

Children and Families Committee

Date of Meeting:	12 July 2021
Report Title:	Variation to LA Co-ordinated Scheme and Admissions Arrangements
Report of:	Ged Rowney, Interim Director of Children's Services
Report Reference No:	CF/33/21
Ward(s) Affected:	All wards

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. There is a new School Admissions Code due to come into force on 1 September 2021 subject to parliamentary approval.
- 1.2. LA Co-ordinated Scheme and Admissions Arrangements 2021-22 and 2022-23 need to be varied to meet the new requirements and statutory duties around school admissions.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. Arrangements to be varied as below:
- 2.2. References to School Admissions Code 2014 updated to 2021.
- 2.3. Clarification that reference to Previously Cared for Children includes those previously in State Care outside of England and ceased to be in State Care as adopted (e.g. Appendix 2 -paragraph 20.1).
- 2.4. Confirmation that Admission Authorities may opt out of the Co-ordinated scheme and this will be published on the Cheshire East website.
- 2.5. Changes around addresses that can be used for children of Service Personnel and Crown Servants coming from overseas (e.g. Appendix 2 paragraph 1.7).
- 2.6. Approval of LA Co-ordinated Scheme and Admissions Arrangements at Appendix 1 and 2.

- 2.7. Approval to adapt the above LA Co-ordinated Scheme and Admissions Arrangements should any additional statutory changes be requested as part of the parliamentary approval.

3. Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1. To comply with the new School Admissions Code due to come into force on 1 September 2021 subject to parliamentary approval.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1. No other options if this becomes a statutory requirement.

5. Background

- 5.1. The LA is required to determine Admissions Arrangements by 28 February of the previous year to which the arrangements apply (e.g. the Arrangements for September 2022 where determined by 28 February 2021). As the DfE has published a new Admissions Code outside the usual Admissions timeline variations are required to adhere to this.

6. Consultation and Engagement

- 6.1. The DfE have confirmed that consultation is not a requirement where variation is solely to meet the requirements of a new Code. The New Code has been shared with all Admissions Authorities and Schools.
- 6.2. The Admissions Team is running separate online training sessions in June 2021 for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools where the LA is the Admissions Authority and for own Admissions Authority Schools (e.g. Academies) to explain the changes and the steps that schools need to take to comply with the new Code.

7. Implications

7.1. Legal

- 7.1.1. The School Admissions Code was first published in December 2014 and is issued under Section 84 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and is statutory guidance which sets out what schools and local authorities must do to comply with the law. The guidance should be followed unless there is good reason to not to.
- 7.1.2. The School Admissions Code has now been updated and the guidance in its revised form will now come into force on 1 September 2021 and will apply with immediate effect.
- 7.1.3. A summary of changes and actions required to comply (largely operational e.g. changes to website and composite prospectus) has been completed by legal.

7.2. Finance

- 7.2.1. No financial implications.

7.3. Policy

7.3.1. Policy changed to comply with the new Admissions Code.

7.4. Equality

7.4.1. There are no implications in relation to equality and diversity.

7.5. Human Resources

7.5.1. There are no HR implications.

7.6. Risk Management

7.6.1. Risk mitigated by changes as required by policy.

7.7. Rural Communities

7.7.1. No changes that impact on rural communities.

7.8. Children and Young People/Cared for Children

7.8.1. Clarification that children previously in State Care outside England are given priority in Admissions Arrangements. It is not known how many Cheshire East children will fall into this category as ethnicity is not disclosed within the school admissions application. It is also believed that many parents may chose not to disclose their child's previously cared for status. However as there is a high level of parental preference met within school admissions it is unlikely that this would lead to a child not being offered their preferred school place.

7.9. Public Health

7.9.1. There are no Public Health implications.

7.10. Climate Change

7.10.1. There are no implications for Climate Change.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Jo Bowkett Team Manager – Schools Admissions and Transport Jo.bowkett@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Appendices:	Appendix 1: Draft LA Co-ordinated Scheme and Admissions Arrangements 2021-22 Appendix 2: Draft LA Co-ordinated Scheme and Admissions Arrangements 2022-23
Background Papers:	School Admissions Code 2021