



**CONSULTATION DOCUMENT**  
**ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR HALTON LOCAL AUTHORITY**  
**NURSERY, INFANT, JUNIOR, PRIMARY & SECONDARY SCHOOLS**  
**ACADEMIC YEAR 2011/12**

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1** This document is intended to fulfil the statutory requirements for annual consultation by the Local Authority (LA) on school admission arrangements. Included in this document are the proposed (statutorily required) Co-ordinated Admissions Schemes for the 2011/12 academic year for primary and secondary schools, together with the LA's proposals for admission to LA maintained nursery schools.
- 1.2** In addition to fulfilling the above statutory requirements, Halton Borough Council's School Admissions Policy complies with the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, Race Relations Act 1976, Human Rights Act 1998, Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 & 2005, and does not discriminate on the grounds of sex, race, colour, nationality or national or ethnic origin.
- 1.3** Section 89(2) and (9) of the School Standards & Framework Act 1998, and the associated Regulations require admission authorities (the LA for community and voluntary controlled schools) to undertake consultations by 1 March 2010 before finalising admission arrangements by 15<sup>th</sup> April 2010 for the school year commencing in September 2011.
- 1.4** The LA must consult the governing bodies of schools for which it is the admissions authority and consult other admission authorities in the "relevant area" (the relevant area is currently the administrative boundary of Halton and views are sought as to whether this should be amended). All neighbouring LAs are also consulted, together with the relevant Diocesan Authorities.

## **2.0 NURSERY ADMISSIONS**

- 2.1** The LA is proposing to retain the current admissions criteria for Nursery Schools i.e.
  - 1) Children in Public Care – children who are subject to a care order, or are accommodated by the Local Authority

- 2) Siblings – pupils with elder brothers or sisters including half brothers and sisters and unrelated children living together as part of the same household, already attending the school and expected to continue in the following year
- 3) Pupils living nearest to the school defined as a straight-line distance measurement from the child's permanent residence to the school. Distance is measured by the LA using the LA's Ordnance Survey GIS address point system which measures from the address point of the child's permanent address to the address point of the school in metres.

### **3.0 PRIMARY ADMISSIONS**

- 3.1** The Secretary of State for Education and Skills has defined compulsory school age under the Education Act 1996 as follows:

Child's 5 <sup>th</sup> birthday	Term of Admission
1 <sup>st</sup> April to 31 <sup>st</sup> August	Autumn
1 <sup>st</sup> September to 31 <sup>st</sup> December	Spring
1 <sup>st</sup> January to 31 <sup>st</sup> March	Summer

- 3.2** In Halton, however, children will continue to be admitted to school earlier than the required admission date. This reflects the commitment of the LA to secure the best possible start for children within the Borough of Halton.
- 3.3** At the time of writing (October 2009) the DCSF is consulting on the admission of children below compulsory school age. In summary the DCSF are proposing that admission authorities **must** provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. The DCSF are also proposing that parents can request that the date their child is admitted to the school is deferred until the child reaches compulsory school age in that school year. In Halton this already happens. However, one significant amendment proposed by the DCSF is that parents can request that their child attends part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age. Furthermore the DCSF advise that admission authorities **must** accommodate these requests where it appears to be in the best interest of the child.
- 3.4** As recommended in the School Admissions Code the LA will allow parents to defer their child's entry to school until the child is of compulsory school age, providing the parent applies, is offered, and accepts the place within the normal admissions timetable, and the place is taken up within the same academic year. It should be noted that if a child is presently attending a nursery class they do not have automatic right to transfer to the primary school to which the nursery class is attached. Parents are required to indicate a preference for a

primary school along with all other parents. Attached as Appendix A is the proposed co-ordinated admissions scheme for all Halton LA maintained primary schools.

- 3.5 Transfer from Infant to Junior School** – parents wishing their child to transfer from the infant school to the junior school will be required to complete a preference form along with those parents applying for admission to reception class. The same timetable will apply for the transfer of pupils from infant to junior as detailed for the admission of children into reception class.

#### **4.0 SECONDARY ADMISSIONS**

- 4.1** Children transfer from primary to secondary school in the September following their 11<sup>th</sup> birthday. Attached as Appendix B is the proposed co-ordinated admissions scheme for all Halton LA maintained secondary schools.

#### **5.0 IN-YEAR ADMISSIONS**

- 5.1** The DCSF have confirmed that LA's are now statutorily required to formulate an In-Year admissions scheme from September 2010 which requires every general in-year admission to all infant, junior, primary and secondary school (including VA, Trust and Academy schools) to be managed centrally by the LA. This is a significant change to the way in-year admissions are currently dealt with whereby parents contact the school direct and the school either agree or decline the request for admission. The LA is required to formulate an "In-Year Co-ordinated scheme" in relation to each school in their area and the scheme must be formulated by 1<sup>st</sup> January 2010 for implementation from September 2010. Attached as Appendix C is the proposed In-Year Scheme for 2010 and 2011 and comments are invited on this scheme.

#### **6.0 ON-LINE ADMISSIONS**

- 6.1** LAs are required to have on-line admissions in place and the on-line admissions portal, available on the Halton Borough Council website – [www.halton.gov.uk](http://www.halton.gov.uk), will continue to operate for admission to primary and secondary schools for the 2011 academic year.

#### **7.0 HALTON ADMISSIONS FORUM**

- 7.1** Any recommendations and responses to this consultation paper will be considered by the Halton Admissions Forum and will be included in the report to Halton Borough Council's Executive Board.

#### **8.0 VOLUNTARY AIDED SCHOOLS – CONSULTATION ON ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS**

- 8.1** Regulations allow governing bodies who are the admission authority for their school not to consult in certain circumstances. To qualify for a suspension of consultation an admission authority must have consulted all appropriate bodies in one or both of the preceding years and must not be proposing to change their arrangements, including PAN and oversubscription criteria, and must not have been the subject of an objection to the Schools Adjudicator in the previous five years. However, as detailed in paragraph 3.3 above, admission authorities must allow children to attend part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age, therefore all governing bodies, as admission authorities, will need to consult on their arrangements for 2011.
- 8.2** Governing Bodies **must** provide details of their finalised admission arrangements and any other information requested by the LA for inclusion in the relevant Admission to School Booklet (composite prospectus).
- 8.3** Governing bodies should also be aware that the School Admissions Code confirms that if they have enough places they **must** offer every child who has applied a place, and **must** give first priority to Looked After Children of their faith but they should go further and give priority to all Looked After Children (Children In Care).

## **9.0 SCHOOL ORGANISATION**

- 9.1** The Local Authority is continually reviewing its school place provision in both the primary and secondary sector and continues to meet with and update schools on current and anticipated provision set against pupil profiling. The LA will discuss with and consult, where appropriate, any schools where there may be an impact upon the current admission numbers.

## **10.0 SUMMARY**

**It is recommended that the Governing Body:**

- a) **receives the report;**
- b) **records any response to Halton's proposed admission arrangements for admission to primary and secondary schools and the proposed In-Year admission arrangements;**
- c) **for Voluntary Aided, Trust and Academy Schools only – undertake, where appropriate, statutory consultation with the governing bodies of all voluntary aided schools in Halton, Halton LA, and any other LA within 8 kilometres of the school for secondary schools, or 3.2 kilometres for primary schools, and forward to the LA their admissions policy when determined.**