

Secondary Headteacher Admissions Group

Response to Recommendations

Recommendation 2.1

In borough, out borough, distances as a criterion

The outcome from the group reflects the letter from the non-selective Headteachers to the Chair of the Admissions Forum.

The group rejected the notion of distance as this could have an impact upon the non-selective schools across the town. 'To remove this cohort of pupils from our schools would be damaging – not only to examination groups, but also to the whole ethos, culture and atmosphere of our schools.'

The group did, however, agree to explore the residence of those young people who had passed the 11+ examination but failed to gain a place in a grammar schools in Slough – estimated to be 30.

It was agreed to keep the situation under review and to revisit, in the light of 2009 admissions, to assess whether the 2008 situation was an isolated year or whether there was significant trend. The Headteachers of the grammar schools are exploring alternative criteria including distance.

Recommendation 2.2

Compliance of local arrangements with co-ordinated admissions arrangements.

The group agreed to this recommendation and that many had already moved to compliance.

Recommendation 2.3

2.3.1 Clarity of Information

This practice is already in place. It was agreed to hold briefings for headteachers regarding the process.

The issue of briefing for elected members to be discussed at Admissions Forum to identify process and way forward

2.3.2 Data and information sharing

There is effective communication between schools and the LA in order to share data and information

Recommendation 2.4

Children in Public Care

It was agreed that children in public care had to be highest criteria for admissions and this to be reflected in ALL admissions policies.

Recommendation 2.5

Earlier Testing

There are points in favour and against earlier testing.

- There are significant benefits to the LA in that it would alleviate the issue of allocating first preferences, in that if young people did not pass the 11+, then a grammar school would not be chosen;
- Parents and young people would know the result of the 11+ test prior completing the Common Application Form;
- Issues regarding dates and times of testing – early in year 6, summer term year 5;
- Detraction from Key Stage 2 tests;
- Organisation of open/information evenings – timing in conjunction with the test.

The group did, however, agree to revisit in the light of any changes to the Code of Practice.