

DETERMINATION

Case references: ADA/2315 and ADA/2316

Objectors: A party that wishes to remain anonymous and a parent.

Admission Authority: The Governing Body of South Farnham School

Date of decision: 24 August 2012

Determination

In accordance with section 88H (4) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, I uphold the objection to the admission arrangements determined by governing body, the admission authority of South Farnham School for admissions in September 2013.

By virtue of section 88K (2) the adjudicator's decision is binding on the admission authority. The School Admissions Code requires the admission authority to revise its admission arrangements as quickly as possible.

The referral

1. Under section 88H (2) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, (the Act), an objection has been referred to the Adjudicator by a party who wishes to remain anonymous but who is known to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator; and by a parent, (the objectors), about the admission arrangements (the arrangements) for South Farnham School (the School), a primary Academy school for 4 to 11 year olds, for September 2013. The objection is to the new catchment area which in the view of both objectors contravenes paragraph 1.14 of the School Admissions Code (the Code), in that it is not, in their view reasonable.

Jurisdiction

2. The terms of the Academy agreement between the proprietor and the Secretary of State for Education require that the admissions policy and the arrangements for the Academy School are in accordance with admissions law as it applies to maintained schools. These arrangements were determined by the proprietor, in this case the governing body, which is the admission authority for the Academy school, on that basis. The objectors submitted their objections to these determined arrangements on 25 June 2012. One party has met the condition of paragraph 24 of the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admissions Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012, which requires that any person or body making an objection who wishes to remain anonymous must provide their name and address so that they are known to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator. I am

satisfied the objections have been properly referred to me in accordance with section 88H of the Act and they are within my jurisdiction.

Procedure

3. In considering this matter I have had regard to all relevant legislation and the Code.

4. The documents I have considered in reaching my decision include:

- the objectors' forms of objection dated 25 June 2012 and subsequent letters of 8, 9, 15, 19 July 2012 and 13 August 2012;
- a copy of the determined arrangements and minutes of the governing body meeting on 13 March 2012 at which they were determined;
- a copy of the determined arrangements for the 2011 admissions, prior to the conversion of the School to an Academy school;
- maps of the area identifying relevant schools;
- the School's responses to the objection dated 4, 13 and 20 July 2012 and supporting documents;
- the composite prospectus for parents seeking admission to schools in the area in September 2012 issued by Surrey County Council, the local authority, (the LA) ;
- the LA's response to the consultation about the 2013 arrangements dated 28 January 2012 and the response to the objection dated 3 July 2012;
- a letter from the Diocese of Guildford (the Diocese) dated 23 July 2012; and
- a LA analysis of the deprivation indices for the Farnham area.

5. I have also taken account of information received during a meeting I convened on 25 July 2012 at the School.

The Objections

6. The objectors contend that the design of the new catchment area for admissions to the School in September 2013 is not reasonable and therefore contravenes paragraph 1.14 of the Code which states that; 'Catchment areas must be designed so that they are reasonable and clearly defined.'

7. The new catchment will omit the area north of the A31 bypass road (the bypass) and this change will leave the children who live in this area, close

to St Andrew's Church of England (Controlled) Infant School (St Andrew's), without a named partner junior school to attend. The objectors say that the School has not provided any reasonable justification for the decision to exclude children, who actually live closer to the School, while continuing to maintain the priority for admission, for children who attend other partner schools, one of which is over five miles away,

8. They state that the use of the bypass as a northern boundary for the catchment area will have the effect of splitting the community of Farnham and that families living in the centre of the town, who may be of more modest means, will be excluded from the School. On the other hand families in the remaining partner schools, which are situated in 'very prosperous villages' will retain their priority for admission to the School. The objector cites the Equalities Act 2010 and the public sector equality duty to advance equality of opportunity.

9. The objectors do not accept the governors' view that the rationale for the new catchment is transparent, and do not understand why some of the children who attend St Andrew's will no longer be able to progress to the junior department of the School as they have traditionally. They contend that all children who attend St Andrew's, the closest partner school should remain entitled to progress to the junior department of the School regardless of which side of the bypass they live.

10. They cite paragraph 1.15 of the Code, which says that admission authorities may wish to name feeder schools and that if they choose to do this then the selection of feeder schools as an oversubscription criterion must be transparent and made on reasonable grounds. The objector says that of the four feeder infants schools, St Andrew's is the nearest geographically to the School.

11. The objectors state that the proposed catchment contravenes section 1A (1) (d) of the Academies Act 2010 which requires that 'it provides education for pupils who are wholly or mainly drawn from the area in which it is situated.'

Background

12. In May 2011 The Bourne Community Infant School (The Bourne) was closed and South Farnham School which was then a junior school extended its age range to become a primary school for pupils aged 4 to 11 years of age. The infant and junior sites are approximately 1.2 miles apart. The published admission number (PAN) is 60 for the Reception Year (Year R) and 76 for Year 3.

13. The School, which became an Academy school on 1 July 2011 has four partner infant schools for admissions into Year 3, St Andrews's in Farnham which has a PAN of 40, and three village schools, All Saints Church of England (Aided) Infant School, Tilford, St John's Church of England (Aided) Infant School, Churt and St Mary's Church of England (Aided) Infant School, Frencham, each with a PAN of 30. For ease of reference I shall refer to them

as St Andrew's, All Saints, St John's and St Mary's. In each of the past two years 38 children have transferred from St Andrew's with 39 children due to be admitted in 2012. The combined total of admissions from the other three partner schools for the previous two years was 31 in 2010 and 28 in 2011; and 28 children will be admitted in to the School in September 2012.

14. Prior to conversion to an Academy school, the oversubscription criteria gave equal priority to children in all the partner infant schools. The School was able to admit all applicants from these schools, before giving priority to children for whom the school was the nearest to their home address and finally, to any other applicants.

15. With the exception of St Andrew's, children who attend the partner infant schools also have the option of a second named partner school, Waverley Abbey Church of England (Aided) Junior School, (Waverley Abbey), which has 480 pupils on roll and a PAN of 120 for Year 3.

16. The most recent inspection report in June 2012 provided an assessment of provision and standards at the School and it was judged to be an outstandingly effective school.

Views of the parties

The School

17. The School explained the background to its decision to change the catchment for admissions in September 2013. The Bourne had always been popular and oversubscribed and when the amalgamation was being considered, concern was expressed by parents of children on the Bourne site, that any priority given to siblings of children at the junior school, for admissions in September 2011, would affect the chances of infant siblings gaining a place. The LA proposed transitional arrangements for one year for admission to the newly amalgamated school, with a tiered sibling priority that gave first priority to siblings of children at the Bourne. The School says it agreed to this arrangement reluctantly, knowing that it would have an impact on admissions in future years.

18. For admissions in September 2012 it has become apparent that some families living very close to the Bourne site have been unable to gain admission into the infant department. The amalgamation has also affected families living close to the junior site, who traditionally would have had priority for admission into Year 3 of the separate junior school, but now find themselves in a different position. As they do not live close enough to either the infant site or to St Andrew's, to gain admission into Year R, they will have to apply to one of the other partner schools, if they wish to make a successful transfer to the School, which is nearest to their homes, for junior education.

19. The School states that it has traditionally admitted children from the South Farnham area and with the addition of the Bourne site, 1.2 miles away it is important to meet the needs and aspirations of parents living near to both sites of the School. Governors say that they want to serve these

communities, close to each site and have changed the catchment area to create opportunities for local families to gain admission into Year 3. It is their view that the new catchment is necessary to enable the School to admit children into the junior department, who live locally but who have not been able to gain admission to the infant department.

20. In the nearest partner school, St Andrew's which is situated in Farnham town centre, 80 per cent of pupils live to the south of the bypass in the local community of the School. Governors say that the remainder, who live in the town centre, have a number of alternative schools near to their homes. They note that the LA has plans to increase the number of places at Potters Gate Church of England Primary School (Potters Gate), which is being expanded to provide additional primary provision. A little further away there are two more schools, William Cobbett School Junior School and St Peter's Church of England (Aided) Primary School, although both schools are oversubscribed. The School contends that applicants living to the north of the bypass therefore have a greater choice of schools than parents to the south of it.

21. When starting to draw up a new catchment area the governors referred to the Admission Priority Areas that had previously been used by the LA, which for a number of years had used the bypass as the northern boundary. They recall that one year this boundary was formed with reference to the railway line and excluded families living between the line and the bypass to the north of it. The School states that it has referred to the northern boundary line used by the LA over a period of years and has shaped the catchment area to reflect that used by the LA when it was a community school.

22. The School says that it gave very serious consideration to a number of proposed catchment areas and consulted extensively with the LA, local schools, residents groups, local County Councillors and a large number of individuals. Careful consideration was given to meeting the local demand for places. In the School's view the majority of people consulted, supported the current catchment area noting that it reflected arrangements that had been in place at some point in the past.

23. A letter from the School on 4 July 2012 states that governors are aware of the potential problems for parents with children in Year R and Year 1 at St Andrew's and have put transitional arrangements in place for these children and their siblings, which will continue to give them priority in the arrangements. The School provided copies of letters from parents at St Andrew's who had expressed their gratitude that their children would benefit from the transitional arrangements. These would ensure that all children in this named partner school would be treated equally and be able to progress with their classmates.

24. Governors say that their plans were drawn up in consultation with the governing body of St Andrew's and that they have been striving to find a fair system that is both transparent and easy to understand. They have concluded that the new catchment area will be the most effective in meeting the needs of local children and that it is therefore transparent and reasonable.

25. In response to the objection in relation to the use of feeder schools, the governors explained that the four nearest infant's schools had been selected, not as feeder schools but rather as partner schools for the purposes of admissions to the junior department. Governors did not wish to designate them as feeder schools because increasing demand for primary places in the area might eventually mean that they would not be able to guarantee admission to all applicants.

The Local Authority

26. In response to my enquiries about the use of Admission Priority Areas (APA) and feeder schools, the LA explained that prior to the publication of the 2007 School Admissions Code; they had operated a system of confirming the APA for each school, only after parents had expressed their preferences for admission. This meant that the boundary lines for the catchment of the School had changed annually. They told me that some schools still have direct feeder schools but these tend to be in areas that have linked infant and junior schools.

27. In their response to the formal consultation about arrangements, in a letter dated 26 January 2012, the LA noted that the School's proposal to introduce a catchment area that would give priority to those families who lived south of the bypass, before families living to the north of the road, had generated a lot of interest within the community; and many parents had expressed concern about its introduction. The LA advised the governing body that they would need to be able to demonstrate why it was felt to be reasonable, to set a catchment using the bypass which would effectively split the community of Farnham.

28. The LA pointed out that the new catchment had the bypass as the only determining factor, but without other boundaries this could be perceived as unfair, because families living at some distance from the school to the south would receive a higher priority than families who live closer, but north of the bypass. The LA advised the governors to set boundaries on all sides in order to ensure that the boundary was clearly defined and in that respect would therefore be equitable to families living north of the bypass.

29. The LA informed the governors that the proposed catchment would effectively mean that none of the children who attended St Andrew's, the nearest partner school, but who live north of the bypass, would be offered a place. Concern was expressed about the impact on the infant school should the pattern of parental preferences change, and if families looked for alternative schools in order to secure some certainty about both infant and junior phases of education. Governors were urged to make transitional arrangements for parents of children already attending St Andrew's.

30. The LA also noted concerns related to the potential for an increase in the number of children who would qualify for a place under the sibling criterion. As 76 places are available for admission to Year 3 and some of the children that might be admitted from partner schools lived some distance away, this could impact on admissions into the Reception Year and actually

displace local children in future years.

31. The LA acknowledges that the School has clarified the boundaries of the new catchment area and in their view this is fairer than just having a northern boundary line and that it has introduced transitional arrangements for children in Years 1 and 2. However, the LA believes that these arrangements should have been extended to those families whose children will be admitted into Year R in September 2012, as they would have been unaware of the planned change to the arrangements, when they expressed a preference for the School.

32. The LA confirmed that the permanent expansion of Potters Gate is currently going through the statutory process and is likely to be approved by October, adding 30 primary places a year to the Farnham area. The School has already agreed to admit additional children, above the PAN, in September 2012. Officers stated that there was potential on the site of Hale Primary School, to admit some additional children into the junior department and scope to expand William Cobbett Junior School, but as there are sufficient places in the system, the LA would be unlikely to invest further capital resources to provide additional junior school places.

The Diocese

33. The Diocese was not consulted about the change to the catchment area even though all the partner infant schools are Church of England schools. Governors explained that they had fully consulted St Andrew's and had expected the governing body of that school to discuss the proposed changes with colleagues from the Diocese.

34. The Diocese describes St Andrew's as a successful school with a proud history and officers have expressed 'extreme concern' about the impact of the new catchment on the future viability of St Andrew's. They acknowledge that in response to extensive opposition from governors and parents of St Andrew's, the School has agreed to transitional arrangements up to 2015. However, they have become aware of anecdotal reports within the local community about the eventual closure of the school.

35. The Diocese has strongly affirmed its support for the long term future of St Andrew's but officers cannot see how this might be achieved in practice. They are aware of the planned expansion by the LA of Potters Gate to meet the additional demand for places, but note that there are no plans to provide additional junior provision. St Andrew's site is already very constricted and there is no space for further expansion of the age range. The Diocese does not think it practicable to hold discussions with Waverley Abbey as an alternative destination for junior education, as it already has several named partner schools.

36. The Diocese objects to the new catchment area on the grounds that; 'The northern boundary of the catchment whilst clearly defined is not reasonable. The disenfranchising of some parents of a historic feeder school is not reasonable. Under the Equalities Act 2010, the northern boundary of

the catchment area does not provide equality of opportunity for town centre dwelling pupils of St Andrew's.'

37. At our meeting, officers stated that the changed catchment meant that there was now no clear destination for junior education for any families living north of the by pass, who elected to attend St Andrew's and that their options had been reduced. They asked whether or not there might be another geographical feature that might be utilised by governors in place of the bypass. They also noted that the socio economic profile was more favourable to the south of Farnham.

Further comments from the objectors

38. Both objectors have taken the opportunity to reflect fully on the responses from the other parties. They say that neighbouring children admitted to St Andrew's last year, in September 2011, will retain priority for admission to the junior department of the School, which they have now lost as a result of the boundary change. They feel that the decision to introduce a catchment will isolate their children from others, within their neighbourhood.

39. One objector takes issue with the assertion that applicants from the north of the bypass have a choice that is not available to some families from the south of it, and points out that children from the other partner schools all have a second named junior school, Waverley Abbey which prioritises them for admission into Year 3. She finds it difficult to understand why the children admitted to St Andrew's cannot progress together and why a small minority of families have been excluded from automatic transfer to the junior department of the School. These children would have to establish new friendships with children in a number of different schools, with pupils who will have already been together for three years.

40. One objector explained that she had felt unable to express a preference for St Andrew's, her closest and the nearest named partner school, for admission in September 2012, because it had not been possible to assess which other local school would have space available in Year 3. The family had felt compelled to apply for one of the other partner infant schools in the villages to gain priority for admission to Year 3 at the School. As both parents work some distance from Farnham, it will be difficult to transport their child daily to a school that is some considerable distance from their home. They feel they will have no option in the future but to apply to the same school five miles away, for a younger sibling, in order to secure a place in South Farnham junior department which is less than a mile from their home.

41. The objector goes on to explain that it is particularly unfair, that in drawing up its boundaries, the School has ring-fenced all of its named partner schools with the exception of St Andrew's, despite the fact that it is the nearest of the group. She questions the School's argument that it has decided to give preference to its other partner schools, on the basis that many parents living close to its infants department, who have been unable to gain admission there into Year R, have elected to attend one of those schools. She states that the School has no way of knowing on an annual basis how

many families will actually be unable to gain admission to the infant department and who will then go on to apply successfully to one of the other named partner schools.

Consideration of Factors

42. The School has explained that the changing pressures related to the admission of pupils into Year 3, has led governors to the decision to introduce the catchment area. Following the amalgamation which established a new split site primary school; and the transitional arrangements that were made at that time, the School now finds that there are new and different pressures which are affecting the pattern of admissions to both Year R and Year 3. Families that might have been able to gain admission into the junior school prior to the amalgamation, are now aware that the majority of places in Year 3 are likely to be taken by children transferring from the infant department or one of the partner infant schools.

43. Governors are convinced that local families who have been unable to gain admission to the infant department or St Andrew's have been admitted to the other named partner schools. They say that this is why they have had to make the catchment area change, to retain places for families that attend infant schools up to five miles away, but who actually live close to one of the two sites of the School. They contend that the new catchment is clearly defined and transparent and I agree with this assessment. However the question remains as to whether or not the catchment is reasonable.

44. In response to my request, the School has provided maps which indicate the distance from the School to the homes of the pupils who have been admitted from St Mary's, St John's and All Saints in the past three years. From these it is clear that despite the genuinely held belief that all the children admitted from partner infants schools were from families who lived close to the School; this is not necessarily the case. As the maps show, during this period, generally between 9 and 12 children have been admitted each year that live between three and five miles away.

45. The current pattern of admissions is also likely to be affected in the longer term by the continuing priority given to all siblings within the School's oversubscription criteria. One consequence of admitting children who live over five miles away and of retaining a sibling priority without reference to distance, has been that some families living in close proximity to the two sites have not been able to gain admission for September 2012 and this is likely to be the case in subsequent years. Whilst governors have elected to change the catchment area to resolve admission issues, this will have the effect of leaving about a third of the families who attend their nearest partner school, without a named destination for junior education.

46. The objectors pointed out that in their view it is particularly unfair that governors are seeking to exclude some families who live close to the School, while ignoring the distance to the south to other partner schools, knowing another option for junior education is available to those families at Waverley Abbey.

47. I have considered the availability of alternative provision for families affected by the boundary change. Although the School asserts that families living north of the bypass have the options of attending either Potters Gate or Pilgrim's Way, both schools tend to admit a full cohort of children into Year R and there is no way for prospective parents of St Andrew's to know whether either school would have a casual vacancy in Year 3. The majority of the schools cited as alternates by governors and the LA, are in fact, primary schools and are therefore unlikely to have many places vacant to meet the demand for admissions into Year 3. Only one of the primary schools suggested as an alternate has a PAN for Year 3 and this is Hale Primary School which admits 2 children into Year 3. Over half of the schools suggested by the LA as being within 3.5 miles are situated in the next town of Aldershot. The LA remains concerned about how it might provide some certainty for the families affected by the boundary change and in my view there do not seem to be any viable alternative schools with a PAN for Year 3 that would enable this group of children, who would be displaced by the boundary change, to transfer into junior education.

48. During the morning prior to the meeting held at the School on 25 July 2012, I took the opportunity to explore the area and made several journeys driving from the School to each of the partner infant schools to assess the ease of access by road. Although St Andrew's is the closest partner school, there is no easy walking route, as the busy bypass must be crossed by parents who live to the north. However, over 80 per cent of the intake to St Andrew's is from families living to the south of the bypass and who must therefore make the daily journey across this busy road. The route is generally congested as a result of the volume of traffic heading to and from the station and the placement of traffic lights in close proximity to the level crossing. Local residents explained to me that the traffic is much heavier when the local schools are in session. The access roads to the three villages are good and travelling time is no longer than 15 minutes to the furthest partner school in the village of Churt.

49. I also took time to check the road access to the alternative schools in the Farnham area that had been suggested as alternatives for families living in the town centre and concluded that the nearest schools were within easy reach by road. Only one of these schools is a junior school but it is significantly oversubscribed and already has three named partner infant schools.

50. The governors say that children living north of the bypass have to travel to school by car and that this will increase the traffic outside the School but one has to consider that there is a far greater volume of traffic from pupils at St Andrew's who live south of the bypass and have to negotiate access to the school through one way narrow streets. There will also be a similar volume of traffic coming up to the School from the villages.

51. I will now turn to a consideration of the impact of the proposed catchment change on St Andrew's. The objectors have pointed out that all other partner schools have been 'ring fenced' and thus protected from the impact of the proposed changes. St Andrew's is a good school and popular

with parents, so it is natural that those families living closest to it should want to gain admission. During our discussions governors said that in the past, parents from St Andrew's had in the past transferred to Potters Gate, which is close by but the objectors say that even when that option was open to them, many parents had still preferred to transfer to the School. That option was closed when Potters Gate was extended to become a primary school and the majority of parents of pupils at St Andrew's have been progressing into Year 3 of the School, their nearest junior provision for several years.

52. In my view when deciding to introduce a significant change to their arrangements, the School should have taken greater account of the impact that it would have on the future options for children attending St Andrew's. When Potters Gate became a primary school the options to transfer to junior education were reduced to a single named partner school, which also happened to be the closest. The boundary change to the catchment has now removed this remaining option altogether for parents who live to the north of the bypass and parents must seek casual vacancies in order to continue their children's education.

53. Parents who live close to St Andrew's would either have to select another school altogether to secure primary provision or they would need to find spare places in a number of schools in Farnham or in the neighbouring LA of Hampshire, in the urban area of Aldershot for junior education. Of concern to the objectors was that their young children would have to leave established friendship groups, and also separate from other friends within the town at the point where they would have to seek casual vacancies in a number of different schools. I agree with both the LA and the Diocese that this situation could have a detrimental impact on families who wished to express a preference for St Andrew's.

54. Despite the best of intentions I have to question whether there was sufficient consultation with prospective parents in the area or with the Diocese. At our meeting, the governors took note of the fact that the objector, as a prospective rather than current parent of St Andrew's, had not felt fully informed about the changes. They noted that 15 of the 40 children who will be admitted into Year R live to the north of the bypass and after discussion readily agreed that the transition arrangements would be extended to the children (and their siblings) who have been offered places for admission to St Andrew's in September 2012. In my opinion there is further consultation to be undertaken so that all parties concerned have an opportunity to comment on the proposed changes and crucially this must include prospective parents, not only in Farnham but also in the partner infant schools.

55. In my view it is not reasonable to suggest that parents living closest to the nearest partner infant school and for whom the School provides the nearest available junior education be excluded as a result of a new northern boundary line, that splits the community within St Andrew's and in the neighbourhood. Nor is it reasonable to exclude from consideration the impact of admission of pupils from other partner schools before reaching the decision to change the catchment.

56. In response to the objection in relation to the use of feeder schools, the governors explained that the four nearest infant's schools had been selected, not as feeder schools but rather as partner schools for the purposes of admissions to the junior department. Governors did not wish to designate them as feeder schools because if there was a future increase in the demand for primary places in the area, it might eventually mean that they would not be able to guarantee admission to all applicants. Whilst it is for admission authorities to formulate their arrangements, paragraph 1.9b of the Code says they must not take into account any previous school attended, unless it is a named feeder school. The School has named partner infant schools and has stated specifically that they are not feeder schools for the purpose of admissions. This situation therefore currently contravenes the Code and must be addressed by the governing body.

57. The objectors cite the Equalities Act 2010 and feel that it is possible that they have been excluded because they live in the town centre which is less affluent than the villages to the south. Information from the LA certainly supports the notion that the socio economic profiles of the two areas are different and that the town centre is less affluent. Paragraph 1.8 of the Code states clearly that admission authorities must ensure that their arrangements will not disadvantage unfairly, either directly or indirectly, a child from a particular social group. Having discussed the issue with the School I am convinced that there was no intention to discriminate directly on socio economic grounds but it may well be that one consequence of the decision to exclude the town centre, without also considering changes to the other three boundaries, could be deemed to be indirect discrimination.

58. Finally the objectors cite the requirement within the Academies Act for schools that are Academy schools to provide education for pupils who are wholly or mainly drawn from the area in which the school is situated. The School agrees that there are a number of pupils who live some distance however; it is evident from information provided by the School and the LA that the majority of pupils are drawn from families living in the area local to the School.

Conclusion

59. I have considerable sympathy with the governors of the School who feel they have given their best endeavours over an extended period to find a fair solution to the problems they perceive, in relation to admissions to the split site school. They have responded positively to the concerns of parents who have children in Years 1 and 2 at St Andrew's and they have now agreed to extend the transition arrangements to parents of children who will be admitted in September 2012. However, in my view these only deal with the School's own 'parent body' and will do nothing to allay the real concerns of prospective parents for St Andrew's, or of the LA and the Diocese who can see no solution to a problem caused to some families living to the north of the bypass who would have no named partner school to attend.

60. The introduction of the new catchment area has not taken full account of the fact that a number of the children admitted to the School in each of the

last three years do not live close to either the infant or junior site, which governors contend is the rationale for making this change. Nor does it take into consideration the previous, well established parental expectation that all children at St Andrew's, the nearest partner school, will have a right of access to their nearest junior provision, when there is no other dedicated junior provision available for them. However, linked to these issues is the current use of partner schools that are not feeder schools, a situation that contravenes the Code and which must be addressed.

61. For these reasons and those given above I uphold the objections to the arrangements in the matter of the catchment area.

62. I am aware that time may now be short for the governors to consider how to respond to this determination. However parents who are about to express preferences for schools for admission in September 2013 will need to have a greater degree of certainty about their options for junior education than exists at present. It is for the governing body to consider how to respond and governors may wish to seek assistance from the LA and the Diocese when considering what action to take.

Determination

63. In accordance with section 88H (4) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, I uphold the objection to the admission arrangements determined by governing body, the admission authority of South Farnham School for admissions in September 2013.

64. By virtue of section 88K (2) the adjudicator's decision is binding on the admission authority. The School Admissions Code requires the admission authority to revise its admission arrangements as quickly as possible.

Dated: 24 August 2012

Signed:

Schools Adjudicator: Carol Parsons