

Decision Of: Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Children's Services, Families and Lifelong Learning
With Advice From: Director of Children's Services
Directorate: Children's Services

Decision No: CY085 (2023/24 scheme)

Subject: School Admission Arrangements Relevant Area Consultation 2024-2026

Key Decision: Yes

Reason: The Relevant Area covers the whole of the North Somerset district and therefore applies to more than one ward area of the Local Authority

Background:

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 requires each Local Authority to establish a Relevant Area(s) for admission policy consultations. The Relevant Area is the area in which admission authorities must consult with schools regarding their proposed admission arrangements before finalising them.

There is a legal requirement for the Local Authority to consult on and review its Relevant Area every two years.

Decision:

The Relevant Area for Consultation on Admissions Arrangements 2024-26 policy is accepted and adopted by the Authority. The Relevant Area for North Somerset Admission Arrangements 2024 – 2026 is the whole council area of North Somerset.

Reasons:

Each Local Authority has a statutory duty to establish a Relevant Area(s) for admission policy consultations.

Options Considered:

To not undertake consultations. It is a legal requirement to set a Relevant Area for consultation on Admissions Arrangements. The Relevant Area consulted on was the whole

of North Somerset. A failure to undertake consultations would mean that some local admission arrangements could be unlawful.

Consideration was given to setting a number of smaller geographical areas, particularly for primary schools, to match the local authorities school planning areas. As there could be significant overlap between school catchment areas, these smaller areas would diminish the opportunity for wider consultation across the district. It was felt this would not be beneficial for schools or for those applying for places.

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications to the council of adopting this policy.

Costs:

None.

Funding:

None.

Legal Powers and Implications:

The School Standards & Framework Act 1998, Section 5, requires local authorities to establish a Relevant Area(s) for admission policy consultations. Each local authority is required to define a 'relevant area' in which admission authorities must consult on their proposed admission arrangements. The relevant area is determined after consultation with all interested parties and is reviewed periodically.

Climate Change and Environmental Implications:

The Council supports the principle of 'Local Schools for Local Children'. Having a Relevant Area that enables consultations across the whole district to take place in relation to school admission arrangements assists in ensuring that schools give priority within their arrangements to local pupils. Having a local school reduces travel time to and from school and the impact of travel on our carbon footprint.

Consultation:

Details of the proposed Relevant Area for Consultation on Admissions Arrangements 2024-26 have been circulated to the following groups for consultation:

- Head Teachers and Chairs of Governors of all mainstream schools in North Somerset
- Neighbouring Local Authorities
- Every other admissions authority for a school outside of North Somerset that is within a distance of
 - 1.6 kilometres for primary schools
 - 4.8 kilometres for secondary schools
- Local Members of Parliament
- The Diocese of Bath and Wells, the Clifton Diocese and the Methodist Church

No responses to the consultation have been received.

The consultation was presented to a meeting of the School Organisation Scrutiny Steering Group on 8 September 2023. The responses received were supportive.

Risk Management:

The Council is under a statutory duty to set a Relevant Area. A failure to set a Relevant Area would mean the Council would be in breach of Section 5 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Equality Implications:

Have you undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment? Yes
No changes are being proposed from the 2022-24 relevant area. It was noted that this would have no disproportionate impact on any groups.

Corporate Implications:

The Council has a duty to formulate and publish the Relevant Area for Consultation on Admissions Arrangements.

Appendices:

None

Background Papers:

[The Education \(Relevant Areas for Consultation on Admission Arrangements\) Regulations 1999](#)
[School Admissions Code 2021](#)

Signatories:

Decision Maker(s):



Signed:

Title: Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Children’s Services, Families and Lifelong Learning

Date: 30.11.23

With Advice From:



Signed:

Title: Director of Children’s Services

Date: 30.11.23

Footnote: Details of changes made and agreed by the decision taker since publication of the proposed (pre-signed) decision notice, if applicable: