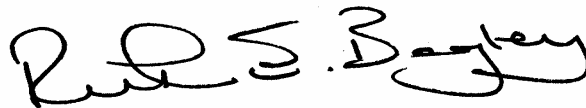


Date of issue: 13th March 2009

MEETING	ADMISSIONS FORUM
DATE AND TIME:	MONDAY, 23RD MARCH, 2009 AT 4.00 PM
VENUE:	COMMITTEE ROOM 2, TOWN HALL, BATH ROAD, SLOUGH
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER: (for all enquiries)	CLAIRE GRAY (01753) 875120

NOTICE OF MEETING

You are requested to attend the above Meeting at the time and date indicated to deal with the business set out in the following agenda.



RUTH BAGLEY
Chief Executive

NOTE TO MEMBERS

This meeting is an approved duty for the payment of travel expenses.

AGENDA

PART 1

<u>AGENDA ITEM</u>	<u>REPORT TITLE</u>	<u>PAGE</u>	<u>WARD</u>
	Apologies for absence.		
1.	Minutes of the last meeting.	1 - 4	

<u>AGENDA ITEM</u>	<u>REPORT TITLE</u>	<u>PAGE</u>	<u>WARD</u>
2.	New Admissions Code Briefing	5 - 12	All
3.	Admissions Forum Revised Terms of Reference	13 - 14	All
4.	Admissions Proposals 2010 – (This document has been circulated separately to Admissions Forum Members and is available upon request from Democratic and Member Services.)		All
5.	Secondary Transfer 2009 - Update	15 - 16	All
6.	Any Other Business		
7.	Date of the next meeting		

Press and Public

You are welcome to attend this meeting which is open to the press and public, as an observer. You will however be asked to leave before the Committee considers any items in the Part II agenda. Special facilities may be made available for disabled or non-English speaking persons. Please contact the Democratic Services Officer shown above for further details.

Admissions Forum – Meeting held on Thursday, 22nd January, 2009.

Present:-

Voluntary Aided Schools

John McAteer – St. Bernard's Grammar School

Foundation Schools

Hilda Clarke – Langley Grammar School

Maureen Ball – Baylis Court School

Parent Governor Representatives

Mohammed Din – Ryvers Primary School

Local Education Authority

Councillors Dale-Gough, Dodds, Pantelic and Shine

Officers Present

Bill Alexander - Assistant Director, Raising Achievement

Tony Browne – Head of Schools Services

Kevin Marsh - NUT

Apologies for Absence

Gill Bodman

PART 1

14. Minutes of the last meeting held on 24th September, 2008.

The minutes were agreed as a correct record subject to the inclusion of John McAteer in the list of those present.

15. Secondary Schools Admissions Report

The Admissions Forum received a report on secondary school admissions procedures. The report included information on the current admissions criteria for the grammar schools in Slough and considered the implications of these. The report provided further detail on those gaining places at grammar schools from within and outside of the borough. The Forum was advised that the report should be considered in conjunction with the Secondary heads responses and the proposed Herschel Grammar School admissions policy. The report was commissioned due to the increasing pressure on Slough secondary school places. The report also provided information on other authorities with Grammar schools and how the admissions arrangements functioned in those authorities. The report contained a number of recommendations on the different issues the report highlighted. It was noted that changes to the admissions arrangements would impact on both selective

Admissions Forum - 22.01.09

and non-selective schools but that some progress was being made towards reducing the number of Slough pupils who passed the 11+ and did not receive a grammar school place.

A Member advised that they thought that the number of children not receiving a grammar school place was significant and higher than reported by the Secondary Headteacher Admissions Group. A Member commented that out of borough children coming into Slough also caused significant traffic congestion. There was no input into the report from primary heads, governors or parents and a Member felt that these groups should have been included in the research. The Forum was advised that St. Bernard's Grammar School offered a place to every Slough child who applied and passed the 11+. In response to a question regarding Admissions at Langley Academy it was confirmed that the majority of applicants were from Langley and very few pupils received a place who did not live in Langley.

The main issue in Slough was oversubscription in all schools. Many Secondary schools had improved significantly over the past few years and there were no longer places available. The admissions process to secondary schools was complex. The ideal was to create a system where everybody received their 1st preference but this was not possible. The authority noted the demand for places in Slough and a report on increasing capacity had been commissioned and was currently in draft form and there were proposals to increase places in a number of Slough schools.

Members of the Forum considered distance to be one of the most important criteria when allocating secondary school places and recommended that schools should take distance into account when setting their admissions criteria. However it was noted that distance to a school and prioritising pupils from 'in-borough' were not the same thing. Distance to school was important but there were also many other factors to consider in secondary school admissions, for example most schools in Slough had a 'specialism'.

The Director of Education and Children's services noted that all of the issues raised were important and advised that the School Places Paper, Admissions Paper and GCSE's paper could be brought together into a single paper to consolidate the issues and demonstrate the links between them. Members requested the figures of those young people who were not in education, employment or training (NEET) should also be included in the report.

A task group that had been established to deal with distance criteria had influenced Herschel's new admissions policy. The changes to Herschel's Admissions policy were welcomed by the Forum.

Resolved –

(a) That a report be brought to a future meeting to include information on NEET, GCSE's Admissions and School Places.

Admissions Forum - 22.01.09

(b) That the report, responses and proposed changes to Hershel Grammar's admissions policy be noted.

16. Ombudsman's Report Summary

The Head of Schools Services informed the Forum that an Ombudsman's report had been received in response to a complaint made regarding the Admissions procedure at Herschel Grammar school. The complaint was that the school had operated a first preference first system and had offered places to lower scoring pupils but refused a place to a higher scoring pupil who had made Langley Grammar their first choice. The Ombudsman's decision was the pupil should have been offered a place and an offer had now been made. It was noted in the summary of the Ombudsman's report that this may result in fewer Slough pupils being offered a place, although this was likely to be temporary as Herschel was due to change their admissions arrangements in 2010. It was also noted that other children scoring over 114 were offered a place.

Resolved – That the summary be noted.

17. Slough Grammar Adjudication

The Admissions Forum received the findings of the Slough Grammar Adjudication which the Admissions Forum had referred to the Adjudicator. The report concluded that although the objection was not upheld the school's admissions arrangements could be clearer and more transparent. It was recommended that the school state the number of pupils admitted below the pass mark each year. The Forum was advised that Slough Grammar admitted 180 pupils last year but the admissions number was only 145. The local authority had asked for clarification on this matter but as yet no response had been received.

Resolved – That if the adjudicators recommendations are not included within the proposed admissions arrangements for Slough Grammar School the Forum make an objection to the adjudicator.

18. Date of the Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on 23rd March 2009.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 4.00 pm and closed at 5.20 pm)

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NEW ADMISSIONS CODE BRIEFING

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN CHANGES TO THE REVISED SCHOOL ADMISSIONS CODE

Sustainable travel (paragraph 1.8)	To promote sustainable, healthy travel to school, admission authorities of primary schools are encouraged to ensure admission arrangements promote children walking or cycling safely to school where possible, and that other schools support sustainable and healthy travel where possible.
Admission numbers (paragraph 1.19)	Admission authorities must determine a higher admission number where they admit more than 26 children above the published admission number in any three year period.
Consultation (paragraph 1.26)	<p>All admission authorities are required to consult on 2010-11 admission arrangements for a minimum of eight weeks by 1 March 2009. Parents and local groups with an interest in the local area must also be consulted when admission authorities are setting their admission arrangements.</p> <p>For 2011-12 admission arrangements and subsequent years, admission authorities are required to consult between 1 November and 1 March for a minimum of eight weeks in the determination year. Admission authorities need only consult every three years unless arrangements are not the same as the previous consultation.</p>
Catchment areas (paragraph 1.30(i) and 2.45)	Admission authorities must consult on any catchment areas to be used and are prohibited from setting catchment areas after admission arrangements are determined.
Applications from children (paragraph 1.41)	In relation to the 2010-11 school year, children above compulsory school age will have the right to apply and appeal for any school place. Children will also have the right to make an application and appeal for a school sixth form place independently of their parents.
Withdrawing offers of places (paragraph 1.50)	If a parent has not responded to the offer of a school place within a reasonable time, the admission authority must remind the parent of the need to respond within a further 7 days and point out that the place may be withdrawn if they do not (see also Schedule 1 - 1(f) and Schedule 4 - 1(g) of the Co-ordination Regulations 2008).
Application forms (paragraph 1.75)	Local authorities must not require parents to attend the school in person to collect a form or require them to return their completed application

	form to the school.
Ensuring fair admission arrangements (paragraph 1.76)	Local authorities must not inform an admission authority of the rank order of parents' preferences.
Supplementary forms (paragraph 1.78)	Admission authorities must not ask parents for any financial contribution; to agree to support the ethos of the school in a practical way or; require both parents to sign the form.
Use of photographs and birth certificates (paragraph 1.81)	Clarification that photographs and "long" birth certificates are prohibited from being used during the admissions application process. Use of a photograph will only be permitted in order to verify the child's identity where entry tests are used.
Proof of date of birth (paragraph 1.81)	Admission authorities can only request proof of date of birth in the form of a short birth certificate once an offer of a school place has been made.
School charging (paragraph 1.97)	Governing bodies must make it clear to parents where charging may be expected for board and lodging on residential visits.
Prohibition of oversubscription criteria (paragraph 2.16)	(f) Admission authorities must not take into account reports from previous schools. (g) Governors have no discretion over the admission of children with statements of SEN. (p) Admission authorities must not use oversubscription criteria that give priority to children according to the alphabetical order of their first name or surname, or their date of birth.
Siblings of children who are still at the school (paragraph 2.22)	Admission authorities must clearly explain in their admission arrangements how priority to younger siblings will be given and on what basis. This includes giving priority to children on the basis that they have an older sibling at another school with which they have close links.
The ethos of the school (paragraphs 2.31 and 2.32)	Admission authorities may include a factual statement of the school's ethos in their admission arrangements but must not prioritise on this basis.
Additional guidelines for faith schools (paragraph 2.52)	Admission authorities must have regard to guidance provided by the religious authority which sets out what objective processes and criteria may be used to establish whether a child is a member of, or whether they practise, the faith.
Boarding schools (paragraphs 2.59 and 2.60)	Admission authorities of boarding schools must give priority (after priority to children in care) for boarding places to children of members of the UK Armed Forces.

	The category for the next highest priority (children with boarding need) includes children of Service personnel who have died while serving or who have been discharged as a result of attributable injury.
Additional guidelines for secondary schools (paragraph 2.72)	Admission authorities for secondary schools must not include independent primary schools as feeder schools.
2010-2011 admissions – Co-ordination of applications made during the normal admissions round (paragraph 3.3)	There are no changes to the requirements for co-ordinating applications made during the course of the normal admissions round for admission in the 2010-2011 academic year.
In-year applications from the 2010-11 academic year (paragraph 3.4)	Local authorities must coordinate all in-year applications for parents in their area from the 2010-2011 academic year onwards. The arrangements for co-ordinating these applications must be formulated by 1 January 2010.
Co-ordination of admissions from 2011-2012 onwards (paragraph 3.6)	Local authorities must formulate schemes for co-ordinating all applications to maintained schools and Academies from parents in their area, whenever received, and for whichever age group.
Main obligations imposed by the Co-ordination Regulations (paragraph 3.15)	<p>A national closing date for secondary applications of 31 October in the Offer Year (from the admissions round for admission in the 2011-2012 academic year).</p> <p>A national closing date for primary applications of 15 January in the Offer Year (from the admissions round for admission in the 2011-2012 academic year).</p> <p>Parents must be allowed to express at least three preferences. For in-year applications this will apply from September 2010. For the normal admissions round this will apply for admissions in the 2011-2012 academic year.</p> <p>Only the home local authority can make offers for primary and secondary school places (from September 2010 for in-year admissions and the normal admissions round for 2011-2012 admissions).</p> <p>The School Admissions (Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2008 require that, in the case of primary admissions made during the normal admissions round, the necessary communication between local authorities must be completed by the last working day in March in the offer year for admission in the 2011-2012 academic year.</p>

<p>Waiting lists (paragraph 3.19)</p>	<p>From September 2009 each admission authority must maintain a waiting list for at least the first term in the academic year of admission for every oversubscribed school.</p>
<p>Children of UK Service personnel and other Crown servants (inc. Diplomats) (paragraph 3.27)</p>	<p>Local authorities and admission authorities must:</p> <p>b) allocate a school place in advance, if accompanied by an official government letter (e.g. MOD, FCO or GCHQ) declaring a relocation date and intended address, if the applicant would meet the criteria on relocation;</p> <p>d) accept a Unit postal address, or if appropriate, a “quartermaster area” address in the absence of a new home postal address.</p>
<p>Children who have been permanently excluded twice (paragraph 3.30)</p>	<p>Local authorities are responsible for providing suitable full-time education from the 6th day of exclusion. For children of secondary school age, the local authority, schools and Pupil Referral Units should work together through their local behaviour partnership to help arrange the education required.</p>
<p>Children with challenging behaviour (paragraph 3.32)</p>	<p>A change to one of the exceptions where a school may refuse to admit a child even though there are places available:</p> <p>e) a secondary school where less than 20% of children are achieving 5 or more A*-C GCSEs including English and mathematics, or a primary school where fewer than 55% of pupils achieve level 4 or above at Key Stage 2 in both English and mathematics for four or more consecutive years.</p>
<p>Local authority power to direct admission to a foundation or voluntary aided school (paragraph 3.39)</p>	<p>In considering whether to make a direction the local authority must be satisfied that admission will not seriously prejudice the efficient use of resources at the school and that the admission of the child will not pose serious risks to the child or the school.</p>
<p>Local authority decision to admit a child to a community or voluntary controlled school (paragraph 3.41)</p>	<p>Local authorities must ensure that the schools for which they are the admission authority are not asked to take a greater proportion of children with challenging behaviour than other schools in the area.</p>
<p>Fair Access Protocols (paragraphs 3.43 to 3.47)</p>	<p>Local authorities must not require undersubscribed schools to admit a greater proportion of children with a recent history of challenging behaviour than other schools.</p> <p>Each local authority must have a Fair Access Protocol.</p>

	<p>Admission authorities must include in the Fair Access Protocol, as a minimum, the list of categories of children set out in Appendix 3.</p> <p>The home local authority should contact a neighbouring (maintaining) authority to help secure a school place in that area under its protocol where appropriate.</p>
Complex admission arrangements (paragraph 4.3)	The Schools Adjudicator may consider and amend, or replace entirely, admission arrangements that he considers to be complex, including those with complex points systems.
Local authority reports (paragraph 4.7)	Local authorities are required to make a report to the Schools Adjudicator about the admission arrangements of schools in their area by 30 June each year.
Objections to the Schools Adjudicator (paragraph 4.20)	The date by which objections should be referred to the Schools Adjudicator in the determination year is 31 July.
Objections to the Schools Adjudicator (paragraph 4.22)	When considering admission arrangements brought to his attention, the Adjudicator may decide changes are appropriate and specify changes to be made. The admission authority must revise their admission arrangements immediately to give effect to the Adjudicator's decision.
Admission Forums (paragraph 4.28)	The main focus of an Admission Forum is to consider the fairness of arrangements in their local context.
Membership of Forums (paragraphs 4.29 and 4.30)	<p>Membership must reflect the types of schools in the locality including up to two local authority representatives.</p> <p>The membership of the Forum must not exceed 20.</p>
Statutory role of Admission Forums (paragraph 4.31)	<p>Admission Forums must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review guidance produced for parents and the delivery of Choice Advice within the area of the forum • advise on whether the authority's proposed co-ordinated admission arrangements differ substantially from the previous year • monitor the effectiveness of local authority Fair Access Protocols
Ensuring fair access (paragraph 4.32)	An Admission Forum should review the impact of local admissions policies on achieving fair access.
Appendix 1 (paragraph 18)	The appeal panel must refer to the Schools Adjudicator any admission arrangements brought

	to their attention that they consider to be in breach of the Code.
Appendix 3	A new appendix on placing children with challenging behaviour and Fair Access Protocols.
Appendix 4	<p>(3) Admission authorities must, in the determination year, publish their determined admission arrangements on their website, if they have one, for the whole offer year, unless amended.</p> <p>(4) Local authorities must by 1 May in the determination year publish the determined admission arrangements of all schools in the area. Local authorities must also publish a notice in local newspapers providing details of where the determined arrangements can be viewed.</p> <p>(7) Local authorities must publish a composite prospectus by 12 September in the offer year.</p> <p>(11) The composite prospectus must include a copy of the common application form.</p>
Appendix 4 - Information in respect of each school mentioned (paragraphs 13 and 14)	<p>Governing bodies of all maintained schools within the area must provide the local authority with the required information by 8 August in the offer year.</p> <p>(e) Supplementary information forms must, as a minimum, appear on the Local Authority's website and school's website (where they have one) and be available on request in hard copy at the local authority's offices.</p> <p>(14) Where an objection has been raised against a school's admission arrangements and the Schools Adjudicator has not reached a decision in time for the publication date, local authorities must include the arrangements with a statement that an objection is still outstanding.</p> <p>(18) Choice Advisers may support parents in preparing their appeal and may accompany parents to the appeal hearing. With local agreement, they may also present an appeal on parents' behalf.</p>
Appendix 5 – Choice Advice	This appendix has been revised to place an emphasis on the importance of the independence of Choice Advice and of proactively targeting parents in need of Choice Advice.

**SUMMARY OF CHANGES TO THE REVISED SCHOOL ADMISSION APPEALS
CODE**

<p>Membership (paragraph 1.5(c))</p>	<p>Only employees of the local education authority (not the local authority as a whole) are disqualified from serving on Appeal Panels.</p>
<p>Representation (paragraph 2.13)</p>	<p>Local MPs are permitted to attend appeal hearings where there is no conflict of interest.</p>
<p>Primary and secondary school admission appeals (paragraph 3.2(a))</p>	<p>Clarification of the extent to which Appeal Panels can consider the lawfulness of admission arrangements.</p>
<p>The right of children to appeal against decisions for admissions from the 2010-2011 academic year (paragraphs 1.31, 2.3, 2.5, 2.35)</p>	<p>In relation to admissions for the school year 2010-2011 onwards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • children will have the right to apply for a school sixth form and appeal against decisions refusing their applications; • children above compulsory school age will have the right to apply for a school place other than school sixth form and appeal against decisions refusing their applications.

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Slough Admission Forum Revised Terms of Reference (Draft) (To comply with the new code)

1. Constitution

Members Nominated By:	Proposed Members	Change from previous membership	Maximum Number Permitted
Local Authority (Councillors)	2	-3	2
Schools - community	2	None	n/a
School – voluntary controlled	1	None	n/a
Schools - foundation	2	-1	n/a
Schools - voluntary aided	1	None	n/a
Church of England Diocesan Board representatives	1	None	1
Islamic School Representative	1	+1	1
Sikh School Representative	1	+1	1
Roman Catholic Diocese representatives	1	None	1
Parent Representatives	1	-2	n/a
Representatives of the local community	1	-2	n/a
Academies	1	None	1
City Technology Colleges	0	None	n/a
Total	15	-6	20

2. Role of the Forum

The Forum has a statutory duty to:

1. consider how well existing and proposed admission arrangements serve the interests of children and parents within the Slough area;
2. promote agreement on admissions issues;
3. review the comprehensiveness, effectiveness within the local context, and accessibility of advice and guidance for parents provided by the Local Authority.
4. consider the effectiveness of the authority's proposed co-ordinated admission arrangements;
5. consider the means by which admissions processes might be improved and how actual admissions relate to the admissions numbers published.
6. monitor the admission of children who arrive in the authority's area outside the admission round and promote arrangements for the fair distribution of these children among local schools.
7. promote the arrangements for children with special needs, children in care and children who have been excluded.
8. monitor the effectiveness of local authority fair access protocols

The Forum can refer an objection to the Schools Adjudicator where it identifies unfair practice or any breach of the Admissions Code of Practice.

3. Working Arrangements

(a) Membership

Members are appointed for up to four years. They may ask the Local Authority to appoint members of the local community. The Forum can convene working groups consisting of non-members.

(b) Meetings

The Forum must meet at least twice each year and possibly more often if there are significant local issues. Members will be given 7 days notice of meetings. At the first meeting the Forum will appoint a Chair and Vice Chair. The quorum of the meeting will be 5 and must include one Local Authority appointed member and one School Member. Meetings will take place at the Town Hall. The Forum should seek to achieve a consensus on issues where possible. When referring an objection to the Schools Adjudicator a simple majority is required of all members. The Secretary to the Forum is provided by Slough Borough Council.

(c) Agenda Items

Members may suggest items. The Chair and Vice-Chair will decide whether to include the items and how they should be prioritised.

(d) Publicity

The Local Authority must circulate the Forum's advice to all admission authorities in the area. The Forum will be open to the press and public but may decide to exclude the press and public when dealing with a particular issue such as those set out in the Local Government (Access to information) Act 1985.

4. Reporting Arrangements

Admissions Forums can publish an annual report, which can be referred to the Schools Adjudicator. If an Admission Forum produces a report it must include:

1. the extent to which admissions arrangements ensure fair access to educational provision.
2. any recommendations the forum wishes to make to improve fair access.
3. details about the co-ordinated admission scheme
4. details of any school policy which in the opinion of the forum affects fair access.

Tony Browne
Head of School Services
9th March 2009

Secondary Transfer 2009**1. Applications from Slough Residents**

The final number of applications from Slough residents for schools within Slough and outside was 1599 compared to 1602 the previous year.

2. Total Preferences for Slough Schools

The total number of preferences for Slough schools increased. (This figure includes preferences made by Slough residents and the residents of other boroughs). The total number of preferences for schools outside Slough has dropped. (This figure only includes preferences by Slough residents). The table below shows the details.

Slough Schools & PAN	Total Preferences 2007	Total Preferences 2008	Total Preferences 2009
Baylis (155)	366	336	356
Beechwood (150)	237	296	328
Herschel (120)	1482	1635	1556
Langley Grammar (145)	1336	1559	1538
Langley Academy (180)	339	514	509
St Bernard's (120)	524	570	578
St Joseph's (124)	342	312	352
Slough & Eton (165)	325	284	307
Slough Grammar (145)	1405	1396	1567
Westgate (150)	561	605	666
Wexham (150)	563	536	521
	7480	8043	8278
Other Schools	Slough Resident Preferences 2007	Slough Resident Preferences 2008	Slough Resident Preferences 2009
Altwood	137	153	87
Beaconsfield High	30	32	16
Burnham Upper	193	139	103
Burnham Grammar	514	545	529
Charters	9	9	3
Chesham High	1	1	1
Chalfont Community College	50	39	21
Churchmead	154	111	92
Cox Green	14	10	30
Cranford Community School	1	1	1
Desborough	118	58	68
Dormers Wells	0	1	1
Dr Challoners Grammar	10	7	2
Dr Challoners High	4	3	4
Furze Platt	7	10	10
Guru Nanak	16	22	6
John Hampden Grammar	5	4	9
Kendrick Girls Grammar	10	20	18
Matthew Arnold	1	2	4
Magna Carta	7	8	12
Newlands	31	37	21
Reading School	4	3	7
Sir William Borlase	4	3	4

The Royal Grammar	10	7	6
Tiffin Girls	3	2	4
Wye Valley	4	14	10
Uxbridge High	1	3	1
Vyners	0	2	2
Wycombe High School	4	3	2
Tiffin School	0	1	5
	1342	1250	1079

3. Place Offers

Place offers were fully co-ordinated by the Local Authority with support from all Slough schools, so that each parent received one offer only. All 1599 Slough resident parents who applied for a place were offered a place on the national offer day. The table below shows how many applicants were offered their preferred schools.

	Number of Offers Slough Residents	Percentage of Total Applications
First Preference	667	42%
Second Preference	296	19%
Third Preference	198	12%
Fourth Preference	188	12%
Fifth Preference	84	5%
Sixth Preference	38	2%
Alternative Offers	128	8%
Total	1599	100%

The proportion receiving their first preference is low by national standards because Slough is a fully selective area and many applicants who place a grammar school first on the application form do not reach the qualifying mark in the 11+ test. The proportion of applicants receiving one of their preferred schools is 92%. Where none of the preferred schools can be offered applicants are offered the nearest school with vacancies.

Tony Browne
Head of School Services
9th March 2009