



DETERMINATION

Case reference: VAR732

Admission Authority: Hampshire County Council for Cranbourne
Business and Enterprise College, Basingstoke

Date of decision: 13 October 2017

Determination

In accordance with section 88E of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, I approve the variation to the admission arrangements determined by Hampshire County Council for Cranbourne Business and Enterprise College for September 2017 and September 2018.

I determine that for admissions in September 2017 and September 2018 the oversubscription criteria shall have the addition of three new feeder primary schools, Castle Hill Primary School, Chiltern Primary School and Winklebury Junior School. The catchment area will be extended to include the catchment area that was formerly Fort Hill Community School catchment area and, in the case of a tie break, distances for children living within the former catchment area of Fort Hill Community School will be measured from the child's home address to the former Fort Hill Community School site.

The referral

1. Hampshire County Council, the local authority and admission authority for Cranbourne Business and Enterprise College (Cranbourne), has referred a variation to the adjudicator concerning the admission arrangements for this community school for pupils 11-16 years, for September 2017 and September 2018 (the arrangements). The variation requested is to add to the arrangements the school specific criteria of Fort Hill Community School (Fort Hill) which has been discontinued, by adding feeder schools, expanding the catchment area and adding a specific tiebreaker.

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 variation prescribed] (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 (the Code).
4. The documents I have considered in reaching my decision include:
 - a. the local authority's form of referral of 10 August 2017 and supporting documents;
 - b. the determined arrangements for 2017/2018 and 2018/2019 and the proposed variation to those arrangements;
 - c. a copy of the local authority's composite prospectus for parents seeking admission to schools in the area in September 2017;
 - d. a copy of the notice informing the appropriate bodies about the request and information on the responses to same received 28 September 2017; and
 - e. information about the closure of Fort Hill.

Background and consideration of factors

5. The local authority, after following appropriate statutory procedures decided to close a secondary school in Basingstoke, Fort Hill, where the number of pupils on roll had declined over recent years; and to provide places for these pupils at Cranbourne. The local authority refers to this process as amalgamation.
6. On June 19 2017 the Executive Member for Education agreed the recommendation to discontinue Fort Hill. Fort Hill had three feeder schools, called linked schools in the arrangements, Castle Hill Primary School, Chiltern Primary School and Winklebury Junior School. The local authority wishes pupils attending those schools to continue to have a linked secondary school and proposes to do this by linking them to Cranbourne.
7. The local authority admission arrangements provide for a catchment area for each school such that every family in the county has a

catchment school. The closure of Fort Hill removes that benefit for families living in the former catchment area; this variation would ensure that no pupil was left without a catchment school. I note that the combined numbers of pupils likely to be resident in the catchment area will exceed the PAN in the future, however, the local authority offers assurance that the current roll of the school and levels of demand are such that all pupils will be able to be accommodated in 2018.

8. The third matter, the tiebreaker, is to ensure that pupils living in the area that was formerly the catchment area for Fort Hill are not disadvantaged due to their distance from Cranbourne. Cranbourne's present catchment area is already split into two parts. There is a specific criterion that states in the case of a tiebreak, the distances for children living in Oakley and the surrounding area will be measured from the child's address to the nearest college bus stop. This school specific criterion was introduced at the governing body's request to ensure that families living in that part of the catchment area were not consistently disadvantaged by their distance from Cranbourne compared to other parts of the existing catchment area. Similarly, the local authority wishes not to disadvantage those living in the former Fort Hill catchment area and so will measure to that school site.
9. Although the term has started, the local authority has requested a variation for September 2017. This request is to enable children on the waiting list, if any, who live in the former Fort Hill catchment area to be ranked appropriately on the waiting list for Cranbourne.
10. I note that the local authority determined the admission arrangements for September 2017 on 20 January 2016 and for September 2018 on 18 January 2017. As the final decision about the closure of Fort Hill had not been taken when the arrangements were determined, the local authority properly set its admission arrangements to reflect the position at that time.

Conclusion

11. The local authority has closed Fort Hill and arranged for the children on roll to transfer to Cranbourne. It wishes to change the admission arrangements for Cranbourne to ensure that pupils who live in the former Fort Hill catchment area or attend one of the primary schools linked to Fort Hill are not disadvantaged. I am satisfied that the proposed variation addresses the circumstances described.

Determination

12. In accordance with section 88E of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, I approve the variation to the admission arrangements determined by Hampshire County Council for Cranbourne Business and Enterprise College for September 2017 and September 2018.

13. I determine that for admissions in September 2017 and September 2018 the oversubscription criteria shall have the addition of three new feeder primary schools, Castle Hill Primary School, Chiltern Primary School and Winklebury Junior School. The catchment area will be extended to include the catchment area that was formerly Fort Hill Community School catchment area and, in the case of a tie break, distances for children living within the former catchment area of Fort Hill Community School will be measured from the child's home address to the former Fort Hill Community School site.

Dated: 13 October 2017

Signed:

Schools Adjudicator: Miss Jill Pullen