

Date: January 2009

CONSULTATION ON CHANGES TO THE ADMISSION RULES FOR HARROW COMMUNITY* SCHOOLS FROM SEPTEMBER 2010

Harrow Council consults every year about the system of applying for places in its primary and high schools. Full details of this year's consultation can be found on the Harrow website – www.harrow.gov.uk/admissionarrangements – or can be obtained in paper format from School Admissions – 020 8420 9614. This year a Working Group of elected members, primary and high school headteachers, governors and early years representatives, reporting to the Harrow Admissions Forum (HAF), were asked to review Harrow's admission arrangements. Their recommendations were presented to the Forum who agreed to consult as follows:

Primary school admission arrangements

Proposed increase to Planned Admission Number (PAN) for Elmgrove First and Elmgrove Middle Schools with effect from September 2010.

In order to increase provision in the area and to bring the PAN for the schools in line with the majority of schools in Harrow (i.e. multiples of 30), it is proposed to increase the planned intake for Elmgrove First reception and Elmgrove Middle Schools Year 4 from 82 to 90.

Proposed increase to Planned Admission Number (PAN) for Roxeth F&M School with effect from September 2010

In order to increase provision in the area and to bring the PAN for the school in line with the majority of schools in Harrow (i.e. multiples of 30, it is proposed to increase the planned intake for Roxeth F&M School's reception from 56 to 60.

***NOTE:** This only applies to Harrow's 54 community schools.

Individual governing bodies of Voluntary Aided or 'faith' schools and independent or private schools make their own admissions rules.

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High school admission arrangements

Community co-educational high schools

1. **NO** change to the admission rules that deal with:
 - Children Looked After - by law these children must be given first priority.
 - Agreed medical claims.
 - Siblings:
 - Siblings attending the school at the same time (excluding students at sixth form colleges).

If in January 2009 Cabinet agrees the change to school organisation the following additional sibling rule will apply for the 2010 academic year only.

 - For families with children in Year 6(11+ transfer) and Year 7(12+ transfer) who indicate they want their children to attend the same school, the following will apply: Where one child is offered a place because they best meet the admission rules at a preferred school, the other child will be given the sibling priority for that school. This is to ensure that siblings will be offered the same school.

2. To remove link school arrangements and use distance from home to school as the final criterion.

In making a decision to change the admission rules full account was given to the School Admissions Code of Practice, which requires admission arrangements to be fair and equitable across the borough. The following options were considered:

No change to the current arrangements	Independent legal advice considered that the current arrangements would not be felt to be fair and equitable because <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some primary schools have dual links. • One high school is oversubscribed by children from its feeder primary schools. • One high school only has one single linked school.
Changes to the current linked schools	This option was considered at great length but it was not possible to develop a model that was fair, equitable and would gain the support of parents and schools.
Banding	This option received little support during the early soundings exercise in July 2008 and on this basis has been ruled out.
Lottery	This option received little support during the early soundings exercise in July 2008 and on this basis has been ruled out.
Distance from home to school in a straight line	Distance offers a fair, equitable and stable option both for now and the future.

The reasons for proposing the change from link schools to distance are as follows:

- The outcome of the early soundings exercise was that only a small number (i.e. 4.7%) of respondees supported linked high schools over distance. However, when asked if they would still want a linked school system if links changed, over 50% of respondees indicated they would not support any change to established links.
- Independent legal advice was clear that dual links are likely to be challengeable under the Admissions Code of Practice. This meant that the current system would need to be changed.

- Because primary schools have differing intakes, it was not possible to balance the potential intake from linked primary schools to high schools' planned admission numbers without changing existing links. This would mean that a number of primary schools would have to change to a different linked high school. The disruptive impact of change was considered taking account of feedback from previous consultations and the early soundings exercise. This clearly identified that change to long established links would be very unpopular.
- Demographic changes mean that links will need to be reviewed constantly resulting in disruption and insecurity. This would lead to instability with links changing to meet circumstances (i.e. new housing developments, school expansion/contraction, etc.).
- Independent legal advice is that linked schools will only be acceptable when high schools do not fill all their places via the feeder criterion. At least some children must be placed in the school because they live in close proximity. This means that Park High school would need to reduce its number of linked primary schools.
- In making the decision information gained from an exercise undertaken using only distance on the 2008 high school transfer group was taken into account. This showed little impact on the number of successful first preference applications i.e. 1556 with linked schools and 1549 with distance. What was shown was that 106 pupils (6%) who would have been offered the linked school using links, would not have been offered places if distance were used. In many cases, these pupil were offered a more local (and in some cases a higher preference) school.
- Cluster arrangements to support curriculum continuity and pastoral support can continue without the need for link school arrangements.

Who will be affected by these proposals?

Pupils in Year 7 in 2009 transferring to Year 8 in September 2010.

If in January 2009, the Cabinet agrees to proposals for school re-organisation (including changing to 11+ transfer) then the following pupils will also be affected.

Pupils in Year 6 in 2009 transferring to Year 7 in September 2010

Community single sex school (Bentley Wood School for Girls)

No changes are proposed.

Next steps

Harrow Cabinet will make the final decision on any change to Harrow's Admission rules at its meeting on 26 March 2009. A summary of views received through this consultation will be presented to them before any decision is made.

Parents and carers are particularly welcome to comment on the proposed admission arrangements for 2010. To give your views please complete the form attached to this note and return it either to your child's school or Admissions Service, Harrow Council, Civic Centre, Station Road, Harrow, HA1 2UW by **13 FEBRUARY 2009** at the very latest.

Madeleine Hitchens
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PARENTS' RESPONSE FORM : SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2010

Which school/pre-school does your child currently attend?

Please tick **one** box

Please let us know your views by ticking one box ONLY	I agree	I disagree
PRIMARY SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS		
Increase intake to Elmgrove First & Elmgrove Middle from 82 to 90		
Increase intake to Roxeth F&M from 56 to 60		
COMMENTS ON PRIMARY SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS:		
HIGH SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS		
Agreed medical claims, where there are special medical reasons for seeking a place at the preferred school		
Siblings attending the school at the same time (excluding students at sixth form colleges)		
For 2010 only, siblings in 11+ and 12+ transfer groups, to have the sibling link where parents want their children to attend the same school ¹		
Distance from home to school measured in a straight line ²		
COMMENTS ON HIGH SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS OR ON THE OTHER OPTIONS THAT WERE CONSIDERED		

¹ See report for full details of sibling arrangements

² Distance is measured from the home address point to the closest school entrance.

PLEASE RETURN TO YOUR CHILD'S CURRENT SCHOOL OR ADMISSIONS SERVICE, HARROW COUNCIL, CIVIC CENTRE, STATION ROAD, HARROW HA1 2UW BY 13 FEBRUARY 2009 AT THE LATEST.

To help us to review and improve our consultation please turn over the page and tell us a little bit about yourself and how you heard about this consultation. **This will be used only for monitoring by Harrow Council.**

I heard about this consultation from:

My child's school	
Pre-school playgroup / nursery	
A local newspaper advert	
Harrow People Magazine	
A public notice/poster (e.g. Doctor's surgery, play group, pre-school, supermarket etc.)	
Harrow's website www.harrow.gov.uk	
From family / friends/ neighbours	
A voluntary or community group	
Other – please specify	

To which one of these groups do you consider you belong?

Asian or Asian British Bangladeshi		Mixed White & Black African	
Asian or Asian British Indian		Mixed White & Black Asian	
Asian or Asian British Pakistani		Mixed White & Black Caribbean	
Black or Black British Other		Mixed Other	
Black or Black British African		White British	
Black or Black British Caribbean		White Irish	
Chinese		White Other	
		Other Ethnic Group	

It would be helpful if you could give the first part of your Post Code (eg HA1)

MANY THANKS FOR YOUR HELP