

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL****CABINET****DATE:** 25 JANUARY 2022**REPORT OF:** DENISE TURNER STEWART, CABINET MEMBER FOR  
EDUCATION AND LEARNING**LEAD OFFICER:** LIZ MILLS, DIRECTOR EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING**SUBJECT:** ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR SURREY'S COMMUNITY  
AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED SCHOOLS FOR SEPTEMBER  
2023**ORGANISATION STRATEGY** EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES  
**PRIORITY**  
**AREA:****PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:**

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 can be offered 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 90 community and voluntary controlled schools for 2023. 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 2023, Cabinet is asked to consider the responses set out in Enclosure 4 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 2023.

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

- Removal of use of 'nearest school' for Hurst Park Primary School, Langshott Primary School, Meath Green Infant School, Tillingbourne Junior School and Wallace Fields Junior School (Recommendation 1)
- Introduction of a catchment area for Walton on the Hill Primary School to replace 'nearest school' (Recommendation 2)
- Introduction of a nodal point to measure home to school distance for Reigate Priory School (Recommendation 3)
- Reduction of the Year 3 PAN at West Ashted Primary School from 30 to 2 (Recommendation 4)
- Introduction of a Year 3 PAN of 4 at Leatherhead Trinity Primary School – (Recommendation 5)

- Introduction of a Year 3 PAN of 2 at Felbridge Primary School (Recommendation 6)
- Introduction of priority for children of staff at community and voluntary controlled nurseries (Recommendation 7)
- Introduction of a supplementary information form for social/medical applicants (Recommendation 8)
- Published Admission Numbers for other community and voluntary controlled schools (Recommendation 9)
- Admission arrangements for which no change has been consulted on (Recommendation 10)

Recommendations are set out below and further details of each proposal are set out in paragraphs 1 to 90.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

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

### **Recommendation 1**

That priority for children who have the school as their 'nearest school' is removed from the admission criteria for Hurst Park Primary School, Langshott Primary School, Meath Green Infant School, Tillingbourne Junior School and Wallace Fields Junior School for 2023 admission, as indicated in Enclosure 1.

#### **Reasons for Recommendation**

- It will bring the admission criteria into line with the majority of other community and voluntary controlled schools
- It will ensure that the admission arrangements for these schools 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
- Analysis would indicate that this change will have no or minimal impact on the intake to each of these schools
- Where children might be displaced, a place at an alternative local school will be available
- It will enable school specific criteria to remain for Wallace Fields Junior School which exists to accommodate a feeder link from Wallace Fields Infant School
- 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
- 86% of academies, foundation, trust and voluntary aided schools do not give priority on the basis of 'nearest school'
- The change is supported by the Headteacher and Governing Body of Hurst Park Primary School, Langshott Primary School, Meath Green Infant School and Wallace Fields Junior School
- The change is not supported by the Headteacher and Governing Body of Tillingbourne Junior School which is concerned at maintaining pupil numbers and serving the areas of Gomshall and Shere. However, with a projected deficit of Year 3 places across Tillingbourne Valley until 2026/27 and the projected forecasts for Godalming showing a surplus of Year 3 places for the foreseeable future, the local authority does not anticipate that the school will face a shortage of pupils nor that children from Godalming will displace children from Gomshall and Shere

### **Recommendation 2**

That a catchment area is introduced for Walton on the Hill Primary School for 2023 admission to replace 'nearest school', as set out in Enclosure 1 and Appendix 5.

#### **Reasons for Recommendation**

- It will ensure that the admission arrangements for these schools 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
- The introduction of a catchment is not anticipated to affect the pattern of admission to the school as it has been based on the catchment created by use of 'nearest school'
- 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 3**

That a nodal point to measure home to school distance is introduced for Reigate Priory School for 2023 admission, as set out in Section 8 of Enclosure 1.

#### **Reasons for Recommendation**

- It will ensure the pattern of admission does not change if the school moves site
- It will ensure that families to the north of Reigate will still be served by the school if the school moves site
- Use of a nodal point to measure home to school distance is permitted by the School Admissions Code
- It is supported by Surrey's Education Place Planning team
- It is supported by the Headteacher and Governing Body of the school

### **Recommendation 4**

That the Published Admission Number for Year 3 at West Ashted Primary School is reduced from 30 to 2 for 2023 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 in KS2
- It will have no impact on children who are currently on roll at the school

### **Recommendation 5**

That a Published Admission Number of 4 is introduced for admission to Year 3 at Leatherhead Trinity Primary School for 2023 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
- It is supported by Surrey's Education Place Planning team
- It will help to offset the reduction in PAN at West Ashted Primary School
- It will help to alleviate any pressure on places in Fetcham and Bookham

- It will have no impact on children who are currently on roll at the school

### **Recommendation 6**

That a Published Admission Number of 2 is introduced for admission to Year 3 at Felbridge Primary School for 2023 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
- It reflects what is currently being operated within the school
- It will ensure parents know that they can formally apply for a place in Year 3
- It will have no impact on children who are currently on roll at the school

### **Recommendation 7**

That priority is given to children of a member of staff for entry to a nursery school for 2023 admission as set out in Section 20 of Enclosure 1.

#### **Reasons for Recommendation**

- It will align the criteria for entry to a nursery to that for Reception
- Priority for children of staff is permitted under the School Admissions Code
- The definition of children of staff is compliant with the Code
- It will help nurseries with staff recruitment and retention
- It will put community and voluntary controlled nurseries on an equal footing with those academies, foundation, free, trust and voluntary aided nurseries which already give priority for children of staff

### **Recommendation 8**

That a supplementary information form is introduced for families applying on the basis of exceptional social/medical need for 2023 admission, as set out in Appendix 6 of Enclosure 1.

#### **Reasons for Recommendation**

- It will ensure applicants can be guided through the process for applying on the basis of social/medical need
- It will enable applicants to understand what they need to provide to support their application
- It will enable applicants to declare details of their case in more detail than is allowed on the application form

### **Recommendation 9**

That the Published Admission Numbers (PANs) for September 2023 for all other community and voluntary controlled schools are determined as they are set out in Appendix 1 to Enclosure 1.

#### **Reasons for Recommendation**

- Most other PANs remain as they were determined for 2022 which enables parents to have some historical benchmark by which to make informed decisions about their school preferences for 2023 admission
- The PAN for Oakwood School has been increased from 300 to 330 to provide additional capacity in Horley
- The Education Place Planning team supports the PANs

## Recommendation 10

That the aspects of Surrey's admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools for September 2023 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 local authority has undertaken to review the admission arrangements for the remaining two schools which will still use 'nearest school' ahead of any consultation on the arrangements for 2024
- 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 7, Section 11, Section 12 and Section 16 of Enclosure 1 have been made to add clarity to the arrangements and reflect existing practice

<b>DETAILS:</b>
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### **Recommendation 1 – That priority for children who have the school as their 'nearest school' is removed from the admission criteria for Hurst Park Primary School, Langshott Primary School, Meath Green Infant School, Tillingbourne Junior School and Wallace Fields Junior School**

1. The reasons for the change for these schools are set out in Sections 1 and 2 of Enclosure 3.
2. There was general opposition to this proposal for each of these schools but the response rate was low, as follows:
  - Hurst Park Primary - 4 respondents in support and 18 opposed (of which six indicated that they would be affected by the proposal)
  - Langshott Primary - 4 respondents in support and 16 opposed (of which two indicated that they would be affected by the proposal)
  - Meath Green Infant - 5 respondents in support and 16 opposed (of which one indicated that they would be affected by the proposal)
  - Tillingbourne Junior - 2 respondents in support and 20 opposed (of which six indicated that they would be affected by the proposal)
  - Wallace Fields Junior - 2 respondents in support and 15 opposed (of which one indicated that they would be affected by the proposal)
3. Many of the respondents who were opposed expressed concern that priority should be given to children who live nearer to a school and flagged the associated issues that would occur if this was not the case. They indicated that this proposal would increase traffic and parking, make it more difficult for parents to get their children to school, increase travelling distances, prevent children from being able to walk to school, increase the impact on climate change and prevent children from going to a school with other children that they know.
4. However, the final criterion for each of these schools 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 a 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.

5. Based on analysis of the intakes for 2019, 2020 and 2021 it is anticipated that this proposal will, overall, have minimal impact on the intake to each of these schools. It will also not affect the local authority's ability to offer a school place to every child, albeit it may alter the school offered for a small number of children in some areas.
6. A Governor at Trinity Oaks Primary School specifically indicated their Governing Body's support for the removal of 'nearest school' at Langshott Primary and Meath Green Infant schools, on the basis that use of 'nearest school' denied some children access to other local schools if Trinity Oaks is their nearest school and they are not eligible for a place.
7. Based on admission arrangements set for 2022, only 16% of all academies, foundation, trust and voluntary aided schools (which set their own admission arrangements) give priority on the basis of 'nearest school' and a number of these are consulting on a change for 2023. If the admission arrangements for Hurst Park Primary School, Langshott Primary School, Meath Green Infant School, Tillingbourne Junior School and Wallace Fields Junior School were to continue to give priority on the basis of 'nearest school', this might disadvantage applicants if their actual nearest school does not give priority on this basis.
8. There is never any guarantee that a parent will be able to secure a place at one of their preferred schools and, where that is not possible, the local authority has a duty to offer an alternative place within a reasonable distance from the child's home address.
9. 'Nearest school' was removed from the admission arrangements for 78 community and voluntary controlled schools for 2022 admission, to comply with a decision of the Office of the Schools Adjudicator (OSA) and to ensure that the admission arrangements complied with the School Admissions Code in regard to catchments.
10. The determination by the OSA in October 2019 (determination number ADA3589) identified some concerns with the use of 'nearest school' and the objectivity and clarity regarding this. The Schools Adjudicator set out that, by having 'nearest school' as a criterion within a set of admission arrangements, the local authority effectively creates a catchment area which is defined by a polygonal (multi-sided) shape based on the location of the other schools surrounding the school. As a catchment area, the local authority has a duty to consult on any changes, such as when the inclusion or location of 'nearest' schools change as these can result in a change to the polygonal shape/catchment area and thus which children may receive priority.
11. The School Admissions Code also sets out other requirements for catchment areas that the local authority must comply with, such as they must be reasonable and clearly defined. In order to assess whether such a catchment area meets the requirements of the Code, it would be necessary to understand the catchment boundaries that are created as a result of using 'nearest school' as an admission criterion.
12. Other reasons for reviewing use of 'nearest school' within the admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools at that time were as follows:
  - 'nearest school' is measured in a straight line from the child's home address. In this way, although this may be used to prioritise applicants, it does not necessarily reflect the school that is nearest by walking or road route or the one that is easiest for the child to get to
  - having a school as a 'nearest school' does not guarantee admission
  - the majority of academies, foundation, trust and voluntary aided schools do not give priority to children based on whether or not it is a child's nearest school

13. At that time, no change was proposed for 8 schools (Hurst Park Primary School, Langshott Primary School, Meath Green Infant School, Southfield Park Primary School, Stamford Green Primary School, Tillingbourne Junior School and Wallace Fields Junior School), as it was considered that removal of 'nearest school' for these schools was more likely to have a medium or significant impact on the pattern of admission. As such, the local authority undertook to review the admission arrangements for these schools ahead of any consultation on the arrangements for 2023.
14. This change for 2023 will bring the admission arrangements for these schools into line with the arrangements for the majority of 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.
15. This change also serves to simplify the admission arrangements and will enable parents to better understand how their application will be considered.
16. The Headteacher and Governing Body at Hurst Park Primary School, Langshott Primary School, Meath Green Infant School and Wallace Fields Junior School support the change for their schools.
17. The Headteacher and Governing Body at Tillingbourne Junior are not in support as they are concerned at maintaining pupil numbers. However, with a projected deficit of Year 3 places across Tillingbourne Valley of 0.5 of a full time equivalent class until 2026/27, it is unlikely the school will face a shortage of pupils. The school also wishes to continue to serve Gomshall and Shere which are very much part of the established school community. With projected forecasts for Godalming showing a surplus of Year 3 places for the foreseeable future, the local authority does not anticipate that children from Godalming will displace children from Gomshall and Shere and that the pattern of admission is likely to remain similar to that for 2021.
18. It is intended to review the arrangements for the remaining two schools (Southfield Park Primary School and Stamford Green Primary School) as part of the review for 2024 admission (see paragraphs 82 and 83).
19. This change is reflected in the admission criteria set out in Section 7 of Enclosure 1 (Hurst Park Primary School, Langshott Primary School, Meath Green Infant School and Tillingbourne Junior School).
20. The admission criteria for Wallace Fields Junior School will still be school specific, to provide for the feeder link from Wallace Fields Infant School as set out in Section 8 of Enclosure 1.

**Recommendation 2 – That a catchment area is introduced for Walton on the Hill Primary School for 2023 admission to replace 'nearest school'**

21. The reasons for this change are set out in Section 3 of Enclosure 3.
22. The number of responses was low with 3 respondents in support and 16 opposed to it, with only one of those opposed indicating that they would be affected by the proposal.
23. Several of the respondents who were opposed expressed concern that priority should be given to children who live nearer to a school and that the proposal would result in more children being driven to school as more children attend schools further away.

24. However, the catchment is designed to replace use of 'nearest school' so that the pattern of admission to the school will not change. After catchment, the final criterion for the school 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 a school will only be offered a place once all children who live within catchment and those that 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.
25. The reasons for removing 'nearest school' as a criterion are the same as those set out in paragraphs 9 to 15.
26. This change is reflected in the admission criteria set out in Section 8 and Appendix 5 of Enclosure 1.

**Recommendation 3 – That a nodal point to measure home to school distance is introduced for Reigate Priory School for 2023 admission**

27. The reasons for this change are set out in Section 4 of Enclosure 3.
28. The number of responses was low with six respondents in support of this proposal and nine opposed to it.
29. Only two of those opposed lived within the area of Reigate and Redhill.
30. Comments of those opposed indicated that priority for admission should be based on the school site. However, the School Admissions Code allows a nodal point, that is separate from the school site, to be used to prioritise applicants. The Code says that the 'selection of such a point must be clearly explained and made on reasonable grounds'. The local authority believes that the selection of the nodal point is reasonable because it is based on the existing site of the school, from which admissions have historically been assessed, and so will not change the pattern of admission to the school if it moves site.
31. This proposal will also ensure that families to the north of Reigate, who do not have an alternative junior school within the area, will retain their priority for Reigate Priory School should it move site. Other families to the south of the current site of the school have an alternative school, Sandcross, which they can apply for and so it would be unreasonable to prioritise these applicants above others who have no alternative school.
32. This proposal is supported by the Headteacher and Governing Body of Reigate Priory School.
33. Section 8 of Enclosure 1 has been updated to reflect this change.

**Recommendation 4 – That the Published Admission Number for Year 3 at West Ashtead Primary School is reduced from 30 to 2**

34. The reasons for this change are set out in Section 5 of Enclosure 3.
35. Overall, four respondents agreed with this proposal whilst 35 were opposed to it.
36. 24 of the respondents who were opposed gave their reasons.
37. There was a concern about the loss of school places for local children especially those who have a sibling at the school. There was also concern for those transferring from a local infant school and the associated impact that the PAN reduction might have on

application numbers to Barnett Wood and St Giles infant schools due to fear of not getting into a primary school at Year 3.

38. West Ashtead Primary is undersubscribed in Key Stage 1 (Reception – Year 2) meaning that there will be far fewer West Ashtead pupils transitioning into Year 3 by 2023. This provides additional capacity for pupils applying to Year 3 from other schools. The priority for siblings within the admission arrangements is higher than for other applicants.
39. There is a Year 3 intake at The Greville Primary School (60 places) and this school currently carries a small number of vacancies in most year groups in the junior phase. It is proposed that West Ashtead will retain a PAN of 2 places but may have capacity to take additional pupils as their infant classes are undersubscribed. The local authority also proposes to introduce a Year 3 PAN of 4 places at Leatherhead Trinity Primary School (see paragraphs 53 to 58), which is also undersubscribed in Key Stage 1 and able to offer additional capacity at Year 3. Introducing a Year 3 PAN provides parents with an opportunity to apply for Leatherhead Trinity where this has not been the case previously.
40. Some respondents felt that Leatherhead Trinity was not a suitable option as families would have to travel further afield to get their children to school and that traffic into Leatherhead would be made worse. The local authority is responsible for providing sufficient places to meet the demand across a primary place planning area. Surrey's Education Place Planning team produces pupil projections based on planning areas. Planning areas do not have geographical boundaries but are groups of schools which reflect the local geography, reasonable travel distances and existing pupil movement patterns. There are currently a high proportion of pupils attending school in Ashtead who come from Leatherhead. 47% of pupils come from Leatherhead North and 65% from Leatherhead South. Leatherhead Trinity is 1.65 miles from West Ashtead and within a reasonable travel distance.
41. Generally, the birth rate for Mole Valley has fallen by 21% since 2010. Education Place Planning forecasts project a 15% (45 place) surplus of Year 3 places for September 2023 increasing to a 23% surplus (68) by 2030. There are currently 42 vacancies in Reception and 35 vacancies in Year 1 across the schools in the Ashtead and Leatherhead planning area. The proposed reduction in Year 3 places at West Ashtead and the introduction of a Year 3 PAN of 4 at Leatherhead Trinity, reduces the number of Year 3 places across the Ashtead and Leatherhead primary place planning area by 24 places (8%) from 2023, but still provides a working margin for any unexpected short-term demand.
42. There was concern about proposals for further housing development in the area. However, Education Place Planning will continue to monitor place planning forecasts to ensure there are sufficient places to meet any future demand from migration and housing. Education Place Planning projects primary place demand over a ten-year period. The forecast pupil yield from new housing proposed in the Draft Mole Valley Plan, does not outweigh the fall in birth rate during the current place planning period to 2030. It is estimated that, even if there is an upturn in birth rates, it will take some time before the previous levels are restored. If the demand for places increase, West Ashtead will still have accommodation for an increase in PAN. Furthermore, if there were to be a need for additional Year 3 places, these could be provided through bulge class arrangements, potentially/possibly at West Ashtead.
43. Education Place Planning will continue to work closely with Mole Valley District Council on the phasing of future homes to ensure sufficient places are available to meet future demand.

44. One respondent felt that, as West Ashtead is on a huge site, it would be a waste of resources to reduce it to one form of entry all the way through. West Ashtead is a 1FE entry primary school, offering 30 places from Year R to Year 2. The school currently has an additional intake of 30 pupils at Year 3, offering 60 places from Year 3 through to Year 6. However, it is not financially viable for West Ashtead Primary School to continue to run two classes from Year 3 through to Year 6 due to the very low number of pupils applying for a place at Year 3. West Ashtead only had 39 pupils on roll in Year 3 (October 2021 census) and carry 21 vacancies. This proposal maintains a sufficient number of places in the local area and enables West Ashtead to manage its numbers.
45. The Governing Body of St Giles CofE Infant School indicated its objection to the proposal in the belief that it would affect the sustainability of St Giles. It believes that families would withdraw their children from St Giles to secure a place at an all through primary school ahead of the Year 3 transfer. The Governing Body believes that it would then be in the same "reduced income" position that West Ashtead seek to mitigate by reducing their PAN. The Governing Body at St Giles asks that other ways of managing the impending fiscal deficit should be encouraged and that Surrey adheres to its planning principles in the Surrey School Organisation Plan 2020-2030. They also believe that a reduction in PAN (with the consequential damage as described) is also contrary to the planning principles of the Surrey School Organisation Plan 2020-2030, namely, "to consider the challenges and actions that may need to be taken to ensure sustainability of existing small local schools".
46. Only a small number of pupils transition to West Ashtead from St Giles and Barnett Wood infant schools. In September 2021, only 16 pupils went to West Ashtead from the two infant schools. The current Year 3 at West Ashtead only has 39 pupils in total and this includes pupils coming up from their own Year 2. There is already a Year 3 intake at The Greville and parents will still be able to apply for a place at West Ashtead and for a place at Leatherhead Trinity. Even with the proposals outlined, there will still be a surplus of 21 Year 3 places in the Ashtead and Leatherhead primary place planning area. If parents do not secure any of their preferences, they have the right to appeal.
47. Notwithstanding this, the local authority encourages self-determination and respects the autonomy of individual schools. In light of the place planning forecast of surplus places, an area meeting was held with Ashtead and Leatherhead schools in March 2021 to facilitate conversations and action on collaborative working and how individual schools might face their own challenges. It is understood that governing bodies have subsequently met and Headteachers have started to collaborate. A conference to support Resilience and Sustainability was held in September 2021 and governing bodies encouraged to self-review. No immediate proposals for collaboration have come forward. As a school with a Requires Improvement from Ofsted, West Ashtead Primary School have taken immediate action to address the challenge they face with managing numbers and financial stability by seeking to reduce their Year 3 PAN.
48. The Governing Body of St Giles also believe that the effect of the PAN reduction is contrary to the statutory duties that local authorities have to provide school places that increase opportunities for parental choice (Education and Inspections Act 2006) and that the proposal diminishes their statutory responsibility to plan, provide and fund school places for the faith sector. However, the local authority's duties in relation to diversity and choice sets out that they shall exercise their functions with a view to – (a) securing diversity in provision of schools and (b) increasing opportunities for parental choice. The local authority is not removing parental choice as West Ashtead Primary School will still retain a Year 3 PAN so that parents can make an application for a place. Lower numbers in Key Stage 1 provides additional capacity for future pupils and helps West Ashtead to fill vacant places. The introduction of a Year 3 PAN at Leatherhead Trinity will enable

parents to also make an application to a faith school for Year 3, thus securing diversity in provision and increasing opportunities for parental choice. Governors should plan for their own individual school and the proposal should not reduce plans to address the falling number of children across faith and non-faith schools.

49. This decrease in PAN will have no impact on children who are currently on roll at the school.
50. This reduction in PAN had been formally requested by the Headteacher and Governing Body of West Ashted Primary School as it will provide the school with greater ability to maintain financial viability.
51. Surrey's Education Place Planning team are satisfied that this reduction will not impact the sufficiency of places as current forecasts indicate a projected surplus of primary places across the Ashted and Leatherhead area from 2023.
52. Appendix 1 to Enclosure 1 has been updated to reflect this change.

**Recommendation 5 – That a Published Admission Number of 4 is introduced for admission to Year 3 at Leatherhead Trinity Primary School**

53. The reasons for this change are set out in Section 6 of Enclosure 3.
54. The number of responses was low with four respondents in support of this proposal and 13 opposed to it. However, only two of those who were opposed indicated that they would be affected by the proposal.
55. Some of the comments of those opposed appeared to reflect the proposal to decrease the PAN at West Ashted rather than the introduction of a Year 3 PAN at Leatherhead Trinity. Whilst this proposal will help to offset the reduction in PAN at West Ashted, this is a separate proposal which is not dependent on the PAN being reduced at West Ashted. This is because it is also hoped that a Year 3 PAN at Leatherhead Trinity will help to offset any pressure in Year 3 places in Fetcham and Bookham.
56. The introduction of a Year 3 PAN will have no impact on children who are currently on roll at the school.
57. This proposal is supported by the Headteacher and Governing Body of Leatherhead Trinity Primary School.
58. Appendix 1 to Enclosure 1 has been updated to reflect this change.

**Recommendation 6 – That a Published Admission Number of 2 is introduced for admission to Year 3 at Felbridge Primary School**

59. The reasons for this change are set out in Section 7 of Enclosure 3.
60. The number of responses was low with three respondents in support of this proposal and seven opposed to it. However, none of those who were opposed indicated that they would be affected by the proposal or gave reasons.
61. The introduction of a Year 3 PAN will have no impact on children who are currently on roll at the school.
62. This proposal is supported by the Headteacher and Governing Body of Felbridge Primary School, having been requested by them.

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

**Recommendation 7 - That priority is given to children of a member of staff within the admission arrangements for nursery school**

64. The reasons for this change are set out in Section 8 of Enclosure 3.

65. Overall, 23 respondents agreed with this proposal whilst 11 were opposed to it.

66. Concerns raised included whether such priority would introduce a conflict of interest and that priority should not be granted on the basis of employment. However, giving priority for admission to children of staff is permitted by the School Admissions Code and the definition is compliant with the Code.

67. The introduction of priority for children of staff for admission to nursery will support community and voluntary controlled schools with staff recruitment and retention.

68. It will also align the arrangements to those that exist for admission to Reception and will put community and voluntary controlled nurseries on an equal footing with those academies, foundation, free, trust and voluntary aided nurseries which already give priority for children of staff.

69. Section 20 of Enclosure 1 has been updated to reflect this change. It provides for priority to be given to children of staff within criterion three, after looked after/previously looked after children and children where there is an exceptional social/medical need.

**Recommendation 8 - That a supplementary information form is introduced for families applying on the basis of exceptional social/medical need**

70. The reasons for this change are set out in Section 9 of Enclosure 3.

71. There was significant support for this proposal with 28 respondents in support and 2 opposed to it. However, neither of those who were opposed indicated that they would be affected by the proposal or gave reasons.

72. The introduction of a supplementary information form for applicants applying on the basis of a social/medical need will ensure applicants can be guided through the process and to declare details of their case in more detail than is allowed on the application form.

73. Enclosure 1 has been updated to reflect this change and Appendix 6 has been added.

**Recommendation 9 - Proposed Published Admission Numbers (PANs) for other community and voluntary controlled schools**

74. Appendix 1 to Enclosure 1 sets out the proposed admission numbers for all community and voluntary controlled schools for 2023 admission, with changes highlighted in bold.

75. The reduction in Year 3 PAN at West Ashted Primary School has already been referenced in Recommendation 4.

76. The introduction of a Year 3 PAN at Leatherhead Trinity and Felbridge primary schools has already been referenced in Recommendations 5 and 6.

77. It is also proposed to increase the PAN at Oakwood School from 300 to 330 to introduce additional capacity in Horley. This proposal did not require consultation.

78. It is proposed that the PAN for all other community and voluntary controlled schools for 2023 will remain as determined for 2022. This will enable parents to have some historical benchmark by which to make informed decisions about their school preferences.
79. The Education Place Planning team support the proposed PANs.
80. Each community and voluntary controlled school has been given the opportunity to comment on the proposed PAN if they wished.

#### **Recommendation 10 – Admission arrangements for which no change has been consulted on**

81. The local authority has a duty to determine the admission arrangements for all community and voluntary controlled schools by 28 February 2022, even if there are no changes proposed.
82. No change has been proposed for Southfield Park Primary School or Stamford Green Primary School, which will retain use of 'nearest school' for 2023 admission, as it is considered that a change is more likely to have a significant impact on the pattern of admission to each of these schools and, potentially, the schools in the surrounding area.
83. For these schools, given the greater complexities of making a change, the local authority has undertaken to review the admission arrangements ahead of any consultation on the arrangements for 2024.
84. Other than changes already referenced in Recommendations 1 to 9, the only other changes are points of clarification as follows:
  - The fourth criterion in Section 7 of Enclosure 1 has been updated to read 'Children who **are expected to** have a sibling at the school or at an infant/ junior school which will operate shared sibling priority for admission at the time of the child's admission' from 'Children who **will have** ....'. As it is not possible to determine categorically that a sibling will be on roll at the time of a child's admission, this is a more accurate reflection of the decision. This is in line with the explanatory text in Section 12.
  - Linked to this, Section 12 has been updated to reflect the fact that the local authority reserves the right to withdraw an offer of a place if information comes to light that an applicant knew about a sibling leaving the school or linked school at the time of a sibling claim, or if they failed to tell the local authority of a change that might affect their sibling claim.
  - Section 11 has been updated to clarify what the definition is of a parent in relation to priority for children of staff and confirmation that the member of staff might be employed full or part time.
  - Section 16 has been updated to clarify the process for a child's name being added to the waiting list at the end of the academic year.
85. The admission arrangements for Surrey's community and voluntary controlled schools are generally working well. This is demonstrated by the fact that, in 2021, 84.9% 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.
86. 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.
87. 7 respondents took the opportunity to make comments about the admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools for which no change was

proposed. However, only four had relevance to the admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools.

- 13
88. One respondent asked why The Greville Primary School was not mentioned in the consultation. This was a school for which no change was proposed and as such there was no specific mention of it. However, the admission arrangements for The Greville for 2023 will be approved under recommendation 10.
  89. Two respondents suggested that travel requirements needed to be taken in to account when considering admission arrangements. The admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools provide for children living nearer to a school to be offered a place ahead of those living further away. This ensures that children are not encouraged to travel long distances to get to school.
  90. One respondent suggested that it would be helpful to see on a map the catchment area for each school. The majority of Surrey's community and voluntary controlled schools do not have a catchment and priority is based on home to school distance. This distance varies from year to year based on the number of applications, where children live and the preference rank of the school on the application form. However, for schools which do have a defined catchment area, the map is published with the admission arrangements.

## CONSULTATION

91. On 12 October 2021 the Cabinet Member for Education and Learning agreed to consult on proposed changes to the admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools for 2023.
92. A consultation on the proposed changes and the admission arrangements for which no change was proposed was published on Surrey Says on 20 October 2021.
93. 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.
94. A document which set out a summary of the consultation was made available to schools and parents and is attached as Enclosure 3.
95. 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 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.
96. 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.
97. Nurseries and schools were asked to draw the consultation to the attention of parents with children at the nursery or school.
98. All consultees were also sent a suggested form of wording for parents, which they were encouraged to put on websites, noticeboards and in newsletters, as appropriate.

- 99. Notice of the consultation was also published on Surrey County Council's website along with an online response form.
- 100. In total, 70 respondents submitted a response to the consultation, some of whom answered more than one question.
- 101. A full analysis of the responses to the consultation is included as Enclosure 4.
- 102. A summary of the responses to the individual school related questions within the consultation is set out below in Table A.

**Table A - Summary of responses to admission consultation**

Question Number	Proposal	Document	Agree	Disagree	No Opinion
1	Removal of priority on the basis of 'nearest school' for Hurst Park Primary School	Enclosure 1	4	18	48
2	Removal of priority on the basis of 'nearest school' for Langshott Primary School	Enclosure 1	4	16	50
3	Removal of priority on the basis of 'nearest school' for Meath Green Infant School	Enclosure 1	5	16	49
4	Removal of priority on the basis of 'nearest school' for Tillingbourne Junior School	Enclosure 1	2	20	48
5	Removal of priority on the basis of 'nearest school' for Wallace Fields Junior School	Enclosure 1	2	15	53
6	Introduction of catchment area for Walton on the Hill Primary School to replace 'nearest school'	Enclosure 1	3	16	51
7	Introduction of a nodal point to measure home to school distance for Reigate Priory School	Enclosure 1	6	9	55
8	West Ashtead Primary School: Reduction of Year 3 PAN from 30 to 2	Enclosure 1, Appendix 1	4	35	31
9	Leatherhead Trinity Primary School: Introduction of a Year 3 PAN of 4	Enclosure 1, Appendix 1	4	13	53
10	Felbridge Primary School: Introduction of a Year 3 PAN of 2	Enclosure 1, Appendix 1	3	7	60
11	Introduction of priority for children of staff at Surrey's community and voluntary controlled nurseries	Enclosure 1	23	11	36
12	Introduction of a supplementary form for	Enclosure 1, Appendix 6	28	2	40

	applicants applying on the basis of social/medical need				
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### **RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS**

103. 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**

104. 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**

105. Although significant progress has been made over the last twelve months to improve the Council's financial position, the medium-term financial outlook beyond 2021/22 remains uncertain. The public health crisis has resulted in increased costs which may not be fully funded. With uncertainty about the ongoing impact of this and no clarity on the extent to which both central and local funding sources might be affected 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.
106. As such, the Section 151 Officer supports the recommendations of this report as the overall funding of schools provided through the Dedicated Schools Grant Schools Block will not be impacted.

### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS – MONITORING OFFICER**

107. The admission arrangements comply with legislation on school admissions and the School Admissions Code.
108. The local authority has carried out a consultation on all changes for a period of 6 weeks between 20 October 2021 and 1 December 2021, which is in accordance with statutory requirements.
109. 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.
110. 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.

- 111. 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.
- 112. A summary of responses is collated in Enclosure 4 and the local authority has given due regard to those responses in considering the recommendations to put before Cabinet.

**EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY**

- 113. The Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed in full and is attached in Enclosure 2. 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.
- 114. 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**

- 115. 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**

- 116. 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**

- 117. 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

118. The County Council attaches great importance to being environmentally aware and wishes to show leadership in cutting carbon emissions and tackling climate change.
119. Since 2017 the County Council's Safer Travel Team have promoted a new national online system called Modeshift STARS [www.modeshiftstars.org](http://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.
120. 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.
121. Children will continue to be considered for home to school transport in line with Surrey's Home to School/College Travel and Transport policy and information on this is provided to parents in Section 22 of Enclosure 1.

## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

- The September 2023 admissions arrangements as agreed by the Cabinet will be ratified by the full County Council on 8 February 2022.
- The determined admission arrangements will be published on Surrey's website by 15 March 2022 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 2022.
- The arrangements will be published in the primary and secondary admissions booklets in August 2022, which will be made available to parents online and in hard copy by request in September 2022.
- 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 2023 entry will also be published on Surrey County Council's website in September 2022.

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### Consulted:

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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:**

<b>Enclosure 1</b>	Admission arrangements for community & voluntary controlled schools
• <b>Appendix 1</b>	Published Admission Numbers (PANs)
• <b>Appendix 2</b>	Schools which will operate shared sibling priority
• <b>Appendix 3</b>	Schools not to be considered in assessment of nearest school
• <b>Appendix 4</b>	Catchment map for Southfield Park Primary
• <b>Appendix 5</b>	Catchment map for Walton on the Hill Primary
• <b>Appendix 6</b>	Supplementary Form for social/medical applicants
• <b>Appendix 7</b>	Supplementary Form for staff applicants
<b>Enclosure 2</b>	Equality Impact Assessment
<b>Enclosure 3</b>	Summary of consultation
<b>Enclosure 4</b>	Outcome of consultation

**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 – 12 October 2021
- OSA determination on Stamford Green Primary School - ADA3589

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