

Wilson, Tracey

From: Mark Pollard <pollardm@bishopperowne.co.uk>
Sent: 27 November 2018 12:19
To: Wilson, Tracey
Cc: Waters, NJ
Subject: CAUTION: External email - Worcester City FAAP response to the proposed 'In-year admissions protocol from 2020'

Dear Tracey,

I write on behalf of the Worcester City FAAP, representing the views of 6 headteachers of the following secondary schools:

Bishop Perowne CE College
Blessed Edward Oldcorne Catholic College
Droitwich Spa High School
Nunnery Wood High School
The Chantry School
Tudor Grange Academy, Worcester

We met on Thursday 22nd November 2018 and discussed, as part of our agenda, the consultation for Worcestershire County Council to adopt the responsibility for coordinating in-year admissions from September 2020. We are pleased to report that we are broadly in support of this process and the endeavour to provide transparency and fairness to the current system. However, we do have a number of concerns/questions regarding the implementation of the strategy as follows:

- 1) Can an academy 'opt out' (remain as an independent admissions authority) and effectively cripple the whole system by refusing to participate?
- 2) What is the process for ensuring all schools adhere to and cooperate with this protocol prior to launch? What capacity does the local authority have to ensure that the process is acted upon fairly in all schools?
- 3) What legal powers would the local authority have in ensuring all schools comply with the protocol and the admissions code?
- 4) The local authority has access, at each census point, to a clear picture of numbers of students on roll in each year group in each school. It has always published these figures on its website, however has not done so since January 2017. What measures will the local authority take to ensure transparency about numbers of students in each school and how will it ensure that the protocol is based on reliable and up-to-date information from schools?
- 5) What advice will local authority officers give to parents in terms of 'spaces available' in schools? Will this have any impact on the process for parents expressing a preference for school or schools of choice when the reality of place availability may be very different?
- 6) What is the estimated number of in-year applications that the local authority expects to process? What extra staffing capacity will the local authority provide to ensure the process runs smoothly? Will there be extra officers dedicated to and appropriately trained for this process specifically?

In representing the group's views in this response, I would be willing to meet to discuss any or all of these points further.

Kind regards,

Mark Pollard (Headteacher of Bishop Perowne CE College)

29 November 2018

Our ref: PA/TW
Contact: Tracey Wilson

Mark Pollard
Head Teacher Bishop Perowne CE College
Acting on behalf of Worcester City FAAP
Headteachers

Tel: 01905 678207

Dear Mark

I write in response to your email dated 26th November 2018, sent to myself on behalf of the Worcester City FAAP Schools, in relation to the consultation on the In-Year Admissions Protocol for 2020 onwards.

I would firstly like to thank all of those schools for taking the time to contribute to the consultation in a very positive manner. I will ensure that your response is provide to the Cabinet of Worcestershire County Council, when they determine the arrangements, at their meeting in January 2019.

I would like to address the questions that you have raised in relation to the implementation of the scheme, I shall endeavour to do so, in the order that you have raised them.

All schools have a statutory duty placed on them by the School Admissions Code Section 2.22. On receipt of an in-year application, there is a duty to notify the local authority of both the application and its outcome. The In-Year scheme being proposed, creates the facility for own admission authority schools to be able to meet their statutory duty. This will provide a comprehensive service that is clear and fair to all parents and schools.

Even if a school does not wish to participate, they are still legally obliged to provide the required information. Any school not complying with the requirements will be subject to challenge by School Admissions, the local authority and escalation, where necessary, to the Regional Schools Commissioner, the Education Skills Funding Agency and/or Secretary of State. The system cannot be crippled by the actions of an individual school.

This scheme is for the benefit of parents and all schools, and ensures that all are treated equally within the system. By standardising all of the processes, this will ensure that the practices across all schools are consistent and parents can be assured that their applications will be treated in the exact same way no matter which school they may be applying for. It also provides schools with the reassurance and confidence to know that all schools are dealing with applications in the exact same way, and that all schools are complying with the requirements placed on them. It is clear, fair and objective.

The local authority has a duty placed on them to raise an objection to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator if they are of the view or suspect that the admission arrangements that have been determined by other admission authorities are unlawful. I can advise,

that in the last 5 years, a total of 17 schools in Worcestershire have been reported to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator for not complying with the law in relation their admission arrangements. In each of those 17 cases the local authority has successfully had the objection upheld by the Office of the Schools Adjudicator and those schools have had to revise their arrangements. This challenge will continue to be made if it is suspected that any admission authority in Worcestershire is operating unlawfully.

With regards to the census information, the local authority collects census information at set points throughout the year, the information currently on the website is due for update and should be revised shortly. The local authority has also put into place, within the Children's Services Portal, a process for deregistering and registering children in all Worcestershire Schools. A system on the Portal is also being introduced, whilst schools continue to deal with their own in-year applications, for those applications and outcomes to be completed by each school on the Portal.

This data is and will be analysed in conjunction with the School Admissions data to ensure that children are not out of school for unnecessarily long periods of time, that the more vulnerable and hard to place children are safeguarded by a robust admissions process. The data on school numbers will be live data, obviously this can vary on a daily basis, so cause's difficulty in terms of publication, but we will be able to provide to the Chairs of FAAP, on a regular basis, the specific details on school numbers, numbers of in-year applications and their outcomes for their area panels. This should aid in your colleague discussions and peer to peer challenge ensures that all schools are acting in accordance with the scheme.

Whilst School Admissions will have a clear picture of place availability we will always caveat that in our discussions with parents, in that simply because a school appears to have a vacancy when comparing the number of children in the school with what was previously the PAN, it is also imperative that further detail in relation to how a school organises a particular year group must also be taken into account. We would always encourage parents to have curriculum discussions with individual schools prior to making an application.

If the In-Year admission process is co-ordinated, we will continue to have these conversations with parents and we will have a much clearer understanding of how each school has reached its decisions to refuse admission. Clarification can be sought, where evidence is not provided, to ensure that parents are provided with the exact reasons why a school is unable to accommodate another child. The law requires the reason for such refusals to be included in any letter refusing a place, as well as notifying the parent of their right to appeal. School Admissions will ensure that this is all included in the letter it issues to parents. Each school must be confident in defending it's decisions to an independent appeal panel.

School Admissions are not going to be reaching the decision as to whether or not to admit or refuse a child a school place. School Admissions will be the conduit for parents and schools creating a process which is timely and ensures their application is handled appropriately. It is particularly important that Children that are Looked After or Previously Looked After, those that are Hard to Place and that may be subject to the Worcestershire Fair Access Protocol can be identified early and any relevant referrals made in a timely manner. This minimises the days lost to education.

With regards to the estimated numbers of applications expected to be processed, in the consultation letter, I did explain that the number of in-year applications has increased. Based on the number of applications being processed previously and the number of schools that were being co-ordinated, it would show an estimate of approximately 1700 in-year applications/preferences being made directly to own admission authority schools. The local authority is committed to increasing the School Admissions Team in order to ensure that this process benefits parents, schools and the local authority. Staff will be recruited and trained by experienced practitioners in all aspects of School Admissions.

I hope this has been able to address the questions you have raised. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have further queries.

Yours sincerely



Mainstream Admissions Manager
Babcock Training Limited

**Consultation on Proposed Changes to the Admissions Policy
for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools 2020/21
Response Form**

| | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| School/Organisation/ Name | Ridgeway Academy |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|

1. Do you support giving second highest priority in the oversubscription criteria to children who have previously been in state care outside of England, and have ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted?

YES

NO

Comments:-

2. Do you support the Local Authority Co-ordinating In-Year Applications and approve the proposed Scheme?

YES

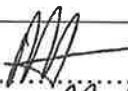
NO

Comments:-
This is an issue. The 'In year admissions' movement is having an impact on the quality of TEL and is disruptive. Also, it is unfair in some areas/schools...

3. Are there any comments on the Co-ordinated Primary Scheme you wish to make?

Comments:-

| |
|---|
| 4. Are there any comments on the Co-ordinated Secondary Scheme you wish to make? |
| Comments:- |
| 5. Are there any comments you wish to make on the proposed PAN changes? |
| Comments:- |

Signed..........
Printed.....*M. Bennett*.....

Responses are required by 7th December 2018. They should be sent to:
Admission Arrangements Consultation 2020/21, School Admissions, Prime
House, Woodbury Lane, Norton, Worcester, WR5 2NP

Or by e-mail to tracey.wilson@babcockinternational.com

7 December 2018

Our ref: PA/TW
Contact: Tracey Wilson

Mike Bennett
Head Teacher
Ridgeway Academy
Evesham Road
Astwood Bank
Redditch
B96 6BD

Tel: 01905 678207

Dear Mike

I write in response to your submitted consultation response form, in relation to the proposed changes to the Admission Arrangements for 2020.

I would like to thank you for taking the time to contribute to the consultation in a very positive manner. I will ensure that your response is provide to the Cabinet of Worcestershire County Council, when they determine the arrangements, at their meeting in January 2019.

All schools have a statutory duty placed on them by the School Admissions Code Section 2.22. On receipt of an in-year application, there is a duty to notify the local authority of both the application and its outcome. The In-Year scheme being proposed, creates the facility for own admission authority schools to be able to meet their statutory duty. This will provide a comprehensive service that is clear and fair to all parents and schools.

This scheme is for the benefit of parents and all schools, and ensures that all are treated equally within the system. By standardising all of the processes, this will ensure that the practices across all schools are consistent and parents can be assured that their applications will be treated in the exact same way no matter which school they may be applying for. It also provides schools with the reassurance and confidence to know that all schools are dealing with applications in the exact same way, and that all schools are complying with the requirements placed on them. It is clear, fair and objective.

Yours sincerely



Mainstream Admissions Manager
Babcock Training Limited