

# Minutes

**For:** Admissions and Place Planning Forum

**Date:** 13 June 2018

**Time:** 18:00 – 20.00

**Location:** Forest Gate Community School

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## **Attendees:**

Councillor Julianne Marriott: Cabinet Member for Education (JM)  
Peter Gibb: Head of Access and Infrastructure (PG)  
Tracy Jones: Group Manager, Pupil Services (TJ)  
Mike Singleton: Interim Advisor, School Place Planning (MS)  
Diane Barrick: Head Teacher, Carpenters Primary School  
Simon Elliott: Head Teacher, Forest Gate Community School (Chair of NASH)  
Sue Ferguson: Head Teacher, Ellen Wilkinson Primary School  
Paul Halliwell: Head Teacher, St Bonaventure's Catholic Comprehensive School  
Paul Harris: Head Teacher, Curwen Primary School  
Peter Whittle: Head Teacher, Langdon Academy  
Andrew Seager: Head Teacher, Stratford School Academy  
Anthony Wilson: Lister Community School  
Shirley Ann Jones: Head Teacher, St. James' CoE Junior School  
Quintin Peppiatt: New Vision Trust (Primary)  
Diane Rochford: Executive Head, John F Kennedy Special School

## **Apologies:**

Gael Hicks: Head Teacher, St Helen's Roman Catholic Primary School  
Anne Kibuuka: Head Teacher, Kay Rowe Nursery School & Forest Gate Children's Centre  
Ian Wilson: Head Teacher, Little Ilford Primary School  
Geoffrey Fowler: London Design and Engineering UTC  
Matt Hipperson: Head Teacher, St. Luke's CoE Primary School

## **Clerk:**

Kiran Parkash Singh: Clerk (Pupil Services)

## **Key**

Secondary Head Teacher – SHT

Primary Head Teacher - PHT

## Action Points

**Item 2. Transgender Admissions** – TJ to request information at the next London Inter Admissions Authority Group meeting. Feedback to be provided at the next forum.

**Item 2a. Sixth Form Admissions** – TJ to contact all schools with 6<sup>th</sup> form provision to ensure compliancy with the Admissions Code

**Item 2b. Summer Born Children** – TJ to develop new online public request form. Two PHT and a SHT to meet with practitioners and PVI nursery providers to discuss the

**Item 3c. Terms of Reference** – TJ to update Terms of Reference to reflect changes agreed by the forum.

**Item 3d. Place Planning** – MS to provide SEND data in relation to place planning and general data relating to the level of places available in schools.

**Item 4. Fair Access Protocol** – TJ to redraft based on feedback and recirculate for approval.

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## 1) Introductions

JM opened the forum by introducing herself as the new Cabinet Member for Education and chair of the forum.

## 2) Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

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

QP asked if there had been an update on the matter of transgender admissions. TJ advised that she will follow this up at the next London Inter Authority Admissions Group (LIAAG) on 29 June 2018.

### 2.a Sixth Form Admissions

TJ advised that the School Admissions Code required schools with sixth forms to consult over their arrangements and to ensure that they are published on their websites. TJ will send an email to all schools with a sixth form to remind them of what is required and to ensure that not only is there compliance but also transparency for applicants.

### 2.b Summer Born Admissions – NASH Feedback

TJ provided an update on summer born children. It was agreed at the last meeting that the matter would be discussed at the next Newham Association of Secondary Heads (NASH) to consider the impact of agreeing to defer the admission of a summer born child on secondary schools. It was confirmed at NASH that summer born children could leave school whilst in year 10 and were not required to sit GCSEs.

A SHT provided further comment from NASH. It was suggested that accountability measures should be adapted to deal with this (e.g. results count in the year they are sat). They were concerned that it could lead to schools encouraging students to be placed into a year group to suit the school and possibly impact on SEND or lead to parents 'shopping around'.

A PHT advised that they had had a number of requests this year and was in the process of considering them but advised that in the absence of advice or clear guidelines and timelines it was a challenge to make the right decisions.

TJ suggested that Newham needed a local protocol that schools could use to make

decisions as to whether deferment should be granted to make sure that there was a consistency in approach and decision making.

A PHT stated that any local protocol needed to be carefully thought through and that it must include guidance regarding children with SEND, particularly those undergoing a statutory assessment as it was always possible that there could be a difference of opinion between schools and SEND officers.

A PHT also suggested that a representation of head teachers should discuss deferred entry for summer born children with primary practitioners and PVI nursery providers.

TJ suggested that an online form could provide parents some clarity on how to apply for deferred entry. A SHT suggested that the form should state that any request was not guaranteed and that applicants should also consider the potential impact deferred entry may have on secondary school admission and education.

All members agreed to an online form taking into the SHTs' comments. Two PHTs and a SHT will follow up through a meeting with practitioners and nursery providers.

### **3 Standing Items**

#### **3.a New academy conversions and proposed new free schools**

TJ outlined the latest schools that have converted into an academy.

#### **3.b Consultations**

A SHT advised that a business case had been put forward to make an adjustment to their admission arrangements which takes into account the opening of a resource provision at their school for September 2018.

#### **3.c Terms of Reference**

TJ advised that the new Terms of Reference has been circulated. Attendees confirmed that they had been read. TJ asked the forum if any amendments needed to be made. The following were suggested and agreed:

Clarity that this forum covers place planning as well as admissions, and it was agreed that it will be known from now on as “**Admissions and Place Planning Forum**”

LB Newham's SEND service to provide a representative to become a member of the forum.

A representative from a Newham College/14-19 provider should attend

LB Newham Officers should not be involved in voting on policies. Voting rights restricted to head teachers and school representatives.

#### **3.d Place Planning**

MS provided an update on Place Planning. Going forward there is an expectation that primary population numbers will stabilise or reduce in some parts of the borough and that the secondary population will continue to increase. The forecast increase in secondary places will be met in part by expansion of both Brampton Manor Academy and Forest Gate Community School. Additional provision will be needed on top of this.

JM asked how the data was being monitored. MS explained the methodology. A SHT suggested that any plans needed to reflect the growth in the number of children in the borough with SEND. MS responded that the SEND data was being looked at as part of the Best for All strategy. PG added that the increase in the number of children with complex SEND was in part being addressed with additional resource provision places opening from September 2018.

A SHT queried whether once the primary year groups moved into secondary school, would there be a high surplus of places in secondary? MS advised that with the number of planned new homes the forecast is that the additional places being created in the next few years will be utilised.

A school representative suggested that the increase in secondary was good news and reflected the high retention rate of secondary pupils staying in the borough. However have the Department for Education or Education Funding Agency been approached to provide sites for new builds?

PG noted that national guidance is that new free schools are being prioritised in areas where schools have been 'coasting' rather than where there is a demonstrable need for places.

A SHT stated that it was important SEND admissions was considered alongside place planning and it was important to have data that reflected the increase in the number of children with needs in Newham, which can be discussed at the next panel.

A PHT added that whilst schools may have places available, capacity and resources were currently being stretched with the increase of children with SEND being admitted.

The forum agreed and requested data on places that are available in all schools.

#### **4 Fair Access Protocol**

TJ presented the draft version of the new Fair Access Protocol (FAP) which had been previously circulated. The feeling was that the current version did not reflect the original reasons why it was introduced. The draft had also been provided to the LB Newham's legal services as well as to the DfE.

The forum was invited to provide feedback. A SHT suggested that 'Group 2' (subject to local discretion) needed to have a broad definition and cases considered under this group needed to be looked at on a case by case basis.

The forum agreed that the Pupil Placement Panel was responsible for ensuring that the protocol was being adhered to and the panel were the guardians of the process, and the local authority carry out the decisions made by the panel.

A SHT added that there needed to be a constitution of Pupil Placement Panel members. TJ stated that the Terms of Reference was currently being drafted and the constitution was being considered as part of that.

PG concluded that the FAP will be re-drafted and circulated for final comment.

#### **5 Normal admission rounds – over allocation**

A SHT presented the discussion regarding over allocation and bulge classes and pointed out the difference in that schools who have over allocated are not required to fill in spaces as pupils are taken off roll but schools that open a bulge class are requested to infill places as they become available. They felt that this could lead to a concentration of in year admissions in certain schools where places bulge classes have been opened, creating a question of equity and fairness between school.

PG suggested that the difference was correct however to allow for this difference, growth funding is provided for schools who provide bulge classes. Whilst bulge classes are the preferred option to provide a guarantee of places for mid phase admissions, over allocation has also been necessary in recent years to ensure the LA can meet its duty to provide sufficient places.

#### **6 Exploring options: supporting schools with low rolls**

PG presented the agenda item regarding low roll numbers. Some schools in the borough

were a whole form of entry under their published admission number (PAN). The question for the forum was how to support schools with low numbers whilst ensuring there is sufficient 'headroom' in the system to ensure places are always available.

A PHT suggested 'mothballing' classes to cap their in year admission numbers but it was important schools liaised with the local authority before doing this. Mixed aged classes are also an option but not ideal. A SHT suggested that the impact of capping on neighbouring schools needed to be considered before any capping agreements were reached. JM added that capping comes with the caveat that schools may be asked to reopen a class should there be a need.

A PHT stated that some parents were unaware of certain schools in their area and the LA should improve signage around the borough to help promote the schools.

JM asked whether marketing would help. A PHT stated that it did not help their school. Some children are travelling some distance to get to school but would leave as soon as a place became available at a more local school.

## **7 Nursery Admissions**

TJ provided the panel with an update to nursery admissions. A document relating to nursery admissions had been circulated. Primary schools wanted a consistent approach to nursery admissions and discussions had taken place about what should be included in the arrangements which could be introduced from September 2019.

This will be followed up at the next forum.

Meeting Closed 20:00

Next meeting – Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2018. Location - Ellen Wilkinson Primary School  
End.