

Open Report on behalf of Debbie Barnes, Executive Director of Children's Services

Report to:	Executive Councillor, Cllr Mrs P A Bradwell
Date:	05 April 2013
Subject:	Primary and secondary school admission policies for 2013 to 2014
Decision Reference:	02160
Key decision?	No

Summary:

The Local Authority is the admission authority for all community and controlled schools in the county. The purpose of this report is to enable the Executive Councillor to determine the final admission policy for entry into primary and secondary community and controlled schools for the academic year 2014/15. The admission policy only comes into force if a school has more applications than places available. It is proposed to extend the sibling criterion.

The government's current school admissions code came into force in February 2012 and changed the position on giving sibling priority; as a result it became possible to give priority on this basis even where the older child would have left the school by the time the younger child started.

In the summer of 2012 the school admissions team consulted community and voluntary controlled schools about extending the sibling criterion to cover an older sibling on roll at the time of application, but who would have left by the time the younger child started. The majority of respondents were in favour of this change.

The policy also amends the explanation of how applications from siblings of multiple births as distinct from siblings in the same cohort would be handled in the event of one of the children falling within the admission number and the others outside it; this is necessary to ensure compliance with the infant class size regulations.

In January and February 2013 the school admissions team undertook the consultation process required by the school admissions code; there were no responses to the consultation

Recommendation(s):

The Executive Councillor is recommended to approve the amended admission policies in appendix A and B that include the recommendations above.

Alternatives Considered:

1. To accept the proposal to amend the policy.
Advantages: increases the degree to which families can retain a connection with a school even if children in the family are widely spaced in age.
Ensures compliance with the infant class size regulations.
Disadvantages: in very small rural schools this has the potential to displace local children in some years, however the admissions code now facilitates offering extra places to address this.
2. Retain the present policy.
Disadvantages: the schools affected have expressed support for the proposal.
There is a risk of non-compliance with the infant class size regulations.

Reasons for Recommendation:

The extension of sibling priority has the support of the schools that fall under the policy, the clarification relating to siblings of multiple births as compared to same cohort siblings is necessary to avoid unlawful breaches of the infant class size limit.

1. Background

The Executive Councillor has to consider the admission policy each year along with any comments received through the consultation process, which runs from 1 January to 28 February each year. There have been no comments received for the proposed amendments.

2. Conclusion

That the amended admission policies shown in appendix A and B be approved for entry into schools for 2014.

3. Legal Comments:

The legal considerations to be taken into account in the making of this decision, which is within the remit of the Executive Councillor, are set out within the report

4. Resource Comments:

There are no significant financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

5. Consultation

a) Has Local Member Been Consulted?

No

b) Has Executive Councillor Been Consulted?

Yes

c) Scrutiny Comments

n/a

d) Policy Proofing Actions Required

n/a

6. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Lincolnshire County Council primary school admission policy for community and controlled schools.
Appendix B	Lincolnshire County Council secondary school admission policy for community and controlled schools

7. Background Papers

The following background papers as defined in the Local Government Act 1972 were relied upon in the writing of this report.

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
School Admission Code February 2012	School Admissions Manager

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