



Minutes

Name of meeting	Admissions Forum
Date and time	17 June 2008 9.30 – 11.30 am
Venue	Convent of the Holy Cross, East Cowes
Present	Sara Sheath – Chair of the IW Admissions Forum Karin Wales – Community & Controlled Primary Schools Louise Tatton – CSA George Cameron – Local Authority John Brocklehurst – (Ex-Officio)
Apologies	Matt Atkins: John Bradshaw: Amanda Page: Dorothy Harrington: Adrian Smith: Urszula Topp
1.	Minutes of last Meeting:- Agreed
2.	Matters arising:-
2.1	The time-line for schools re-organisation has been revised, final decisions will be made in May/June 2009. The Forums meeting on the 17 July 2008 is necessary to include details of parental consultation in 2009/10 booklet. However, there is no change to the proposed implementation date which is September 2010. The parents raising concerns are those who have children in current Year 3.
2.2	Admission arrangements for 2009/10 are being scrutinised nationally by the chief schools adjudicator, checking for breaches in code of practise, unfair criteria weighting. Following a complaint from a parent, church aided schools will need to check their admission arrangements and amend any anomalies.
2.3	New rules for the admission to school of LAC (Looked after Children) are being introduced. LAC and their faith re the admissions criteria. A discussion ensued regarding faith schools, where schools are closing and a faith school opens, can the authority ensure that there are still enough choice for families with no faith? It is a duty of the LA to ensure that the proportion of faith schools will remain the same after the reorganisation.
2.4	Figures for parental preferences for secondary school, following new legislation in February 2008, were returned to the DCSF in line with the National Offer Date 3 March 2008.
3.	Information for booklet 'Educating your Child'
3.1	Draft booklets had been circulated via e-mail, prior to the meeting and

- 3.2 hard copies were available at the meeting.
Members discussed changes to the booklet as follows:
- Fresh introduction from the director of Children's Services and young people including an update on the school re-organisation proposals
 - Terms used in the booklet and acronyms should show the full name at the beginning
 - The 'Common Application Form (CAF)' should be clarified as this acronym has three connotations within children's services.
 - The 'frequently asked questions' noted in bullet point format should include the actual page numbers as to where the answers are available
 - SEN children should be on the criteria list (it was felt that if a school is not named on a statement parents would have difficulty deciding how to complete the application form).
 - Voluntary aided schools should try to unify their pages to ease confusion (ie items should be numerical or alpha, not both)
 - Update student rider amount to £1 per journey
 - Update free school meals income details to £15.575
 - Choice Advisor details and contacts should form part of the front page information
 - Update details of representatives of the Admissions Forum to include two councillors. Voluntary aided representatives (etc check admissions code book)
- 3.3 The forum will convene in July 2008 to formally approve the 2009 booklet, which will include the above amendments and new artwork
- 3.4 JB advised the forum that the DCSF had recently consulted on extending the objection period by parents and other bodies concerning admission arrangements, after the arrangements have been determined, but before they take effect. As a result of the consultation, the DCSF has extended the objection period to the 31 July each year. This reduces the time for information booklets to be published but provides more time for Choice Advisors to familiarise themselves with the determined arrangements before they take effect.
- 3.5 The forum acknowledged that the information booklet will have to be revised subject to the school organisation proposals being approved and in accordance with admission arrangements time frame.
- 3.6 JB reported that scrutiny of admission arrangements by the Chief Schools Adjudicator during summer 2008 has already indicated that a number of definitions within LA information booklets must be amended for the 2009 booklet and that a national admissions booklet/template may be considered appropriate. The adjudicator's final report on national admissions arrangements is due September 2008.
4. **Children's Education Advisory Service (MOD Organisation) update**
The CEAS contacted all authorities regarding crown personnel in their geographical area. There is not data on the number of crown personnel on the Island, and it was felt that a representative from the CEAS was not necessary at present, but would be kept under review.

5. **Admissions Appeals 2008 update**
JB reported that appeals are ongoing, to date there had been 50 appeals lodged. Solent Middle School appeals had been upheld. Appeals are continuing throughout July
6. **Admissions Forum – Annual Report update**
 - 6.1 The 2007 Admissions Code and the Education and Inspections Act 2006 provides administrative forms with the power to produce an annual report on whether school admissions arrangements support fair access and with recommendations for improvement.
 - 6.2 The forum has previously received examples of other LA annual reports and a small working group was established. The DCSF have now produced some guidance information and three report examples which will be circulated to all forum members for discussion and agenda item at next meeting.
 - 6.3 The forum members are requested to review the guidance and the working group prepare a draft annual report for autumn 2008.
7. **School Organisation Update**
 - 7.1 The Isle of Wight Cabinet meeting on 3 June 2008 approved the next stage of the school reorganisation proposals following the earlier council decision (19 March 2008) to move from a three tier system to a two tier system.
 - 7.2 This decision allows officer to enter into formal consultation with all schools, staff, governor, VA colleagues and stakeholders between mid June and 26 September 2008.
 - 7.3 The formal consultation and actual details of school sizes and locations is set out in the various appendices of the cabinet report.
 - 7.4 The representations received from the school community during this extended consultation period will be considered by the cabinet during October 2008 following a detailed report from senior officers.
 - 7.5 The proposals include the closure of Island Middle Schools, three primary school closures, a number of amalgamations within the primary sector, enlargement of the age range at 38 primary schools and 5 'new' secondary schools, plus the enlargement of Christ the King College into 11-19 secondary school.
 - 7.6 The 'new' secondary school and the enlargement of primary schools will require proportional increase to the respective governing bodies following a final council decision in May/June 2009 to prepare for proposed implementation on 1 September 2010.
8. **Next meeting** 17 July 2008 9.30 – 11.30 am at The Convent of the Cross, East Cowes