

DETERMINATION

Case reference: ADA 002153-2175

Objector: Twenty-three eligible parents

Admission Authority: Poole Borough Council

Date of decision: 6 July 2011

Decision

The objections by twenty-three parents to the admission arrangements determined by Poole Borough Council for Courthill First School for September 2012 do not fall within the criteria prescribed by paragraph 27 of the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2008, and therefore do not fall with the jurisdiction of the Schools Adjudicator. I am therefore not able to determine the objection.

The referral

1. Twenty-three eligible parents (“the Objectors”) have referred an objection to the Adjudicator about the admission Arrangements (“the Arrangements”) for Courthill First School (“the School”), a community school, for September 2012, in relation to the published admission number.

Jurisdiction

2. The Arrangements were determined under section 88C of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (“the Act”) by Poole Borough Council (“the Council”), which is the admission authority for the School. The Objectors submitted their objection on 12th June 2011. For the reasons set out below, I have decided that I do not have jurisdiction to consider the objection.

Procedure

3. In considering this matter I have had regard to all relevant legislation, guidance and the School Admissions Code (“the Code”).

4. The documents I have considered in reaching my decision include:
the Objectors’ letter and statement of objection of 12th June 2011; and
the Council’s response of 27th June 2011.

The Objection

8. The parents have objected to the admission number for the School

continuing to be set at 90 for September 2012, despite what they believe is additional demand for places at the school and the availability of accommodation. The parents have drawn attention to the fact that the Council intends to change the School from a first school to an infant school in 2013 and increase the admission number to 120, and believe that it would be possible to accommodate additional children from 2012.

Consideration of Factors

9. Paragraph 27 of the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2008 prescribes the kind of objections that may be referred by parents. Sub-paragraph (a) is not relevant to this case. Sub-paragraphs (b) and (c) require that a parental objection must either relate to an admission number that is lower than the Indicated Admission Number, or must suggest that the Arrangements do not comply with the legislation or the mandatory requirements of the Code.

10. The indicated admission number for a school derives from the Net Capacity Assessment for that school. Net Capacity Assessment follows a process prescribed by the Department for Education, and from a measured assessment of all accommodation within a set of school buildings arrives at a figure for the Net Capacity for the school. This figure, divided by the number of year groups in the school, becomes the Indicated Admission Number. The admission authority for the school may then not set an actual admission number that is less than the Indicated Admission Number without following defined procedures. In the School's case, the Net Capacity Assessment has produced an Indicated Admission Number of 89. The published admission number of 90 is not less than this, and therefore it is not possible for a parental objection to be made on these grounds.

11. The legislation and the Code both define requirements for school admission arrangements. The Objectors have not suggested that any breach of these requirements has been perpetrated. Neither has my consideration of the admission arrangements for 2012 on the Council's website led to a conclusion that any breach has occurred.

Conclusion

12. I have therefore concluded that the objection is invalid, and I do not have jurisdiction to consider it further.

Decision

13. The objections by twenty-three parents to the admission arrangements determined by Poole Borough Council for Courthill First School for September 2012 do not fall within the criteria prescribed by paragraph 27 of the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2008, and therefore do not fall with the jurisdiction of the Schools Adjudicator. I am therefore not able to determine the objection.

Dated: 6 July 2011

Signed:
Canon Richard Lindley
Schools Adjudicator