




People Scrutiny School Admission Arrangements

2/2/17

Christine Townsend

Why am I here?

- ▶ Invited 'a former Mayoral candidate with a particular interest in school admission'
- ▶ Actual reason
- ▶ I am Bristolian and was educated in Bristol's comprehensive system under Avon
- ▶ Been a qualified teacher for over 20 years
- ▶ Taught in London, Coventry and back home since 2003 at City Academy, Orchard, City of Bristol College, work now in SEND reforms
- ▶ Am safeguarding governor at Whitehall
- ▶ The vice-chair of the School Forum
- ▶ Co-founder and board member of Integrate UK (formally Integrate Bristol)
- ▶ Sit on Bristol's Children Safeguarding Board as the VCS Advocate
- ▶ Have sat on school appeal panel hearings in another local authority (education member) for over 5 years
- ▶ Am the referrer of 4 Bristol secondaries and 1 primary to the OSA for unlawful admission arrangements, worked with the Fair Admission Campaign on 3 others, re-referered and await the ruling
- ▶ Real reason I'm 'a former Mayoral candidate with a particular interest in school admission' is because the 2-tier state system I saw whilst **AT** school is still what we observe today
- ▶ I am also 'a former Mayoral candidate' because change is within the local decision making processes – **admission arrangements are CHOICES** made at Diocese, Trust, local authority and school levels



Another take on some of the 'Background Information'

Your pack includes

- ▶ A referrer's comment on the School Adjudicator rulings St Bedes and Merchants Academy
- ▶ A catchment map for Redland Green
- ▶ A data table that includes FSM% and the P Premium % for the secondary system
- ▶ Non-Bristol resident children being allocated places in Bristol schools

Comment on a workshop session

- ▶ 'Advantages and disadvantages of community v wider catchments'
- ▶ What was the EVIDENCE presented for this?
- ▶ Were you invited to come up with your own ideas?
- ▶ Policy recommendations need to be based on evidence

Current Situation – why is change needed?

‘Double Disadvantage’

- This is what we have – data on FSM% and P Premium% demonstrates this
- Additional impact on ESOL, high, middle and low attainers, shown on ‘a referrer’s comments’
- Bristol has very low parental preference figures at secondary level, the impact is disproportionate across the city, this data is in your workshop pack



Selection by 'Anyone Can Apply' examples Bristol Cathedral Choir School and Colston Girls

- ▶ Bristol Cathedral Choir allocates places by 'random allocation', it takes applications from across Bristol, N Somerset, S Gloucestershire
- ▶ Colston's Girls' does the same, only applicants must also sit a test, in addition to above authorities, it also takes from postcodes in Gloucester and Wiltshire
- ▶ Look at the data you have for these schools – FSM and P Premium
- ▶ Think about why these schools **CHOOSE** admission arrangements like this?
- ▶ Think about where these schools are geographically located


Cathedral Primary School is also in this category, a second 'anyone can apply' secondary school is being sort by the Cathedral Trust

Selection by Catchment – example Redland Green

- Look at the catchment maps in your pack
- Why might Redland Green **CHOOSE NOT** to have ‘anyone can apply’ admission arrangements?
- Look at the data you have for this school – FSM and P Premium
- Think about where this school is geographically located

Also in this category are Bristol Free School and Cotham





Selection by Faith – examples St Mary Redcliffe and St Bedes

- ▶ St Mary Redcliffe **CHOOSES** to admit from Bristol, BaNES, and S Gloucestershire
- ▶ Of the 216 places, 16 are available to be allocated to children living within 500m of the school gates
- ▶ St Bedes **CHOOSES** to admit from Bristol, N Somerset and S Gloucestershire
- ▶ Both schools allocate places to 'faith applicants' BEFORE looked after children 'not of the faith'
- ▶ Look at the data you have for these schools – FSM and P Premium
- ▶ Think about where this school is geographically located

Also in this category is St Bernedettes



Its all a **CHOICE**

- NO set of admission arrangements are set forever
- ALL academies/free schools/faith schools/maintained schools can change them
- EVERY school, regardless of type, can prioritise children entitled to Pupil Premium
- EVERY academy can make changes to their Funding Agreement
- A 'faith' school is NOT required by law to admit on the basis of 'faith' - this is a **CHOICE** by the faith body and the school
- Catchment areas or otherwise CAN be changed
- This **CHOICE** can be achieved locally

‘My View’ on first steps – all achievable locally

- ▶ Secondary schools in Bristol should prioritise children entitled to Pupil Premium, both as a result of FSM and Ever 6
- ▶ This should be capped at the city average for each within the 3 mile statutory walking distance, when over subscribed distance tie-break
- ▶ Other places allocated according to over-subscription BUT
- ▶ Bristol schools should not refuse a place to a Bristol child whilst allocating to children who lives in North Somerset, South Gloucestershire, BaNES, Gloucester or Wiltshire (SEN and LAC places are protected in law, the siblings criteria will pick up younger siblings of families with children already in attendance)
- ▶ 18 new classes are needed according to the Education Capital Strategy in mainstream secondary schools -5 of these are already in existence within the Bristol system – the **153**
- ▶ Who pays for the transport to ensure equity of access **for ALL** remains unresolved

How can this be Achieved?

- ▶ Leadership and public communication about the vision for the secondary estate and how the current situation is a **CHOICE** the schools are making
- ▶ Support and strategic leadership from elected representatives for the officers tasked to implement it – challenging entrenched privilege will bring resistance – no doubt you will hear that resistance today
- ▶ **Admission arrangements do not sit within the remit of a strategic board - this needs addressing**
- ▶ Solution - the education department to re-establish Bristol's School Admission Forum to scrutinise admission arrangements for lawful competence and refer as the law **REQUIRES**, monitor the implementation and work to enable the system to adapt
- ▶ Bristol Learning City must reform so its' work is open to public scrutiny
- ▶ Local parties, politicians including the MPs, the local authority, profession representatives and residents respond to admission arrangement consultations collectively to help achieve the vision
- ▶ People's Scrutiny to work more closely with a wider section of the education profession working in schools, more formal links to the School Forum
- ▶ Create a unified voice that supports equity of access to our state school system **for ALL** the city's children. The Council's priority is to 'support the most vulnerable children' those growing up in deprivation are 'the most vulnerable children' and they need and deserve a **SYSTEM** that supports their achievement, as well as their school

