

CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR RICHMOND UPON THAMES COMMUNITY SCHOOLS FOR 2013/2014 ENTRY

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES TO PROPOSED REMOVAL OF THE 'LINKED SCHOOL' CRITERION FOR GREY COURT, ORLEANS PARK AND TEDDINGTON

334 responses were received by the closing date of 13 January 2012 and they can be broken down as follows:

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| Schools | 10 – two secondary (both in-borough); and eight primary (of which five are in-borough, two in Kingston and one in Hounslow). |
| Local Authorities | 1 |
| Pressure-group | 1 |
| Sets of parents/residents | 319 |

A full record of the responses can be found at:

http://www.richmond.gov.uk/school_admissions.htm.

The responses to Proposal 4 can be broken down as follows:

In favour

- 2 secondary schools – Orleans Park, Teddington
- 3 primary schools – Fern Hill (Kingston), St James's, The Vineyard
- 1 pressure-group – Richmond Inclusive Schools Campaign
- 94 sets of parents or local residents, of whom the breakdown by parentage of children at particular schools is as follows:
 - Archdeacon Cambridge's – 2
 - St James's – 13
 - St John the Baptist – 1
 - Stanley – 2
 - The Vineyard – 79
 - Trafalgar – 1
 - Unknown – 6

Against

- 5 primary schools – Darell, Latchmere (Kingston), St Mary's and St Peter's, Stanley, and Worple (Hounslow)
- 1 local authority – Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
- 225 sets of parents or local residents, of whom the breakdown by parentage of children at particular schools is as follows:
 - Archdeacon Cambridge's – 4
 - Chase Bridge – 15
 - Darell – 1
 - Latchmere (Kingston) – 32
 - St Mary's – 53
 - St Mary's and St Peter's – 52
 - St Paul's (Kingston) – 36
 - St Stephen's – 6
 - Stanley – 6
 - Trafalgar – 1
 - Worple (Hounslow) – 2
 - Unknown – 15

Neutral

- 3 local residents

The **principal** arguments **in favour of** the proposal are summarised, by type of respondent, in the chart below, with, where relevant, officers' comments appended alongside:

| Respondent | Argument(s) | Officers' comments |
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| Orleans Park | Local children should be able to access the school regardless of which primary school they attend. | |
| Teddington | Proximity would be fairer than using links. | |
| Fern Hill Primary | Could increase children's chances of obtaining places at Teddington (in addition to Grey Court) | Few, if any, Fern Hill children would be able to access Teddington on the basis of proximity, due to the fact that we measure distance by 'road and maintained footpath', i.e. via either Kingston Bridge or Teddington Lock, rather than 'as the crow flies'. |
| St James's Catholic Primary – governing body and parents | Children should be able to access places at their closest secondary school, rather than having to travel much further afield. In primary schools without links, some parents feel compelled to move their children to schools that do have links, which is disruptive for children's education. | |
| The Vineyard Primary – governing body and parents | The school's lack of a link to a community secondary school prompts some parents to move their children to other local primary schools or the private sector. That means the school is unlikely to be able to re-establish a link. Using historical data is unfair. Children from further away, including out-borough, can access places at local secondary schools, whilst Vineyard and other local children living much nearer cannot. That is particularly acute for east Twickenham children, who were unable to get into Orleans Infant and so cannot | |

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| | <p>access Orleans Park. So the original aim of circumventing the Greenwich Judgement has now been turned on its head so that in-borough children are being discriminated against in favour of out-borough children. The links also no longer serve their original purpose of ensuring continuity for local children from primary school to secondary. The links are illogical – e.g. some faith schools are linked whereas some community primary schools, such as The Vineyard and Marshgate, are not, and are anachronistic. Enabling children to access their closest secondary schools would mean they would travel shorter distances. Richmond is the only local authority that operates a linked schools policy that gives children such high priority. Using ‘distance’ as the main criterion would produce a more transparent system for allocating places and would ensure greater equality of opportunity. Using ‘distance’ would also lead to the fulfilment of more first preferences among borough residents than at present.</p> | |
| Richmond Inclusive Schools Campaign | Children attending Catholic primary schools should be able to access their closest state-funded secondary school. | |
| Stanley Primary parents | Removing the links would give local parents more choice of secondary schools. The current system is unfair to children who attend non-linked schools. | |

The **principal** arguments **against** the proposal are summarised, by type of respondent, in the chart below, with, where relevant, officers' comments appended alongside:

| Respondent | Argument(s) | Officers' comments |
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| Darell Primary – headteacher, governing body and parents | Concerned that Darell pupils would no longer be able to get into Grey Court. | In recent years, all parents who have stated Grey Court as a preference have had it (or a higher preference) met, i.e. all children on the waiting list have been offered places. It is likely that that situation will continue for the next few years. Beyond that, the likelihood of Kingston Council receiving funding to implement their approved establishment of a new eight-form secondary school in north Kingston would mean that fewer north Kingston children would go to Grey Court from September 2015, leaving more places for Richmond Borough residents. Parents of Darell pupils also have Richmond Park Academy as a viable local alternative. |
| Latchmere – governing body and parents | If the links are removed, some Latchmere children may miss out on places at Grey Court because St Paul's children who would otherwise have got into Teddington might be living nearer to Grey Court. | As above. However, even if Grey Court did become truly oversubscribed, nearly all Latchmere children would be living substantially nearer to Grey Court than St Paul's children. St Paul's is located just off Kingston Hill, considerably further away than Latchmere, and in both cases most pupils live close by. |
| St Mary's and St | The link still ensures the maximum number of | The arguments re Kingston residents |

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| <p>Peter's – governing body and parents</p> | <p>children transferring from St Mary's and St Peter's to Teddington. Removal of the links would mean an influx of children from Ham and Kingston to Teddington School. Year 5 parents have already made decisions regarding which secondary schools they would like their children to transfer to. The unknown situation re free school applications and funding for the north Kingston secondary school mean that now is not the right time to make this change.</p> | <p>ignore the fact that we measure home-to-school distance by road and maintained footpath, i.e. over Kingston Bridge or Teddington Lock for Kingston residents, rather than 'as the crow flies'. Children living in Somerset Road live nearer to Teddington than those in the roads on what was the British Aerospace site or those living in the Canbury ward roads. Re Ham residents, if they wanted to have places in Teddington School, Ham residents could already have obtained places in Teddington primary schools in Year 5 or 6, but that has not happened; which indicates a high degree of satisfaction among Ham and Petersham residents with the performance and attractiveness of Grey Court. We see no reason why that situation would change. With regard to the timing of the proposed change, the proposal would, if approved, have to be implemented for September 2013 entry, as the timetable for determining admission arrangements is set out in statute. The continued existence of the links has always been subject to annual review and this is the third time in six years that we have consulted upon removing them. The uncertainty regarding free schools and the north Kingston secondary school will</p> |
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| | | be resolved this spring but in any case does not provide sufficient reason not to implement the proposed change. |
| Stanley Primary – governing body and parents | Whilst the school understands the wish to increase the number of in-borough children obtaining places in the community secondary schools, removing the link would reduce Stanley children’s chances of obtaining places in their preferred schools, especially for boys. The Council should also review the status of Waldegrave as a girls-only school, as it is the closest secondary school to Stanley and would be the natural fit if it became a mixed school. | Whilst removing the links might restrict the chances of admission to Teddington for some children living in Fulwell and south Twickenham, the growing number of primary-aged children within Teddington means that their chances would be restricted if the links continued. Removing the links would, though, increase their chances of admission to Orleans Park. Although Waldegrave’s status as the only state-funded single sex school in the borough is anomalous, it provides a highly successful and popular education for local girls and the Council therefore has no plans to make the school co-educational. |
| Worple Primary – governing body and parents | The school does not wish to see removal of the link with Orleans Park, its closest mixed-sex non-faith secondary school, which has been in place for many years and which pertains between the two schools in ways other than just admission to Orleans. | Whilst we recognise that there are links between the schools which extend beyond admissions, it is the case that Hounslow Manor, Worple’s second nearest mixed-sex non-faith secondary school, has more than enough spaces in Year 7 to accommodate all the children who would otherwise transfer from Worple to Orleans Park. |
| Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames – Principal Admissions | Children attending St Paul’s C of E Junior School would be unable to access places at Teddington and the absence of local alternatives would make it | Many, if not all, of the St Paul’s children would be able to obtain places at the Coombe schools and, in the longer term, |

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| <p>& Governance Officer</p> | <p>difficult for them to gain places elsewhere.</p> | <p>at the north Kingston secondary school. Coombe Boys' has a considerable number of vacancies in Year 7 and the cut-off distance for Coombe Girls' for 2011 entry was 3.4km, well within the range of children living in the Kingston Hill area.</p> |
| <p>Chase Bridge – parents</p> | <p>Parents value the link with Orleans Park and it would be unfair to remove it. De-linking schools will affect house prices.</p> | <p>Although it has been linked with Orleans Park since 2005, it was previously linked (from 1991 to 2004) with Whitton, whose replacement, Twickenham Academy, is the closest state-funded mixed-sex secondary school to Chase Bridge. It is likely that those Chase Bridge children who would be unable to gain places at Orleans Park, would be able to obtain places at Twickenham Academy even if and when, as expected, the improvements in standards and the new buildings make the school much more popular with local parents.</p> |
| <p>St Mary's – parents</p> | <p>Children in the roads – e.g. Craneford Way, Court Way, Egerton Road, Heathfield North and South, etc. – between Heatham House and the A316 would no longer be able to obtain places at Orleans Park, which would fracture friendship groups. The proposal would 'force' parents to send their children to a school – Twickenham Academy – which is under-performing in comparison with Orleans Park. The Clifden Road site should be used for an 'inclusive' school. The link provides certainty for</p> | <p>Even allowing for an increase in applications from parents of local children who attend schools that are not linked, the modelling undertaken indicates that all of the children living within that area would still be within the cut-off for Orleans Park if the links were removed. There has been some confusion over the term 'Heathfield' which the Council officer understood to</p> |

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| | <p>parents and children about likely secondary school destinations. Using 'distance' would make Orleans Park's pupil population less diverse.</p> | <p>be the area adjoining Whitton, rather than, as some parents have used the term, the roads between Heatham House and the A316. Even if some St Mary's children – perhaps any living west of the Heath Road railway bridge – could not get places at Orleans Park, the Council is confident that the improvements in standards and the new buildings at Twickenham Academy will lead to local parents making first preferences for the latter in much greater numbers than at present. The consultation document in respect of Clifden – see http://www.richmond.gov.uk/council_consultations – sets out the reasons why establishing a new non-faith school at Clifden would not provide best value for local residents and would undermine the improvements being made at the three academies in the borough. Whilst the links provide certainty for nearly all St Mary's children, that is not the case for children at other linked primary schools, e.g. Stanley and Trafalgar, and for those at non-linked primary schools.</p> |
| <p>St Paul's – parents</p> | <p>Removing the link so quickly would be unfair on parents of current Year 5 children, who have long presumed that their children would transfer to Teddington as children in previous cohorts have done. The proposal should therefore be delayed until</p> | <p>The proposal would, if approved, have to be implemented for September 2013 entry, as the timetable for determining admission arrangements is set out in statute. The continued existence of the</p> |

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| | <p>the north Kingston secondary school is established. If implemented, the proposal could be removed a year later if the schools became academies.</p> | <p>links has always been subject to annual review and this is the third time in six years that we have consulted upon removing them. As academies, the schools would indeed have responsibility for consulting upon and determining their own admission arrangements, but, as with the three current academies, it is anticipated that they would continue to work very closely with the Council and would not make any major changes to their admission arrangements without prior agreement.</p> |
| <p>St Stephen's – parents</p> | <p>Removing the link would mean that children in north St Margarets would no longer be able to obtain places at Orleans Park.</p> | <p>Even allowing for an increase in applications from parents of local children who attend schools that are not linked, the modelling undertaken indicates that all of St Margarets and central and east Twickenham would be within the cut-off for Orleans Park if the links were removed.</p> |