

Minutes

For: Admissions and Place Planning Forum

Date: 21 November 2018

Time: 18:00 – 20.00

Location: Ellen Wilkinson Primary School

Attendees:

Chair

Councillor Julianne Marriott: Cabinet Member for Education (JM)

Local Authority Officers

Peter Gibb: Head of Access and Infrastructure (PG)

Tracy Jones: Group Manager, Pupil Services (TJ)

Simon McKenzie, Interim Head of Service 0-25 SEND (SM)

Tracey Schofield, Early Years Advisor, Children's Commissioning (TS)

Clerk

Kiran Parkash Singh: Pupil Services

Representative: Nursery Schools

Anne Kibuuka: Head Teacher, Kay Rowe Nursery School & Forest Gate Children's Centre

Representatives: Maintained Primary Schools

Diane Barrick: Head Teacher, Carpenters Primary School

Sue Ferguson: Head Teacher, Ellen Wilkinson Primary School

Representatives: Maintained Secondary Schools

Anthony Wilson: Lister Community School (Chair of Newham Association of Secondary Head teachers - NASH)

Representatives: Academy Primary Schools

Paul Harris: Head Teacher, Curwen Primary School

Quintin Peppiatt: New Vision Trust

Representatives: Academy Secondary Schools

Andrew Seager: Head Teacher, Stratford School Academy

Charlotte Whelan: Associate Head Teacher, Forest Gate Community School

Peter Whittle: Associate Principal, Langdon Academy

Representative: University Technical Colleges

Geoffrey Fowler: Principal, London Design and Engineering UTC

Representative: Catholic Secondary Schools

Paul Halliwell: Head Teacher, St Bonaventure's Catholic Comprehensive School

Representative: Church of England Primary School

Matt Hipperson: Head Teacher, St. Luke's CoE Primary School

Representative: Voluntary Controlled Schools

Shirley Ann Jones: Head Teacher, St. James' CoE Junior School

Representative: Single Sex Schools

Charlotte Robinson: Head Teacher, Rokeby School (boys only)

Representative: Virtual School

Val Naylor: Executive Head Teacher

Apologies

Manjit Bains: Commissioner Education Place Planning

Ian Wilson: Head Teacher, Little Ilford Primary School

Gael Hicks: Head Teacher, St Helen's Roman Catholic Primary School

Diane Rochford: Executive Head, John F Kennedy Special School

Key

Secondary Head Teacher – SHT

Primary Head Teacher - PHT

Action Points

Item 2a. Summer Born Admissions – Follow DfE guidance and applicants apply for the year admission is being sought. TJ to update the Newham guidance to reflect this.

Item 2b. Fair Access Protocol – Final version to be ratified by all Newham head teachers at NASH and NAPH.

Item 3. Place Planning – PG to circulate updates to place planning strategy by the end of term.

Item 5. Secondary Transition for September 2019 – TJ to conduct late application checking exercise with primary schools.

Item 6. – Members are invited to bring case studies of admission of pupils with medical needs and/or toilet training to the next meeting.

1) Introductions

Chair introduced herself and asked the other members of the forum to do the same.

2) Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

The minutes of the previous forum meeting were reviewed. All present confirmed that it was an accurate recording of the discussions.

2.a Summer born admissions

TJ advised that the new online application for summer born deferments was now live and requested members of the panel to visit the pages on the Newham website and provide feedback. Once it had been approved the details will be circulated to all schools. JM said that the LA needed to ensure that the guidance is clear and detailed so that residents could fully understand what they were requesting and its potential impact.

TJ then asked the panel what course Newham should take to determine when an applicant needed to submit the application for a reception class place once it had been agreed.

1. Follow the DfE guidance and ask parent/carers to apply the following year once summer born has been agreed

Or

2. Have the reception place reserved and rolled forward to the agreed year of entry.

A PHT stated that whatever approach was taken it was important all primary head teachers followed a consistent approach when deciding to grant a deferment. A SHT asked if the DfE had provided specific details of when deferment should be granted. JM stated that there wasn't, however generally the type of requests considered would be where there was a medical or special educational need or if the child was born prematurely.

It was agreed that the DfE guidance should be followed. Primary school head teachers will be expected to honour the decision made when the request was submitted. TJ will make amendments to the online guidance and then roll out the online form and guidance to schools.

2.b Fair Access Protocol

TJ advised that the updated Fair Access Protocol needed to be signed off by the end of the calendar year. It was currently with LB Newham's Legal Services. Once it has been signed off by them, the protocol will need to be ratified by schools. It was agreed that the final version should be circulated to the Newham Association of Primary and Secondary Head Teachers (NAPH and NASH) and/or Primary Partnership Board (PPB) .

2.c Nursery Admissions

TJ notified the panel that a document outlining a proposed coordinated admission approach for admission to nursery was being drafted. The main consideration was to have a consistent approach with a borough wide application form with borough wide deadlines.

JM asked whether primary, voluntary and independent nurseries (PVI's) should be included. A PHT advised that it would not be appropriate as PVI's can take children from birth. Another PHT asked if it would only be for three year olds. TJ stated that it would be for two and three year olds but would be based on capacity of nurseries as to who would be prioritised.

A PHT advised that nurseries tend to have different start states for nursery, September, January and April. Would that still be possible with a coordinated approach? TJ stated that it would be a single offer with staggered start dates as there used to be with reception class admissions.

All agreed that there was a need for a consistent approach but further discussions were needed on the detail of what would be required.

3 Standing Items

Membership

JM welcomed, Charlotte Robinson, Head teacher of Rokeby School and Val Naylor, Head of LB Newham's Virtual School as new members to the forum.

TJ asked whether there was a need for any other education providers to be represented. All agreed that the current membership represented all types of state funded compulsory education. Therefore there was no need for others to be included.

New academy conversions and proposed new free schools

TJ outlined the latest schools that have converted into an academy. Only Sarah Bonnell School had converted to academy status since the last meeting. There are no new proposed free schools.

Consultations

TJ informed the forum of the current consultations. The arrangements and over subscription criteria for St Luke's Primary School and the Newham Catholic Schools were currently being consulted on. Members of the forum were invited to comment on these.

A discussion then took place regarding a proposal for changing the oversubscription criteria for admission to Lister Community School to include a criteria based around musical aptitude.

This was being considered for admission from September 2020 however the details were still being discussed; including further information requested on aptitude testing.

TJ advised that as the school is currently a community school it would be the local authority that would carry out the consultation, not the school itself.

A SHT informed the forum that the London Design and Engineering UTC had been

approached by the DfE and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) about admitting children from year 7 onwards rather than from year 9. This was currently being considered and the UTC will be providing the local authority with an update.

TJ notified that this was now commonplace and many if not all UTCs were being asked to consider this.

Place Planning

PG provided an update on Place Planning and presented the LA's draft five year place planning strategy, 'Places for All'. PG explained that the strategy was developed to provide transparency over the LA's plans for any proposed expansion of schools.

Discussions with over 40 headteachers were held in spring 2018 and the LA received constructive feedback. As a result the Plan was updated based on new projections and the need to factor in SEND.

In summary the primary school sector had stabilised with sufficiency of places across the borough.

The current high numbers in key stage 2 however will be moving to secondary school over the next few years and therefore it was important for the LA to be prepared for this.

There was still a need for additional bulge classes for year 7 admission for September 2019 in addition to planned permanent expansions, however the number of bulge classes will be confirmed in early 2019 to avoid excessive over provision of places. The data for on time applications for year 7 places for September 2019 suggested that there had not been a huge growth in the current year 6 cohort however there was a possibility that there could be a large number of late applicants.

In terms of the long term forecast, feasibility studies are underway on proposed 4FE permanent expansion planned for 2021; again the number of additional FE needed will be kept under review.

A PHT suggested that the recent announcement on the deal to build more social and affordable homes in the borough needed to be factored in as it is likely that these properties will be accommodated by families. PG agreed and advised the forum that the plan was kept under regular review.

PG also reminded the forum that a bid had been submitted to the DfE for a new special school in Newham. There had been an increase in the number of children with complex autism now moving from the primary into the secondary sector. There was therefore a need for more resource provision places in mainstream schools but also more demand for places in special schools.

SM advised that Newham had a high level of ASD diagnosis compared to other LAs and that the data showed that the greater increase was in the early diagnosis of 2-3 year olds.

PG will circulate updates to the Places for All strategy by the end of term before it is presented to Cabinet in January..

4 SEN non EHCP Admissions

TJ and SM reminded the forum what the law states about the admission of children with special educational needs but do not have a Education Health Care Plan (EHCP).

Admission authorities are required to consider such children as part of the normal admission procedures. Schools must not refuse to admit because they do not have an EHCP or because they do not feel they will be able to cater for those needs.

SM added that currently Newham's 0-25 SEND Service were working towards drafting EHCP for all children provided with levels 3/4 High Needs Funding.

TJ added that it was important these admissions should not be delayed as there would be a risk of them becoming missing in education.

A PHT asked what would be the follow up to a school not agreeing to admit. PG advised that the LA can direct the school to admit.

A SHT stated that there was a need to ensure that where possible there should be an even distribution of pupils with SEND and that more should be done to support parents make informed decisions. JM advised that Newham's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) will be supporting families with these decisions. A PHT suggested that there may need to be flexibility to ensure that children with complex needs have a school place e.g. regarding primary to secondary transition points.

5 Secondary Transition for September 2019

TJ presented the raw on time application data for admission in September 2019, advising that it could potentially change due to ongoing Pan London checking.

A significant number of applicants (643) had stated that they work at the school they were applying for (new priority for September 2019). A checking list however will be sent to all schools for them to confirm whether the applicant is indeed a staff member.

TJ further advised that based on checks conducted by Pupil Services it appeared that a significant number of applications were still missing and now possibly will be late applications. Historically late applicants tended to be from vulnerable families. Therefore it was important to understand the causes of this.

Action – TJ to conduct work with primary schools to identify those that had not submitted and investigate the reasons why.

6. Any other Business

TJ advised the forum that that Helen Page, Director of Delivery (Compliance and Transformation) will be attending the next forum to discuss the admission of children with toilet training and/or medical needs where input is needed from school nurses or other support services.

Attendees were invited to bring case studies to the next forum which could be discussed with Helen to see what the challenges they faced with these admissions.

Meeting Closed 20:00

Next meeting – TBC (Early March 2019)

End.