

Executive Board – 21 February 2023

Subject:	School Admission Arrangements 2024/25 for Nottingham City community schools																						
Corporate Director(s)/Director(s):	Catherine Underwood, Corporate Director for People																						
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Cheryl Barnard, Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Schools																						
Report author and contact details:	Danny Hall, Admissions Manager, Access and Inclusion, E: Danny.Hall@nottinghamcity.gov.uk																						
Other colleagues who have provided input:	Lucy Juby, Project Manager, Education Division, E: Lucy.Juby@nottinghamcity.gov.uk																						
Subject to call-in:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No																						
Key Decision:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No																						
Criteria for Key Decision:	B) Significant impact on communities living or working in two or more wards in the City <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No																						
Type of expenditure:	<input type="checkbox"/> Revenue <input type="checkbox"/> Capital If Capital, provide the date considered by Capital Board Date:																						
Total value of the decision:	Nil																						
Wards affected:	All																						
Date of consultation with Portfolio Holder(s):	29/09/2022																						
Relevant Council Plan Key Outcome:	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr><td>Clean and Connected Communities</td><td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td>Keeping Nottingham Working</td><td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td>Carbon Neutral by 2028</td><td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td>Safer Nottingham</td><td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td>Child-Friendly Nottingham</td><td style="text-align: center;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td>Healthy and Inclusive</td><td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td>Keeping Nottingham Moving</td><td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td>Improve the City Centre</td><td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td>Better Housing</td><td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td>Financial Stability</td><td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td>Serving People Well</td><td style="text-align: center;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td></tr> </table>	Clean and Connected Communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	Keeping Nottingham Working	<input type="checkbox"/>	Carbon Neutral by 2028	<input type="checkbox"/>	Safer Nottingham	<input type="checkbox"/>	Child-Friendly Nottingham	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Healthy and Inclusive	<input type="checkbox"/>	Keeping Nottingham Moving	<input type="checkbox"/>	Improve the City Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	Better Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Financial Stability	<input type="checkbox"/>	Serving People Well	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Summary of issues (including benefits to citizens/service users):	<p>To consider and approve the local authority's proposed admission arrangements for the 2024/2025 academic year in respect of community schools.</p> <p>The proposed admission arrangements are set out in Appendix 1. The proposed oversubscription criteria is set out within the policy along with the admission numbers for community schools. Included in the document is also a copy of the draft timetable for the 2024.2025 admission year and the City Council's Fair Access Protocol.</p> <p>The LA is proposing no substantial change to the policy from that of the previous year apart from a reduction in the Published Admission Number (PAN) for Dovecote Primary School.</p>																						
Does this report contain any information that is exempt from publication?	No																						

Recommendation(s):
1 To approve the local authority's proposed admission arrangements for the 2024/2025 academic year for community schools.

1. Reasons for recommendations

- 1.1 Following on from analysis carried out by the Council's School Organisation Team, it was identified that there is a continued growing surplus of places in primary schools in some areas. Caused primarily from falling birth rates, the team carried out further analysis on primary school capacity in planning areas. This identified a need for PAN reductions at some schools and academies. Clifton was identified as one area with a surplus of school places. Collaboratively, a review was undertaken between the Council and academies in the area to identify appropriate solutions to address this. The reduction included in this policy is necessary to safeguard the future financial viability of Dovecote Primary School, optimising capacity with a potential to repurpose space and support strategies that aim to introduce flexibility and sustainability.
- 1.2 The unamended sections of the arrangements continue to support the Council with complying with the School Admissions Code and providing services that are efficient and citizen focused.

2. Background (including outcomes of consultation)

- 2.1 The local authority is the admissions authority for community schools and is therefore responsible for determining the admission arrangements for these schools.
- 2.2 As the local authority is proposing changes to the policy (PAN change to Dovecote Primary) there is a requirement to consult. Consultations also take place with the governing body of each community school about its proposal to keep the same admission number for that school. The consultation with governing bodies of community schools took place during the period 4 October 2021 and 26 November 2021. No responses to the consultation were received.
- 2.3 During the period 12th October 2022 to 23rd November 2022, the local authority consulted on its proposed arrangements for admission to schools in the 2024/2025 school year which included the change to PAN for Dovecote Primary School.

3. Other options considered in making recommendations

- 3.1 Alternative options would be to leave the admission numbers as they are but this could create vulnerabilities for the schools in respect of staffing and finance.

4. Consideration of Risk

- 4.1 There are no known risks to the changes to the school admission arrangements.

5. Best Value Considerations, including consideration of Make or Buy where appropriate

N/A

6. Finance colleague comments (including implications and value for money/VAT)

As a result of there only being a reduction in the pupil admission number for Dovecote Primary in 2023/24 to the admissions code there is no cost implication to the Local Authority.

Funding for the School Admissions service is funded from the Dedicated Schools Grant. This budget allocation was approved by Schools Forum for the financial year 2023/24 on 6 December 2022 and is taken to the Executive Board for approval on 21 February 2023 as part of the budget setting process. This process is undertaken on an annual basis.

This proposal will support the school to manage the financial implications on their delegated budget of falling pupil numbers by helping ensure class sizes are at a viable level.

Advice provided by Julia Elizabeth Holmes (Finance Analyst) on 19/12/2022.

7. Legal colleague comments

This decision seeks approval for proposed changes to the arrangements for admission to schools in the 2024/2025 school year from those determined for the previous year. The LA is proposing no substantial change to the policy from that of the previous year apart from a reduction in the published admission number for Dovecote Primary School.

All admission authorities must consult in accordance with the School Admissions Code (September 2021) where they propose to reduce the PAN. Community and voluntary controlled schools have the right to object to the Schools Adjudicator if the PAN set for them is lower than they would wish. There is a strong presumption in favour of an increase to the PAN to which the Schools Adjudicator must have regard when considering any such objection.

The Admission Authority is the body responsible for setting and applying a school's admission arrangements. For community or voluntary controlled schools, this body is the local authority, i.e. NCC.

Consultation must last for a minimum of 6 weeks and must take place between 1 October and 31 January in the determination year.

Admission authorities must consult with:

- a) parents of children between the ages of two and eighteen;
- b) other persons in the relevant area who in the opinion of the admission authority have an interest in the proposed admissions;
- c) all other admission authorities within the relevant area (except that primary schools need not consult secondary schools);
- d) whichever of the governing body and the local authority is not the admission authority;
- e) any adjoining neighbouring local authorities where the admission authority is the local authority; and
- f) in the case of schools designated with a religious character, the

body or person representing the religion or religious denomination.

For the duration of the consultation period, the admission authority must publish a copy of their full proposed admission arrangements (including the proposed PAN) on the school's website or its own website (in the case of a local authority) together with details of where comments may be sent and the areas on which comments are not sought. Admission authorities must also send, upon request, a copy of the proposed admission arrangements to any of the persons or bodies listed above inviting comment. Failure to consult effectively may be grounds for subsequent complaints and appeals.

Regulations 12 to 17 of the School Admissions Regulations 2012, also cover consultation requirements.

It is therefore essential that the proposed consultation complies with both the Code and the Regulations referred to above, especially given the potential for an objection/appeal in respect of the same. Having consulted in compliance with their obligations, the LA has received only a small number of objections to the proposal, with the majority of consultees being in favour of the proposals.

As the LA has complied with its statutory requirements to consult in relation to this decision, the proposal can now proceed toward approval by the Portfolio Holder for Early Years, Education and Employment.

Advice provided by Majid Iqbal (Legal Team Leader) on 23/12/2022.

8. Other relevant comments

During spring term 2021/22, Dovecote reviewed their staffing in light of falling admissions predicted for the next two years and commenced consultation on a staffing reduction process in order to reduce to one form entry based on the estimates. As a result 4.51 FTE staff left on 31 August 2022 by voluntary redundancy and one 0.6 FTE teacher resigned. This process was supported by HR and was compliant with Council procedures and legislation.

It is hoped that this action will ensure appropriate staffing for the next two years, during which time the school will consider natural wastage and the need to carry out further reductions in the future.

School Governors are advised to engage HR support for any future process that may be necessary. The Governing Body are committed to minimising the impact on staff wherever possible.

Advice provided by Carol McCrone (Senior HR Consultant) on 19/12/2022.

9. Crime and Disorder Implications (If Applicable)

- 9.1 Admission arrangements are set to enable all school age children to access a suitable school place at the appropriate time, as far as possible according to their parents' preference, so that they are not vulnerable to crime and disorder.

10. Social value considerations (If Applicable)

- 10.1 N/A

11. Regard to the NHS Constitution (If Applicable)

11.1 N/A

12. Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

12.1 Has the equality impact of the proposals in this report been assessed?

No
An EIA is not required because:

Yes
Attached, and due regard will be given to any implications identified in it.

13. Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)

13.1 Has the data protection impact of the proposals in this report been assessed?

No

A DPIA is not required because this does not include any personal information, and in accordance with s.88C(1) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, the admission authority for a maintained school must, before the beginning of each school year, determine the admission arrangements which are to apply for that year.

14. Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA)

14.1 Has the carbon impact of the proposals in this report been assessed?

No
A CIA is not required because this is in relation to an administrative process.

15. List of background papers relied upon in writing this report (not including published documents or confidential or exempt information)

15.1 None

16. Published documents referred to in this report

16.1 School Admissions Code 2021.

16.2 The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012.

16.3 Delegated Decision 4729 – Consultation on Admission Arrangements for 2024/2025 Academic Year