Statutory Consultation on the proposed changes to admission arrangements for community schools and the PAN-London coordinated admissions schemes for the 2020/21 academic year

Consultation period: 18 October 2018 to 06 December 2018

Consultation document

What are we consulting on?
Croydon Council would welcome your views on the proposed changes to the admission arrangements for community schools for the 2020/21 academic year. The information included in this consultation document should be considered in conjunction with the draft admission arrangements for the 2020/21 academic year attached at Appendix 1.

Who we are consulting:
In accordance with the School Admissions Code (2014), we are consulting with key stakeholders, including;
- All schools / admission authorities in Croydon – governing body / academy trust
- Parents/carers;
- neighbouring Admission Authorities;
- local residents;
- Ward Members;
- anyone else who has an interest in the proposed changes.

Consultation period
The consultation on the proposed changes will run from Thursday 18 October 2018 to Thursday 06 December 2018.

Proposals
The proposed changes are as follows:

1. **Acceptance of first preference offers as part of the coordinated admission arrangements**

   The proposed change would mean that if a parent/carer has been offered their first preference school, the place would no longer be automatically recorded as accepted by this local authority. Parents/carers would be required to accept or decline the school place offered to their child by logging into their eadmission account.

   The proposed change would allow the local authority to keep a better track of any first preference offers declined by parents so these places can be reallocated to children on the waiting lists. Some parents fail to notify the local authority of their refusal of a school place which means that potential vacancies cannot be filled as
they arise and it is often the case that schools and the local authority do not find out that places have been declined until the start of the new academic year when children do not to attend their first day of school.

2 Pan-London primary and secondary coordinated schemes and post offer process (main rounds of admissions) – Appendix 2 and Appendix 3

In accordance with the coordinated admission arrangements, when an offer is made at a lower preference school, a child is automatically placed on the waiting for any higher preference school. When it subsequently becomes possible to offer a place at a higher preference school, the offer held at a lower preference school is automatically withdrawn. In order to avoid any doubt or confusion amongst parents about how subsequent offers are made post National Offer Day, it is proposed that additional information (shown below in bold) is added to the Pan-London primary and secondary coordinated schemes. The proposed change also highlights parents/carers’ responsibility to inform the local authority if they are no longer interested in their child being on the waiting list for higher preference schools. (Appendix 2, page 10 paragraphs 45 and 46 and Appendix 3, page 11 paragraphs 51 and 52)

The proposed change will speed up the process of reallocating places that become available following National Offer Day by ensuring that schools’ waiting lists are made up of genuine applicants.

1. When acting as a home LA, Croydon LA will offer a place at a maintained school or Academy in the area of another LA to an applicant resident in its area, provided that the school is ranked higher on the Common Application Form than any school already offered. As a result, any offer held by the applicant resident at a lower preference school will automatically be withdrawn as a higher preference has been offered. Resident applicants who no longer wish to remain on the waiting list for a higher preference school must notify Croydon LA as soon as they receive their initial offer.

2. When acting as a home LA, Croydon will offer a place at a Croydon maintained school or Academy to an applicant resident in its area, provided that the school is ranked higher on the Common Application Form than any school already offered. The lower preference school offered will automatically be withdrawn as a higher preference school has been offered. Resident applicants who no longer wish to remain on the waiting list for a higher preference school must notify Croydon LA as soon as they receive their initial offer.

3. The processing of overseas applications for admission to school within the normal admissions rounds (excluding Crown servants) – Appendix 1, note 5
In the past, this local authority’s policy has been not to allow applications from families who reside overseas until such time as evidence has been received that a family has arrived in the UK and is residing at a property in the Croydon area.

In order to achieve commonality with all coordinating boroughs, it is proposed that applications with an overseas address are accepted for processing when this local authority is satisfied that there is evidence of a link to an address in its area and that the child will be resident at that address on or before the date of admission (i.e. start of September). Such evidence must include:

- Booked travel tickets and
- End of lease /notice to tenants in property or
- Start of employment contract in London/SE area or
- End of employment contract abroad

The overseas address will apply until such time as there is evidence of a child’s return to the linked address. In the event that a family does not return to the linked address provided by the start of September, this local authority will withdraw the application submitted and any offer made.

**Statutory requirement**
The Council is the Admission Authority for community schools and is therefore responsible for consulting on proposed changes to these schools’ admission arrangements.

The School Admissions Code, December 2014, requires all admission authorities to publicly consult for a minimum of 6 weeks on admission arrangements each year where there are proposed admission arrangement changes and once every seven years if there are no proposed changes.

**Consultation Timetable**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18 October 2018</td>
<td>Start of consultation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06 December 2018</td>
<td>End of consultation period and deadline for submitting views.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From 07 – 13 December 2018</td>
<td>Analysis of responses to consultation and draft consultation outcomes report</td>
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<tr>
<td>21 January 2019</td>
<td>Consultation outcomes report to Council’s Cabinet Committee and schools’ leadership team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 January 2019</td>
<td>Full Council to ratify determine Admission Arrangements</td>
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How to give your views

This consultation period allows anyone with an interest to comment or raise any concerns about the proposed changes to the admission arrangements for the 2020/21 academic year by:

- Completing the online questionnaire at [www.croydon.gov.uk/admissionarrangements](http://www.croydon.gov.uk/admissionarrangements) or a paper copy of the questionnaire (Annex A) and returning it by post to the address below or by email to the address below.

- Writing to:
  
  Niora Amani  
  Croydon Council  
  School Admissions Service  
  4th Floor Zone A  
  Bernard Weatherill House  
  8 Mint Walk  
  Croydon CR0 1EA

- Email: [school.admissions@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:school.admissions@croydon.gov.uk)

All comments must be received by 06 December 2018.

What happens next?

After the closing date of 06 December 2018, responses will be analysed and a consultation outcomes report produced which will be presented to the Council's Cabinet Committee on 21 January 2019 for a decision on the proposed changes and determination of the admission arrangements for the 2020/21 academic year for community schools. The admission arrangements will then be presented to full Council on 28 January 2019 for ratification. After which the determined admission arrangements for community schools will be published on the Council's website.

Attachments:

- Appendix 1 – Proposed admission arrangements for community schools for the 2020/21 academic year.
- Appendix 2 – Draft Pan-London scheme for co-ordination of admissions to secondary schools 2020-2021
- Appendix 3 – Draft Pan-London scheme for co-ordination of admissions to Reception and Junior 2020-2021

Annex A below – Questionnaire
Questionnaire

Section 1 – Proposed change
We are proposing to make it mandatory for parents to respond to their first preference offer by accepting or declining their offer on the eadmission site. This means that first preference offers will no longer be automatically recorded as accepted by this local authority.

1) Please tell us whether you support/do not support the proposal to the local authority not recording first preference offers as automatically accepted.

   I support the proposed changes
   I do not support the proposed changes
   Not sure
   I am not affected by/do not want to answer questions about this proposed change

2) If you do not support the proposed change, please tell us why.

3) We are keen to understand how the proposed change for admission arrangements for the 2020/21 academic year may affect you. Please use this space to tell us if you are impacted by the proposed change and how. What can we do to address any impacts you have mentioned?

Section 2 – Proposed change
We are proposing that parents/carers who receive an offer at a lower preference school notify the local authority immediately after they have received their offer if they no longer wish their child to remain on the waiting list for higher preference schools. This will stop the local authority withdrawing the offer originally made in the event that a higher preference offer can be made.

4) Please tell us whether you support/do not support the proposal to parents/carers notifying the local authority immediately after they have
received their initial offer at a lower preference school if they no longer wish their child to remain on the waiting list for higher preference schools.

I support the proposed changes
I do not support the proposed changes
Not sure
I am not affected by/do not want to answer questions about this proposed change

5) If you do not support the proposed change, please tell us why.

6) We are keen to understand how the proposed change may affect you. Please use this space to tell us if you are impacted by the proposed change and how. What can we do to address any impacts you have mentioned?

Section 3 – Proposed change
We are proposing to accept applications from overseas for processing when this local authority is satisfied that there is evidence of a link to an address in its area and that the child will be resident at that address on or before the date of admission (i.e. start of September).

7) Please tell us whether you support/do not support the proposal to this local authority allowing applications from overseas when evidence that a child will be residing at an address in Croydon before the date of admission is received and confirmed.

I support the proposed changes
I do not support the proposed changes
Not sure
I am not affected by/do not want to answer questions about this proposed change

8) If you do not support the proposed change, please tell us why.

9) We are keen to understand how the proposed change may affect you. Please use this space to tell us if you are impacted by the proposed change and how. What can we do to address any impacts you have mentioned?
10) Please use the space below if you have any other comments or views on the proposed admissions arrangements,

Section 4 – About You
We are endeavoring to receive comments from a broad range of people and families reflective of our community. In order to enable us to assess the degree to which this has been successful, it would be helpful if you could take a moment to complete the section below. You are not obliged to provide the below information, however if you are able to, the information you provide will only be used to allow us to assess how representative the responses received are, and will be used for no other purpose. Such information will only be retained and used for as long as is necessary. Where data is no longer required, they will be destroyed in line with relevant destruction policies and processes.

The Council will take all reasonable measures to ensure that any data provided will be protected against loss, misuse or hijack. Your information will not be retained or shared with any other parties or for any other purposes.

11) Please tell us who you are.

Member of staff at primary school
Member of staff at secondary school
School Governor at primary school
School Governor at secondary school
Parent/carer of a child/children at primary school
Parent/carer of child/ren at secondary school
Pupil at Primary School
Local resident
Prefer not to say
Other (Please specify) __________________________________________

12) Gender:

Male
Female
Transgender
Prefer not to say

13) Age:

Under 15
16-18
19-25
26-34
35-44
45-54 □
55-64 □
65+ □
Prefer not to say □

14) Which of the following best describes your ethnic background?
   White British □
   White Irish □
   White European □
   Other white □
   Mixed white and black Caribbean □
   Mixed white and black African □
   Mixed white and Asian □
   Other mixed background □
   Asian or Asian British: Indian □
   Asian or Asian British: Pakistani □
   Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi □
   Asian or Asian British: Chinese □
   Other Asian or Asian British Background □
   Black or Black British: Caribbean □
   Black or Black British: African □
   Other Black or Black British background □
   Arabic □
   Prefer not to say □
   Other Please specify ________________________________

15) Do you consider yourself to have a disability?
   No □
   Yes □
   Prefer not to say □

16) Please specify
   Mobility □
   Visual impairment □
   Hearing impairment □
   Mental Health □
   Learning disability □
   Prefer not to say □
   Other (Please specify) ___________________________________________