

### **Additional information received from Councillor Gollop:**

The Inquiry day into school admissions was helpful in opening up discussion about the pressures and the challenges. I was concerned however that it gave much more emphasis to challenging the status quo, rather than considering supporting it with minor modifications.

Christine Townsend gave a powerful presentation which ignored the reality of the situation and was effectively proposing bussing pupils from more deprived areas to the schools with lowest numbers of free school meals and pupil premium, and then sending pupils from those areas to the most deprived.

This extraordinary proposal is flawed in so many respects that it needs to be ruled out before it is considered further. First and foremost, this sort of social engineering does not work in either direction.

I cannot help but look at the area I represent which is predominantly BS9. There has never been a state secondary school within this area and 15 years ago, the only schools on offer in Bristol were Portway, Henbury or Monks Park. However, virtually no BS9 parents used those schools. They either use North Somerset and South Glos schools, Bristol Church schools, private schools, or moved out of Bristol to secure secondary education

As Redland Green and the Free school have come available, parents now tend to remain in the area rather than move, and there are now far more children living in the area, The surrounding schools have improved their standards significantly, but the numbers attending from BS9 have not increased.

The inevitable conclusion is that whatever form of reallocation takes place, parents can choose not to be part of it.

Redland Green and Bristol Fee school provide 400 places each year that did not exist 12 years ago, and are very oversubscribed. If they had to offer the average number of places to pupils on free school meals, this would mean 49 places a year not available to local children, plus the knock on impact of reduced places being offered to BCCS and St Mary Redcliffe. These children would then be adding to the pressure on the already oversubscribed North Bristol schools and all the evidence suggests that these children would not go to another Bristol state school but would exit the Bristol state system.

There was also demand for schools to stop taking pupils from outside Bristol. We were however only presented with one side of the story in terms of the number of out of City pupils that come in to each school, but I do not recall seeing the information of how many Bristol Children and educated out of the City. It is important we understand that information before making unilateral decisions that could result in similar actions from our neighbours potentially increasing pressure on schools in Bristol.

I have specific area which I did not get chance to mention. Neither is straight forward to solve.

1. I understand the need for the sibling rule, but question whether there could be some distance element to this. It seems very unfortunate when a high number of sibling places at distance from the school actually prevents children living close to the school from attending. I understand some schools now only apply the sibling rule in their primary area which is a much fairer approach.
2. When neighbouring schools allocate on a distance from the school basis, some who live equidistant from both schools find they are too far away to be allocated a place, and then have to travel beyond their first and second choice to a school much further away. In these circumstances the designated area needs weighting.

I believe Bristol's schools have performed much better in recent years and our aim should be to keep the highest possible number of any year group in the state system, with the continued target of improving standards each year. The allocation system we have has helped achieve that outcome and therefore any changes to it should be in the form of minor adjustments not major changes.