

**OFFICER REPORT TO EXECUTIVE****SCHOOL ADMISSIONS POLICY REVIEW 2009****6 NOVEMBER 2007****KEY ISSUE/DECISION:**

Following high profile problems with the admissions policy in 2007, the Executive requested a review of the 2009 policy. This paper recommends a school admissions policy for 2009 as the basis for consultation - it includes a countywide policy, a policy for schools where the Schools Adjudicator imposed a one-year variation for 2008 and a policy where local arrangements exist. The objective is a transparent and equitable policy, which is easily understood, compliant with the 2007 Admissions Code and the Schools Adjudicator's rulings.

**BUSINESS CASE:****2007 POLICY**

1. There were a number of significant changes to the admissions policy in 2007, including the introduction of the equal preference system (now required by law), inability to offer over PAN for secondary schools, the abolishment of flexible admission priority areas and the introduction of local variations to address specific geographic issues. For most community and voluntary controlled schools the admissions criteria were as follows (children with statements of special educational needs are not included in the criteria as schools must admit these children):
  1. Looked after children
  2. Exceptional arrangements
  3. Siblings
  4. Children for whom the school is closest to their home
  5. Any other applicant
2. A number of high profile problems occurred. Not all as a result of the policy – unanticipated demand, forecasting issues, process and system difficulties were experienced. Action has been taken to address a number of these for 2008, Surrey suggested variations in policy for significantly affected schools and the Schools Adjudicator also introduced variations intended to improve outcomes.
3. Benchmarking with other authorities using equal preference in 2007 suggests Surrey is comparable in terms of total preferences achieved but improvements can be made in first preferences met. Surrey has a higher number of oversubscribed schools at

primary level and consequently operates within tighter constraints. A summary of outcomes in Surrey Districts/Boroughs is included in Annex 1.

## COUNTYWIDE ADMISSIONS POLICY 2009

4. Each of the approved over-subscription criteria in the 2007 Admissions Code has been evaluated for appropriateness in the Surrey context for inclusion on a countywide basis, using acceptability, suitability and feasibility criteria. A detailed evaluation is included in Annex 2 – it includes the pros and cons of each option, together with benchmarking evidence where relevant. Tie-breaks are also assessed. The results, which are summarised in the table below, support the oversubscription criteria we currently operate as being the most suitable for Surrey, suggesting no

<b>Oversubscription criteria</b>	<b>Acceptability</b>	<b>Suitability</b>	<b>Feasibility</b>	<b>Total</b>
Banding	L (1)	L (1)	L (1)	<b>3</b>
Catchment Areas	M (2)	L (1)	L (1)	<b>4</b>
School nearest to their home	H (3)	M (2)	H (3)	<b>8</b>
Partial Selection by Aptitude	L (1)	L (1)	L (1)	<b>3</b>
Attendance at Named Partner School	M (2)	L (1)	L (1)	<b>4</b>
Random Allocation (lottery)	L (1)	L (1)	L (1)	<b>3</b>
Sibling	H (3)	H (3)	H (3)	<b>9</b>
<b>Tie-break</b>				
Distance from nearest alternative school	L (1)	L (1)	L (1)	<b>3</b>
Straight-line distance from home to school	H (3)	H (3)	H (3)	<b>9</b>

change to the existing countywide policy in 2009.

## ALIGNMENT OF CONFEDERATION, SCHOOL TRANSPORT AND ADMISSIONS POLICY

5. An analysis of partner school criteria (based upon confederations and historic intake) has been undertaken in response to public support for this criteria and a commitment made in 2006 to review it once confederations were established. The analysis, included in Annex 3, uses 2007 data to model the impact of the partner school criteria in a representative sample of oversubscribed junior and secondary schools.
6. The variable and large size of most confederations means there does not appear to be an alignment between confederations and the admissions policy on a countywide basis. Adopting a partner school criteria based on confederations is likely to reduce the transparency of our countywide admissions policy, with parents unable to assess

their likelihood of gaining a place at a particular school, as there would be so many partner schools feeding into it.

7. There may also be an expectation that if a child attends a partner school for a particular junior or secondary school and obtains a place although the school is some distance away, free school transport will be provided if they meet the distance criteria. This is not required under legislation if there are closer schools, but by prompting a child down a particular school path it may well be a parental expectation.
8. Including a partner school oversubscription criteria can be detrimental for those children for whom the school is their closest but who didn't attend a named partner school. If the partner school list is based on the confederation, results have also shown intake patterns could alter, with areas unlikely to have ever had priority for a particular school now actually gaining a place.
9. Inclusion of partner school criteria across the county is likely to produce varying outcomes for each school, irrelevant of how the partner school list is created. Surrey's school confederation policy was not introduced with the intention of using it as the basis for the countywide admissions policy. The pattern of confederations would need to be reviewed in the future should an alignment with the admissions policy be sought.

#### HOWARD OF EFFINGHAM AND OXTED

10. The Schools Adjudicator has imposed a one-year variation of policy for 2008 for Howard of Effingham secondary school (Guildford) and Oxted secondary school (Tandridge). An evaluation of the options for the 2009 admissions policy for these schools is included in Annex 4 – it includes the pros and cons, together with a recommendation. The results and recommendations for the 2009 admissions policy are summarised in the tables below. The recommended option is highlighted.

##### Howard of Effingham

Option	Recommendation
1. Surrey's countywide admissions policy	Impossible to adopt as Adjudicator has ruled it inequitable and therefore in breach of the mandatory terms of the 2007 Admissions Code.
2. Criteria imposed by School Adjudicator for 2008 (partner school criteria with nearest alternative school tie-break)	2008 arrangements could disadvantage different communities. This will not breach the Admissions Code as the 2007 arrangements did, but could alter historical intake patterns. It is also not very transparent as parents are unable to realistically assess their child's likelihood of gaining a place at the school.
3. Revised partner school criteria with straight line distance tie-break	Ultimately this option does not make any improvement on the 2007 policy in legal terms, as it still does not ensure equitable access for some children to at least one reasonably accessible school.
4. Revised partner school criteria with nearest alternative school tie-break	This is a viable policy for Howard of Effingham as it addresses inequalities noted by the School Adjudicator and results in those who have a choice of alternative local schools not gaining a place at the Howard of Effingham.
<b>5. Surrey's countywide admissions policy with nearest alternative</b>	<b>This is a viable policy for Howard of Effingham as it addresses inequalities noted by the School Adjudicator and impacts on communities which have alternative local secondary schools. It</b>

<b>school tie-break</b>	<b>has none of the potential problems caused by including partner schools.</b>
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### Oxted

<b>Option</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
1. Surrey's countywide admissions policy	A defined catchment area was established to address specific geographical issues for this school. To remove a catchment area will cause changes in intake patterns to the detriment of Surrey pupils
2. Criteria imposed by Schools Adjudicator for 2008 (catchment area with nearest alternative school tie-break).	The Adjudicator has suggested that refinements are needed to the catchment area, thereby implying that this option is not suitable in the long term. It continues to be confusing for the majority of Lingfield and Dormansland pupils as they will live within a catchment area but are unlikely to have a realistic opportunity of gaining a place at the school.
<b>3. Revised catchment area with straight line distance tie break</b>	<b>Although this option is likely to be contentious it would appear to be the best option in a complicated situation. It makes the inclusion of a catchment area a more meaningful oversubscription criteria and excludes areas which have close alternative schools.</b>
4. Inclusion of a partner school criteria	There are limited benefits to this option and it is likely to cause additional problems.

11. In the medium-long term there may be other options available for heavily over-subscribed schools. These are outside the scope of this review but could be considered at a later date and would impact upon the admissions policy for these schools in future years. Options might include relocating the 6<sup>th</sup> form to create additional capacity for 11-16 year olds in a school, restructuring existing schools or working in partnership with the independent school sector.

### WARLINGHAM AND WAVERLEY

12. A fixed catchment area operates for Warlingham. This is based on the old flexible Admissions Priority Area and is consequently based on historical admissions trends. A catchment area has been adopted to address the rural nature of the area and proximity to Kent, both factors that could potentially cause problems in fulfilling our duty to offer a school place to every Surrey child, without the creation of a specific catchment area.
13. For Warlingham there was a high level of oversubscription and not all applicants from the catchment area were allocated a place. However, the adjudicator has not recommended any variations for this school for 2009 and it is recommended that the existing fixed catchment area is maintained unchanged in 2009.
14. The over-subscription criteria of 'partner schools', was introduced for two secondary schools and one junior school in Waverley for 2007. In all cases the partner school lists were based on historic intake patterns rather than intentionally using the confederation list. It is popular with the schools and analysis shows it generally works well. Attending a named partner school did not guarantee a place but children from the partner schools had a high success rate when applying for a place. At junior school level, the majority of first preferences from a partner school were allocated a place.

15. The partner school criteria has been extended to other schools within Waverley for 2008 and the criteria has also been moved above the criteria of children for whom the school is closest to their home, giving extra weight to the partner school criteria. These alterations will need to be monitored to observe the outcomes.
16. There is consensus in the area on the partner school list and the partner school criteria appears to work in this area where there is a relatively small number of schools within a partner relationship. For 2009 it is recommended that the existing partner school criteria for specific schools within Waverley is maintained unchanged.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

17. This is an existing policy with minimal financial and value for money implications for Surrey other than the on-going resourcing of the Admissions and Transportation Team, the Contact Centre who receive a high volume of enquiries from parents and the management of any resultant appeals.

### **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

18. This policy gives priority to children with statements of special educational needs, looked-after children and those children with exceptional arrangements eg a serious or life-threatening medical condition, disability, sensitive family circumstances, disability. The policy allows the governing body of voluntary-aided and foundation schools to define their own admissions criteria and thus takes account of admissions on the basis of faith. Those schools designated by the Secretary of State as having a religious character (faith schools) are permitted to use faith-based oversubscription criteria in order to give higher priority in admissions to children who are members of, or who practise, their faith or denomination. This only applies if the school is oversubscribed.
19. The policy has been reviewed with CCMT, the Schools and Learning Select Committee and the Admissions Forum with representatives from a number of stakeholder groups including Members, Head Teachers and the Dioceses. A formal equality impact assessment will be undertaken on the 2009 admissions policy before it is reported to the Executive and Council in March 2008.
20. Consultation will be undertaken and will be as inclusive as possible.

### **RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

21. Risk	Mitigating Actions
Adverse publicity arising from the 2009 admissions policy, particularly the Howard of Effingham and Oxted schools	Consideration of all the policy options and recommendation based on assessment of risks and benefits. Ongoing involvement of affected groups
Parents not understanding the 2009 admissions policy	Materials published to support the consultation and admissions process must be easy to understand
Parents not feeling they have had sufficient opportunity to engage in the consultation process	A consultation plan and process will be prepared by the Admissions Project to ensure the consultation, which will be managed by the Admissions and Transportation Team, reaches as many parents as possible

## **SECTION 151 COMMENTARY**

22. The Section 151 Officer confirms that all material financial and business issues have been taken into account in this report.

## **SENSITIVE ISSUES**

23. The Schools and Learning Select Committee and the Admissions Forum have asked for the consultation on the 2009 admissions policy to reach as many parents as possible who will be impacted by the 2009 policy.
24. The local arrangements for the Howard of Effingham and Oxted remain complex and politically sensitive. While the 2009 policy is designed to be as transparent as possible, it is recognised that each option advantages or disadvantages a particular community.
25. A review of the placement planning process and identification of improvement opportunities will be undertaken by the Admissions Project and its conclusions will be reported to the December meeting of the Schools and Learning Select Committee.

## **LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS**

26. Equal preference is now required by law and Surrey's policy must be compliant with the 2007 Admissions Code. The Local Government Ombudsman stated on 18th October 2007 that his "initial view is that the Council's revised arrangements now appear to be sufficiently clear, fair and objective" and "accord with the requirements of the schools admissions code".
27. The Schools Adjudicator ruled that to apply Surrey's countywide admissions policy for the Howard of Effingham would not be equitable as every child could not be confident of admissions to at least one reasonably accessible school. Surrey is therefore obliged to have a local variation in place.
28. The Schools Adjudicator suggested the catchment area for Oxted needs to be redrawn to more closely reflect the distribution of the population.

## **CONSULTATION**

29. The Schools and Learning Select Committee and Admissions Forum have been consulted and have agreed the recommended no change to the existing countywide policy in 2009.
30. The timing of the Schools Adjudicator's final decision for the Howard of Effingham and Oxted on 16 October, meant the recommendations relating to these two schools for 2009 were not included in the paper to the Select Committee and Admissions Forum. However, the Chairman of the Schools and Learning Select Committee and the Executive Member for Schools, Children and Youth Services have been consulted. All Council Members and Members of Parliament impacted by the policy relating to these two schools have been notified and provided with a copy of this paper.
31. The County Council Management Team supports the recommendations in this paper.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

It is recommended that consultation on the admissions policy for 2009 be undertaken on the basis of the following proposals:

- (a) No change to Surrey's 2009 countywide admissions policy - this means maintaining the existing admissions criteria operating for 2008
- (b) For Howard of Effingham the 2009 admissions policy to be Surrey's countywide admissions policy with distance to nearest alternative school as a tiebreak
- (c) For Oxted the 2009 admissions policy to be a revised catchment area with a straight line distance tie-break.
- (d) No change to the local arrangements in place in Warlingham and Waverley for 2009

## **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- (a) Any significant change to the countywide policy, following the major changes undertaken in 2007, would cause confusion, instability, continued appeals and negative publicity. 2008 is the first full year in which to monitor the equal preference system at work and to observe how well the local arrangements operate. The evaluation of approved over-subscription criteria support the criteria currently operated as being the most suitable for Surrey.
- (b) This option provides consistency with the countywide arrangement with a revised tie-break to ensure that the policy is equitable. It addresses inequalities noted by the Schools Adjudicator and impacts on communities which have alternative local secondary schools.
- (c) By making the catchment area for Oxted school smaller, the inclusion of a catchment area becomes a more meaningful oversubscription criteria. It also excludes areas which have close alternative schools.
- (d) The fixed catchment area for Warlingham addresses the rural nature of the area and proximity to Kent. The partner schools criteria in Waverley is popular, has been extended and analysis shows it generally works well.

## **WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:**

The annual statutory consultation on the 2009 admissions policy will be led by the Admissions and Transportation Team during the mid-November 2007 to January 2008 period.

The final 2009 admissions policy will be submitted to the Executive in March, to the Council and then submitted to the DCFS in April.

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**Consulted:** Schools and Learning Select Committee

Admissions Forum  
CCMT  
Andrew Crisp - Executive Member for Schools, Children and Youth Services  
Nick Wilson - Head of Schools and Learning  
Andrew Webster, Strategic Director for Families  
Anne Macavoy and Paul Mailer - Admissions and Transportation Team

**Informed**

Council Members affected by Howard of Effingham (James Smith, Tim Hall, Mike Bennison and Dorothy Mitchell)  
Member of Parliament affected by Howard of Effingham (Peter Ainsworth)  
Council Members affected by Oxted (Peter Langham, Sally Marks, Marian Myland, Ken Rimington, Nick Skellett and David Hodge)  
Members of Parliament affected by Oxted (Ian Taylor and Paul Berrisford)

**Sources/background papers:**

- School Admissions Code February 2007
- Information on School Admissions & Transfers 08/09 (Primary)
- Information on School Admissions & Transfers 08/09 (Secondary)
- School Admissions Policy for September 2007
- School Admissions Policy for September 2008
- Letters and emails from parents (various)
- Press releases (various)
- Proposed change of Admissions Criteria for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools for September 2007 (paper to Executive 17/01/06)
- Consultation on Surrey's Admission arrangements for September 2007 for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools (paper to Schools and Communities Select Committee 09/03/06)
- Consultation on Surrey's Admission arrangements for September 2007 for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools (paper to the Executive 28/03/06)
- Consultation on Surrey's Admission arrangements for September 2007 for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools (paper to the Executive 27/02/07)
- School Admissions policy review consultation 2005 (survey and results)

**PREFERENCES ACHIEVED IN SURREY'S DISTRICTS AND BOROUGHES IN 2007****RECEPTION**

District/Borough	% 1 <sup>st</sup> preferences achieved	% 2 <sup>nd</sup> preferences achieved	% 3 <sup>rd</sup> preferences achieved	Number of children not allocated one of their preferences (district refers to area where they were finally allocated a place)
Elmbridge	81.9	7.5	3	65
Epsom and Ewell	77.9	5.1	4.1	65
Guildford	84.2	9.1	3.4	64
Mole Valley	89.3	7.1	3.1	28
Reigate	83.5	8.7	3.5	84
Runnymede	88.2	9.3	6.3	46
Spelthorne	87.4	6.3	5.4	36
Surrey Heath	85.6	8.3	2.8	26
Tandridge	84.6	3.8	3.8	30
Waverley	83.6	6	2.9	61
Woking	83.1	4.9	5.1	62
Total	84.5	6.9	3.9	567

- Reigate has the highest number of children not receiving any of their 3 preferences as a result of the shortage of school places.

**JUNIOR**

District/Borough	% 1 <sup>st</sup> preferences achieved	% 2 <sup>nd</sup> preferences achieved	% 3 <sup>rd</sup> preferences achieved	Number of children not allocated one of their preferences (District refers to area where they were finally allocated a place)
Elmbridge	92.2	2.3	2.9	20
Epsom and Ewell	93.5	2.3	0.9	19
Guildford	89.5	4.4	4.2	14
Mole Valley	85.3	5.9	3.1	20
Reigate	88.2	3.6	2.6	25
Runnymede	94	4.5	4.3	5
Spelthorne	94.3	3.4	3.4	4
Surrey Heath	84.9	9.5	2	9
Tandridge	90.4	10.3	6	30
Waverley	87.6	6.3	1.9	64
Woking	88.8	5.8	2.6	12
Totals	89.9	5.3	3.1	222

**SECONDARY**

District/Borough	% 1 <sup>st</sup> preferences achieved	% 2 <sup>nd</sup> preferences achieved	% 3 <sup>rd</sup> preferences achieved	Number of children not allocated one of their preferences (District refers to area where they were finally allocated a place)
Elmbridge	78.1	9	5.6	83
Epsom and Ewell	81.5	15	9.1	55
Guildford	85.5	4.6	3	67
Mole Valley	86.1	6.6	4.8	34
Reigate	82.7	13.8	11.4	156
Runnymede	84.8	9.3	4.1	54
Spelthorne	85.8	10.2	5.7	45
Surrey Heath	83.7	9.3	3.2	75
Tandridge	80.7	9.3	5.8	0
Waverley	86.3	5	3.2	52
Woking	91.7	2.8	2.4	75
Totals	84.2	8.6	5.3	696

- High numbers of applicants not receiving one of their preferences were allocated places in Reigate due to the oversubscription of Oxted and Warlingham Schools.

\* Percentages within districts will not total 100% as applications are made across boundaries

## ANALYSIS - 2009 POLICY OPTIONS

1. Over the years there have been many proposals for change to Surrey's admissions policy. Each of these proposals, were consulted upon with Surrey community and voluntary controlled schools, Surrey's admission authorities and neighbouring authorities through the annual statutory consultation.
2. A number of the criteria and approaches Surrey has previously used, are now prohibited under the School Admissions Code of February 2007, including:
  - Giving priority to children according to the order of other schools named as preferences (including first preference first systems).
  - Allocation of places at a school on the basis that a sibling is a former pupil.
  - Catchment areas that are set after applications have been made.
3. Criteria adopted by Surrey for 2007 and 2008 admissions met the Code's guidelines for setting fair over-subscription criteria. Given the mandatory provision of the Code there are limited changes Surrey could make to its admissions policy. However, to review any options for change, this paper considers each of the approved over-subscription criteria listed in 2007 Admissions Code in the Surrey context.
4. Over-subscription criteria only operate when the number of applications exceeds the number of places available. The criteria of children with statements of special educational needs is not included in this analysis as according to the 2007 Admissions Code it is not an over-subscription criteria, schools must admit such children whether they have places or not. Similarly, admissions authorities must give highest priority in their over-subscription criteria to children in care. Upon advice from Legal Services, the criteria of ease of access by transport has not been analysed as it is subjective and open to legal challenge, as well as being difficult to administer.
5. All of the over-subscription criteria options below have been assessed for their suitability for inclusion in Surrey's county-wide admissions policy.
6. There are also different tie-break criteria which have been assessed for their suitability for inclusion in Surrey's county-wide admissions policy. A tie-break applies if there are more applicants than places available within a particular criteria category.
7. Definitions for the assessment criteria are as follows:
 

<b>Acceptability:</b>	Transparency of the criteria and the likely political and public opinion
<b>Suitability:</b>	Suitability in the Surrey context and consideration of any relevant geographic or demographic issues
<b>Feasibility:</b>	Time, cost and quality - how over-subscription criteria will be administered, cost and officer time involved

## OVER SUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

## BANDING

Over-subscription criteria	<u>Banding</u>
<b>Definition</b>	Ability banding can be used to ensure an intake includes a proportionate spread of children of different abilities. Any test arrangements must be clearly explained to parents and a common test used.
<b>Benchmarking evidence</b>	A high percentage of schools using this criteria tend to be voluntary aided schools. Usage is limited in community and voluntary controlled schools.
<b>Surrey Context</b>	There has been no research or consultation into this option within Surrey
<b>Acceptability</b>  Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>X Perceived by parents as another test of ability, likely to be unpopular</li> <li>X May generate additional travel and congestion as could lead to those living further from the school gaining a place</li> <li>X Likely to be unpopular with schools as would require increased workload in testing</li> <li>X Possible to coach pupils for the tests</li> </ul> <p>√ Can play a role in widening access to particular schools</p> <p>Rationale: Inclusion would reduce the transparency of Surrey's admission policy as it would make it harder for parents to assess whether they have a reasonable likelihood of gaining a place at a particular school</p>
<b>Suitability</b>  Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>X Not an over-subscription criteria that could be applied across Surrey as not all schools would want it included</li> </ul> <p>Rationale: May be suitable for specific schools, but not as a criteria to include in Surrey's admissions criteria.</p>
<b>Feasibility</b>  Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>X The banding of students would have to be applied consistently county wide, involving increased officer time</li> <li>X Local authority time and cost involved in providing the tests</li> <li>X Assessments may be open to challenge</li> <li>X Impossible to determine which schools will be over-subscribed in advance. The possibility of having to band all applicants is a huge undertaking</li> <li>X The banding criteria can be very complicated</li> </ul> <p>Rationale: Inclusion would further complicate the allocation process</p>

**CATCHMENT AREA**

<b>Over-subscription criteria</b>	<u><b>Catchment areas</b></u>
<b>Definition</b>	A geographical area is identified around a school, within which pupils are given priority in terms of admissions. The area should be clearly defined and explained in the prospectus, with maps where appropriate. Catchment areas must not be set after applications have been received and in drawing up the area, admission authorities should ensure they reflect the diversity of the community served by the school and must not exclude particular areas in a way that might disadvantage particular social groups. A catchment area does not prevent parents expressing a preference for the school if they do not live in the area
<b>Benchmarking evidence</b>	Use of the criteria is widespread. Findings from RISE (Research and Information on State Education) in 2003 suggested that 61% of secondary schools in England used catchment areas as an admissions criteria. In many cases, for example Worcestershire County Council, catchment areas are well established and have been operating for some time. In these cases challenges are few as the areas are so well established. Maintaining catchment areas through reviews and consultation takes significant officer time.
<b>Surrey context</b>	<p>Catchment areas have not been consulted upon within Surrey and although we previously had Admission Priority Areas, which could supply trend data as to sensible catchment areas, they were only drawn up in relation to over-subscribed schools (maybe a maximum of 65). For huge areas of the County there has been no work into researching likely catchment areas</p> <p>In Tandridge fixed catchment areas operate for Warlingham and Oxted schools. These are based on the old flexible Admissions Priority Area and are consequently based on historical admissions trends. Catchment areas have been adopted in these areas to address the rural nature of the area and proximity to Kent and Sussex, both factors that could potentially cause Surrey children problems in obtaining places at these schools without the creation of a specific catchment area.</p> <p>Due to the high level of oversubscription for both these schools, not all applicants from the catchment areas have been allocated a place, with some specific areas having been particularly affected. The Schools Adjudicator ruled that further refinement was required to this criteria for Oxted for 2008.</p>

<p><b>Acceptability</b></p> <p>Medium</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>X May be socially selective favouring those who can afford to can buy a house within a catchment area for a popular school</li> <li>X In Surrey catchment areas are generally unpopular with head teachers and governors, being viewed as subjective</li> <li>X Likely to be unpopular with parents in the catchment area for a poorly performing school</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>√ Priority is given to local children, supporting green travel policies</li> <li>√ There is consistency, as parents within a catchment area know their children will have priority in gaining a school place in their local school.</li> </ul> <p>Rationale: It is a transparent criterion with parents in theory being able to assess whether they have a reasonable likelihood of gaining a place at a particular school.</p>
<p><b>Suitability</b></p> <p>Low</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>X Some schools are close to one another and share similar areas from which they accept children</li> <li>X Catchment areas would need to vary in size to reflect the differing sizes of the schools</li> <li>X Limited work has been undertaken within Surrey to identify catchment areas for the entire county</li> </ul> <p>Rationale: We do not currently have the data in a format which would enable us to attempt to draw up catchment areas county-wide.</p>
<p><b>Feasibility</b></p> <p>Low</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>X A countywide scheme of catchment areas would take years to devise and may then prove to not be fit for purpose</li> <li>X Any newly defined area is open to challenge</li> <li>X Significant officer time required in drawing up and maintaining catchment areas</li> <li>X Catchment areas must reflect the diversity of the community, and must not exclude particular housing estates or addresses. How these boundaries are drawn up can be argued to be subjective and is therefore open to challenge</li> </ul> <p>Rationale: The work involved to divide Surrey into catchment areas is considerable and costly.</p>

**HOME TO SCHOOL DISTANCE CRITERION: SCHOOL IS NEAREST TO HOME**

<b>Over-subscription criteria</b>	Distance criterion: Children for whom the school is the closest to their home
<b>Definition</b>	The nearest school is defined as the school closest to the home address, which admits pupils of the appropriate age. Distance between home and school is a clear and objective over-subscription criteria. Admission authorities should clearly explain how distance from home to school will be measured including the points at the school and the child's home from which distance is to be measured.
<b>Benchmarking evidence</b>	Use of a distance criterion is widespread. The 2003 findings from RISE (Research and Information on State Education) showed that 86% of schools in England used a distance criterion.
<b>Surrey context</b>	For 2008 the measurement of distance was changed to measurement by straight line as opposed to measurement by walking route
<b>Acceptability</b>  High	<p>X May be socially selective, favouring those who can afford to buy homes close to a popular school</p> <p>√ Measuring distance is objective and usually easily verified.</p> <p>√ Fits with green travel policies, except in the few cases where children living in rural areas with no other reasonably accessible school do not gain a place.</p> <p>Rationale: Is a transparent criterion and parents are able to assess the likelihood of their child gaining a place at a local school.</p>
<b>Suitability</b>  High	<p>√ Is suitable in all authorities</p> <p>X Does not take into account distance to the nearest alternative school. For example a child may live a little further away from their local school than other children but would have a disproportionately long journey to their next nearest school if they do not gain a place at their local school</p> <p>Rationale: Entirely suitable for any local authority to include</p>
<b>Feasibility</b>  High	<p>√ Is easy to administer.</p> <p>Rationale: Very easy to administer over-subscription criteria</p>

**PARTIAL SELECTION**

<b>Over-subscription criteria title</b>	Partial selection by aptitude
<b>Definition</b>	The admission authority for a school that specialises in one or more prescribed subjects is allowed to give priority to up to 10% of children who can demonstrate an aptitude in the relevant subject
<b>Benchmarking evidence</b>	Schools selecting by aptitude tend to be their own admission authority (Voluntary aided or foundation)
<b>Surrey context</b>	A number of junior schools and four of the County's secondary voluntary aided and foundation schools include this criterion within their policy.
<b>Acceptability</b>  Low	<p>X Perceived by parents as another test of ability</p> <p>X May generate additional travel and congestion as could lead to those living further from the school gaining a place</p> <p>X Potentially takes places away from local children</p> <p>X It is hard to simply assess aptitude, tests tend to also test for ability at the same time</p> <p>√ Selection by aptitude in sport and PE, the visual and performing arts and modern foreign languages can play an important part in widening access to particular schools</p> <p>Rationale: Inclusion would further fragment Surrey's admission policy and increase the number of areas/schools with local arrangements. This could confuse parents and make it harder for them to assess whether they have a reasonable likelihood of gaining a place at a particular school.</p>
<b>Suitability</b>  Low	<p>X Is not an over-subscription criterion that can be applied widely across the County as not all schools specialise in specific subjects</p> <p>X Does not act in accordance with a comprehensive and fully inclusive policy</p> <p>Rationale: May be suitable for specific schools, but not as a criteria to include in Surrey's Countywide admissions criteria.</p>
<b>Feasibility</b>  Low	<p>X The assessment of whether a school specialises in a subject and the assessment of which pupils have an aptitude will have to be applied consistently county wide, involving increased officer time.</p> <p>X Assessments may be open to challenge</p> <p>X Would increase the number of schools/areas operating local arrangements</p> <p>Rationale: Inclusion would further fragment Surrey's admission policy, complicating the allocation process.</p>

**PARTNER SCHOOL**

<b>Over-subscription criteria</b>	Attendance at named partner schools
<b>Definition</b>	Identifies a clearly defined school educational path between named junior/primary schools and a specific secondary school or between named infant schools and a specific junior school by giving admission priority to children attending those schools. Support for the links must be obtained from schools.
<b>Benchmarking</b>	RISE (Research and Information on State Education) research in 2003 found that only 28% of English secondary schools included a feeder school criteria. In many cases, for example Newcastle City Council, feeder school links are well established. They tend to be based on historical links between the schools and date from a time when parental choice was less of a factor and there was more of a natural progression from school to school. It would appear to operate best in a geographically small area
<b>Surrey context</b>	<p>The partner school criteria has been consulted upon within Surrey, particularly during the large scale consultation on the policy for 2007, but as far back as 2004 suggestions for inclusion of a partner school criteria were being received.</p> <p>In the 2007 consultation, 4 criteria options were given (siblings at school, nearest school, ease of access to school and feeder school). Of these there was least strong support for the partner school criteria, although 59% of postal survey respondents and 40% of the face to face survey respondents felt it should be included in our criteria</p> <p>During the statutory consultation a list of partner schools was also circulated. There was limited support of 36% for the specific list of partner schools that was circulated (drawn up from historical data on admission trends for particular schools).</p> <p>The reaction to partner schools in 2007 was very mixed and it was not felt that support existed at that time for inclusion of the criteria, except where schools made a special case for its inclusion after nearest school (as was the case in Waverley). The grounds for making this decision would be that by adding feeder schools it would include pupils in areas that had been historically admitted by the school, that the method of selecting feeder schools was transparent and fair and that the social composition of the subsequent intake properly reflected that of the schools' local geographical area. These arrangements were introduced at the request of the schools involved with the intention of maintaining traditional admission patterns.</p> <p>The over-subscription criteria of 'Partner schools', was introduced in two secondary and one junior school in Waverley for 2007. It is popular with the schools in the area and analysis shows that it generally works well. Attending a named partner school did not guarantee obtaining a place but children from the partner schools had a high success rate when applying for a place. At junior school level, the majority of first preferences from a partner school were allocated a place.</p> <p>The partner school criteria has been extended to other schools within Waverley for 2008 and the criteria has also been moved above the criteria of children for whom the school is closest to their home, will give extra weight to the partner school criteria. These alterations will need to be monitored to observe the outcomes.</p>

<p><b>Acceptability</b></p> <p>Medium</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>X Perception that children are tied into a school path and the school or the child's needs may change</li> <li>X Disadvantages those children that were in the independent sector or those that have moved from out of County to start secondary school as they have not attended a designated partner school</li> <li>X Unpopular with the Admissions Forum</li> <li>X Possible feeling among parents that if partner schools are named, their child is prompted to follow a certain school path and consequently free school transport should be provided for those living the relevant distance away from the school, even if this is not their closest school.</li> <li>X Possible confusion around the fact that by attending a partner school a child is not guaranteed a place at the school it feeds into.</li> <li>X An increase in appeals may be observed where the partner school criteria exists as parents appeal to get their child into a particular infant school to feed into a junior or primary to feed into a secondary.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>√ Allows local continuity and can support good curriculum and geographical links between phases in an area</li> <li>√ Allows children continuity and to maintain friendships</li> <li>√ Consistency as parents with children at a partner school knows that their child will have priority in obtaining a place at the school they feed into.</li> <li>√ Support has previously been expressed for the criteria within Surrey.</li> </ul> <p>Rationale: Should be a transparent criterion if significant oversubscription does not occur as parents will in theory be able to assess their likelihood of obtaining a place at a particular school.</p>
<p><b>Suitability</b></p> <p>Low</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>X Would appear to work best within a geographically small area.</li> <li>X Uncertainty on what a list of partner schools would be based on within Surrey. The confederation model is possibly too immature and too large to base these important linkages on</li> <li>X Based on analysis, inclusion of the criteria in Surrey is likely to reduce the transparency of our policy if applied county wide as parents will be uncertain of their likelihood of obtaining a school place even if their child attends a named partner school. Regardless of what method is used to draw up the partner school list, PAN is frequently reached before all applicants from the named partner obtain a place. Inclusion could raise expectations of parents and create confusion.</li> <li>X By including the criteria, results vary from school to school, both in terms of the number and location of allocations affected and the number of applicants from partner schools that get admitted.</li> </ul> <p>Rationale: Inclusion on a county-wide basis is likely to cause unanticipated or unwelcome results for particular schools. The question of how to objectively draw up a list of partner schools is complicated. Confederations cover too many schools and using historical intake information can also cause unwanted outcomes.</p>
<p><b>Feasibility</b></p> <p>Low</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>X Designation of partner schools can be complicated, arrangements should not include only partner schools that serve more advantaged groups, leaving out other schools a similar distance from the school it is feeding into.</li> <li>X Can accentuate the polarisation between popular and unpopular schools</li> <li>X Some primaries would need to feed into more than one secondary</li> <li>X Unlikely to get agreement from schools county wide, some schools will be popular partner schools, others less so.</li> </ul> <p>Rationale: To determine which schools would feed into which is a complicated process and subject to challenge.</p>

**RANDOM ALLOCATION**

<b>Over-subscription criteria title</b>	Random Allocation (lottery)
<b>Definition</b>	The 2007 admissions code acknowledges that admission authorities can use a lottery or ballot as a means of allocating places in over-subscribed schools. It must be clearly detailed how the system will operate and the process will need to be supervised by someone independent.
<b>Benchmarking</b>	<p>Following Brighton and Hove's introduction of a lottery criterion for over-subscribed schools in 2007, Ipsos Mori undertook research into the public's opinion on this criterion. Key points.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As an abstract concept, 28% of respondents viewed ballots as being unfair, 9% as fair and 63% unable to express an opinion viewed ballots. The public are intuitively against the idea of allocating school places on a random basis.</li> <li>• Respondents believed the fairest way of allocating places is by giving priority to children who live closest to the school (52% viewed it as fair, compared to 9% unfair)</li> <li>• When faced with a specific example of an over-subscribed school, respondents were much more likely to think random allocation is a fair way of deciding which pupils get places. 32% think a ballot is the fairer way of deciding which pupils get a place at an over-subscribed community school, whilst 35% think a fairer way to decide is how near families live to the school.</li> <li>• When the details of any scheme are explained and the context laid out, the use of ballots becomes a more acceptable proposition.</li> <li>• Outside of the UK, the use of ballots for allocation is a lot more widespread</li> </ul>
<b>Surrey Context</b>	No specific research on this criteria has been undertaken within Surrey, however national research suggests it is unlikely to be a popular option

<p><b>Acceptability</b></p> <p>Low</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>X As an abstract concept is perceived as unfair by the public</li> <li>X May generate additional travel and congestion as could lead to those living further from the school gaining a place</li> <li>X No consistency in waiting lists, as every time anyone is added to a waiting list, random allocation needs to occur again to allocate ranking</li> <li>√ It can create a truly equitable system, for example if used as a tiebreak within a catchment area</li> </ul> <p>Rationale: Acceptability politically and amongst the public is likely to be very low for this option.</p>
<p><b>Suitability</b></p> <p>Low</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>√ Can be good practice for urban areas and secondary schools as can widen access to schools for those unable to buy houses near to popular schools</li> <li>X May not be suitable for rural areas</li> </ul> <p>Rationale: It is unsuitable for the Surrey context where there is a mix of urban and rural areas.</p>
<p><b>Feasibility</b></p> <p>Low</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>X Has to operate within a specified geographical area or a specific pool of applicants, otherwise pupils from across the County could have the opportunity of obtaining a place at any school, thereby contradicting green travel policies. It is usually used as a secondary over-subscription criteria (effectively a tie-break) after a criteria which places a limit on the extent of applicants that can enter into the lottery, for example as in Brighton and Hove as a tie break within a catchment area</li> <li>X Possible increased administration costs due to queries and complaints</li> <li>√ Quick to administer</li> </ul> <p>Rationale: Within Surrey we do not use any criteria county wide that would identify the pool of applicants eligible for entering a lottery, for example catchment areas</p>

**SIBLING**

<b>Over-subscription criteria title</b>	Siblings of children who are still at the school																		
<b>Definition</b>	<p>Many parents will want their children to attend the same school and most admission authorities recognise this and give priority in admissions to siblings. This is recognised as good practice.</p> <p>Admission authorities should consider the effects of the sibling criterion particularly where a disproportionate number of children attending the school do not live in the local area.</p>																		
<b>Benchmarking evidence</b>	<p>Inclusion of this criteria is widespread, in excess of 96% of secondary schools include this criteria. If within the admissions criteria there is an area identified from which applicants receive priority, ie catchment area, authorities tend to split the siblings along these lines:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Siblings within catchment area</li> <li>2. All other applicants within catchment area</li> <li>3. Siblings outside of catchment area</li> <li>4. All other applicants</li> </ol>																		
<b>Surrey context</b>	<p>In 2004 the criteria for the 2005 intake were consulted upon. Whether to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give priority to all siblings of existing pupils at schools (definition at time)</li> <li>• Only given priority to siblings of existing pupils who live within the district or borough and for whom the school is the nearest maintained by the LEA</li> </ul> <table border="1" data-bbox="496 999 1334 1245"> <thead> <tr> <th>Respondent Group</th> <th>Keep current definition</th> <th>Supports proposed change</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Parents/ Carers</td> <td>47.47%</td> <td>47.31%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Governors</td> <td>45.55%</td> <td>50.18%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Head teachers</td> <td>34.21%</td> <td>60.53%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>School staff</td> <td>48.84%</td> <td>47.09%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Teachers</td> <td>45.12%</td> <td>47.56%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>There were also a high number of additional responses received indicating that they wished to keep the sibling priority the same. A number of responses were received suggesting that the sibling changes should be phased in.</p> <p>Although the arguments were finely balanced, a recommendation of no change was presented, and the sibling criteria has not been investigated since. The Admissions Forum agreed with these recommendation.</p> <p>It is difficult to investigate any variation to the sibling criteria county-wide as we do not operate catchment areas within which other applicants could be given priority above non catchment area siblings.</p>	Respondent Group	Keep current definition	Supports proposed change	Parents/ Carers	47.47%	47.31%	Governors	45.55%	50.18%	Head teachers	34.21%	60.53%	School staff	48.84%	47.09%	Teachers	45.12%	47.56%
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<p><b>Acceptability</b></p> <p>High</p>	<p>X Difficult for younger siblings to go to a different school that they may be more suited to</p> <p>X Priority can be given to siblings resident outside of area above a local child</p> <p>√ Supports families where younger children may not be able to travel independently</p> <p>√ Reduces journeys if two or more children are attending the same school</p> <p>√ Enables families to build relationships with schools</p> <p>Rationale: Inclusion of the sibling criterion is considered good practice and is viewed by the parents of Surrey as being a fair over-subscription criteria (87% respondents considered this criteria to be fair in the consultation of 05/06)</p>
<p><b>Suitability</b></p> <p>High</p>	<p>√ Is suitable in all authorities and its inclusion is considered good practice</p> <p>X Possible exception is for schools where a disproportionate number of children attending the school do not live in the local area.</p> <p>Rationale: Entirely suitable for any local authority to include</p>
<p><b>Feasibility</b></p> <p>High</p>	<p>√ Easy to administer and verify by school in question.</p> <p>Rationale: Very easy to administer over-subscription criteria</p>

## TIE-BREAK OPTIONS

## DISTANCE FROM NEAREST ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL

<b>Over-subscription criteria title</b>	Distance from next nearest school
<b>Definition</b>	This is where priority could be given to pupils who would have a disproportionately long journey to another school if not admitted to the first.
<b>Benchmarking evidence</b>	This system operates in Shropshire and has been in place for 10+ years. It is only in place in Shrewsbury for secondary schools whereas the rest of the County operates catchment areas. The system was devised to address specific issues within the town due to the positioning of its schools, namely their concentration in sectors of the town that don't correspond to the location of the majority of housing. They consider that the system successfully addresses their specific geographic issues and appeals are no more pronounced in the areas that it operates as the system is so well established
<b>Surrey context</b>	The Schools Adjudicator has ruled that Surrey will operate a variation of this criterion for two secondary schools where specific geographical problems were encountered in 2007. If there are more applicants for these schools in any of the admissions criteria than there are places available, priority will be given to children living furthest away from the nearest alternative school.
<b>Acceptability</b>  Low	X Can be difficult to explain to parents and it makes it more difficult for them to assess a child's priority at a given school  √ Is a useful tiebreak criterion for over-subscribed schools where the impact on specific communities is significant √ Looks at applications globally, possibly increasing total preferences met for an area (although could lead to a reduced number of first preferences met)  Rationale: Inclusion countywide would reduce the transparency of Surrey's admission policy, as it would make it harder for parents to assess whether they have a reasonable likelihood of gaining a place at a particular school
<b>Suitability</b>  Low	√ Has a role in addressing specific geographic issues, for example children living in rural areas with no other reasonably accessible school. X It is not necessary to add the criteria on a county-wide basis as it would cause unwanted local outcomes.  Rationale: Is a useful addition to local arrangement criteria where local circumstances dictate
<b>Feasibility</b>  Low	X Complications in administering at the allocation stage. X Doubts as to whether our system is capable on a significant scale.  Rationale: Inclusion countywide would complicate the allocation stage significantly.

**STRAIGHT LINE DISTANCE BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL**

<b>Tie-break</b>	Straight line distance between home and school
<b>Definition</b>	Those applicants living closer to the school when measured as the crow flies are given priority.
<b>Benchmarking evidence</b>	This is a commonly used tie-break.
<b>Surrey context</b>	This is what operates on a countywide basis. During the consultation of 2007/2007 for the 2008 arrangements, the proposal to measure distance between home and school by straight line distance was consulted upon. 67% of respondents supported the change, with a further 10% making no comment.
<b>Acceptability</b>  High	<p>X In specific geographic situations it can result in children in rural areas with no other reasonably accessible school not gaining a place at what is their local school.</p> <p>X In a limited number of cases the use of straight-line distances could result in children being given priority even though the actual journey time to the school is high as physical boundaries and travel routes aren't taken into account.</p> <p>√ Is transparent and easy for parents to understand</p> <p>√ Enables parents to assess the likelihood of their child gaining a place at a particular school.</p> <p>√ Is in accord with green travel policies as in theory should result in local children attending local schools.</p> <p>Rationale: On a countywide basis this is a transparent tie-break.</p>
<b>Suitability</b>  High	<p>√ In Surrey as we give priority to children for whom the school is closest to their home, this tie-break further emphasises that those local to the school will be given priority.</p> <p>X In specific geographic situations it can result in children in rural areas with no other reasonably accessible school not gaining a place at what is their local school.</p> <p>Rationale: On a countywide basis this is a suitable criteria as it aims to result in children attaining a place at their local school.</p>
<b>Feasibility</b>  High	<p>√ Is easy to administer.</p> <p>Rationale: This is what we currently operate and it works in the vast majority of cases.</p>

**DETAILED EVALUATION OF PARTNER SCHOOL CRITERIA - JUNIOR**

	A junior school with PAN of 90	A junior school with PAN of 90	A junior school with PAN of 150	A junior school with PAN of 68
Number of applicants allocated a place based on 07 criteria, but who wouldn't be if feeder school criteria were added. (Partner school list based on confederation list).	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>7</b>
Number of applicants allocated a place when feeder school criteria added, but who weren't based on 07 criteria (Partner school list based on confederation list).	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>7</b>
Number of applicants allocated a place based on 07 criteria, but who wouldn't be if feeder school criteria were added. (Partner school list based on historical intake).	<b>3</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
Number of applicants allocated a place when feeder school criteria added, but who weren't based on 07 criteria (Partner school list drawn from historical intake).	<b>3</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
Number of applicants from a feeder school not awarded a place due to PAN being reached when feeder school criteria added (Partner school list based on confederation list).	<b>0</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>108</b>
Number of applicants from a feeder school not awarded a place due to PAN being reached when feeder school criteria added (Partner school list based on historical intake information).	<b>24</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>43</b>
Number of applicants for whom the school is their closest but who would not be allocated a place when feeder school criteria is added (Partner school list based on confederation list).	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>
Number of applicants for whom the school is their closest but who would not be allocated a place when feeder school criteria is added (Partner school list based on historical intake)	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>

**DETAILED EVALUATION OF PARTNER SCHOOL CRITERIA – SECONDARY**

	Secondary school with a PAN of 180	Secondary school with a PAN of 300	Secondary school with a PAN of 270	Secondary school with a PAN of 335	Secondary school with a PAN of 240	Secondary school with a PAN of 210
Number of applicants allocated a place based on 07 criteria, but who wouldn't be if feeder school criteria were added. (Partner school list based on confederation list).	<b>38</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>19</b>
Number of applicants allocated a place when feeder school criteria added, but who weren't based on 07 criteria (Partner school list based on confederation list).	<b>38</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>19</b>
Number of applicants allocated a place based on 07 criteria, but who wouldn't be if feeder school criteria were added. (Partner school list based on historical intake).	<b>51</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>19</b>
Number of applicants allocated a place when feeder school criteria added, but who weren't based on 07 criteria (Partner school list drawn from historical intake).	<b>51</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>19</b>
Number of applicants from a partner school not awarded a place due to PAN being reached when partner school criteria added (Partner school list based on confederation list).	<b>173</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>46</b>
Number of applicants from a partner school not awarded a place due to PAN being reached when partner school criteria added (Partner school list based on historical intake information).	<b>109</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>139</b>
Number of applicants	<b>7</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>21</b>

for whom the school is their closest but who would not be allocated a place when partner school criteria is added (Partner school list based on confederation list).						
Number of applicants for whom the school is their closest but who would not be allocated a place when partner school criteria is added (Partner school list based on historical intake)	8	33	49	190	11	19

In all the options below the risks and benefits apply if the school is oversubscribed, a situation that is certain. For all options the first three criteria for the admissions policy remain:

- Criteria 1 Looked after children
- Criteria 2 Exceptional circumstances
- Criteria 3 Siblings

All analysis is based on 2007 data and whilst it gives an indication of future trends, exact number of applicants from each category will vary year on year and could cause slight variations in outcome.

## Howard of Effingham

It is not possible to expand the school in the short term as it is constrained by its infrastructure and a lack of social area such as hard core playing surfaces.

Options 4 and 5 are both feasible, however the project team and the Admissions and Transportation team favours option 5. Option 5 also has the support of the chair of the Schools and Learning Select committee.

### 1. Surrey's countywide admissions policy

- **Criteria 1 Looked after children**
- **Criteria 2 Exceptional circumstances**
- **Criteria 3 Siblings**
- **Criteria 4 Children for whom the school is closest to their home**
- **Criteria 5 Any other applicant**

**Tie-break is straight line distance**

Benefits:

- Consistency with the rest of the countywide policy
- None of the confusion associated with local arrangements

Risks:

- Same problems experienced for the 2007 admissions process, namely that children in the villages of West and East Horsley had disproportionately long journeys to alternative schools if denied access to their nearest, local school.
- Ruling by the Schools Adjudicator in September 2007 that the Council's proposed arrangements were not equitable as every child could not be confident of admission to at least one reasonably accessible school.

Recommendation

- Impossible to adopt as Adjudicator has ruled it inequitable and therefore in breach of the mandatory terms of the 2007 Admissions Code.

## 2. Criteria imposed by School Adjudicator for 2008:

- **Criteria 4 Partner schools (based on confederation)**
- **Criteria 5 Any other applicant**
- **Tie-break is straight line distance to the nearest alternative school.**

### Benefits:

- Following the Adjudicator's ruling this is the policy that is being used for 2008 admissions. Continued usage in 2009 would avoid another change in policy for the school and provide some consistency and stability.
- Modelling shows that results will address the problems experienced by children living in rural areas with no other reasonably accessible school ( ie West and East Horsley residents).

### Risks

- The Adjudicator considered going further in his recommendations for change but avoided doing so, instead recommending that the Council made further refinements in subsequent years.
- The list of partner schools is too big. In 2007 there were 322 applications from the schools that have now been named as partner schools. Of these 267 were first preferences, already exceeding the PAN of 240 before Looked after children, Exceptional circumstances and Siblings have been added to this total. By designating these schools as partner schools the number of first ranked preference applications from them is likely to increase.
- Public feedback that the list of partner schools is incorrect and does not represent historic local partner schools.
- Suggestion that communities unlikely to have recently gained places at Howard of Effingham, ie Oxshott pupils, could as a result of the ruling be offered places above more local residents who have a choice of secondary schools in close proximity.
- Inclusion of partner schools in the criteria is likely to increase pressure for parents to get their children into the named partner schools. Possible increase in appeals at primary level.
- Exclusion of anyone who has not attended a named partner school, including those new to area or from the independent sector.

### Recommendation

- Due to the criteria that the Adjudicator has imposed, 2008 arrangements could disadvantage different communities. This will not breach the Admissions Code as the 2007 arrangements did, but could alter historical intake patterns. It is also not very transparent as parents are unable to realistically assess their child's likelihood of gaining a place at the school.

### 3. Revised partner school criteria A:

- **Criteria 4 Partner schools (based on historical intake information – Eastwick Junior, St Lawrence, The Dawnay, The Raleigh)**
- **Criteria 5 Children for whom the school is closest**
- **Criteria 6 Any other applicant**
- **Tie-break is straight-line distance**

#### Benefits

- Responds to the concern that the inclusion of the Royal Kent School in Oxshott and Oakfield Junior School in Fetcham as partner schools does not represent historic partner school patterns. In particular inclusion of Royal Kent School benefits pupils in Oxshott unlikely to have recently gained a place at Howard of Effingham as they live too far away.
- Produces a more sensible size list of partner schools. In 2007 there were 245 applications from these partner schools (235 of them first preference). With this smaller list parents are much more able to assess the likelihood of their child gaining a place.

#### Risks

- No consistency in arrangements for all schools and parents concerned. The inclusion of Royal Kent and Oakfield as partner schools for one year has set a precedent.
- Inclusion of a partner school criteria on a smaller scale may cause an increase in popularity of the partner schools at the expense of other local schools. However, the four schools in question are already oversubscribed or almost oversubscribed on first preferences alone and they will continue to admit local residents as priority.
- Exclusion of anyone who has not attended a named partner school, including those new to area or from the independent sector.
- Children gain access to the secondary school regardless of home address. This has possible transport implications.
- PAN continues to be exceeded before all applicants from partner schools are admitted.
- Using 2007 data, 82 applicants for whom Howard of Effingham is their closest school do not gain a place. Under 10% of these attended an independent primary school.
- By using straight-line distance as the tie break within this cohort of pupils, over 58% of the applicants unable to obtain a place at Howard of Effingham are from West Horsley.

#### Recommendation

- Ultimately this option does not make any improvement on the 2007 policy in legal terms, as it still does not ensure equitable access for some children to at least one reasonably accessible school.

#### 4. Revised partner school criteria B:

- **Criteria 4 Partner schools (based on historical intake information - Eastwick Junior, St Lawrence, The Dawnay, The Raleigh)**
- **Criteria 5 Children for whom the school is closest**
- **Criteria 6 Any other applicant**
- **Tie-break is straight line distance to the nearest alternative school**

##### Benefits

- Responds to the concern that the inclusion of the Royal Kent School in Oxshott and Oakfield Junior School in Fetcham as partner schools does not represent historic partner school patterns. In particular inclusion of Royal Kent School benefits pupils in Oxshott unlikely to have recently gained a place at Howard of Effingham as they live too far away.
- Produces a more sensible size list of partner schools. In 2007 there were 245 applications from these partner schools (235 of them first preference). With this smaller list parents are much more able to assess the likelihood of their child gaining a place.
- The situation in East and West Horsley is partially addressed. 77% of applicants from these areas come from named partner schools and this tie-break ensures that applicants from these areas are awarded a place, as distances to their nearest alternative schools are disproportionately long.
- The communities that are impacted have closer or comparable distance schools. In some cases Therfield School is actually their closest school or distances to the two schools are comparable by straight-line distance.

##### Risks

- No consistency in arrangements for all schools and parents concerned. The inclusion of Royal Kent and Oakfield as partner schools for one year has set a precedent.
  - Inclusion of a partner school criteria but on a smaller scale may cause an increase in over-subscription of the partner schools at the expense of other local schools. However, the four schools in question are already oversubscribed or almost oversubscribed on first preferences alone and they will continue to admit local residents as priority.
  - Exclusion of anyone who has not attended a named partner school, including those new to area or from the independent sector.
- PAN continues to be exceeded before all applicants from partner schools are admitted.
- Based on 2007 data, in excess of 70 applicants for whom Howard of Effingham is their closest school are unable to gain a place at the school. Under 10% of these applicants had attended independent junior schools.
- Alternative communities are disadvantaged. Due to the tiebreak used, the applicants unable to gain a place at Howard of Effingham are typically from the Fetcham area of Leatherhead and eastern area of Bookham.

##### Recommendation

- This is a viable policy for Howard of Effingham as it addresses inequalities noted by the School Adjudicator and results in those who have a choice of alternative local schools not gaining a place at the Howard of Effingham.

## 5. Surrey's countywide admissions policy with a revised tie-break.

- **Criteria 1 Looked after children**
- **Criteria 2 Exceptional circumstances**
- **Criteria 3 Siblings**
- **Criteria 4 Children for whom the school is closest to their home**
- **Criteria 5 Any other applicant**

**Tie-break: Straight line distance to nearest alternative school.**

### Benefits

- Consistency with the countywide arrangements with a revised tiebreak to ensure that the policy is equitable for Howard of Effingham.
- None of the issues associated with the inclusion of partner school criteria, ie increase in popularity of certain schools at the expense of others in the area or exclusion of pupils who haven't attended a partner school for whatever reason.
- The majority of children living in rural areas with no other reasonably accessible school are prioritised.
- The communities that are impacted have closer or comparable distance schools. In some cases Therfield School is actually their closest school or distances to the two schools are comparable by straight-line distance.

### Risks

- The inclusion of partner schools for one year has set a precedent and changing the policy so completely could lead to confusion and negative publicity.
- PAN will be exceeded before all those for whom the school is their closest are able to gain a place.
- Alternative communities are disadvantaged. Due to the tiebreak used, the applicants unable to gain a place at Howard of Effingham are typically from the Fetcham area of Leatherhead and eastern area of Bookham.

### Recommendation

- This is a viable policy for Howard of Effingham as it addresses inequalities noted by the School Adjudicator and impacts on communities which have alternative local secondary schools. It has none of the potential problems caused by including partner schools.

## 6. Oxted

It is not possible to grow the school as it is already of such a size (2100 roll) that any expansion is inadvisable.

The options favoured by the Admissions and Transportation Team and the project team is option 3. This option is also favoured by the Chair of the Schools and Learning Select Committee.

### 1. Surrey's countywide admissions policy

- **Criteria 1 Looked after children**
- **Criteria 2 Exceptional circumstances**
- **Criteria 3 Siblings**
- **Criteria 4 Children for whom the school is closest to their home**
- **Criteria 5 Any other applicant**

**Tie-break is straight line distance**

#### Benefits

- Consistency with the rest of the countywide policy
- None of the confusion associated with local arrangements

#### Risks

- Without a catchment area, Kent pupils will gain places at Oxted school, resulting in Surrey pupils being left without a place
- Potential problems in fulfilling our duty to offer a school place to every Surrey child.

#### Recommendation

- A defined catchment area was established to address specific geographical issues for this school. To remove a catchment area will cause changes in intake patterns to the detriment of Surrey pupils.

## 2. Criteria imposed by School Adjudicator for 2008

- **Criteria 4 Existing catchment area**
- **Criteria 5 Any other applicant**
- **Tie-break is straight line distance to nearest alternative school**

### Benefits:

- Following the Adjudicator's ruling this is the policy that is being used for 2008 admissions. Continued usage in 2009 would avoid another change in policy for the school and provide some consistency and stability.

### Risks

- As the catchment area has not changed, PAN will continue to be exceeded before all applicants from the catchment area gain a place. Based on 2007 data there were 237 applicants from within the catchment in addition to 165 sibling and SEN applications. In total there were 402 applicants from these groups for an intake of 335.
- The Adjudicator limited the application of his changes to just one year (2008), allowing the Council to come forward with further refinements for subsequent years.
- The Adjudicator implied that the catchment area needs to be redrawn to more closely reflect the distribution of the population.
- The Adjudicator ruled that the exceptional inclusion of a defined catchment area fails to secure reasonable confidence for children living in Lingfield and Dormansland. However, even with his revisions to the policy for 2008, it is likely that those communities will continue to fail to gain a place at the school as they are much closer to secondary schools in East Grinstead, West Sussex.

### Recommendation

- The Adjudicator has suggested that refinements are needed to the catchment area, thereby implying that this option is not suitable in the long term. It continues to be confusing for the majority of Lingfield and Dormansland pupils as they will live within a catchment area but are unlikely to have a realistic opportunity of gaining a place at the school.

### 3. Revised catchment area. (Map shown in annex 5)

- **Criteria 4 Revised catchment area**
- **Criteria 5 Any other applicant**
- **Tie-break is straight line distance tie break**

Based on 2007 data, the number of applications from within the catchment area needs to be reduced by approximately 30% to more closely mirror the number of places remaining after Looked after children, Exceptional circumstances and Siblings at the school. The revised catchment area proposed has been drawn by excluding areas furthest from the school which have close alternative schools and areas which have a choice of closer alternative secondary schools or schools a comparable distance away. The new boundaries have been drawn to avoid splitting communities.

#### Benefits

- Inclusion of a smaller catchment area makes this a more meaningful oversubscription criteria as more applicants from within the catchment area are likely to gain a place at the school.
- Complies with the Adjudicator's suggestion that further refinements are needed to the arrangement.
- The areas excluded have closer or comparable distance secondary schools.

#### Risks

- The existing 2007 and 2008 catchment area is based on the old Flexible Admission Priority Areas, themselves based on historical intake patterns.
- Effectively removes any opportunity of Lingfield and Dormansland pupils gaining a place at Oxted.
- For some pupils the measurement to the nearest alternative school is to an out of county secondary school. For areas to the south of the catchment area, the nearest alternative school lies within West Sussex. There are two secondary schools in East Grinstead and based on 2007 outcomes, Lingfield and Dormansland residents stand a good chance of gaining a place at these schools. Sackville school in East Grinstead was not oversubscribed and for Imberhorne school, East Grinstead, oversubscription occurred within the category "Out of catchment area". Although these Surrey pupils are not within the school's catchment area due to their proximity they still have opportunity to gain a place.
- Does not take into account public transport links.

#### Recommendation

- Although this option is likely to be contentious it would appear to be the best option in a complicated situation. It makes the inclusion of a catchment area a more meaningful oversubscription criteria and excludes areas which have close alternative schools.

#### 4. Inclusion of a partner school criteria.

- **Criteria 4 Attendance at a named partner school**
- **Criteria 5 Children for whom the school is closest**
- **Tie-break is straight line distance or straight line distance to nearest alternative school**

##### Benefits

- Would be possible to maintain traditional links between schools to some extent

##### Risks

- There is no consensus on how a partner school list for Oxted school would be drawn up. The confederation for the area covers the whole of Tandridge, and therefore includes a large number of schools. It is unworkable to base a partner school list on this. To draw up a smaller partner school list would need the agreement of all relevant schools in the area and is likely to be equally problematic.
- This is a difficult criteria to operate in such a large area, it works best in a geographically small area.
- By basing an oversubscription criteria on partner schools, some Kent residents are likely to have a higher priority than Surrey residents, causing a change in intake patterns to the detriment of Surrey residents.
- It is likely that oversubscription will occur within this category and then a tie-break will apply. Similar outcomes are likely whichever tie-break is used, ie areas to the south of the existing catchment area (Lingfield and Dormansland) are unlikely to gain places at the school as they will either live too far away or will have closer alternative schools.
- Potential increase in the popularity of named partner schools at the expense of other schools and exclusion of those who haven't attended a partner school for whatever reason.

##### Recommendation

- There are limited benefits to this option and it is likely to cause additional problems.
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