



Buckinghamshire County Council

Report School Organisation Committee

Date 17 April 2002

Title Statutory Notices : Winslow CE Combined School: Standard Numbers

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Electoral Divisions Affected

Buckingham South: Mr K Liverseige
Winslow: Mr D Rowlands

Summary

To bring to the Committee a statutory proposals relating to changes in standard numbers for Winslow CE Combined School which have been consulted upon and for which the statutory objection period has now finished.

The Committee is asked to determine the Statutory Notice.

Recommendation

Approval be given to the Statutory Notice relating to changes in standard numbers at Winslow CE Combined School

Supporting Information

The Statutory Notice relating to Winslow CE Combined School was published in the Summer. The proposals relate to a change in standard number (and therefore the relevant admission arrangements) with effect from September 2002. The proposal is to change the standard numbers from 45 (4+) and 20 (7+) to 60 and 30 respectively. The objection period closed in September.

No statutory objections to the proposals had been received at the time of the close of the objection periods.

Copies of the proposals were circulated to Members of the Committee in July.

(MEMBERS ARE ASKED TO BRING THESE PAPERS WITH THEM TO THE MEETING IN ORDER THAT APPROPRIATE CONSIDERATION LEADING TO A DECISION ON THE INDIVIDUAL NOTICES CAN TAKE PLACE).

The Committee is reminded that at its meeting of 16 January, a decision on the determination of the Statutory Notice relating to a change in standard numbers for Winslow CE Combined School was deferred pending further discussion with the schools affected. At the January meeting it was reported:

“There is one matter which does need to be brought to the attention of the Committee. In Winslow, there are three Church Schools, Padbury CE Infant (Controlled), Swanbourne CE Infant (Aided) and Mursley CE Infant (Controlled), where pupils may continue at the School until Key Stage 2 and parents may therefore seek transfer to Winslow School, which is the appropriate recipient combined school, at Year 4 (8+) or even Year 5 (9+).

Previously the Authority had attempted to give some support to this arrangement by indicating in its Information for Parents Booklet, a point of admission, albeit without a corresponding standard number at 8+ and 9+.

However, in drawing up proposals for an increase in the standard numbers which will better reflect the overall pattern of demand and the capacity of the Combined School, the advice from the DfES was that only two points of entry should be established at a primary school and that it was not possible to have more (for example three at 4+, 7+ and 8+ or even four at 4+, 7+, 8+ and 9+).

Under normal circumstances, this should not have caused a problem because the projected cohort sizes in Key Stage 2 for Winslow School, once there has been transfer from the Feeder Infant Schools, typically is between 90 and 100 pupils which would enable the school to accommodate these year cohorts in three classes.

This year, the year cohort which will become year 4 in September 2002 is exceptionally large with approximately 115 in the Year Group. This has meant that were the school to admit the 14 in area pupils who were seeking admission into year 4 in September 2002, the Year cohort would be too large to be accommodated in the 3 class groups and therefore an additional fourth group would need to be formed. This has implications both as far as funding the additional staffing is concerned as well as the provision of accommodation.

If it was indicated therefore to parents that it was unlikely that the school would be able to offer a place for their child for September 2002. Subsequently however local negotiation has resulted in the Authority providing extra funding for staffing and extra accommodation in order to house the large cohort.

In future, it is unlikely that the Authority will be able to maintain its position with a point of entry at 8+ or 9+ and therefore late transfers will have to apply to the school on the basis of casual late admissions. Members of the Committee are reminded that the relevant sections of the draft guidance on local decision making on statutory proposals, are contained at Section A (2) pages 30 and 31: Statutory Guidance on the factors to be considered in decision standard number variations and Section F (1) pages 111 to 119 : Standard Numbers.”

A meeting has now occurred involving all of the schools affected. The major area of difficulty, as indicated above, was transfer from the infant schools to the combined school at 7+ (or 8+

or 9+). Whereas no complete resolution of the matter or total reconciliation of the differing perspectives was achieved, some degree of consensus did emerge from the meeting.

The late transfer issues primarily centre around 8+ transfer because only a very small proportion of the cohort remains in the infant schools for year 4 and therefore seeks transfer at 9+

Further work needs to be done on the overall organisation of schools in the area with, for example, the possibility of confederation or amalgamation of certain of the village schools which could end the necessity of transfer to Winslow. (An initial meeting has occurred to look at possibilities for the future organisation at Mursley and Swanbourne).

Resources Appraisal

There are no immediate resource implications arising directly from this report.

Your questions and views

If you have any questions about the matters contained in this paper please get in touch with the Contact Officer whose telephone number is given at the head of the paper.

If you have any views on this paper which you would like the Committee to consider please inform the Secretary to the School Organisation Committee. This can be done by telephone (01296 383710 or 383610) or e-mail to rpopat@buckscc.gov.uk or cgray@buckscc.gov.uk