

CABINET

DATE	14 th February 2024
REPORT OF	Councillor Margaret Cracknell, Portfolio Holder for Children and Education
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Ann-Marie Matson, Director of Children's Services
SUBJECT	School Admission Arrangements 2025-2026
STATUS	Open
FORWARD PLAN REF NO.	CB 02/24/09

CONTRIBUTION TO OUR AIMS

The recommendations contribute to 'Enable children, young people and adults to learn and be ready to work.' School Admission Arrangements enable children and young people to access appropriate education and therefore have better opportunities to learn and be employed.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report describes the local authority's school admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools for the academic year 2024-2025. In accordance with legislation these arrangements should be determined and published, after any relevant consultation by 15th March 2023. The report summarises the consultations which have taken place and the recommendations made.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet

- 1) Supports the position whereby, the general admission arrangements, including published admissions numbers (PANs), for the local authority's community and voluntary controlled schools for 2025-2026 be unchanged.
- 2) Supports the position that, no material changes be made to the local authority's co-ordinated school admission arrangements published schemes other than the updating of dates and deadlines, and that locally agreed protocols that support admission arrangements continue to be reviewed on a regular basis.
- 3) Delegates authority to the Director of Children's Services in consultation with the governing bodies of community and voluntary controlled schools and the Portfolio Holder for Children and Education to increase the published admission number of an individual year group in a school in exceptional circumstances.
- 4) That it be noted that those schools / academies that are their own admission authorities have the ability to consult and determine their own admission arrangements. Details of known proposed changes are provided at Appendix 1.
- 5) That it is noted with the increasing number of academies within the local authority the number of schools for which the local authority is responsible for in respect of determining admission arrangements is reduced

REASONS FOR DECISION

The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012 requires school admission arrangements for 2024-2025 to be determined and published, after any required consultation by 15th March 2023. The recommendations above result from the statutory consultation required under legislation which took place for a minimum period of 6 weeks between 1st November 2023 and 10th December 2023.

1. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

1.1 Consultation with neighbouring local authorities and the diocesan bodies during 1999 established that North East Lincolnshire and its neighbouring authorities of North Lincolnshire and Lincolnshire all agreed that their "relevant areas" for consultation on admission arrangements would be the areas that coincided with each local authority's own boundaries.

1.2 The three neighbouring local authorities have informed each other of their proposals for admission arrangements for 2025-2026. No areas of disagreement have arisen between North East Lincolnshire and its neighbouring authorities as a result of this. Consultations took the form of written advice and access to publications on respective websites.

1.3 In line with the School Admissions Code, it is no longer a requirement for admission authorities:

- To formally consult on any increases to school's published admission numbers (PANs).
- To formally consult on admission arrangements unless they remain unchanged for seven years.

However, there is a requirement to formally consult on proposals to decrease published admission numbers and/or changes to oversubscription criteria or policy details.

1.4 Despite the reduced School Admissions Code's requirements, even if there are no formal consultation requirements, admission authorities still have to determine and publish their admission arrangements annually in line with the relevant timescales.

1.5 There are no proposals for change to the local authority's agreed published co-ordinated school admissions. Therefore, current arrangements will continue for a further year with appropriate modification of dates and deadlines.

1.6 To assist schools / academies in understanding the statutory requirements and to provide the opportunity for proposed changes, informal consultation commenced with all North East Lincolnshire School / academy governing bodies during the 2023 summer term.

1.7 It is noted that some governing bodies of schools / academies which are their own admission authorities are proposing changes to their admission arrangements for 2025-2026 and have all requested that the local authority coordinate consultation on their behalf. These will be determined and published

by the respective admission authorities by 15th March 2024.

1.8 The Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) requires that local authorities regularly review the links between school admission arrangements and education transport policies. There have been no changes to the local authority's school admission policy this year which would result in the need to review the Home to School Transport Policy.

2. RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Risk assessment against proposed school admissions arrangements. Identified as Priority E – Low Risk, Requiring Monitor and Review. The local authority's school admission arrangements are consulted upon and determined annually. Any proposed changes are in line with statutory requirements. The public consultation has taken into account the views, opinions and likely impact on citizens, schools and service users.

3. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Other options are regularly considered in the wide ranging consultations.

4. REPUTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS

Due to the stake holder consultation, there are minimal potential reputational implications for the Council resulting from the decision.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

There is no effect on the Council's revenue or capital expenditure or any expectation to call on Council's reserves.

6. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IMPLICATIONS

School Admission Arrangements enable all children and young people to access appropriate education and be given the opportunity to learn and become employed.

7. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no climate change or environmental implications.

8. CONSULTATION WITH SCRUTINY

There has been no consultation with Council's Scrutiny Panel

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct additional financial implications arising from the report.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1. Section 88C of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, as amended, requires the Local Authority in its role as admission authority to determine the admission arrangements that will apply in line with regulations and the mandatory requirements of the School Admissions Code.

10.2. As stated in the body of the report the Local Authority has a statutory duty to

consult, determine and publish its admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools.

10.3. In adopting the recommendations as set out in the report the Local Authority is adhering to, and complying with, such obligations.

11. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct HR implications arising from the contents of this report.

12. WARD IMPLICATIONS

All wards are affected.

13. BACKGROUND PAPERS

School Admission Arrangements for the Academic Year 2023-2024
<http://www.nelincs.gov.uk/resident/schools-and-education/apply-for-a-school-place-admissions-information/school-admission-arrangements-2023/2024>
School Admissions Code 2021
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1001050/School_admissions_code_2021.pdf

14. CONTACT OFFICER(S)

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COUNCILLOR MARGARET CRACKNELL
PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CHILDREN AND EDUCATION

Appendix 1

North East Lincolnshire Local Authority – Governing body resolutions in relation to any proposed changes to school admission arrangements for the 2025-2026 academic year

The School Admissions Code does not require admission authorities to consult on any proposed increase in published admission numbers (PANs). Consultation is required for any changes to admission arrangements or a decrease in PAN.

The following table provides details of academies which have advised the local authority of any proposed changes to their admission arrangements for 2025-2026 academic year which have required formal consultation to be undertaken.

Academy Trust	Academy	Proposed Change
Lincolnshire Gateway Academies Trust	Pilgrim Academy	A decrease in the Published Admission Number (PAN) from 45 to 30.
Lincolnshire Gateway Academies Trust	Scartho Gateway Academy	Full proposed Admission Arrangements for new build Free School for September 2025.
Lincolnshire Gateway Academies Trust	Waltham Gateway Academy	Full proposed Admission Arrangements for new build Free School for September 2025 (dependent upon planning permission).
The Enquire Learning Trust		<p>Updated Rules for EY, Pupil Premium and Service Premium – page 4 Addition of wording: “<i>The pupil premium is additional funding paid annually to schools under Section 14 of the Education Act 2002 for the purposes of supporting the attainment of disadvantaged children.</i> <i>The service premium is additional funding paid annually to schools under Section 14 of the Education Act 2002 for the purposes of supporting the pastoral needs of the children of Armed Services personnel.</i>”</p> <p>Updated 7.2 Oversubscription Criteria – section 3 Added clarification: “3. <i>Pupils who are eligible for Early Years Pupil Premium and are in a nursery class which is part of the academy. This is applicable to all academies outlined in 7.1 with the exception of Keelby and Laceby Acres Primary Academies.</i> <i>Admission authorities may give priority in their oversubscription criteria to children eligible for the early years pupil premium, the pupil premium, or the service premium who:</i> <i>a) are in a nursery class which is part of the school; or</i> <i>b) attend a nursery that is established and run by the school. The nursery must be named in the admission arrangements and its selection must be transparent and made on reasonable grounds.</i>” and section 5 correction “5. <i>Pupils whose main residence is within the catchment area. Parents can view each</i></p>

		<i>academy catchment area through their local authority website. NB; criterion 5 is not applicable in full to Lincolnshire or Tameside academies because they do not have catchment areas."</i>
Waltham Leas Primary Academy Limited	Waltham Leas Primary Academy	<p>Addition of "child of staff" to existing admissions policy oversubscription criteria:</p> <p><i>"2. Children of staff at the academy</i></p> <p><i>Either:</i></p> <p><i>a. Where the member of staff has been employed at the academy for two or more years at the time which the application for admission to the academy is made, or;</i></p> <p><i>b. Where the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage."</i></p>
David Ross Education Trust	Edward Heneage Primary Academy	A decrease in the Published Admission Number (PAN) from 45 to 30.