



DETERMINATION

Case reference: VAR671

Admission Authority: Surrey County Council for Hale Primary School, Farnham.

Date of decision: 15 September 2015

Determination

In accordance with section 88E of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, I approve the variation to the admission arrangements determined by Surrey County Council for Hale Primary School, Farnham.

I determine that for admissions in September 2016, Weybourne Infant School will not be named as a feeder school in the oversubscription criteria for Year 3.

The referral

1. Surrey County Council, the local authority, has referred a variation to the Adjudicator about the admission arrangements for Hale Primary School (the school), a community primary for pupils age 4-11 for September 2016. The variation requested is to remove Weybourne Infant School as a feeder school from the oversubscription criteria for admission to the school in Year 3 as Weybourne Infant School closed 31 August 2015.

Jurisdiction

2. The referral was made to me in accordance with section 88E of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (the Act) which states that:

“where an admission authority (a) have in accordance with section 88C determined the admission arrangements which are to apply for a particular school year, but (b) at any time before the end of that year consider that the arrangements should be varied in view of a major change in circumstances occurring since they were so determined, the authority must [except in a case where the authority’s proposed variations fall within any description of variations prescribed for the purposes of this section] (a) refer their proposed variations to the adjudicator, and (b) notify the appropriate bodies of the proposed variations”.

I am satisfied that the proposed variation is within my jurisdiction.

Procedure

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

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

- a. the local authority's letter of referral of 23 July 2015 and supporting documents;
- b. the determined arrangements for 2016/2017 and the proposed variation to those arrangements;
- c. a copy of the local authority's booklet for parents seeking admission to schools in the area in September 2015 and September 2016;
- d. documents relating to the proposal to extend the age range of the William Cobbett Junior and close Weybourne Infant School to form a single primary school; and
- e. a copy of the letter notifying the appropriate bodies about the proposed variation.

Background and consideration of factors

5. The school is a larger than average primary school in Farnham in Surrey. It admits 60 pupils to Year R and a very small number of pupils to Year 3; the PAN for Year 3 is 2.

The admission arrangements for Year 3 for September 2016 are, in summary

- i. Looked after and previously looked after children
- ii. Exceptional social/medical need
- iii. Siblings
- iv. Children attending one of the following named feeder schools. In alphabetical order these are:
 - a. • Folly Hill Infant School
 - b. • Weybourne Infant School
- v. Children for whom the school is the nearest to their home address
- vi. Any other children

6. The local authority made a prescribed alteration to William Cobbett Junior School from 1 September 2015 by extending the age range to become a primary school, William Cobbett Primary School. At the same time it discontinued Weybourne Infant School. As Weybourne Infant School no longer exists and the children previously at that school now are now in Year 2

at William Cobbett Primary School, they will have automatic transfer to Year 3 in the newly formed primary school,. The local authority argues that there is no longer a need for Weybourne Infant School to be named as a feeder school for Hale.

7. I note that the Year 3 PAN for the school is 2 and in the last three years no Year 3 places have been offered to children attending Weybourne Infant School.

8. The local authority has submitted evidence that it properly notified all the parties required about the request for variation. In addition it has provided evidence of notification and consultation on the changes in the admission arrangements within the consultation about the proposal to bring about the changes to the infant and junior schools. I see that the proposal to make those changes was well supported in the responses.

9. The local authority consider the closure of a school named as a feeder school in the oversubscription criteria to be an exceptional circumstance requiring a variation . I find that the appropriate procedures were followed and the relevant parties notified. Weybourne Infant School no longer exists so it is necessary to remove it as a feeder from the admission arrangements and it will make the arrangements clearer for parents. I am satisfied that the proposed variation addresses the circumstances described.

Conclusion

10. The local authority properly set admission arrangements in advance of the decision to close Weybourne Infant School. As the closure has taken place I approve the request for a variation to remove Weybourne Infant School as a feeder school from the oversubscription criteria of Hale Primary School for the reasons in the determination above.

Determination

11. In accordance with section 88E of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, I approve the variation to the admission arrangements determined by Surrey County Council for Hale Primary School, Farnham.

12. I determine that for admissions in September 2016 Weybourne Infant School will not be named as a feeder school in the oversubscription criteria for Year 3.

Dated: 15 September 2015

Signed:

Schools Adjudicator: Jill Pullen