

Education, Children and Families Committee

10am, Tuesday, 6 October 2015

Short-Life Member Officer Group: School Admissions/ Appeals

Item number	7.14
Report number	
Executive/routine	
Wards	

Executive summary

The purpose of this report is to establish a short-life Member Officer Group to review school admissions and the appeals process.

Links

Coalition pledges	P5
Council outcomes	CO1-CO3
Single Outcome Agreement	SO3

Short-Life Member Officer Group: School Admissions/ Appeals

Recommendations

- 1.1 To establish a Short-Life Member Officer Group to review the admissions and appeals process for session 2015 /16.
- 1.2 To appoint Councillor Paul Godzik as Convener of the Group and to approve the composition as detailed at paragraph 3.1 of the report.
- 1.3 To approve the remit of the Group as detailed at paragraph 3.3 of the report.
- 1.4 To request a report on the 2015 /16 Admission and Appeal Process in December 2015.

Background

- 2.1 The policy and procedures which underpin the admissions process for mainstream primary and secondary schools have been in place since the inception of Edinburgh City Council.
- 2.2 The context of rising rolls in Edinburgh means that fewer parents will be successful in out of catchment requests. In this context it is especially important that admissions and appeals processes operate as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Main report

Processes

- 3.1 To take stock of present school admission and appeal arrangements and to plan for the future a short life Member Officer Group should be established to ensure an effective and efficient service. Initial membership would include:
 - 3.1.1 Elected Members: 2 SNP, 2 Labour, 1 Conservative, 1 Green, 1 SLD;
 - 3.1.2 Representatives from Communities and Families and Corporate Operations as appropriate;
 - 3.1.3 1 Parent Representative: Education, Children and Families Committee;
 - 3.1.4 Substitutes will be permitted.

- 3.2 The aim will be to seek the views of all involved in the process eg, headteachers, panel members and chairs, and parents.
- 3.3 From May to August 2015, 48 meetings were held to consider P1 and S1 appeals. 5 common cases were not upheld as the appeals committee did not accept the legal grounds for refusing a place. The table below indicates the number of appeals lodged initially, heard and granted by the appeals committee for August 2015.

Appeals	Lodged	Heard	Granted
Primary	223	161	63
Secondary	67	51	10

Remit

- 3.3 It is proposed that the short life Member Officer Group is established to review the operation of the school admissions and appeals arrangements including:
- 3.3.1 Recruitment to increase the number of Appeal Committee Members and Chairs.
- 3.3.2 Training for everyone involved in the process including Members of Appeal Committees, Chairs and Officers.
- 3.3.3 Administration of appeals including the paperwork associated with Stage Appeals and Late Appeals
- 3.3.4 The management of 'reserved place'.
- 3.3.5 The criteria for 'exceptionality' in the context that all local schools are skilled to meet the needs of children with additional support needs.
- 3.3.6 Communication with parents in general and about transition from nursery to primary in particular.

Measures of success

- 4.1 Short-Life Member Officer Group established and new placement processes for the new round of school admissions.

Financial impact

- 5.1 All work in this area is delivered within existing budgets.

Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

6.1 The risk in this area is that statutory deadlines are not met.

Equalities impact

7.1 There are no negative impacts arising from this work.

Sustainability impact

8.1 There are no adverse economic, social or environmental impacts.

Consultation and engagement

9.1 There are a variety of means of consultation with parents. These are at school and local authority level. Parents are consulted through Neighbourhood Groups and Consultative Committee with Parents. Head teachers also meet with their Parent Council to discuss placements in their own school.

Background reading/external references

[Class Size Legislation](#)

[Choosing a School](#)

[Education Scotland Act 1980](#)

[School Placements Edinburgh](#)

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Links

Coalition pledges	P5 – Seek to ensure the smooth introduction of the Curriculum for Excellence and that management structures within our schools support the new curriculum.
Council outcomes	CO1 – Our children have the best start in life, are able to make and sustain relationships and are ready to succeed. CO2 – Our children and young people are successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens making a positive contribution to their communities. CO3 – Our children and young people in need, or with a disability, have improved life chances.
Single Outcome	SO3 – Edinburgh’s children and young people enjoy their childhood and fulfil their potential.
Agreement	