

SCRUTINY REVIEW – SCOPING RECORD

PROPOSAL FOR SCRUTINY REVIEW

SECTION 1 – TO BE COMPLETED BY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The purpose of this document is to provide the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC) with information to make a decision on whether a scrutiny review could proceed on this topic. The following guidelines have been agreed as a basis for making decisions on topics for scrutiny reviews.

It is important that in-depth reviews are:

- *deliverable within a set timetable*
- *sufficiently focused on a particular aspect of a service*
- *not duplicating other significant review activity*
- *not related to a specific individual grievance or complaint*

Reviews should also, wherever possible:-

- *contribute to the overall objectives of the organisation*
- *reflect community concerns*
- *lead to potential achievable outcomes or improvements for the people of Lincolnshire*

DETAILS OF PROPOSED SCRUTINY REVIEW TOPIC

Title	School Admissions and Exclusions in Lincolnshire
Committee	Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
Purpose of the Review	<p>To examine the following issues across all types of schools in Lincolnshire:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What can the Local Authority do to support schools to reduce exclusions? 2. How can the Local Authority best champion the needs of vulnerable children especially those with special educational needs to ensure that they can access the school of their choice? 3. How can the Local Authority ensure that the Fair Access Protocol is applied consistently and equitably across all schools and ensure that the protocol assists schools to meet the needs of this group? 4. How can the Local Authority best support parents with children with special educational needs to attend the school which would best meet their needs?

<p>Benefits of the Review</p>	<p>The Government has brought in a number of changes to the education system, in particular the introduction of academies through the Academies Act 2010 and free schools. In addition a new School Admission Code comes into force in the New Year and the Education Act 2011 is now published.</p> <p>All of these national changes will have an impact on how families are supported to apply to a school of their choice and how schools manage pupils who are at risk of exclusion.</p> <p>Given the changing nature of admissions and guidance around exclusions, and that in future a large number of schools will be outside the control of Lincolnshire County Council, it is important that the Local Authority responds proactively to these changes. The Local Authority will need to adapt its service offering, policies, practices and procedures in relation to admissions and exclusions across all schools, especially for vulnerable children such as those with special educational needs and hard to place children, to ensure that they are revised and flexible enough to meet the changing school landscape in Lincolnshire.</p> <p>This review will enable an investigation of current policies, practices and procedures around admissions and exclusions and whether these are appropriate for the future. The review will also inform the development of our service offering to schools and academies and will identify areas of inconsistent practice which may need to be challenged. The review will help Members to understand how they can use their democratic mandate to ensure that all children have access to a good education and will enable the Local Authority to continue to highlight examples of good practice.</p>
<p>Is there anything excluded from the review?</p>	<p>This review will be investigating the Local Authority's service offering, its policies, practices and procedures relating to admissions and exclusions, and therefore any detailed investigation into individual schools' admission and exclusion policies will be excluded.</p>
<p>Timescale for Completion</p>	<p>Subject to approval by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on 19 January 2012, the review will begin in March 2012. The date for completion would be 19 October 2012.</p>
<p>Executive Councillor Comment</p>	

<p>Executive Director Comment</p>	
<p>Any further information (including any relevant information relating to the guidelines)</p>	<p>The White Paper, <i>The Importance of Teaching</i>, outlined the intention to simplify the School Admissions and School Admission Appeals Codes so that it is easier for schools and parents to understand and act upon, while maintaining fairness as the guiding principle. On 1 December 2011, the Department of Education laid the revised Codes before Parliament, as required under section 85 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. Subject to the views of Parliament, these Codes will come into force on 1 February 2012, affecting the 2013/14 admissions intake.</p> <p>The purpose of the School Admission Code is to ensure that all school places for maintained schools (excluding maintained special schools) and Academies are allocated and offered in an open and fair way. The current School Admissions Code states that “<i>Fair Access Protocols exist to ensure that access to education is secured quickly for children who have no school place but for whom a place at a mainstream school or alternative provision is appropriate and to ensure that all schools in an area admit their fair share of children with challenging behaviour, including children excluded from other schools.</i>” (Source: School Admission Code 2010, www.education.gov.uk)</p>