

<b>LEWISHAM SCHOOLS FORUM</b>			
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	<b>Deferred Admissions</b>		
<b>DECISION</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Item No. 6</b>	
<b>CLASS</b>	<b>Part 1</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>1 October 2015</b>

### **1. Purpose of the report**

Late in the Summer Term an email consultation was undertaken amongst Forum members on Deferred Admissions. The consultation considered the financial consequences for schools of parents exercising their right to defer admission until their child reaches compulsory schools age. It then considered whether financial support should be provided. A number of members voted on the paper but not enough to make a quorate decision. This report updates the original report and asks the Forum if financial support should be provided.

### **2. Recommendation**

That the Forum agree that schools be funded for the school year for the small number of pupils who miss the October Census and the January Census by reason of having deferred admission until later in the school year.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1 The School Admissions Code requires admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday, but children do not reach compulsory school age until after their fifth birthday. There is flexibility for parents who do not feel their child is ready to start school before compulsory school age. This has been strongly supported by the DfE with a commitment from them to incorporating this as a right in the new Admissions Code. In effect, parents may defer the date their child is admitted to school until later in the school year following their fourth birthday, providing they do not defer beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age, or beyond the start of the final term of that school year. Alternatively, their child may attend school part-time until they reach compulsory school age. This leads to the consequence for the school that a place is 'held' throughout the whole year but yet the pupil misses the October Census and appears during

the year. The DfE is also promoting strongly parental right to request delayed entry – that is entry a full academic year late and out of cohort. This does not lead to the same financial consequence for schools and so is not an issue for Schools Forum in the same way.

- 3.2 While the local authority has every confidence that primary schools cater well for summer born pupils through differentiated teaching and strategies to support transition from EYFS to KS1, there is a strong national lobby (supported by the government) concerned that children should not attend school until they are 'ready'. This is also promoted by some early years providers.  
For the current academic year there are 10 children who have deferred admission to later in the school year and have therefore missed the October Census. This tends to affect certain schools more than others. It is therefore worth considering as a Schools Forum compensating schools for this shortfall. Given the total number of pupils (only 10) the total funding foregone is forecast to be £48k which would fall next year(2016/17).

- 3.3 The original consultation report gave members three options to consider

To provide no funding  
Provide a school with funding for a year  
Provide a loan

#### **4 Financial Impact**

- 4.1 The schools budget is predominately based on the number of pupils on the October Census prior to the start of the financial year. The funding the school receives starts in the April following the census. There is no funding received by the school between the October census and the next March
- 4.2 There is provision within our own local funding scheme that if the January census is higher than the October census then the extra pupils will be funded. This is known as the January Uplift. This is the only adjustment allowed to the October census data under the national funding regulations. There is one slight proviso, in that the funding for the January Uplift is not paid until the following year. This is a result of the January actual numbers not being available by the time the school budgets are calculated and notified to schools.
- 4.3 The above adjustment is made on total numbers and there is no differential made between leavers, late joiners and deferred admissions. The net total is taken.

- 4.4 Financially a school would only be at a disadvantage if the pupil deferred admission is after the January count. This would not be the case if the pupil remains in a nursery attached to the school. Nursery funding is counted on a termly basis.
- 4.5 There is no difference for part time children as these are always counted as one.
- 4.6 The difference between a pupil who is on the census count and for those pupils whose admission is deferred will be that a school will not receive any funding in the following year providing the deferral is after the January count. They will not receive a full year's funding for the following financial year.
- 4.7 The basic entitlement for a reception class pupil is £3,700, plus the relevant proportion of deprivation. This on average equates to 25% of the basic entitlement.
- 4.8 The funding position is shown in the table below

	Pupil on October Count 2015	Pupil on January Count 2016	Funding			
			2015/16 £	2016/7 £	2017/8 £	Total £
Normal Admission	Yes	Yes	0	3,700	3,700	7,400
Deferred Admission but pupils joins school before January 2016 count	No	Yes	0	0	7,400	7,400
Deferred Admission but pupils joins school after January 2016 count	No	No	0	0	3,700	3,700

## 5 Proposals

The Schools Forum is not required to make provision for this, but given its scope to be a growing trend it is recommended that provision be made, while being kept under review.

The financial consequence for the DSG are small, of the pupil funding given to schools collectively it represents 0.02%.

For an individual school with two forms of entry one pupil would represent 0.16% of their funding.

## **6 Conclusion**

The exact number of deferred admissions is not known but may grow over the coming years given government policy. Currently the numbers and related costs are low. It is proposed for the current year to take the funding from the contingency. In the longer term it would need to come from the schools budget. As such it is recommended that if this proposal is agreed it is reviewed at a future Schools Forum meeting.

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