Buckinghamshire County Council

Visit **democracy.buckscc.gov.uk** for councillor information and email alerts for local meetings

Report to Cabinet Member for Education & Skills

Decision to be taken on or after 13 March 2017

Decision can normally be implemented at least 3 working days after decision has been signed.

Cabinet Member Report No. ED04.17

Title:	Determined Admission Arrangements 2018
Date:	3 March 2017
Author:	Nick Wilson (Interim Service Director) 01296 382497
Contact officer:	Debbie Munday (Admissions and Transport Manager) 01296 382217
Local members affected:	All

For press enquiries concerning this report, please contact the media office on 01296 382444

1. Summary

1.1 The Admissions Code 2014 sets out the requirements for councils and admission authorities to follow with regard to

- setting the Coordinated Scheme of Admission for Primary and Secondary Schools and
- determining the Admission Arrangements for Voluntary Controlled and Community schools

The requirements in the Admissions Code are underpinned by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, the Education Act 2002 and The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012 as amended by the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014.



1.2 Prior to setting the Coordinated Scheme of Admission for Primary and Secondary Schools for September 2018 the council is required to consult the governing bodies of community and voluntary controlled schools for which the council is the admission authority, neighbouring admission authorities, governing bodies of academies, foundation and voluntary aided schools in Buckinghamshire, and other interested community groups for a minimum 6 week period which must be between 1st October and 31 January in the determination year.

1.3 Admission authorities for community and voluntary controlled schools are required to consult on admission arrangements whenever changes are proposed and at least every 7 years by consulting with the consultees listed above plus 'relevant parents' when setting the admission rules.

1.4 The consultation period for both the scheme and the rules was from 8 December 2016 to 31 January 2017 and was publicised via the council's website and an online response form was provided. As part of notifying the statutory consultees, all Buckinghamshire admission authorities were notified via the school bulletin of the proposals, and other statutory consultees were notified by email of the consultation.

1.5 By Regulation 17 of the School Admissions Regulations 2012 the council is then required to determine its admission rules by 28 February 2017, and to notify the Secretary of State that the scheme has been accepted by admission authorities.

In addition, the Regulations require the admission authority (in this case the local authority) to publish on its website by 15 March in the determining year the determined arrangements of all maintained primary and secondary school and academies in the borough, advising the right to object to the Schools Adjudicator, where it is considered that the arrangement do not comply with the mandatory provisions of the School Admissions code 2014.

1.6 This document sets out the proposed admission arrangements that the council intends to adopt as the determined arrangements for September 2017 admissions. Following publication of the determined policy all consulted parties must then, within 14 days, be notified of the determined admission arrangements.

ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS SCHEMES AND RULES 2018

2. The Combined Scheme for all Buckinghamshire Schools

2.1 The coordinated admissions scheme is as attached as Appendix 1. Six governing bodies responded to the consultation.

	Do you agree with the proposal?	
	Yes	No
Drafting changes to the coordinated scheme	2	2
Change to six preferences	3	1
Automatically add to the waiting list	3	1

On the basis of this level of responses and that for the two major changes the governing body response is in agreement with the proposal we intend to adopt the changes proposed. No adverse comment was received from either parents or governing bodies regarding the proposed changes. These were:

2.2 For paras 17, 18, 32 and 51 small drafting amendments have been made,

2.3 Paragraph 14 of the scheme: we will be allowing parents to express 6 (formerly 4) preferences within the primary scheme so it is now in line with the secondary scheme.

2.4 Paragraph 50 of the scheme: will be amended to automatically add all children to the waiting list of any school they listed as a higher preference than the offered school. Parents who are happy to accept the offered school and who do not want to be on the waiting list of higher preferences will be asked to request that their child is taken off the waiting list. Prior to publishing the allocation 'waiting list' will be recorded against all preferences higher than the offered school and it will be assumed that the parent wants to be on the waiting list unless they advise otherwise.

3. The rules for voluntary controlled and community primary schools

219 parents and 6 governing bodies responded to the admissions consultation. A complete summary of the responses is attached as Appendix 11 and Appendix 12.

Governing Body Responses	Do you agree with the proposal?	
	Yes	No
Little Chalfont reduced Junior entry admission	0	1
number		
Booker Hill & Millbrook catchment change	0	4
Marlow catchment change	0	1
Wendover / Halton catchment change	1	1
Totteridge / Micklefield catchment change	0	1
Stokenchurch Primary Junior intake change	0	1
Great Kimble change	0	1
Monks Risborough change	0	1
Longwick change	0	1
Princes Risborough change	0	1
Haddenham Junior change	0	1
Misbourne catchment change	0	1

Parent Responses and other consultees responses	Do you agree with the proposal?	
	Yes	No
Little Chalfont reduced Junior entry admission	1	13
number		
Booker Hill & Millbrook catchment change	3	190
Marlow catchment change	3	28
Wendover / Halton catchment change	1	11
Totteridge / Micklefield catchment change	1	14
Stokenchurch Primary Junior intake change	0	6
Great Kimble change	2	3
Monks Risborough change	2	3
Longwick change	1	4
Princes Risborough change	1	4
Haddenham Junior change	0	3
Misbourne catchment change	0	4

3.1 No changes were proposed in the admission rules, but some changes of admission number, catchment area and feeder school links were proposed. Comment was invited from:

- Parents of children between the ages of two and eighteen;
- Other persons in the relevant area who have an interest in the proposed admissions;
- All other admission authorities within the relevant area;
- Adjoining neighbouring local authorities;

• The Oxford Church of England Diocese and the Northampton Catholic Diocese.

The lists of schools have been updated to note and/or exclude schools that have become or will become a foundation or academy and where school age ranges have changed or may change (subject to further specific consultation).

3.2 Some changes to specific primary school arrangements were proposed. In some cases there was significant responses from parents and governing bodies and these are summarised below.

3.3 Proposed admission number changes: the following increased admission number changes were included at the request of the relevant governing bodies:

- Lee Common Church of England School increase from 20 to 23
- Aston Clinton School increase from 56 to 58
- Quainton Church of England School increase from 28 to 30
- Whaddon Church of England First School increase from 18 to 20

No adverse comment was received from either parents or governing bodies regarding the proposed changes for the above schools so these will be adopted.

3.4 Little Chalfont Combined School: Feedback was received regarding the proposal to reduce the admission number for Little Chalfont Primary School from 30 at reception and +4 at Junior transfer to 30 at reception with no junior intake.

Governing Body Responses	Do you agree with the proposal?	
	Yes	No
Reduce admission number for Little Chalfont Junior	0	1
	Do you agree with the proposal?	
Parent Responses and other consultees responses	Do yo	u agree with the proposal?
Parent Responses and other consultees responses	Do yo Yes	u agree with the proposal? No

All consultees were offered the opportunity to explain/expand on their decision. No comments were made by any of the 14 parties who stated they disagreed with the proposal to reduce the admission number.

In the absence of any clear reasons for objecting to the reduced admission number, the council proposes therefore to confirm the change requested by the Little Chalfont School governing body to cease to have a point of entry at Junior transfer.

3.5 **Stokenchurch Primary School**: Since commencing the 2018 admissions consultation, in early January 2017 the Cabinet Member formally agreed to change the age ranges of Ibstone CE School and the Mary Towerton School at Studley Green to make them combined schools from September 2017. As a result of the consultation regarding the change of age range consultations the council, as the admission authority of Stokenchurch Primary School consulted on proposals to

a) reduce the admission number of Stokenchurch Primary School from 30 to 0 from 2018 and

b) to adjust the catchment area from 2018 at Junior entry to exclude areas that would now be covered by the newly combined infant schools

Both these actions are intended to ensure, in the event the change of age ranges were agreed, that the 2018 admissions properly reflected the consequential changes to Stokenchurch Primary. Our reason for making this change was because reducing the admission number at Junior transfer from 30 to 0, is essential for Stokenchurch Primary School's logistical and financial planning. Without the bulk of children transferring from its feeder schools the extra class from Year 3 is not financially viable and continuing to offer places also risks the Year 3 classes at Ibstone School and Mary Towerton School would also not be financially viable.

Governing Body Responses	Do you agree with the proposal?	
	Yes	No
Stokenchurch Primary Junior intake change	0	1
Parent Responses and other consultees responses	Do you agree with the proposal?	
	Yes	No
Stokenchurch Primary change	0	6

All consultees were offered the opportunity to explain/expand on their decision. No comments were made by any of the 7 parties who stated they disagreed with the proposal to reduce the admission number. In the main the responses seem to have been made by parents who were responding on another proposal. Prior to the consultation, agreement was obtained from Stokenchurch school governing body.

In the absence of any clear reasons for objecting to the reduced admission number, the council proposes therefore to confirm the change requested by the Stokenchurch Primary School's governing body to cease to have a point of entry at Junior transfer.

Please note that following the decision to make both the feeder infant schools into combined schools with effect from 2017 the Council, on behalf of the governors of Stokenchurch Primary School have also applied to the Office of the School's Adjudicator for an in-year variation to effect this change to the admission number immediately from 2017 entry. The decision of the school's adjudicator is awaited.

Appendix 5 shows the final catchment maps.

3.6 Booker Hill/Millbrook catchment boundary line

We proposed some minor changes to rationalise the catchment line between Booker Hill School and Millbrook School. the proposed changes would have moved the residents of Woodland Close, HP12 4HB (8 properties) and the house 'Bramley' Booker Hill Road, HP12 4HA into the same catchment area (Millbrook) as all the other properties on Hillside Road HP12 4HB. This change was proposed because walking to school from Woodland Close the only exit meant that residents walked into Millbrook catchment before crossing back into Booker Hill catchment. This was considered to be an anomaly and so a change was proposed. The change proposed affected only nine properties so formal approaches to the governing bodies were not felt to be essential. In retrospect it is clear that the governing bodies and parents in the area did not fully understand the minor change being proposed and the reasons for it.

As a consequence this small change resulted in a significant number of parents and 4 responses on behalf of a governing body not in agreement with the proposal.

Governing Body Responses	Do you agree with the proposal?	
	Yes	No
Booker Hill & Millbrook catchment change	0	4
Parent Responses and other consultees responses	Do you agree with the proposal?	

	Yes	No
Booker Hill & Millbrook catchment	3	190

Comments by 58 parents and 3 of the responses made on behalf of governing bodies set out concerns about the proposed change. The full text of the comments is set out in Appendix 11 and Appendix 12. They covered the following 5 main themes:

- That there had been no consultation with the governing bodies of either school
- That they had found the map confusing and no description had been given as to why the change was being proposed
- That Booker Hill was a popular school and the change took houses out of their catchment area and replaced it with fields
- That there had been catchment changes recently which gave houses to Millbrook (The council has not consulted on changing catchment areas since 2005 however this perception of change may be as a result of Booker Hill School being oversubscribed within its catchment area)
- That Booker Hill school was closer than Millbrook school to these addresses

In the light of the significant level of concern expressed by parents and governing bodies alike, including Booker Hill itself and as the change was not designed to deliver a required outcome then this change will not be adopted. Appendix 6 shows the unchanged map we will use for 2018 admission.

3.7 Changes to the Marlow primary school catchment areas

The council set out proposed changes to school catchments in the **Marlow** area to create dual catchment areas. This pattern of shared catchment areas is intended to provide parents with greater choice where the catchment school is at risk of being oversubscribed to ensure (as far as possible) that children, who are unable to get a place at their catchment school, do not have to travel a disproportionate distance to their next nearest school.

Governing Body Responses	Do you agree with the proposal?	
	Yes	No
Marlow catchment change	0	1
	Do you agree with the proposal?	
Parent Responses and other consultees responses	Do you agree wit	h the proposal?
Parent Responses and other consultees responses	Do you agree wit Yes	h the proposal? No

Comments were included in the responses of 16 parents and 3 responses made on behalf of governing bodies setting out concerns about the proposed change. All of the schools concerned had supported the move. The full text of the comments is set out in Appendix 11 and Appendix 12. Comments covered the following themes:

- That the proposals meant families would have to cross Marlow from the east to the west and vice versa
- That this was likely to increase local traffic through the town centre and therefore increase pollution and the number of families using their cars to transport their children to school

 That the proposals could be improved if a different pattern was used and many comments included alternate suggestions

The purpose of catchment areas is to prioritise admissions and ensure (as far as possible) children, who are unable to get a place at their catchment school (as has been the case in the past with Marlow CE/Holy Trinity CE), do not have to travel a disproportionate distance to their next nearest school. BCC would look to minimise the impact of increased traffic by only providing transport to the closest school with a place where dual catchments exists. For example, children living in the Spinfield and Foxes Piece shared area - would only be entitled to transport to Foxes Piece if they expressed a higher preference for Spinfield and it was full. The aim of this policy is to ensure efficient and effective travel planning – and not destabilise existing patterns of parental preference. Based on historic admission trends, BCC would expect any oversubscription in the Spinfield/Foxes Piece shared area to largely occur in the east of the shared area which is closest to Foxes Piece. The shared area covered by Spinfield and Danesfield would be expected to meet any oversubscription based on historic parental preference trends. However, BCC will monitor the situation and if necessary review the Danesfield catchment with a view to widening the area to incorporate addresses to the west of Spinfield Lane as suggested within a number consultation responses. In response to feedback from the consultation, the proposed shared catchment area between Marlow CE and Danesfield will now be between Marlow CE and Foxes Piece i.e. Foxes Piece is within close walking distance of these addresses.

The above changes are shown in the map in Appendix 7.

3.8 Proposal to create a dual catchment area in Wendover/ Halton area.

If the proposed expansion of the Wendover primary schools (i.e. The John Hampden School and Wendover CE School) is approved, then the Council proposed to expand their catchment area to reflect their increased capacity and changing demographics in the area. The new catchment area of the Wendover Primary Schools would include those parts of Halton School's current catchment within one mile of the Wendover schools. This area would also remain in Halton School's catchment, thus creating a 'shared area.'

Shared catchment areas provide parents with greater choice in areas where the catchment school is at risk of being oversubscribed and ensures (as far as possible) that children, who are unable to get a place at their catchment school, do not have to travel a disproportionate distance to their next nearest school.

It was also proposed that, for admission to Halton School only, the shared catchment area will have a lower priority for admission than the sole catchment area – although siblings in both the sole and dual catchment area will have a higher priority over non-sibling catchment children. This was to ensure that the children from the sole catchment area (parts of which are further from the school than the shared area) could still be placed at Halton School.

Governing Body Responses	Do you agree with the proposal?	
	Yes	No
Wendover / Halton catchment change	1	1
Parent Responses and other consultees responses	Do you agree with the proposal?	
	Yes	No
Wendover / Halton catchment	1	11

All consultees were offered the opportunity to explain/expand on their decision. No comments were made by any of the 14 parties who stated they disagreed with the proposal to change the catchment area or the relative priorities of the Halton shared/sole catchment areas.

One comment was received from Halton School governing body who stated 'Halton Community Combined School's governing body are supportive of the proposed changes to Halton catchment area, creating a shared catchment with John Hamden/Wendover Junior School if the proposal to increase the intake of the schools to 4 form entry goes ahead. Halton School Governors appreciated Bucks CC Admissions team involving the GB in the proposal and incorporating our suggested amendments.'

In the absence of any clear objections to the catchment change and with the support of all governing bodies concerned prior to and during the consultation the council proposes therefore to confirm the catchment change set out in Appendix 8.

3.9 **Totteridge/Micklefield** area of High Wycombe. We are proposed to realign Kingswood, Ash Hill and Highworth schools catchment boundaries to try to reduce oversubscription in the Highworth catchment area. This change is proposed in conjunction with the governing body of Hannah Ball School who are also consulting separately as they are a Foundation School on changes to their school's catchment area. The council discussed this proposal in advance with all the schools concerned.

Governing Body Responses	Do you agree with the proposal?	
	Yes	No
Totteridge / Micklefield catchment change	0	1
Parent Responses and other consultees responses	Do you agree with the proposal?	
	Yes	No
Totteridge / Micklefield catchment	1	14

All consultees were offered the opportunity to explain/expand on their decision. No comments were made by any of the 15 parties who stated they disagreed with the proposal to change the catchment areas.

In the absence of any clear reasons for objecting to the changed catchment areas the council proposes therefore to confirm the changes set out in Appendix 9.

3.10 Great Kimble School: In the 2015 admissions consultation we consulted on reducing the admission number from 20 to 15 subject to the school becoming a combined school. This change has been delayed and is still subject to planning permission and public consultation. If it is agreed it would now come into effect from 2018 admissions at the earliest.

The consequential changes to feeder school links, admission number changes and catchment changes for Monks Risborough CE School, Longwick CE School and Princes Risborough Primary School would therefore also come into effect from the changes to Great Kimble School in 2018 as children would cease to feed and instead would remain at Great Kimble. These were consulted upon and determined in the 2017 admissions consultation last year. To confirm, the proposed changes are:

Monks Risborough CE School

- Removal of the feeder link for children from Great Kimble School
- Reduction of the +6 PAN at junior intake to +2
- Removal of the Great Kimble area from the 7+ catchment area,
- A change in admission number to 30 (from 26) in reception

Longwick CE School

• Removal of the feeder link for children from Great Kimble

• A change in admission number to 30 in reception and +2 at Year 3

Princes Risborough Primary School:

- Removal of the feeder link for children from Great Kimble School
- A change in admission number to 45 in reception and +3 at Year 3

Haddenham Junior School:

• Removal of the feeder link for children from Great Kimble School

Governing Body Responses	Do you agree with the proposal?	
	Yes	No
Great Kimble change	0	1
Monks Risborough change	0	1
Longwick change	0	1
Princes Risborough change	0	1
Haddenham Junior change	0	1
Parent Responses and other consultees responses	Do you agree with the proposal?	
	Yes	No
Great Kimble change	2	3
Monks Risborough change	2	3
Longwick change	1	4
Princes Risborough change	1	4
Haddenham Junior change	0	3

All consultees were offered the opportunity to explain/expand on their decision. No comments were made by any of the parties who stated they disagreed with the proposal to the changes proposed for these 5 schools.

In the absence of any clear reasons for objecting to the proposed changes of catchment, admission numbers and feeder links the council proposes therefore to confirm the changes proposed which would come into effect as and when Great Kimble School becomes a combined school.

4.0 Secondary School Admission Rules

No change is proposed to the admission rules for the maintained secondary schools which are currently Buckingham School, Mandeville School and Misbourne School.

4.1 Secondary School Catchment changes: Misbourne School:

Due to increasing populations in the Chesham area we proposed to extend the catchment area of the Misbourne school to include the catchment areas of Amersham and Chiltern Hills Academy to create dual catchment areas. Shared catchment areas provide parents with greater choice in areas where the catchment school is at risk of being oversubscribed. This ensures (as far as possible) that children, who are unable to get a place at their catchment school, do not have to travel a disproportionate distance to their next nearest school. This proposal is subject to the application for a Secondary Free School on the former Penn Special School site being given the go ahead.

Governing Body Responses	Do you agree with the proposal?		
	Yes	No	
Misbourne catchment change	0	1	

Parent Responses and other consultees responses	Do you agree with the proposal?		
	Yes	No	
Misbourne catchment	0	4	

One response on behalf of the Chiltern Hills Academy Governing Body set out their objections to the planned catchment change.

1. The impact of a catchment that overlaps two other secondary schools will create competition amongst these schools for places. This is at a time when we are trying to work more collaboratively and in support of each other.

2. There will be additional travel costs that the LA will be committed to with this model, this at a time when expenditure needs to be reduced.

3. Some parents with economic means will be able to transport their son/daughter across the county to the Misbourne School, those without means will not, making this an unfair admission strategy.

4. School travel plans have a central principle to try to reduce traffic and to ensure travel to and from school has a minimal impact on the environment. This proposal will create more journeys across the already very congested Buckinghamshire roads.

5. The notion of 'local schools for local students' is being ignored with this proposal, this is the desire of the government in terms of building strong local communities.

The Misbourne catchment will remain unchanged. However, BCC will need to keep the situation under review.

5.0 Relevant area

Appendix 4 sets the relevant area which has to be set for 2019, no change is proposed and no comments were received. The relevant area is the area covered by Buckinghamshire County Council.

6. Recommendation

6.1 That the Cabinet Member agrees the determined admission arrangements for admission in September 2018. These arrangements shall include:

The coordinated scheme for primary and secondary admissions in Buckinghamshire, for admission from September 2018, as set out in Appendix 1.

The determined admission rules for community and voluntary-controlled primary schools as set out in Appendix 2, including the admission arrangements for schools and linked primary school arrangements, the admission arrangements for nursery classes and schools and a summary of their locations and the Published Admission Number for each school.

The determined admission rules for community and voluntary-controlled secondary schools as set out in Appendix 3 including proposed Admission Number for each school and sixth form admission arrangements.

The proposed relevant area for school admission arrangements from September 2019, as set out in Appendix 4.

A. Other options available, and their pros and cons

7. The Council is required to determine and publish its admission arrangements for September 2018 by 28 February 2017, by statute, having regard to the views of consultees.

B. Resource implications

8. It is not expected that there will be any negative resource implications as a result of the identified changes to the rules and schemes.

Value For Money (VFM) Self Assessment

Effectiveness: This approach will produce outcomes for residents and stakeholders which they have indicated, through consultation, that they regard as important **Efficiency:** This approach ensures that the continued effectiveness of the current system is not compromised by an ill thought through revision. **Economy:** This approach has no impact on service delivery.

C. Legal implications

9. The current School Admissions Code ("the Code") came into force on 19 December 2014 issued by the Department for Education under section 84 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The Code is to be read alongside the School Admission Appeals Code, as well as the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Coordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012 ("the Regulations") as amended by the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Coordination Arrangements) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 ("the Amendment Regulations"). The Regulations came into force on the 1st February 2012 and the Amendment Regulations and the Amendment Regulations apply to admission arrangements determined in 2014 and later years. In determining its admission arrangements for 2018 the council has a statutory duty as an admission authority to act in accordance with the Regulations and with the relevant provisions of the Code.

10. As part of determining its admission arrangements, the council must set an admission number for each school^{*}s "relevant age group" i.e. the age group at which pupils are or will normally be admitted to the school.

11. Where changes are proposed to admission arrangements, the Code requires the admission authority to consult for a minimum of 6 weeks between 1st October and 31st January on their admission arrangements that will apply for the following academic year. Where the admission arrangements have not changed from the previous year there is no requirement to consult, subject to the requirement that admission authorities must consult on their admission arrangements at least once every 7 years, even if there have been no changes during that period.

D. Property implications

12. None

E. Other implications/issues 13. None

- F. Feedback from consultation, Local Area Forums and Local Member views 14. The proposals were publicised to councillors by email and no adverse comments were received.
- **G. Communication issues** 15. This was the subject of a 6 week consultation with stakeholders de

15. This was the subject of a 6 week consultation with stakeholders during the period 8 December 2016 and 31 January 2017.

H. Progress Monitoring

16. Admission rules are subject to regular review and consultation.

I. Review

17. This is subject to annual review.

Background Papers

School Admissions Code 2014 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/389388/School_ Admissions_Code_2014_-_19_Dec.pdf

There are 14 appendices to this document

- The 2018 primary and secondary scheme (Appendix 1)
- The primary admission rules (Appendix 2)
- The secondary admission rules and rules (Appendix 3)
- The relevant area for 2019 (Appendix 4)
- Appendix 5 Map of Stokenchurch catchment area
- Appendix 6 Map of Booker Hill /Millbrook catchment area
- Appendix 7 Map of Marlow schools catchment areas
- Appendix 8 Wendover/Halton area catchment map
- Appendix 9 Totteridge/Micklefield area catchment map
- Appendix 10 Misbourne catchment map
- Appendix 11 Summary of Governing Body responses
- Appendix 12 Summary of Parent responses
- Appendix 13 Spreadsheet of parental feedback
- Appendix 14 Spreadsheet of governing body feedback.

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 that you would like the Cabinet Member to consider, or if you wish to object to the proposed decision, please inform the Member Services Team by 5.00pm on 10 March 2017. This can be done by telephone (to 01296 382343), or e-mail to <u>democracy@buckscc.gov.uk</u>