

OPEN

## **Children and Families Committee**

**10 February 2025**

### **Determination of the Co-ordinated Scheme and Admissions Arrangements for 2026-27**

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**Report of: Claire Williamson – Director of Education, Strong Start and Integration**

**Report Reference No: CF/36/24-25**

**Ward(s) Affected: All**

#### **Purpose of Report**

- 1 To seek approval of the Committee to determine the Co-ordinated Scheme and Admissions Arrangements to comply with the statutory duty.
- 2 To share with the Committee the outcome of the public consultation and the proposed Co-ordinated Scheme and Admissions Arrangements for determination.

#### **Executive Summary**

- 3 Cheshire East has statutory duties relating to school admissions under the School Admissions Code.
- 4 Cheshire East has a role in co-ordinating school applications. This is set out in the Co-ordinated Scheme. It currently co-ordinates mainstream applications for all schools except Crewe Engineering and Design UTC and Cheshire Studio School.
- 5 Cheshire East is the Admissions Authority for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools within the borough. This means that it is responsible for decisions relating to admissions to these schools. The Admissions Arrangements set out the policy for admissions including the oversubscription criteria. Other schools, for example, Academies are responsible for their own admissions decisions and policies.

- 6 Consultation must take place at least every seven years to comply with the School Admissions Code. Consultation took place for 6 weeks between October and December 2024. Prior to consultation the proposed changes were considered by the Children and Families Committee in September 2024.
- 7 The Consultation summary report is attached and key points are set out in the Consultation and engagement section.
- 8 Admission Arrangements for Wilmslow High School Sixth Form were also part of the consultation. No significant changes are proposed. There are changes for Shared responsibility which mirror the changes in the main Admission Arrangements.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The Children and Families Committee is recommended to:

1. Determine the Co-ordinated Scheme and Admissions Arrangements for 2026-27 in line with the School Admissions Code.

### **Background**

- 9 Following the consultation the following changes were made to the proposed arrangements:
- 10 Changes in published admission numbers

School	Current Published Admission Number	New Published Admission Number	Change / reason
Bollington Cross Primary School	25	25	No change – not part of original consultation and no local need for additional places
Beechwood Primary School	45	60	Increase

Sound and District Primary School	19	21	Increase
Vernon Primary School	50	55	Increase

- 11 Lower Park Primary School has been removed as it has joined The Halliard Trust, and the Academy Trust has become its Admissions Authority.
- 12 At the Children and Families Committee on 10 September 2024 it was raised by members whether consideration could be given to co-ordinating applications for Crewe Engineering and Design UTC. This has been raised with the Academy Trust and the Headteacher and it has been decided that the school will continue to manage its own applications and become part of the Co-ordinated Scheme.
- 13 A definition of “relevant area” has been added in at paragraph 16 of the Co-ordinated Scheme. This relates to the other parties that Admissions Authorities have to consult.

*It is proposed that for individual admission authorities within Cheshire East, the relevant area should be:*

- *All schools or neighbouring Local Authorities which are within 10 miles for a secondary school and 5 miles for a primary school (primary schools need not consult secondary schools).*

## **Consultation and Engagement**

- 14 There were 89 responses to the report. The responses were largely positive with 73% respondents agreeing that how places were to be allocated could be understood.
- 15 Every school has a published admission number. There is no requirement to consult where this is to be increased. There are some schools where it is proposed to be increased these are highlighted in the document in appendix 3. One response suggested that the published admission number for Bollington Cross Primary School be increased which was not included in the original consultation.

- 16 Shared responsibility – 85% of responses agreed that the new proposals for determining the address to be used for admissions purposes was clear and 83% of responses felt it was fair and reasonable.
- 17 Admission of children outside their normal age group – 70% of responses agreed that the process for this was clear and 69% agreed that it was fair and reasonable

**Reasons for Recommendations**

- 18 To comply with the School Admissions Code

**Other Options Considered**

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Option	Impact	Risk
Do nothing	This would put the local authority in breach of its duties under the School Admissions Code	High

**Implications and Comments**

*Monitoring Officer/Legal*

- 20 Both the Admission Arrangements and Co-ordinated Scheme have been reviewed and approved by Legal.

*Section 151 Officer/Finance*

- 21 There are no direct financial implications of this decision.

*Policy*

- 22 The Local Authority has a statutory duty to co-ordinate school admissions and this links in with the corporate plan aim of *A council which empowers and cares about people* and the priority to *ensure all children have a high quality, enjoyable education that enables them to achieve to their full potential.*

*Equality, Diversity and Inclusion*

- 23 An Equality Impact Assessment has been reviewed following consultation. No significant issues relating to equality, diversity and inclusion were identified through the consultation process.

### *Human Resources*

- 24 There are no increased human resource implications for the Council.

### *Risk Management*

- 25 The Local Authority is required to determine its Admissions Arrangements by 28 February each year so if it does not do so then it would not be complying with the statutory duty under the School Admissions Code.

### *Rural Communities*

- 26 There are no direct implications for rural communities, but the oversubscription criteria gives priority to children living in catchment and closest to the school to assist in parents securing a place at their local school.

### *Children and Young People including Cared for Children, care leavers and Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)*

- 27 Children with an Education and Health Care Plan and Cared for and Previously cared for children are given high priority within the oversubscription criteria as required by the School Admissions Code.

### *Public Health*

- 28 There are no direct implications for public health, however providing sufficient places in their local community could improve a child's social and emotional wellbeing.

### *Climate Change*

- 29 By providing local school places the distances which some children may have to travel to attend school should be reduced thus reduce congestion on the roads and therefore reduce emissions, improving the air quality and making a better environment to live in.

<b>Access to Information</b>	
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Appendices:	<p>Appendix 1 - Cheshire East Admissions Arrangements 2026-27 for determination</p> <p>Appendix 2 - Cheshire East Co-ordinated Scheme 2026-27 for determination</p> <p>Appendix 3 - Cheshire East Sixth Form Admissions Arrangements 2026-27 for determination</p> <p>Appendix 4 – Admissions Arrangements Decision Report considered by Children and Families committee – 10 September 2024</p> <p>Appendix 5 – Equality Impact Assessment -14 January 2025.</p> <p>Appendix 6 – School Admissions Consultations report</p>
Background Papers:	<p><a href="#">School Admissions Code, 2021</a></p>