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Date: 20 December 2019

Ms. L. Gooden
Headteacher
King Edward VII Secondary School

Dear Linda

Proposed changes to the current catchment area for King Edward VII School from September 2021

Thank you for your response of 9 December and the opportunity to come and speak with you and your Governors in September. I will ensure that your response is shared with the Cabinet Member, Cllr. Abtissam Mohamed who will be responsible for making the final decision.

I appreciate your support in principle of the Council's ambition to provide access to local school places in response to rising pupil numbers.

For the school admissions process it is never possible to offer any guarantees about future outcomes, whether for catchment residents or any other categories. Outcomes can depend on many variants including population changes and changes in preference patterns. King Edward VII does however have a relatively small catchment area which means that all children attending designated feeder schools can usually be accommodated if parents apply for places.

Of the children attending your feeder schools, many will be Catchment or Sibling category and whilst there cannot be any guarantee, historically children in these categories have always been eligible for places. There are also children who attend feeder schools who do not reside in King Edward VII catchment area. Again in recent years all "Feeder School" category applicants have been accommodated. Over the last 5 years there has been an average of 33 places remaining after all Feeder School children have been accommodated. There would therefore have to be a significant increase in applications from Hallam before there was any displacement of children attending your feeder schools.

In response to your further questions:

1. How can the Admissions Team ensure that our existing feeder schools, children and families are not displaced over time. How can this be monitored?

As confirmed above, the Authority will monitor outcomes but cannot ensure that children and families are not displaced over time. This will be dependent on whether or not there is an increase in applications from Hallam if the proposal is approved.

2. Since Forge Valley is part of the Tupton Academy Trust, why is this school not being considered as part of the solution to meeting the demand for secondary school places for families attending Hallam Primary School?

Forge Valley was not considered as part of the proposed admission arrangements changes. It was not considered that Forge Valley represented a reasonable, accessible alternative for families residing in the Hallam catchment area.

3. Where will children be allocated a place if parents do not select King Edward VII School as their second choice assuming Tapton is their first choice?

If Hallam parents do not apply for King Edward VII as one of their preferences, they will be considered for other schools based on the admission category they fall into for those other schools. If they are not eligible for other schools, places will be allocated to the nearest schools with places. With a combination of written guidance and attendance at open evenings, we always aim to provide parents with objective advice to try and ensure that they maximise their chances of obtaining at least one of their three preferred schools. Ultimately however, parents are responsible for submitting their own preferences.

4. Will the change to King Edward VII School's catchment, to incorporate Hallam Primary, be a permanent change if the proposal is ratified?

Admission arrangements must be determined every year so initially this change will apply to 2021/22. However given that the pressure on places is expected to continue for the foreseeable future in the South West I would expect that the change, if approved would be maintained.

5. Is the demand for school places at Hallam Primary School being sustained and, if so, for how long?

Public Health Authority data indicates a sustained population growth in the Hallam catchment area. This was the rationale for the permanent expansion of Hallam Primary School to 90 places per year. It is therefore expected that demand for 90 places per year at Hallam Primary will continue.

I will inform you of the decision which should be made before the end of January. In the meantime if you require any further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Bigley', with a stylized flourish at the end.

John Bigley
Manager, Admissions & Access
Inclusion & Learning Services