

# TOWER HAMLETS CHILDREN'S SERVICES

## School Admission Arrangements Public Consultation Responses 2021/22



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## 1. Introduction

Tower Hamlets Council consults on its school admissions arrangements each year, even where no changes have been made, to ensure that its arrangements continue to be fair and transparent and that as many parents as possible can obtain a place for their child at one of their preferred schools. An annual consultation is particularly important to those who might not have previously been interested in school admission arrangements, perhaps because they did not yet have a child approaching school age.

The consultation provided opportunity for respondents to comment on the following admissions arrangements for the 2021/22 academic year:

**(A)** Proposed admissions arrangements for Tower Hamlets community schools:

- Nursery Schools/Classes
- Primary Schools
- Secondary Schools

**(B)** Proposed schemes for the co-ordination of admissions for:

- Reception Year of Primary School;
- Year 7 of Secondary School;
- Admissions outside of the normal points of entry ('In Year' admission)

**(C)** Proposed Published Admission Numbers for schools in Tower Hamlets;

Three significant changes were proposed for admissions in 2021/22:

- A reduction in the Published Admission Number at Cayley Primary School from 90 to 60 places.
- A reduction in the Published Admission Number at Malmesbury Primary School from 75 to 60 places.
- A reduction in the Published Admission Number at Olga Primary School from 90 to 60 places.
- A reduction in the Published Admission Number at Canon Barnett Primary School from 45 to 30 places...
- A reduction in the Published Admission Number at Bangabandhu Primary School from 60 to 30 places.
- A reduction in the Published Admission Number at Stewart Headlam Primary School from 60 to 30 places.
- An increase in the Published Admission Number at Oaklands from 120 to 180 places.

The consultation period ran for a total of 7 weeks (5 weeks during term-time) from 18th November 2019 until 3rd January 2020. The consultation was conducted online, with an option to request a paper copy of the questionnaire. There were a total of 131 responses to the consultation, all of which were online responses. There was a further collective response from the Tower Hamlets Admissions Forum – a group representative of key stakeholders including, parents, headteachers, diocesan bodies, Council of Mosques and community organisations. The Forum's role is to consider and promote a fair and effective schools admission system, which advances social equity and inclusion, ensuring that the interests of local parents and children come first. The Forum's comments are included separately in each section.

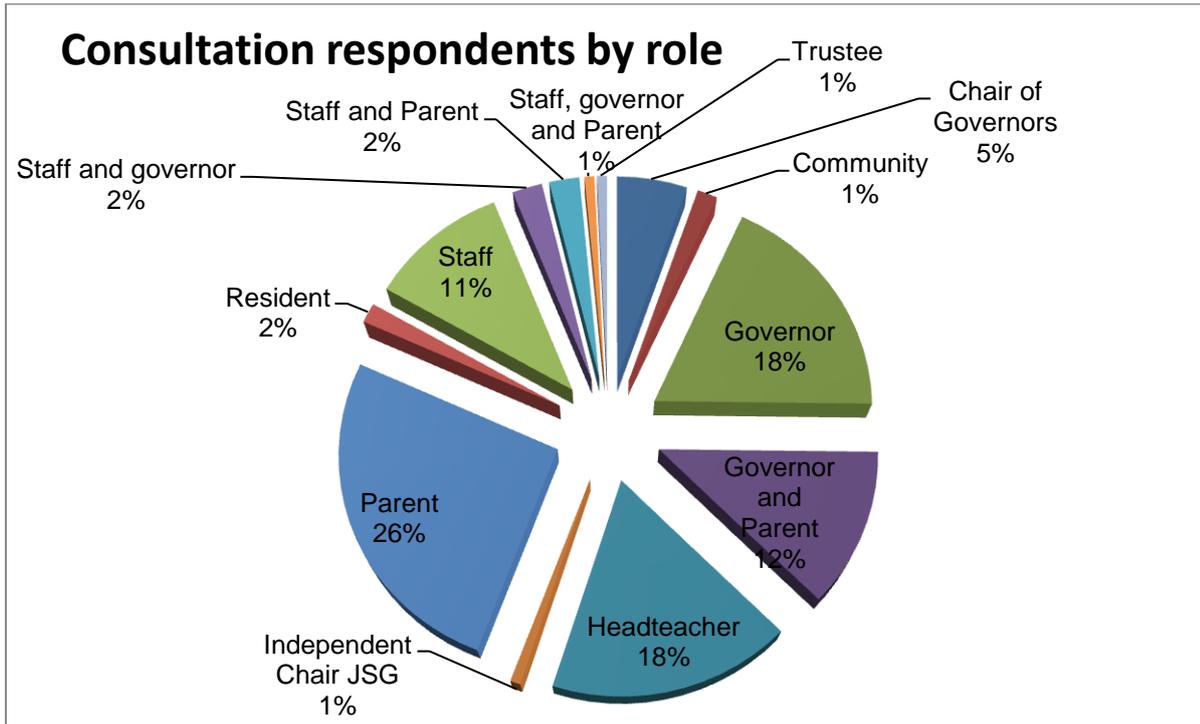
## 2. Communication

The table below includes the communication methods that were used to advertise and promote the consultation:

<b>Communication medium</b>	<b>Communication reach</b>	<b>Date actioned</b>
Link on Tower Hamlets council website, intranet page and social media platforms	All local residents, businesses and staff employed by the Council	November 2019 to January 2020
Email to all governors via Governor Services with information on consultation opportunity	All governors	November 2019
Email to all neighbouring local authorities seeking their views	All neighbouring local authorities	November 2019
Pupil Services staff advertise on email signatures	Borough and council wide reach	November 2019 to January 2020
East London Advertiser Newspaper advert	Local and neighbouring borough residents and businesses	November 2019
Weekly Dosh Newspaper advert	Wider community reach including hard to reach communities	November 2019
Janomot	Wider community reach including hard to reach communities	November 2019
Head Teachers Bulletin, Primary and Secondary Heads Consultative, direct email to all Tower Hamlets Headteachers	All head teachers employed by the local authority	November 2019
Members bulletin	All elected members asking for support to engage the local community	November 2019
Admissions Forum – agenda item for discussion and response	Members of the Forum	December 2019
Collective of Bangladeshi Governors	Governors	November 2019
Tower Hamlets under 5's providers including Children's Centres, Playgroups and Nurseries	Email and letter	November 2019
Parent and Carer Council meeting	Local parents and carers	November 2019
Agenda for Primary and Secondary HTs Phase Consultative meetings	PDC	November 2019
Council social media accounts, including scheduled releases on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter	Facebook, twitter	November 2019 and December 2019
Somali Community Association	Email	November 2019

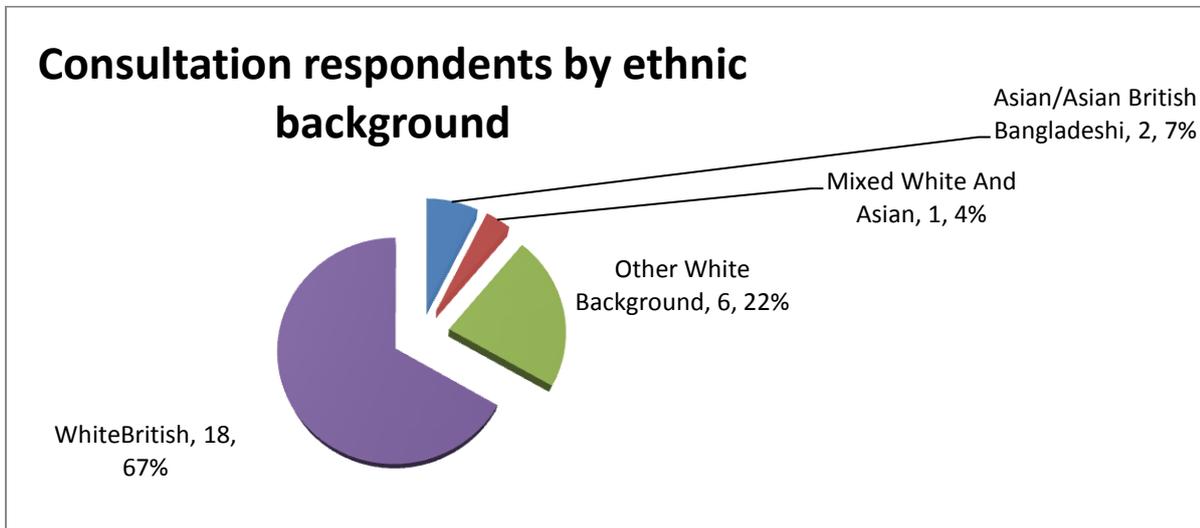
### 3. Profile of respondents

#### 3.1 Role



#### 3.2 Ethnicity

Of the 131 respondents, 104 did not disclose their ethnicity, but of the respondents that did provide details:



#### 3.3 Disability

One respondent (1%) stated that they were disabled, as defined under the Equality Act 2010, 26 respondents (20%) stated that they were not disabled and 104 (79%) respondents did not offer a response in terms of disability.

## 4. Results analysis

### 4.1 Planned Admission Numbers for schools in Tower Hamlets 2022/22

The Published Admission Number (PAN) sets out the maximum number of children that each school will admit to the Reception year (Primary), Year 3 (Junior), Year 7 (Secondary) or Year 9 (UTC). Consultation respondents were asked to consider reductions in the PAN at five Tower Hamlets community schools: Cayley Primary, Malmesbury Primary, Olga Primary, Canon Barnett Primary, Bangabandhu Primary and Stewart Headlam Primary.

Consultation respondents were asked if they agreed with the proposals and invited to express their views. There were 131 responses to the consultation: 97 (78%) were in agreement with the proposals, 25 (20%) against the proposal and 3 (2%) with no preference.

Respondents from the following schools contributed:

- Bangabandhu
- Ben Jonson Primary
- Bishop Challoner
- Bluegate Fields Infant s
- Bonner Mile End
- Bonner Primary and St Paul's Way Trust
- Bow School
- Canary Wharf College Glenworth
- Cayley Primary
- Christ Church C of E Primary
- Clara Grant Primary
- Columbia Primary
- Cubitt Town Infants
- Culloden Primary
- Elizabeth Selby Infants
- Globe Primary
- Guardian Angels
- Hermitage Primary
- Lansbury Lawrence Primary
- Malmesbury primary
- Mayflower
- Oaklands
- Rachel Keeling Nursery
- Raines Foundation
- Seven Mills Primary
- St Anne's
- St Paul's Way Foundation
- St Pauls CE Whitechapel
- St Peter's London Docks Primary
- Stepney Greencoat
- Thomas Buxton Primary
- William Davis Primary

Consultation respondents were asked for views on the proposals to reduce admission numbers; there were 10 comments:

1) Would the reduction of PAN in these schools cause other schools in the vicinity to be over-subscribed?
2) Is the reason for these schools not being able to fill their places due to less children being born or that they are applying to other places?
If Bangabandhu reduces to one form entry, what plans does the LA have in terms of ensuring that the school can be sustainable as a one form entry school?
Investment on making the school better to make sure as many children are attending school and that classes are not cut
It is necessary for the sustainability of each school
It is not yet known whether the same amount of children will start school in 2021. My preferred school may be Olga but I see a risk of not getting a place if reduced PAN

<p>It's not very clear on what happens to parents that live near primary schools without any spaces and if you're on a waiting list how long for... I believe this will reduce jobs and make people's lives difficult, the changes are very drastic and unreasonable. Strongly disagree</p>
<p>The catchment area system penalises those on the boundaries of a catchment area, restricting their choices and making them likely to have to travel a long way to a school which they did not choose. There is no need for such a system at all in the era of digital maps. Most other boroughs have a simple policy based of being able to choose all schools nearby as viable options. Tower Hamlets should do the same.</p>
<p>The demand on school places is caused by the social changes, which are due to the housing policy imposed by this conservative government. People with children are moved out of the borough, so that richer people can purchase the council flats and live in them. This is responsible for the reduction on demand. Some may call it social cleansing. I think with a change of government and a return to more council housing the social set-up can change again and places will be needed again. Also there should be a stop to free schools and excessive Academies because it destroys continuity in education. No school can plan ahead for longer than 2 years if schools can just spring out of nowhere, which will reduce places in council run schools. Again, if we get a Labour government policies might change by next year and places will be required again.</p>
<p>The reduction should correlate on a few historical years on in take admissions analysis, just in case there is a spike in residence in the future and children are left out</p>
<p>Whilst I agree in the main with the proposals - they make sense overall. My concern is for both Canon Barnet and Stewart Headlam Primaries who are reducing down to single form entry. Single form entries are very difficult to manage economically and there is little flexibility in terms of staffing.</p>
<p>Why are the admission numbers not being changed for the St Matthias and William Davis catchment area? If the plan is for Christchurch and St Matthias to merge and there be only 2 schools in this catchment then why are admissions not being adapted accordingly? Parents may be choosing St Matthias for Nursery /reception places and then be told they have to move school in the first year or so. IN the meantime William Davis continues to struggle financially due to a falling role. It would make much more sense to close any new admissions to St M so that places were filled at William Davis or Christchurch.</p>

### **Catchment Area 1 (Stepney)**

- Cayley Primary School, Aston Street, E14 7NG

It is proposed to reduce the PAN at this School from 90 to 60 places. This change is proposed because the School has not been able to fill all of its available places, and there is a surplus of primary school places in the Stepney catchment area. The reduction will come into effect for admissions from September 2021.

### **Catchment Area 2 (Bow)**

- Malmesbury Primary School, Coborn St, Mile End, E3 2AB

It is proposed to reduce the PAN at this School from 75 to 60 places. This change is proposed because the School has not been able to fill all of its available places, and there is a surplus of primary school places in the Bow catchment area. The reduction will come into effect for admissions from September 2021.

- Olga Primary School, Lanfranc Rd, Bow, E3 5DN

It is proposed to reduce the PAN at this School from 90 to 60 places. This change is proposed because the School has not been able to fill all of its available places, and there is a surplus of primary school places in the Bow catchment area. The reduction will come into effect for admissions from September 2021.

### **Catchment Area 5 (Wapping)**

- Canon Barnett Primary School, Gunthorpe St, Spitalfields, E1 7RQ

It is proposed to reduce the PAN at this School from 45 to 30 places. This change is proposed because the School has not been able to fill all of its available places, and there is a surplus of primary school places in the catchment area. The reduction will come into effect for admissions from September 2021.

### **Catchment Area 6 (Bethnal Green)**

- Bangabandhu Primary School, Wessex St, Bethnal Green, E2 0LB

It is proposed to reduce the PAN at this School from 60 to 30 places. This change is proposed because the School has not been able to fill all of its available places, and there is a surplus of primary school places in the catchment area. The reduction will come into effect for admissions from September 2021.

- Stewart Headlam Primary School, Tapp St, Bethnal Green, E1 5RE

It is proposed to reduce the PAN at this School from 60 to 30 places. This change is proposed because the School has not been able to fill all of its available places, and there is a surplus of primary school places in the catchment area. The reduction will come into effect for admissions from September 2021.

The Tower Hamlets Admissions Forum agreed with the proposal, as it recognised that the proposal would not limit parental choice (due to falling rolls in the area) and would enable the schools to better organise and sustain the quality of provision.

#### **Local Authority Response**

The Local Authority firmly believes that reducing the PANs will assist the schools to provide stability in their long-term planning and allow them to secure high quality educational outcomes for the pupils currently on roll, whilst ensuring that an appropriate number of places are provided for future pupil numbers, in line with demand. School roll and school admissions data confirm that primary rolls in the Reception year have been falling year on year in particular areas of the borough over the past few years. A significant surplus of places can lead to financial and organisational difficulties and is challenging for individual schools to manage. The Local Authority and its school leaders have therefore been working together to consider options and take steps to address this. A recent review of the rolls of all primary schools in the borough has been undertaken. Schools where rolls were falling and/or where there is already spare capacity, due to them not filling all of their available places over a sustained period, have therefore been identified and put forward for reduction.

The aim of these proposals to reduce school PANs is to help stabilise each school's intake and enable school leaders to plan and deliver school provision effectively and meet local demand.

The reduction of the PAN in the areas identified will not lead to a shortage of school places - there are currently over 300 spare reception places in these catchment areas and these proposals have the potential to reduce this by 150 places. There will still be a sufficient number of places available at other primary schools in these areas to accommodate Reception and in-year demand at current levels. A reduction in PAN would apply to the Reception intake for each of the proposed schools from 2021 onwards and not to children already in attendance at these schools. However, the Council may seek to bring forward these changes from September 2020 on condition that no child is refused a place.

Long term value for money will be achieved by ensuring that schools are of the right size to meet local demand. The Council will continue to monitor the demand for school places across the borough and act accordingly to re-provide places should the situation change and additional places be required.

### **Oaklands Secondary School**

Tower Hamlets has been experiencing a gradual increase in secondary applications in line with the previous growth in primary. This growth in secondary, together with proposed organisational changes to existing secondary provision in the borough, has led to the Council's plans to increase the Planned Admission Number of Oaklands Community Secondary School. The proposal is for Oaklands to increase its PAN from 120 to 180. This would be for the start of the 2021/22 school year. However, this could be from as early as September 2020, if the current separate statutory proposal for Raine's Foundation School to close at the end of the current school year is determined by the Council in January of next year.

Consultation respondents were asked if they agreed with the proposal and invited to express their views. Out of the 131 individual responses to this question, 104 respondents (83%) agreed with the proposal. 21 respondents (17%) disagreed with the proposal. There were two comments made on the Oaklands planned increase in PAN:

- An objection to the Raine's closure.
- Additional traffic calming measures would be beneficial on Bethnal Green Road

The Tower Hamlets Admissions Forum agreed with the proposal, as it recognised that it would enable the school to improve the quality and sustainability of its provision going forward.

#### **Local Authority Response**

The Local Authority firmly believes that increasing the PAN will assist the school to provide stability in their long-term planning and allow it to secure high quality educational outcomes for the pupils currently on roll, whilst ensuring that an appropriate number of places are provided for future pupil numbers, in line with demand.

## 4.2 Admissions Policy and Oversubscription Criteria for Community Nursery Schools

There are no proposed changes to the admissions policy and oversubscription criteria for admission to community nursery classes/schools for the 2021/22 school year. Consultation respondents were invited to provide views on the existing arrangements. Responses across 40 schools in the borough were received. 15 (11%) respondents provided comments which are summarised below (Full Responses shown on pages 14 and 15):

- 6 respondents offered: The centralised admissions system for NURSERY is not working - this is an additional layer of bureaucracy which parents are finding very difficult to navigate. Communication has not been effective and systems have not been clear resulting in families left quite frustrated and children not in school!
- Concerns over funding full and part time places, along with shortfall of nursery places in the borough were expressed.
- In terms of oversubscription criteria I truly believe children who have siblings should be given priority over all but those in social care. My reason for this is having personally seen the effect on families (parents) when children are separated. This needs to be avoided where possible for safeguarding and family wellbeing concerns.

### Local Authority Response

The feedback from respondents will be used to improve communication in regards to the administration of the Nursery school/classes admissions process.

## 4.3 Admissions Policy and Oversubscription Criteria for Community Primary Schools

There are no proposed changes to the admissions policy and oversubscription criteria for admission to community primary schools for the 2021/22 school year. Consultation respondents were invited to express their views on the existing arrangements. Eleven respondents provided comments which are provided below:

There is no equivalent explanation of the tiebreaker clause to the one that appears in the nursery arrangements. The arrangements that apply to sibling priority in the special case of infant and junior schools (O/S criterion 3 and para 11.1) are poorly worded and ambiguous.

The position on out-catchment siblings is also a bit unclear - possibly as a result of a previous policy change? You might want to consider adding an additional criterion to give out-catchment siblings priority over out-catchment 'others'.

Again it will help with staff retention and increase the quality of provision.

Although numbers are obviously falling the Local Authority must keep some flexibility within the system because of the fluid nature of the local population.

I don't see this working.

I feel strongly that if a child has been admitted to a school's nursery provision that they should have a priority place in the school's Reception classes.

I think any parent who wants a community primary school should be able to get a place. I would like to see the reduction of free schools or academies at the expense of council run schools and there may be a change in government and it will have to be seen what the outcome of the general election is to further determine education in the borough.

Priority to children whose parents work in tower hamlets.

Should it be considered that children who attend Nursery classes in primary schools have a priority for Reception places in the same school?

Teachers should be given priority places for their own children as in other local boroughs. This would help to recruit and retain good teachers.

The catchment area system should be eliminated and replaced with a fair system that is

not biases against those living at the edge of such areas. Parents should be free to choose any nearby school in the borough, regardless of whether they live in one catchment area or another. At present, those living on the edge of catchment areas may end up having to travel a long way to a school that is far down their list of choices.

There is no need for this outdated and biased system.

We have two friends who have moved here after the 15 January deadline for reception admission but before the start of the school year. In my opinion, these people should be considered along with the first round of applications with the decisions going out in April if the applications were submitted before the beginning of April.

My own children (along with the children of these two families) have also gone through the in-term admissions process because of moving to the borough. It would be very helpful if the places available and the place you would receive on the waiting list of a particular school (and the actual place when on the list) was transparent and available easily for parents in this circumstance so that they can make informed decisions about which schools might have availability when ranking them on the applications.

The Tower Hamlets Admissions Forum expressed its support for the current policy, but did not provide any further comment.

### **Local Authority Response**

Tower Hamlets Council seeks to operate an admissions system that provides equal and fair opportunities to all applicants, and must also comply with the Department for Education's School Admissions Code. This requires the Local Authority to have due regard for vulnerable children and those with additional needs. The LA's admissions arrangements continue to ensure positive outcomes for Tower Hamlets residents, with a high proportion of children gaining a place at a nearby primary school. The percentage of Tower Hamlets children securing a place at one of their top three preferences (97.4%) remains above the London average (95.5%).

The LA's primary school catchment areas aim to ensure equal opportunities for children living in areas where there are limited options in applying for a school place. They have been designed to take into account geographical boundaries (such as main roads) to allow for safe walking journeys. There is a need for periodic review and modification to the catchment areas, based on changes to the pupil population and the Council's plans for the reorganisation of primary provision in parts of the borough. Any proposed changes to catchment areas will undergo a public consultation.

Although the local authority cannot guarantee a school place for children of siblings, historically all applicants who applied on time under this criterion have been offered a place at their preferred school.

#### 4.4 Admissions Policy and Oversubscription Criteria for Community Secondary Schools

There are no proposed changes to the admissions policy and oversubscription criteria for admission to community secondary schools for the 2021/22 school year. Consultation respondents were invited to express views on the existing arrangements. Three respondents provided comments which are as follows:

I think all community schools should not discriminate for any reason and all pupils who want a local community school should be able to get a place, regardless of who runs the school. But I would prefer if education gets run by the council instead of being free schools or even smaller so-called non schools who educate privately on the minimum amount of hours allowed without having to register as schools but where the children's education is subsidised in so-called religious classes. Academies can have good standards but again, they reduce overall funding for council run schools and distract attention for a good level education for all pupils, which is very important.

Looking at DfE figures there is already a healthy surplus of places and it is folly to increase at the expense of the smaller schools which are already unable to fill all their places.

"The interaction of O/S criteria 3, 4 and 6 is unclear. In particular the opening words of 3 ""3)Children living nearest the school who are the first born . . . "" are unclear because it is not explained how far away one would need to live before they fail to qualify by being deemed not near enough? If it is only ""the nearest"" only one would qualify (which is presumably not intended) but if they all do then the statement is redundant. If (as the note lower down implies) it actually means those in a designated priority area it should say so in terms.

The use of separately defined and simpler priority order for processing waiting lists strikes me as a very good idea.

The Tower Hamlets Admissions Forum expressed its support for the current policy, but did not provide any further comment.

#### Local Authority Response

The outcomes for children starting secondary school remain positive, with 88.3% of pupils securing a place at one of their top three preferences, which is higher than the London average of 86.3%.

The oversubscription criteria for Tower Hamlets community schools give priority to children living closest to the school, regardless of their borough of residence. Admissions arrangements for schools in other London boroughs are determined by the relevant Local Authority; however there is a coordinated scheme which enables parents to apply for schools in their own borough and in other boroughs using a single application form.

#### 4.5 Proposed Schemes for the Co-ordination of Applications and Admission Decisions for Nursery, Reception and Year 7

In line with arrangements in other London boroughs, Tower Hamlets has a system to co-ordinate the arrangements for children to start primary school in the Reception year and to transfer to secondary school in Year 7. This is known as the Pan-London Co-ordinated System, and it enables parents to apply for schools in their own borough and in other boroughs using a single application form.

There are no proposed changes to the co-ordinated scheme for Reception and Year 7 admissions for the 2020/21 school year. Consultation respondents were invited to express

views on the existing arrangements. Twelve respondents provided comments which are as follows:

As a headteacher, the communication from the admissions team can be tricky. They do not always pass on the correct information (for example when a place had been held by SEN) and admissions for Nursery are complex due to the 15/30 hours, making it very hard to manage from outside the school. Uploading of information to SAMS does not always happen in a timely manner and my admin team find managing admissions frustrating.
Centralised admissions for NURSERY is not working - this is an additional layer of bureaucracy which parents are finding very difficult to navigate. Communication has not been effective and systems have not been clear resulting in families left quite frustrated and children not in school! Nurseries were very effective in getting vulnerable children into school ASAP because we knew them, they came in through our doors to meet us, talk and fill out forms. Now we do not meet them, they do not get the chance to ask questions and the process involves minimal human contact.
Different boroughs use different criteria for admissions (CAT tests) which mean that children from Tower Hamlets might have to sit an extra test to successfully apply to schools in Hackney and vice versa. This is messy and a barrier to cross border applications, particularly for people who live close to the border. Please coordinate more with other boroughs.
I think all parents should be able to get a free nursery place for their children and especially free meals for the children.
More consideration should be given for schools which take a disproportionate high number of SEN pupils in N, R and Y7 in comparison to other schools. Schools should be able to say how many high needs pupils is sustainable for their school offer in their PAN offer - schools that declare low numbers could then be QA by the LA. This would add clarity for parents, help support budget/ operational planning for schools and ensure SEN needs were met fairly across the borough.
Nurseries are better at admitting families themselves rather than centrally. Though it makes sense for primary and secondary to co-ordinate, the Nurseries are the first point of call for families and can help with the process of applications to Primary School. Central admissions for nursery schools isn't working as local community links are what are needed to get those families, especially vulnerable families and those with children who have special educational needs, into the school system. This will benefit the rest of their schooling.
The co-ordinating scheme at the moment is ok for Community Schools but with Voluntary Aided Schools more communication is required because at times parents fail to complete all the application forms. This makes it more difficult for the admission committee to properly assess the applications
There will be more rejection and more application submitted.
This seems like a good streamlined approach
Very sensible

The Tower Hamlets Admissions Forum supports the scheme but did not provide any further comment.

### **Local Authority Response**

The Pan- London Co-ordinated admission arrangements continue to be an effective means of ensuring that the vast majority of children starting primary school or transferring to secondary school are able to secure a school place at the earliest opportunity. The school preference success rates for children in Tower Hamlets remain positive and are still among the best in London.

In accordance with the School Admissions Code, the LA must ensure that where a place is available, children are offered a place at their highest preference of school. The LA seeks to offer these places at the earliest opportunity.

#### **4.6 Proposed Schemes for the Co-ordination of In-Year Admissions and School Transfers**

Tower Hamlets co-ordinates applications made during the school year and outside the standard points of entry (Reception and Year 7), known as 'in-year admissions'.

There are no proposed changes to the co-ordinated scheme for in-year admissions and transfers for the 2021/22 school year. Consultation respondents were invited to express views on the existing arrangements. Four respondents provided comments which are as follows:

I think there must be greater effort to stop school exclusions and close control on all schools who educate excluded pupils. There must be greater control that exclusions are not carried out unnecessarily. Internal transfers should be allowed whenever possible and if necessary extra space should be made available in any school that is over-subscribed. However if that is not possible then another school should get extra influx and that should be determined by the healthy area it is in rather than results. Schools which are in bad air should not be expanded. There should also be more effort to measure for mental health and happiness of pupils to do with transfers.

Make it smoother and easier for parents not more difficult

My children were initially offered places at two different schools, even though I indicated on my in-term applications for them that I would not accept a place at different schools. When I called, they were able to find a place for them at the same school, which was on our list of preferences as #6. If siblings are applying, parents should be explained their options for schools and whether they should wait for a place for the other child at the same school.

It's unclear, too, what would happen in the case of my friends who will receive an in-term primary admission for their son but will have to separately apply for a reception place for their daughter for the next school year. Will that reception place be prioritized at the same school that her brother ends up?

This application should be online. It's very inconvenient to have to come into the pupil services office when you are in the early stages of moving to a new place.

The vacant places and potential place on waiting lists should be communicated clearly to parents in this circumstance by pupil services in order to help them make an informed decision about which schools they put on the application.

This scheme - being parent led, places schools under extreme vulnerability as many pupils are transferring schools, with high needs - that the incoming school cannot meet. Parents are also consistently requesting to move schools when the children are settled and attending well in their current school - for the sake of 1 mile or in some cases 0.5 of a mile convenience.

While trying to place children asap LBTH fail in follow up. Placing an asthmatic child in Bow School is a failure in safeguarding due to high levels of pollution. In these dangerous times of knife crime, bullying and muggings moved Raines children have been highly vulnerable and attacked. Where is your duty of care?

The Tower Hamlets Admissions Forum supports the scheme but did not provide any further comment.

#### **Local Authority Response**

The co-ordinated scheme for in-year admissions and transfers is not a statutory requirement, but it is an essential safeguarding provision that provides the Local

Authority with the most effective way of ensuring that children missing from education can be identified and supported back into school quickly, particularly children who have experienced more complex problems and would therefore face tougher obstacles to them getting back into suitable education.

The Local Authority and its schools have put in place a number of measures to support existing residents and new arrivals to the area, including an established Fair Access Protocol that enables vulnerable children to be placed in education provision quickly as well as ensuring that children with health conditions or care needs are properly supported through the admission process, drawing on expertise from key professionals and agencies..

## End Note

### Full Responses on Nursery Admissions:

<p>I think that it is wrong to close Surestart and reduce other nursery places. It is very important for child development to get a good early start.</p>
<p>Application for full and part time places is for funded places only, but the intake of either category is rather flexible and difficult for schools to plan around - at the start of the year the intake may be enough to justify enjoying a certain number of staff, but during the year the number of eligible parents might change as may the balance of full and part time, at which funding for staff may not be viable. However, ineligible (or partly eligible) parents might be willing to pay for their children to attend which may make it viable. Does current admissions policy allow for this?</p>
<p>Centralised admissions for NURSERY is not working - this is an additional layer of bureaucracy which parents are finding very difficult to navigate. Communication has not been effective and systems have not been clear resulting in families left quite frustrated and children not in school!</p> <p>Nurseries were very effective in getting vulnerable children into school ASAP because we knew them, they came in through our doors to meet us, talk and fill out forms. Now we do not meet them, they do not get the chance to ask questions and the process involves minimal human contact.</p>
<p>From speaking to many parent groups there is a distinct need for more nursery places. You have already closed too many.</p>
<p>I know that the PRAG and admissions team have worked through these changes carefully and the borough it's attempting to future proof our schools -which it has to do.</p>
<p>I would like to send my son to the same primary school as my older children for nursery; however, that is not plausible because we live a 20 minute walk from the school and only qualify for 15 hours.</p>
<p>In last part of paragraph 6.1 "Note 6" explains what the tiebreaker clause does (which is fine) but there is no cross reference from the clause itself; so you should add the words "(see note 6)" after the first paragraph following the numbered oversubscription criteria.</p>
<p>In terms of oversubscription criteria I truly believe children who have siblings should be given priority over all but those in social care. My reason for this is having personally seen the effect on families (parents) when children are separated. This needs to be avoided where possible for safeguarding and family wellbeing concerns.</p>
<p>It will make life so much easier for the staff and help with the staff retention.</p>
<p>The centralisation of nursery admissions is not working. Communication between families and the local authority has not been effective. We have children who would have missed two terms of their high quality nursery education had it not been for school staff who actively searched for children on the system. Conflicting information and slow updates of the system have resulted in much confusion and stress for some families.</p>
<p>The co-ordinated admissions scheme has created many issues for the nursery schools. Families have no real contact or communication through this process. Information was not always passed on to the school. Parents should have a choice of which nursery education they choose. Often parents choose nurseries close to their work which does not work if admissions are based or prioritised on catchment areas.</p>
<p>The current system is not working well for schools, parents or children. It is confusing and is causing a lot of unnecessary heartache for families. The increased administrative burden on school staff is difficult to manage. A return to the previous system would be welcomed.</p>