## Consultation feedback report – Admission Arrangements 2018-19

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1. Background

Gloucestershire County Council consulted on the proposed school admission policies between 1st November 2016 and 8th January 2017.

School admission policies, which are published annually, include information about how places are allocated, how waiting lists for schools work and people’s right to appeal decisions.

By law any school or organisation that manages their own school admissions, such as the council, has to consult on their policy every seven years.

Gloucestershire County Council set the admission arrangements for 146 schools in Gloucestershire. The council’s policy hasn’t changed significantly.

2. Consultation Methodology

Stakeholders were invited to take part in the consultation via an online survey. The promotion of this survey was undertaken in the following ways:

2.1 Online

An online survey was developed and promoted directly to all key stakeholders as well as through the local media, social media, heads up and what’s up Gov communications.

Key stakeholders, included:

- All schools in Gloucestershire and within 5 mile radius of Gloucestershire border
- Early Years Settings in Gloucestershire
- All Local Parish councils
- All Districts within Gloucestershire
- Neighbouring local authorities
- Diocese
- Minority Community Groups e.g. Gloucestershire Chinese women’s guild and GARAS
- Advert in local Answer magazine (circulation 200,000 homes)
- Email to all parents applying online in the September 2017 cohort for Primary, Junior and Secondary schools
2.2 Postal

Consultation posters and flyers advertising the survey were sent to a range of stakeholders, including:

- GP Surgeries
- Libraries
- Leisure Centres
- Childrens Centres
- Note on the Primary Allocation reminder letters to parents
- Flyers/Posters in all Shire Hall Blocks
- Ad panels in Shire Hall

2.3 Face to Face

Stakeholders were invited to give their views on the proposal through seven drop in sessions at various locations throughout the county. These took place on:

- Thursday 10\textsuperscript{th} Nov 2016, 10.00am and 1.00pm, Cotswold Leisure Centre
- Tuesday 15\textsuperscript{th} Nov 2016, 1.00pm and 4.00pm, Regent Arcade, Cheltenham
- Friday 18\textsuperscript{th} Nov 2016, 10.00am and 1.00pm, Stratford Park Leisure Centre
- Tuesday 22\textsuperscript{nd} Nov 2016, 3.00pm and 6.00pm, GL1 Leisure Centre
- Monday 28\textsuperscript{th} Nov 2016, 3.00pm and 6.00pm, Newent Library
- Tuesday 6\textsuperscript{th} Nov 2016, 3.00pm and 6.00pm, Places for People Centre
- Thursday 15\textsuperscript{th} Dec 2016, 2.00pm and 5.00pm, Coleford Library

3. Consultation Feedback

3.1 Drop in events

During the events local authority officers were on hand to answer questions and explain the arrangements in more detail. Attendees were encouraged to then complete the survey online using a supplied GCC laptop or take a flyer giving detail of how they could access the survey online at a later date.

3.2 Questionnaire

A total of 435 responses were received via the questionnaire.
4. Respondents

Respondents were asked to identify themselves as belonging to one or more groups of respondents. The tables below provide a breakdown of the people who responded to each question (not all of the 435 responded to every question)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Number of responses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parent/Carer</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>18</td>
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Those selecting ‘other’ identified themselves as a Gloucestershire resident interested in education, Early years staff, prospective parent, Parish council, Grandparent, Interested party and child minder.

5. Key findings

Question 1

Do you understand how the council allocates school places?

Of the 432 people who responded to this question, the majority (93%) said that they did understand how the council allocates school places.
Question 2

What could we do to make this easier?

13 people suggested ways in which the council could make the process easier, which predominately related to ensuring settings and parents had easy access to clear information (including other languages).

- Clearer process so nurseries can give out educated response to parents
- Pre-application evening at pre school/community centre
- Explain process in primary school meeting
- Catchment area for all schools
- Clearer info sent out in language parents/carers can understand (x3)
- Automatic place from Inf-Jun unless parent specifies don’t want place
- More clarity/clearer info regarding grammar school testing
- Send out info/Booklet (x3)
- Video explainer

The suggestion to automatically transfer children from infant to junior school is not permitted in legislation.

Question 3

The county council is committed to making sure schools support families, therefore do you agree that it is important is to keep siblings together at the same school?

Of the 434 people who responded to this question, the majority (79%) agreed with this statement.
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Question 4

Do you think there are any particular children or families that may be disadvantaged by this policy?

Of the 428 people who responded to this question, the majority (75%) thought particular children or families would not be disadvantaged by this policy.

Of those who felt it would disadvantage children the following comments were made:

- Closer children may miss out because of siblings taking places (x53)
- Non religious children have less options in certain areas (x2)
- Unable to choose 5 schools with breakfast & after school clubs
- EHC or LAC children should not take preference (x2)
- Military children are disadvantaged
- Pre-school children unable to get in to chosen school
- Children with additional needs but no EHC are disadvantaged
- Should have catchment for all schools

Question 5

Do you agree that important children should be able to access a school within walking distance?

Of the 433 people who responded to this question, the majority (61%) strongly agreed
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Question 6

Do you think there are any circumstances not included in our sibling definition?

Of the 418 people who responded to this question, the majority (94%) thought there were no circumstances not included in our sibling definition.

Of those who felt there were circumstances not covered the following comments were made:

- Whether or not a child was in care prior to a special guardianship order or not/has a special guardianship order (x2)
- Children living as a family whether related or not eg cousins, foster care (x6)
- Siblings that don’t live in the same house (x3)
- Add sibling rule that must currently live within a certain radius from school Non religious children have less options