging. The UK is experiencing the highest levels of inflation for decades, putting significant pressure on the cost of delivering our services. Coupled with continued increasing demand and fixed Government funding this requires an increased focus on financial management to ensure we can continue to deliver services within available funding. In addition to these immediate challenges, the medium-term financial outlook beyond 2022/23 remains uncertain. With no clarity on central government funding in the medium term, our working assumption is that financial resources will continue to be constrained, as they have been for the majority of the past decade. This places an onus on the Council to continue to consider issues of financial sustainability as a priority in order to ensure stable provision of services in the medium term.
92. In this context the Section 151 Officer recognises the importance of a clear and compliant admissions policy. Funding for schools is allocated through the annual funding formula approved by Cabinet.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS – MONITORING OFFICER

93. The admission arrangements comply with legislation on school admissions and the School Admissions Code.
94. The local authority has carried out a consultation on all changes for a period of 6 weeks between 5 October 2022 and 16 November 2022, which is in accordance with statutory requirements.
95. There is a statutory requirement for consultation in this context as set out in The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012. Such consultation involved those directly affected by the changes together with relevant representative groups. The material presented to consultees provided sufficient information to allow for intelligent consideration and response in relation to the proposals and was presented in a way that consultees could understand.
96. The best value duty is contained in s3 of the Local Government Act 1999 as a result of which the Council is under a duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. The relevant guidance states that Councils should consider overall value, including economic, environmental and social value when reviewing service provision.

97. In considering this Report, Cabinet must give due regard to the results of the consultation as set out in the reports attached and the response of the Service to the consultation comments and conscientiously take these matters into account when making its final decision.

98. A summary of responses is collated in Enclosure 3 and the local authority has given due regard to those responses in considering the recommendations to put before Cabinet.

EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY

99. The Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed in full and is attached in Enclosure 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.

100. Measures have been taken to reference vulnerable groups both in terms of exceptional arrangements within admissions, the SEND process and the in-year fair access protocol. In addition, a right of appeal exists for all applicants who are refused a school place.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

101. The potential implications for the following council priorities and policy areas have been considered. Where the impact is potentially significant, a summary of the issues is set out in detail below.

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	Set out below
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	Set out below
Environmental sustainability	Set out below
Public Health	No significant implications arising from this report

CORPORATE PARENTING/LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN IMPLICATIONS

102. As required by the School Admissions Code, the proposed admission arrangements give top priority to children who are Looked After by a local authority; children who have left care through adoption, a child arrangements order or a special guardianship order; and children who have been adopted from state care outside England.

SAFEGUARDING RESPONSIBILITIES FOR VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND ADULTS IMPLICATIONS

103. The efficient and timely administration of the school 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.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

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

105. Since 2017 the County Council's Safer Travel Team have promoted a new national online system called Modeshift STARS www.modeshiftstars.org. This system is supported by the Department for Transport. The Modeshift STARS website provides materials for schools to create a School Travel Plan. A school can choose a number of interventions such as Bikeability cycle training and the Golden Boot Challenge to help achieve their accreditation. Successful implementation of School Travel Plans will lead to improvements in road safety and more sustainable travel on school journeys. This will reduce congestion, improve air quality, and active travel will improve the health of children.
106. The admission arrangements will still enable the majority of pupils to attend a local school and so reduce travel and support policies on cutting carbon emissions and tackling climate change.
107. Children will continue to be considered for travel assistance in line with Surrey's Home to School/College Travel and Transport policy and information on this is provided to parents in Section 21 of Enclosure 1.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

- The September 2024 admissions arrangements as agreed by the Cabinet will be ratified by the full County Council on 7 February 2023.
- The determined admission arrangements will be published on Surrey's website by 15 March 2023 and all consultees will be notified.
- All Surrey schools will also be notified of the determined admission arrangements in the Admissions termly newsletter, issued as part of the Schools Bulletin at the start of the Summer Term 2023.
- The arrangements will be published in the primary and secondary admissions booklets in August 2023, which will be made available to parents online and in hard copy by request in September 2023.
- The information on school admissions will be circulated to the Contact Centre, Surrey County Council Libraries and Early Years.
- Full information on school admissions for 2024 entry will also be published on Surrey County Council's website in September 2023.

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Consulted:

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Liz Mills, Director of Education and Lifelong Learning
Mike Singleton, Service Manager for Education Place Planning
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 own admission authority schools within 3/5 miles radius of the Surrey border
Surrey County Councillors
Parish Councils
Local MPs,
General public consultation via Surrey Says/schools/Contact Centre

Annexes:

Enclosure 1	Admission arrangements for community & voluntary controlled schools
• Appendix 1	Published Admission Numbers (PANs)
• Appendix 2	Schools which will operate shared sibling priority
• Appendix 3	Catchment map for Southfield Park Primary
• Appendix 4	Catchment map for Stamford Green Primary
• Appendix 5	Catchment map for Walton on the Hill Primary
• Appendix 6	Supplementary Form for social/medical applicants
• Appendix 7	Supplementary Form for staff applicants
Enclosure 2	Summary of consultation
Enclosure 3	Outcome of consultation
Enclosure 4	Surrey's Relevant Area
Enclosure 5	Equality Impact Assessment

Sources/background papers:

- School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Coordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012
- School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- Education Act 2002
- School Admissions Code 2021
- Equality Act 2002
- Cabinet Member for Education and Learning report and decision – 27 September 2022
- OSA determination on Stamford Green Primary School - ADA3589