

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Community and Children's Services Grand Committee	30/04/2021
<b>Subject:</b> School Admissions Update	<b>Main report is Public</b>  <b><u>Appendix A is Non-Public</u></b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contributing to a flourishing society</li> <li>• Support a thriving economy</li> <li>• Shape understanding environments.</li> </ul>
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	<b>The Dedicated Schools Grant – High Needs Block</b>
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Andrew Carter, Director of Community and Children's Services	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Theresa Shortland, Head of Service – Education and Early Years	

### Summary

The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the allocation of primary and secondary school places to City of London pupils for the academic year 2021/22.

The City of London has complied with the statutory duty to co-ordinate school applications as part of the cross-borough, Pan-London Admissions Scheme process.

All children whose parents applied on time for a school place for entry in September 2021 received a place on national offer day.

### Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the points raised in the report.

## **Main Report**

### **Background**

1. The City of London has a statutory duty to ensure that sufficient school places are available within the area for every child of school age whose parents wish them to attend school. There is only one maintained primary school in the area – The Aldgate School. City of London residents also apply for school places at schools in neighbouring boroughs.
2. The School Admissions Code (the Code) has been issued under Section 84 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (SSFA 1998). This Code came into force on 19 December 2014.
3. The Code applies to admissions for all maintained schools in England. It sets out how school applications are processed. It is the responsibility of admission authorities to ensure that admission arrangements are compliant with this Code. Where a school is the admission authority, this responsibility falls to the governing body or Academy Trust for that school.
4. Regulations 26 to 32 and Schedule 2 of the School Admissions Regulations 2012 require local authorities to co-ordinate school applications and ensure that cross-borough processes are compatible with each other. The City of London is part of the Pan-London Admissions Scheme process, where all 33 London local authorities and Surrey County Council have reciprocal admissions processes.
5. The governing body is the admissions authority for The Aldgate School. This means that the governors set the admissions policy for the school and make the decisions about which pupils are allocated places and admitted to the school. The pupil admission places for The Aldgate School is 30 for each year group.

### **Current Position**

#### **Primary School Places**

6. The deadline for applications for a primary school place for entry in September 2021 was 15 January 2021. Offers for school places were confirmed on 16 April 2021.
7. When parents make their application for a primary school place, they can apply to a maximum of six schools in order of preference. They only receive one offer, which is based on their order of preference and is the highest preference offer that can be allocated. Table 1 illustrates the primary school place offers for City of London pupils offered on 16 April 2021.

<b>Table 1. Primary school place offers for City of London pupils, 16 April 2021</b>			
<b>SCHOOL</b>	<b>Total number of children offered a place at each school</b>	<b>Place offered – 1st preference offer</b>	<b>Place offered – other preference offer</b>
City of London Primary Academy Islington (COLPAI)	14	14	
The Aldgate School	10	9	1 (second)
Prior Weston Primary School and Children's Centre	2	2	
Moreland Primary School	1	0	1 (fifth)
St Mary's Church of England Primary School	1	0	1 (fourth)

8. There were 28 applications received by the closing date (15 January 2021) for primary school places in the City of London. In April 2021, primary school pupils were allocated places. Of City of London pupils, 89% received their first preference and 11% received other preferences. In comparison, in 2020, 89% of primary-aged pupils got their first preference, 4% received other preferences and 7% received no offer. A notable change this year has been that all applicants received an offer from one of their preferred schools.
9. We have also seen a steady increase in the number of children being offered places at The Aldgate School and COLPAI since COLPAI opened in 2017 (see Table 2). Historically, primary-aged children living in the City of London have been offered places in up to 10 different schools in one academic year. This year, 24 (86%) of children living in the City of London have been offered places in two preferred schools. Both schools are rated Outstanding by Ofsted, and both are part of The City of London family of schools.

<b>Table 2: Officers at Aldgate and COLPAI</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Offers at The Aldgate School</b>	<b>Offers at COLPAI</b>
2017	6	6
2018	10	8
2019	6	9
2020	11	12
2021	10	14

10. In 2021, The Aldgate School was oversubscribed. The school received 83 school applications for places. The governing body met during February 2021 to process all applications and allocate places at the school for entry in September 2021 in line with their oversubscription criteria. Both The Aldgate School and COLPAI received significantly more first-preference applications than places available.

## **Secondary School Places**

11. The deadline for applications for a secondary school place for entry in September 2021 was 31 October 2020. Offers for secondary school places were confirmed on 1 March 2021.

12. When parents make their application for a secondary school place, they can apply to a maximum of six schools and mark them in order of preference. They receive only one offer, which is based on their order of preference and is the highest preference offer that can be allocated. Table 3 illustrates the secondary school place offers for City of London pupils on 1 March 2021.

<b>Table 3. Secondary school place offers for City of London pupils, 1 March 2021</b>			
<b>SCHOOL</b>	<b>Total number of children offered a place at each school</b>	<b>Place offered – 1st preference offer</b>	<b>Place offered – other preference offer</b>
City of London Academy (Southwark)	4	4	0
City of London Academy – Islington	3	2	1 (fourth)
Haggerston School	3	1	2 (fourth)
The Grey Coat Hospital	3	2	1 (second)
Bishop Challoner Catholic Collegiate Girls School	2	1	1 (third)
Central Foundation Boys School	2	2	0
Mulberry School for Girls	1	1	0
Stepney All Saints School	1	1	0
St Mary Magdalene Academy	1	1	0
The Cardinal Vaughan Memorial RC School	1	1	0
The St Marylebone CE School	1	1	0
City of London Academy Highbury Grove	1	0	1 (allocated)

13. There were 23 applications received for secondary school places in the City of London by the closing date of 31 October 2020. Out of these 23 applications, 74% of City of London secondary-aged pupils got their first preference and 22% received other preferences; 4% received an allocated offer, which equates to one child.

14. In 2020, there were 22 applications received for secondary school places; 59% of secondary-aged pupils got their first preference, 32% received other preferences; and 9% received an allocated offer.

15. There was a 15% increase in the number of applicants receiving their first preference in 2021. This was notably due to more applicants listing the City of London Academy Islington and Southwark as first preferences. Parents have previously listed the academies as lower preferences due to the distance and ease of travel. This was a welcome change and we will monitor closely to find out if the trend continues for future years.

### **Secondary Admission Appeals**

16. In April 2020, temporary regulations (The School Admissions (England) (Coronavirus) (Appeals Arrangements) (Amendment) Regulations 2020) and accompanying guidance were introduced, giving admission authorities, local authorities and admission appeal panels more flexibility when dealing with appeals during the COVID-19 outbreak. The temporary regulations were due to expire on 31 January 2021 but, due to the ongoing nature of the outbreak and the social distance rules, the Department for Education has introduced another set of temporary regulations that came into force on 31 January 2021, which extends the temporary provisions until 30 September 2021.

17. The main changes include the following:

- a. Appeal hearings can be heard by telephone or video conference
- b. Appeals can be decided on the basis of written submissions only
- c. The statutory timescales have been amended.

The temporary regulations and guidance *only* apply where it is not reasonably practicable to comply with the School Admission Appeals Code for a reason relating to the incidence or transmission of COVID-19.

### **City resident children**

18. As of 31 March 2021, we have identified 409 City of London resident children of statutory school age (Appendix A). We know of 82 schools that City of London pupils attend. A summary of the data held on the schools attended by City of London resident children indicates that:
- 138 of these children attend schools within the City of London local area. This includes the independent schools.
  - 212 of these children attend schools in the immediate neighbouring boroughs (Camden, Hackney, Islington, Southwark, Tower Hamlets, Westminster).
  - 25 City of London children attend schools in an additional nine London boroughs and four home counties.
  - Fewer than 10 children are being electively home educated.
  - There are 21 children with Education, Health and Care Plans.
19. Each year London Councils produces '*Do the Maths*' an annual report that details the pressures facing the school places planning system in London. It can be difficult to forecast the levels of cross-border pupil mobility as they fluctuate for a number of reasons. (*Do the Maths 2020* can be accessed on the London Councils

website: <https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/our-key-themes/children-and-young-people/education-and-school-places/do-maths-2020>)

20. As the City of London has one maintained primary school in the local area, a shortfall of places for primary school is not a current concern. The Aldgate School remains very popular and oversubscribed for school admissions. The demand for secondary places has also not had any current impact on City pupils. The choice of secondary schools is largely within neighbouring areas, and an increase in those interested in City-sponsored schools has increased. City-sponsored schools continue to offer priority places to City resident children.

### **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

21. Strategic implications – Corporate outcome: Contribute to a flourishing society by ensuring that people have equal opportunities to enrich their lives and reach their full potential
22. Resource implications – There is an Admissions and Attendance Manager who oversees the operational admissions function within the local authority. The School Admissions Services is a commissioned service, which is currently being delivered by Islington Borough Council.
23. Financial implications – There is a cost associated with the school admissions service and access to the Pan-London Admissions Scheme.
24. Legal implications – There is a statutory duty to ensure that the City of London co-ordinates all school applications at standard transition points.
25. Risk implications – The City of London has sufficient school places for Primary aged children. There has been a reduction in school places across London in recent years but this has not been an issue for City of London families. Children continue to apply to a wide range of schools primarily in neighbouring areas but also further afield.
26. Equalities implications – All children have the right to a school place. If a child is not offered a school place, then our service will allocate a place at a school within reasonable distance.
27. Climate implications – n/a
28. Security implications – n/a

### **Conclusion**

29. The City of London has complied with the statutory duty to co-ordinate school applications as part of the cross-borough, Pan-London Admissions Scheme process. All children and young people who applied for a school place for entry in September 2021 have been offered school places, and therefore the City of London has fulfilled its statutory duty.

## **Appendices (Non-Public)**

- Appendix A – Schools List – April 2021

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