



Committee and Date

Cabinet

21st February 2024

Item

Public



Determination of Admission Arrangements 2025-26

Responsible Officer:		Rachel Reynolds	
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Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder):		Kirstie Hurst-Knight	

1. Synopsis

Following recommendations from the Local Admissions Forum, in accordance with the School Admissions Code 2021 and The School Admissions Regulations 2012, approval is sought from Cabinet to determine admission arrangements 2025/26 for Shropshire Council's community and voluntary controlled schools

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. Shropshire Council is the admission authority for community and voluntary controlled schools in Shropshire. As such, it must determine its admission arrangements for school pupils every year, even if they have not changed from previous years and a consultation has not, therefore, been required. This must be completed by 28 February in the determination year.
- 2.2. The School Admissions Code 2021 requires consultation on admission arrangements every 7 years if no changes have been proposed in that period. The Council carried out a consultation in 2020-21 on admission arrangements for 2022-23 and these were determined by Cabinet on 8 February 2021. In accordance with revised national legislation, these were re-determined by Cabinet on 21 July 2021.

- 2.3. One significant change to in-year admissions and one minor change to published admission numbers (PANs) are proposed for the arrangements for 2025/26. Consequently, Shropshire Council was required to formally consult again on their admission arrangements in entirety.
- 2.4. It is a legal requirement for consultation to have taken place between 1 October 2023 and 31 January 2024 for 6 weeks and for the arrangements to then be determined by Cabinet before 28th February 2024. The timetable for consultation and determination of admission arrangements have been met by Shropshire Council.
- 2.5. The admission arrangements for 2025-2026, considered and approved by the Local Admissions Forum at their meeting on Wednesday 22 November 2023, are therefore recommended to Cabinet for approval.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. That Cabinet determine the proposed admission arrangements 2025- 2026 for Shropshire's community and voluntary controlled schools and further approves the publication of the arrangements in accordance with the School Admissions Code 2021 and to the notification of this to parties specified in the Code

Report

4. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 4.1. If determination of admission arrangements does not take place before 28 February 2024, Shropshire Council would not be compliant with the appropriate legislation as an admission authority.
- 4.2. These arrangements were subject to public consultation, when all parties and communities, specified in the School Admissions Code, were given the opportunity to consider their impact. Consultation took place between 4 December 2023 and continued for more than 6 weeks until 19 January 2024.
- 4.3. Formal determination and publication of these arrangements will ensure that parents and communities have the opportunity to further consider the impact. If a party considers the arrangements to be unlawful or unfair, there is the opportunity to object to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator by 15 May 2024 for adjudication to be completed prior to the application year.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1. There are no financial implications for Shropshire Council connected with the determination of admission arrangements.

6. Climate Change Appraisal

- 6.1. There are no anticipated climate change implications from the proposals within this report, though the authority continues to work with school leaders, governors and trustees on the opportunities for applying carbon reduction measures in the operation of their schools.

7. Background

- 7.1. All admission authorities must determine their admission arrangements, including their published admission number (PAN), every year, even if they have not changed from previous years and a consultation has not been required.
- 7.2. Shropshire Council is the admission authority for community and voluntary controlled schools in the local authority area. The only schools of this type in Shropshire Council's area are primary-phase schools.
- 7.3. All secondary schools in Shropshire Council's area are academies or foundation schools and so the relevant academy trust or governing body is the admission authority and therefore responsible for determining their own admission arrangements.
- 7.4. The annual transfer round applications, for the point of entry to Reception in primary and Year 7 in secondary schools, must still be co-ordinated by the local authority and the co-ordination scheme is set out in Shropshire Council's admission arrangements.
- 7.5. Shropshire Council are proposing changes to the in-year admission arrangements from 1st September 2024 for all community and voluntary controlled schools as well as own admission authority schools. Shropshire Council is proposing that the Local Authority be responsible for coordinating in-year applications, as well as retaining responsibility for coordinating main admissions rounds. The proposed coordination represents a significant change from the existing position, where the responsibility for in-year applications is delegated to all Shropshire schools. The proposal brings benefits to secure a more consistent approach to pupil movement across Shropshire.
- 7.6. The proposed amendment to Shropshire Council's admission arrangements are as follows: St Lawrence CE Primary School in Church Stretton is proposing a reduction to its Published Admission Number from 34 to 30.
- 7.7. Consultation on the arrangements for 2025-2026 was therefore required, and a formal determination by Shropshire Council must now take place by 28 February 2024.

8. Additional Information

- 8.1. Shropshire Council must be consulted separately by admission authorities who are proposing changes to their own admission arrangements.

9. Conclusions

- 9.1. Once the arrangements have been determined by Cabinet, they will be published on Shropshire Council's website by 15 March 2024. Any objections to the arrangements can then be lodged with the Office of the Schools Adjudicator by 15 May 2024. This will fulfil Shropshire Council's mandatory responsibilities in accordance with admission regulations.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

School Admissions Code 2021 (available from www.education.gov.uk)

Shropshire Council Determined Admission Arrangements 2024/25 (available from www.shropshire.gov.uk/schooladmissions)

Parents' Guide to Education in Shropshire 2024/25 (available from www.shropshire.gov.uk/schooladmissions)

Local Member:

All Members

Appendices [Please list the titles of Appendices]

Appendix A – Shropshire Council Draft Admission Arrangements 2025-2026