

Scrutiny Inquiry Day – School place and admission arrangements

Agenda



Date: Friday, 3 February 2017

Time: 9.30 am

Venue: Conference Hall, City Hall College Green
Bristol BS1 5TR

Distribution:

Open to all Councillors and Cabinet.

Respective Committee Members: Brenda Massey (Chair), Jos Clark (Vice-Chair), Lesley Alexander, Mark Brain, Eleanor Combley, Anna Keen, Gill Kirk, Cleo Lake, Celia Phipps, Ruth Pickersgill, Liz Radford, John Swainston and Roger White

Copies to: John Readman (Strategic Director - People), Paul Jacobs (Service Director Education & Skills), Hayley Leman (Schools Admissions Officer, School Support Services), Ian Bell (Place Planning Manager, Primary Learning Section), Karen Blong (Policy Advisor), Rachel Abba (DLT Support Manager) and Joshua Van Haaren (Democratic Services Officer)

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Date: Thursday, 26 January 2017



Agenda

1. Inquiry Day Programme

6.00 pm

(Pages 4 - 5)

2. Background Info

(Pages 6 - 8)

Bristol City Council Overview and Scrutiny – Inquiry Day

‘School Admission Arrangements in Bristol

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Preparation pack

Thank you for accepting the invitation to participate in the Inquiry Day.

Please find enclosed some information to help you prepare for the session. You are recommended to familiarise yourself with this and the workshop information pack before the Inquiry as time will be limited on the day.

The Information pack consists of:

1. Introduction
2. Programme for the day
3. Background Information
4. Information about other Local Authorities, including information received from other Core Cities
5. Information pack from the workshop on the 19th December 2016
(Available Separately through Mod.Gov).



Bristol City Council Overview and Scrutiny – Inquiry Day

School Admission Arrangements in Bristol

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Programme

9.30am Welcome and Introductions

- Councillor Brenda Massey – Chair of the People Scrutiny Commission and Councillor Claire Hiscott – Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

9.35am An overview of the School Place Planning and Admissions workshop – 19th December

- Paul Jacobs, Education and Skills Service Director

9.45 am Information / evidence from Stakeholders

- Abdul Ahmed, Said Burale and Hanna Ahmed - The Somali Forum (10 mins)
- Christine Townsend – former Mayoral Candidate (May 2016) (10 mins)
- Peninah Achieng-Kindberg and Sauda Kyalambuka - African Voices Forum (10 mins)
- Nimo Ibrahim and Iman Abdi - The Bristol Somali Women’s Group (10 mins)
- Abdul Jama – Bristol Education Welfare Service, Bristol City Council (10 mins)

10.35 am Question and Answers and group discussion

----- 10.45 – 11am - Comfort break -----

11.00 am Information from School Representatives

Click on the school name to view the admission arrangements

- Ms Jo Butler, Head teacher – [Cotham School](#)
- Mr A Perry , Executive Principal – [Colston’s Girls’ School](#)
- Mr Graham Diles , Deputy Head – [Saint Mary Redcliffe and Temple School](#)
- Ms Keziah Featherstone, Head teacher - [Bridge Learning Campus](#)
- Mr Rupert Moreton, Vice Principal – [Bristol Cathedral Choir School](#)

11:50 am Question and Answer session

12:10 pm The approach to school admissions in other Local Authority areas

- Hayley Leman – School Admissions Lead and Ian Bell - Place Planning Manager

12.20 pm Question and Answer session



12.30 pm **Table discussion**

Key Questions to be considered:

- Should Bristol City Council be doing anything differently?
- From the information provided, are there any suggestions or recommendations you'd like to make to the Mayor?

12.55 **Plenary feedback**

1pm **Close**



Bristol City Council Overview and Scrutiny – Scrutiny Inquiry Day

School Admission Arrangements in Bristol

Different Admission Systems

Admission Authorities use different systems to allocate school places. These may include:

- Banding - an equal number of places allocated from each band to achieve a balanced comprehensive intake.
- Geographical areas - priority given to children living within a defined geographical area.
- Home to school distance – measured by direct line or walking route.
- Random Allocation – a random draw under an admission criterion.
- Priority to children of staff/founding directors.
- Priority to children with social or medical reasons for attending a school.
- Priority to children with a child protection plan in place.
- Priority to children with an aptitude in a particular area such as music, sport or languages.
- Priority to children with a sibling attending the school.
- Priority to children entitled to Free School Meals or Pupil Premium.

Different Authorities’ Approaches

Brighton and Hove

Priority to Children in Care and Children Previously in Care.

- Sibling attending the preferred school.
- A wide geographical area served by several schools – if school is over-subscribed within this criterion places are allocated randomly.
- When random allocation introduced first preferences met reduced from 84% to 78%.

In 2010 a report by the Institute for Education and the Universities of London and Bristol found that lotteries alone did not give poor children a higher chance of securing a place at a top school.

Lancaster University found that Brighton and Hove attempts to address inequalities in education through a school lottery system had been largely unsuccessful.

Hackney

Once Children in Care, Children Previously in Care and siblings are considered, places allocated as follow:

- No geographical areas in place – places allocated by dividing applications into 5 bands. If a band is over-subscribed, home to school distance used as tie-breaker.
- Some schools have an inner band (home address up to 1 km from the school) and an outer band (home address 1 km to 2.2 km from the school).



Hackney primary schools build into the school day sitting the Cognitive Ability Tests (CATS) to enable children to be placed in bands. Children educated out of area sit the test on a set day at a number of secondary schools.

Completing applications is part of the school day with support given by primary school.

For Reception applications, library staff available every Thursday to help parents/carers apply on-line. Bristol could adopt this policy and extend it to Citizen Points.

Oldham, Bradford and Burnley Local Authorities

Bradford – to aid cohesion closed 2 two schools and established a new school taking largely equal number of children from different communities.

Also introduced exchange programmes and joint projects to break down segregation and share good practice. Similar projects in place in Epping Forest and Solihull.

Birmingham

New Academy opened in 2015 sponsored by the local university. Home to school distance measured to 4 'nodal' points to ensure a mixed intake in terms of socio-economic, ethnicity and academic ability.

- 50% of places offered to first point close to the school site.
- Remaining 50% of places offered to children living within 3 other nodal areas.



Information from Core Cities

The following question was sent to the School admission and Scrutiny teams at the other [Core Cities](#).

Has the Local Authority ever taken any action specifically designed to improve diversity , i.e. changed catchment areas to make them more representative, adjusted policy or procedures to take positive action to address admissions arrangement with disproportionality high or low numbers of BME or FSM children?

The following responses were received:

Local Authority	Response received:
Newcastle	No work undertaken
Nottingham City Council	<p>No work undertaken on this specifically.</p> <p>An introductory piece of work on place planning took place in July 2015 – click here to view.</p>
Leeds	<p>As a Scrutiny Board we have considered numbers and sufficiency, and do each year.</p> <p>A couple of years ago we had issues in the North of Leeds where there were not enough school places and parents were being offered places as schools they had not preference. There was no specific focus on BME or FSM by the Scrutiny Board.</p>
Cardiff	<p>In March 2016 the Committee reviewed the performance of Education as at Quarter 3 (click here to view the papers and minutes). During the scrutiny of the item members questioned the admissions process and in particular the process across Faith Schools, Welsh Schools and English Medium Schools.</p> <p>Members agreed that it would be helpful if there was one co-ordinated admissions process. As a result the Chairman wrote to the Archdiocese to seek their views on a co-ordinated approach.</p> <p>The Chairman received a positive response and as such a co-ordinated admissions procedure is now being developed.</p> <p>In March 2017 the Committee has programmed to review the admissions process again</p>