

Education, Children and Families Committee

10am, Tuesday, 8 December 2015

Short-Life Working Group - School Admissions/ Appeals

Item number	7.1
Report number	
Executive/routine	
Wards	All

Executive Summary

This is a progress report on the work carried out following the decision at Education, [Children and Families Committee on 6 October 2015](#) to form a short-life working group to review the admissions and appeals procedure for school places.

This report outlines findings of the working group, which met over a four week period and included presentations by key stakeholders, and a wider survey to gauge the views of parents and others involved in the process. This report includes a number of recommendations to address issues that have arisen in recent years and improve the process for all participants.

Links

Coalition pledges	P5
Council priorities	CO1, CO3 and CO6
Single Outcome Agreement	SO3

Short-Life Working Group - School Admissions/Appeals

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1. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

- 1.1 Note the formation of an appropriately qualified, dedicated small team to present the case on behalf of the Council for all appeals to the Independent Appeal Committee.
- 1.2 Note the progress made to date in improving the quality of information on the admissions and appeals process available on the Council website and that further work will be undertaken to improve the quality of public information to ensure that all relevant policies and procedures can be easily accessed.
- 1.3 Note that an Admissions and Appeals report will be submitted to Committee on an annual basis
- 1.4 Note that a separate report on the agenda for this Committee on a revised Admissions policy will support the ongoing work of improving the placing in schools and appeals process.
- 1.5 Note the principle behind 'Reserved Places' as outlined in the Admissions policy to ensure that this is promoted to parents and all involved in the placing process through appropriate communications on a regular basis.
- 1.6 Note that a formalised open recruitment and selection process will be carried out and reviewed annually (if required) to increase the number of both panel members and chairs on the independent panel.
- 1.7 Note the development and delivery of an annual mandatory training programme for panel chairs/members and all officers, including head teachers, who are involved in the Appeals process. Consideration will be given to the use of an external training provider where appropriate e.g. for panel members and chairs.
- 1.8 Request a further progress report in March 2016 on progress in relation to the above recommendations.

To recommend that the Independent Appeals Panel:

- 1.9 Consider whether it is practical for the panel to provide more detailed written reasons for their decisions in order that these reasons can be communicated via Committee Services to the parent/carer and Committee.
- 1.10 Consider developing a formal and enhanced feedback and evaluation process to ensure that Independent Appeal Panel members receive feedback from all stakeholders.

2. Background

- 2.1 [Section 28A \(3\) \(a\) of the Education \(Scotland\) Act 1980](#) (as amended) gives parents the right to express a preference for a particular school that they want their child to attend. If a placing request is made, local authorities have to grant these requests if places are available in the school and there are no additional costs incurred by the authority in granting the place (for example, if they had to employ an additional teacher). If a placing request is refused, parents have the right to appeal this decision to an Independent Appeals Panel.
- 2.2 The City of Edinburgh Council operates a catchment policy where every address in the city is associated with a denominational and non-denominational primary and secondary school. When a denominational school is oversubscribed, priority will be given to baptised Roman Catholic children.
- 2.3 The City of Edinburgh Council receives a high number of placing requests following the closing date for applications in December. In January, the number of non-catchment placing requests is high, however these numbers decrease as requests are granted, withdrawn, deferred, or when families move out of Edinburgh or accept their second choice school recommended to them (see table 1 below).
- 2.4 Some of the main reasons given for non-catchment places are siblings already attending their preferred school, the location e.g. near the parent's place of work, the reputation of the school, childcare or exceptional circumstances. This is supported by the results of the survey carried out by the working group.
- 2.5 The majority of appeals are heard at P1 or S1 stages and table 1 below shows that more secondary school appeals were heard in 2015 than in 2014. This could be linked to the increase in school rolls as a number of schools no longer have any places available for families moving into catchment areas throughout the year. The forecasts for rising rolls were reported to Committee in December 2014 and latest update included in this agenda.
- 2.6 The table below indicates the number of P1 and S1 appeals heard and granted by the Appeals Panel for the last three years.

Table 1

Total number of placing requests received:	Total number of appeals heard and granted
2013 – 1864 non-catchment placing requests	In Primary - Heard: 185; Granted: 46 In Secondary- Heard: 43 Granted: 6 3 common cases lost
2014 – 1918 non-catchment placing requests	In Primary - Heard: 186; Granted: 43 Secondary - Heard: 16; Granted: 6 1 common case lost
2015 – 1782 non-catchment placing requests	In Primary - Heard: 180; Granted: 81 In Secondary - Heard: 51; Granted: 10 5 common cases lost

- 2.7 The table above demonstrates that there are a larger number of placing requests and an increase in the number of appeals being granted at P1 and S1 appeals in 2015 than in last few years even though the number of appeals being heard is staying approximately the same.
- 2.8 Appeals are time-consuming and stressful for parents and for head teachers and Council Officers defending these appeals and, where an appeal is lost, it may mean the authority incurring the additional cost of a teacher at a future stage or stages.
- 2.9 The Council priority is and remains to provide sufficient places for catchment children. Over successive years, the Council has sought to promote the benefits to parents of choosing their local school and remains committed to that principle. The Council has been clear that in a time of rapidly rising school rolls and increasing catchment demand, siblings are increasingly unlikely to gain non-catchment place, and parents need to be aware of this when they make the original application.

3. Main report

- 3.1 The Short Life Member Officer Working Group on School Admissions/Appeals was set up to review the existing Admissions and Appeals processes and identify potential improvements.
- 3.2 The group met four times and at two of the meetings interested parties were invited to attend and outline their experience of being involved in the placing process and what they felt were the issues and challenges that needed to be addressed. Head teachers, a Trade Union representative, Appeal Panel Chairs and Members all attended.
- 3.3 In addition, a survey was distributed to a wide range of interested parties, including parents and Council officers directly involved in managing the process. Key issues raised by panel participants that attended the Short-Life Working Group included:
- 3.3.1 Head teachers highlighted the following:
- Concerns that Appeal Panel members may not recognise the full implications of their decisions to grant appeals, for example pressure on general purpose space in some schools and the difficulties faced by schools when decisions perhaps result in the whole school class organisation having to be reorganised.
 - The need for clearer communications to ensure parents understand the challenges currently being faced as a result of school rolls, to address negative perceptions in some schools and to ensure those parents who are no longer needing their places due to choosing the independent sector didn't wait until the last minute to let their school know.
 - The need for Improved training for head teachers, particularly those who may need to lead appeals at other stages as these are becoming increasingly focussed on legal issues.
 - The need to ensure the policy for reserved places is clearly communicated and that schools should have the ability to reserve places throughout the year for families moving into the area.
- 3.3.2 The trade union representative raised, on behalf of their members, that training for panel members had to ensure they understood the impact their decisions can have on a school in terms of class organisation, particularly at secondary schools, when practical classes are set at 20 and the timetable has already been organised.

3.3.3 Appeal Panel Chairs and Members highlighted the following:

- The need for all involved in the Appeals process to be well trained.
- A clearer understanding of the Council's process on how decisions are made about which children are deemed 'exceptional'.
- To explore if it is possible for the process to be less stressful for parents of those children who are not granted a place and have to go through the Appeals process.
- That parents of nursery children, particularly those with additional support needs, need help to understand that if they choose to send a child to a nursery class in a primary school they are not guaranteed a place in the primary if they live outside the catchment.
- Consideration should be given to making the process less formal for parents, for example moving appeals from committee rooms in the City Chambers to schools and community venues.

3.4 A survey was issued to 606 interested parties including head teachers; parents/carers; panel chairs/members; Council officers; parents who applied for appeals; and elected members. 65% of these responded to the survey. The survey results were positive with the majority of respondents (232) identifying themselves as parents/carers. The results of the survey reinforced the feedback given by invitees during the Short-Life Working Group (see appendix 1).

3.5 The analysis of the responses demonstrated that similar themes came through as were identified at the working group and these are reflected in the recommendations with other aspects reflected in the action plan.

3.6 An action plan has been developed and used throughout the process (see appendix 2). A number of activities have already been put in place for the start of the 2016 placing process earlier this month. These activities will be progressed, including the recommendations in this report, over the coming months with a progress report being taken to Committee in March 2016.

4. Measures of success

4.1 More panel members and chairs are available to sit on panels.

4.2 Future evaluations of the process are positive.

4.3 Training is delivered to all and positively evaluated.

4.4 An improved website means a reduction in enquiries to the school placement team and complaints phonenumber.

5. Financial impact

- 5.1 The cost for admissions and placing in schools is already included into the current Children and Families budget.
- 5.2 The costs implications need to be assessed in relation of the establishment of a dedicated team to present the case on behalf of the Council for all appeals to the Independent Appeal Committee.
- 5.3 Improvements in the website should reduce queries and free up officer time.

6. Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 There are risks associated with statutory deadlines not being met.

7. Equalities impact

- 7.1 There are no negative impacts arising from this work.
An accessibility assessment has been carried out on the main council website, including the placing in schools section.

8. Sustainability impact

- 8.1 There are no adverse economic, social or environmental impacts.

9. Consultation and engagement

- 9.1 The survey extended the consultation to 606 people. In addition, views were sought from interested parties at the Short-Life Working Group. There are already a variety of means of consultation with parents. These are at school and local authority level. Parents are consulted through Neighbourhood Groups and Consultative Committee with Parents. Head teachers also meet with their Parent Council to discuss placements in their own school. The recommendations and work in the action plan look to further enhance these consultations.

10. Background reading/external references

[Class Size Legislation](#)

[Choosing a School](#)

[Education Scotland Act 1980](#)

[School Placements Edinburgh](#)

[Team Teaching CEC](#)

[Composite Classes CEC](#)

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Links

Coalition pledges	P5 - Seek to ensure the smooth introduction of the Curriculum for Excellence and that management structures within our schools support the new curriculum
Council priorities	CO1- Our children have the best start in life, are able to make and sustain relationships and are ready to succeed CO3 - Our children and young people at risk, or with a disability, have improved life chances CO6 - Our children's and young people's outcomes are not undermined by poverty and inequality
Single Outcome Agreement	SO3 - Edinburgh's children and young people enjoy their childhood and fulfil their potential
Appendices	1 - Summary of Survey for School Admissions and Appeals 2015 2 - Schools Admissions/Appeals proposed action plan

Appendix 1

Summary of Survey for School Admissions and Appeals 2015

As part of a review of the School Admissions and Appeal Process, a questionnaire was issued to stakeholders in November 2015. There were 394 responses in total. Of those who indicated the capacity in which they have been involved in the process:

- 232 were parents/carers
- 2 were head teachers
- 8 were panel members
- 7 were panel chairs
- 17 were Council officers (other than head teachers)

The questionnaire included a number of generic questions for all respondents and then divided into specific questions for each stakeholder group. Some respondents appear to have answered the generic questions and not gone on to the specific ones – the highest response was to the first question while the total number responding to the specific questions was 266.

A summary of the feedback is set out below. Responses to quantitative questions are given as numbers and percentages (rounded to the nearest whole number). Responses to qualitative questions are summarised with the issues cited most often highlighted.

Have you used the City of Edinburgh Council website to find out about the placing process?

Answer choice	Response
Yes	253 (65%)
No	137 (35%)

If yes, how helpful did you find it?

Answer choice	Response
Very helpful	35 (15%)
Helpful	174 (73%)
Not very helpful	23 (10%)
Not at all helpful	6 (3%)

Do you have any suggestions on how we can improve the website?

Some respondents had suggestions in relation to:

- Improving the wording of the information and making it easier to understand
- Clearer information on the process and how decisions are made
- Better guidance on appeals

Have you read the Council's admissions policy?

Answer choice	Response
Yes	232 (70%)
No	101 (30%)

If yes, how helpful did you find it?

Answer choice	Response
Very helpful	30 (14%)
Helpful	160 (73%)
Not very helpful	24 (11%)
Not at all helpful	5 (2%)

Are there any elements of the admissions process you would like improved?

Some respondents commented on:

- The need to prioritise places for siblings
- The policy needs to be clearer with less jargon
- The need for clearer information about reserved places

The school population in Edinburgh is rising. Do you recognise that this will have an effect on the ability to accommodate out of catchment placing requests?

Answer choice	Response
Yes	249 (81%)
No	5 (2%)
Don't know	6 (2%)

Any comments?

Some respondents commented that:

- Children should attend their catchment schools
- Rising demand means that capacity should be increased, including by building new schools
- Siblings should be prioritised

Questions for parents/carers

In your experience, why do parents/carers choose schools other than their catchment school?

Answer choice	Response
Location	114 (47%)

Recommendation	67 (28%)
Reputation	198 (82%)
Education Scotland/HMIE inspection reports	101 (42%)

Other, please say

Some respondents commented on:

- Siblings already at the school
- Proximity to place of work
- Quality of education and facilities or perceptions about these
- Friends at the chosen school e.g. from nursery
- Additional support needs/disability
- Child care arrangements

Have you submitted a placing request recently?

Answer choice	Response
Yes	121 (46%)
No	144 (54%)

If yes, how easy was it for you to submit the request?

Answer choice	Response
Very easy	36 (30%)
Easy	66 (55%)
Not very easy	12 (10%)
Not at all easy	5 (4%)

How do you think we could improve the process?

Some respondents commented that:

- The process is slow and can be difficult for parents
- Communication needs to be improved
- It should be possible to do more online

If your request was unsuccessful, did you appeal the decision?

Answer choice	Response
Yes	84 (87%)
No	13 (13%)

If yes, how did you find the process?

Answer choice	Response
Very easy	11 (13%)
Easy	27 (31%)
Not very easy	28 (32%)
Not at all easy	21 (24%)

How do you think we could improve the process?

Some respondents commented on:

- How stressful the process can be
- The need to make appeals meetings less formal
- The length of time the process takes
- Their view that the panel had already made up its mind

Questions for head teachers

As only two head teachers responded, their answers are not given in tables or in percentages.

The head teachers felt that parents/carers chose schools other than their catchment due to reputation, inspection reports, recommendation and location. They also mentioned concerns about the behaviour of pupils currently in the school and avoiding schools not seen as an appropriate social setting for their child.

Out of school catchments put extra stress on accommodation and cause a 'bottle neck' in early years.

Both head teachers had been involved in a placing appeal and both felt supported in the process (one completely and one somewhat). One head teacher wanted more support in advance and one commented that the Grants, Awards and Placement team support is excellent.

Questions for Appeals Panel Members

Did you feel well prepared for being on the panel?

Answer choice	Response
Yes	9 (75%)
Somewhat	3 (25%)
Not really	0
No	0

What training was provided and how has this assisted you in your role?

Respondents identified initial and annual training as being helpful and important. Some said that the opportunity to share experience with fellow panel chairs/members is as important as formal training.

In your experience, what is the best thing about being on the panel?

Respondents commented on the opportunity they have to assist families in need and help find solutions.

What could we do to improve the process?

Respondents commented on:

The need for Council officers to be well prepared

The need for more user-friendly wording of paperwork

The need for an officer to be present

How do we encourage more chairs or panel members to join?

Respondents suggested:

Involving current panel chairs and members in sharing their experiences

Having a recruitment campaign targeting former heads or with other bodies such as the Scottish Parent Teacher Council.

Questions for Council officers

What stage of the process are you involved in?

(Please tick all that apply)

Answer choice	Response
Placing process	2 (15%)
Appeals process	7 (54%)
Presenting officer	4 (31%)

Do you feel well prepared to carry out your role?

Answer choice	Response
Yes	6 (46%)
Somewhat	3 (23%)
Not really	4 (31%)
No	0

Appendix 2

Short Life Working Group: School Admissions/Appeals

Schools Admissions/Appeals proposed action plan- working document.

For all areas below a Lead Officer(s) is mentioned at the top of the table. This lead officer is the person who will co-ordinate all the actions in their table.

Consultation Lead Officer: Departmental Adviser (DA) to the Convener of Education, Children & Families

Action	By whom	By when	Progress/Comments
Invite various interested parties to SLWG to give their views on the process- include Parents/Panel Chairs/Panel Members / HT Representatives and Union Rep	DA to the Convener of Education, Children & Families Committee /Convener of Education, Children & Families / Committee Services/Senior Education Manager (Inclusion & Pupil / Parent Support)/Parent Rep	17/10/15	Completed
Draft survey to SLWG for approval	Principal Officer, Engagement & Involvement/DA to the Convener of Education, Children & Families /Comms Client Manager	23/10/15	Completed

Issue survey to distribution lists	Senior Education Manager (Inclusion & Pupil / Parent Support)/Committee Services	02/11/15	Completed
Analyse and then report back findings of the survey monkey to the SLWG.	Principal Officer, Engagement & Involvement/DA to the Convener of Education, Children & Families Committee /Comms Client Manager	17/11/15	Completed
Collate a range of data including numbers for stage appeals and what schools parents are appealing out of and into	DA to the Convener of Education, Children & Families Committee /Senior Education Manager (Inclusion & Pupil / Parent Support)/Placing in schools team/Committee Services	17/11/15	Completed
A survey to be developed for young people to gain their views. Use Edinburgh Youth Forum	Principal Officer, Engagement & Involvement/ DA to the Convener of Education, Children & Families Committee / Youth Work Strategy Implementation	25/11/15	Completed

Review and update action plan based on the feedback from discussions/ consultations and survey monkey results	DA to the Convener of Education, Children & Families Committee	Ongoing	
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Placing in schools Paperwork Lead Officer: Senior Education Manager (Inclusion & Pupil / Parent Support)

Action	By whom	By when	Progress/Comments
Review non-catchment placing request form	Placing in schools Team/Senior Education Manager (Inclusion & Pupil / Parent Support)	30/10/15	Completed
Consider how the 'exceptional' pupils are deemed exceptional.	Senior Education Manager (Inclusion & Pupil / Parent Support)/	26/01/16	A group has been set up to do this in January prior to the Pupil Student Support Committee

Website: Lead Officers Senior Education Manager (Inclusion & Pupil / Parent Support) (content) and Management Information Systems Officer (analysis/testing) Graeme Smith (web content)

Action	By whom	By when	Progress/Comments
Develop case studies to trial the website	Communications Client Manager	12/10/15	Completed.
Deliver a report on the case studies and accessibility to the SLWG in October	Management Information Systems Officer	20/10/15 to issue on 23 October for discussion at SLWG on the 27 October	Completed
<p>Update website to include feedback:</p> <p>1.1 Make clearer on website that non-catchment schools may not be possible e.g. a note about siblings not automatically entitled to be schooled together.</p> <p>1.2 To help mobile users ensure that links to each part of the guide are included in the body of the content rather than just in the guide title section.</p>	Management Information Systems Officer/Senior Education Manager (Inclusion & Pupil / Parent Support) and Placing in schools team	30/10/15	Completed

1.3	To help mobile users whenever the guide is mentioned include a link in the body of the content rather than just in the guide title section.			
Get ASL information to include on website	Service Manager Professional Services/DA to the Convener of Education, Children & Families Committee	10/12/15		Under Review
Add ASL information to website	MIS Officer	10/12/15		Under review prior to uploading
Add more specific information on Broughton re Football/ Music and Dance and specific number of places allocated	Placing in Schools team/ Senior Education Manager (Inclusion & Pupil / Parent Support)/Broughton HT	30/10/15		Completed.
Include the nursery classes' information on websites i.e. Reinforce nursery classes in Primary schools are not catchment to the Primary school for non catchment children make it clear that if you attend an out of catchment nursery class in a	Senior Education Manager (Early Stages)/Early Years & Childcare Manager/Quality Improvement Officer and Placing in school team	30/10/15		Currently work being done on standardising enrolment forms for all nursery children across the City. This includes information that nursery classes in primary schools are non-catchment. This is clear in the Early

school the chances are that the child will not be able to progress into that out of catchment primary school			Year policy
Review placing booklet and update	Communications Client Manager /Senior Education Manager (Inclusion & Pupil / Parent Support)/ Placing in schools team /Management Information Systems Officer/Senior Solicitor	30/10/15	Completed
Review reserved places policy	Senior Solicitor/ Senior Education Manager (Inclusion & Pupil / Parent Support)	01/12/15	Completed
Update school placement webpage	Communications Client Manager/ Senior Education Manager (Inclusion & Pupil / Parent Support)/ Placing in Schools Team and Management Information Systems Officer	04/03/16	To be considered for next session.
Review other stage placements management	Senior Education Manager (inclusion & Pupil/Parent Support)	04/04/16	Cost implications to be considered.

Admissions Policy/ Paperwork: Lead Officer Senior Education Manager (Inclusion & Pupil / Parent Support)

Action	By whom	By when	Progress/Comments
Review policy	Senior Education Manager (Inclusion & Pupil / Parent Support)/ Senior Solicitor/ Comms Client Manager/ Executive Director of Communities & Families and SLWG	08/12/15	This information is included in the Placing in Schools booklet. Seek Committee approval.

Recruitment: Lead Officer Committee Services

Action	By whom	By when	Progress/Comments
Review recruitment protocol for all panel members	Committee Services/Senior Solicitor/Comms Client Manager	08/12/15	Currently being developed for Open Night
Draw up protocol for chairs and panel members and officers including remit and responsibilities on the appeal's process.	Senior Solicitor/Committee Services	15/01/16	This is for both officers and panel chairs/members

<p>Organise an Open night for recruitment-</p> <p>Draw up an application form for recruitment</p> <p>Promote this event via the various contact channels including Parent Chairs/CCwP/HT/CLD links/QIO network/Brightfutures information on this also.</p>	<p>Committee Services/Senior Solicitor</p>	<p>8/12/15</p>	<p>This has been arranged for Tuesday 8 December at 6pm in the European Room – Programme and online application form and publicity underway.</p> <p>This is currently being organised. Similar format being considered as used for Children Panel Member volunteers</p>
<p>Review design of flyer</p>	<p>Communications Client Manager/Committee Services</p>	<p>17/11/15</p>	<p>In progress.</p>
<p>Promote recruitment of panel members at Neighbourhood groups/ CCwP</p>	<p>Senior Education Manager (Inclusion & Pupil / Parent Support)</p>	<p>01/10/15</p>	<p>Completed.</p>
<p>Develop approach to target previous employees</p>	<p>Committee Services/ Senior Education Manager (Inclusion & Pupil / Parent Support)/ DA to the Convener of Education, Children & Families Committee</p>	<p>24/11/15</p>	<p>Completed.</p>
<p>Invite Parent Chairs to Open night including former</p>	<p>Senior Education Manager (Inclusion & Pupil / Parent</p>	<p>24/11/15</p>	<p>Completed.</p>

CCwP parent representatives	Support)/ Committee Services		
Review /consider capacity to support other stage appeals led by Head Teachers	SLWG Executive Director of Communities and Families	24/11/15	
Review parent letters following appeals to include more details on the outcome of appeal	Committee Services	14/01/16	
Review location of appeals (independent and in less formal settings)	Committee Services	11/04/16	

Training Officers; Lead Officer – Senior Education Manager (Inclusion and Parent/Pupil Support)

Action	By whom	By when	Progress/Comments
Discuss how best to use officers in the appeals process and who is required and when.	Executive Director of Communities & Families/Head of Schools & Lifelong Learning/Head of Resources	08/12/15	Committee report
Consider alternative options to officers presenting the appeals and the cost related	SLWG/ Executive Director of Communities & Families	08/12/15	Investigate costs

to this			
Consider officer support for HT at stage appeals/ exclusion appeals and/ or provide a crib sheet for this	SLWG/Executive Director of Communities & Families	04/02/16	Consider cost implications.
Consider training for school administration staff and /or Business Managers on the appeals process as they often assist HTs	SLWG/Senior Solicitor/Committee Services/Senior Education Manager (Inclusion & Pupil / Parent Support)	14/01/16	Decision to be made on this and training offered
Develop more case studies for all to include in training. These should include examples of the various issues raised during the SLWG and in the Survey Monkey.	Senior Solicitor/Committee Services/Senior Education Manager (Inclusion & Pupil / Parent Support)	14/01/16	Issues/ideas from the interested parties and survey monkey results were noted to consider for future training.
Explore how technology might be used more during the appeals process including for Chairs	Placing in schools team/ Committee Services/ Senior Education Manager (Inclusion & Pupil / Parent Support)/Management Information Systems Officer/Comms Client Manager	04/03/16	Review the cost implications for IT use in this area

Develop evaluations to be completed after training.	Senior Solicitor	04/03/16	
Consider using a Survey Monkey to review the process each year.	Senior Solicitor/Committee Services/Senior Education Manager (Inclusion & Pupil / Parent Support)	04/04/16	Decide on when to use them.
Discuss and develop a yearly mandatory update for all panel members/chairs and officers.	Senior Solicitor/Committee Services/Senior Education Manager (Inclusion & Pupil / Parent Support)	08/12/15	Committee report

Training for the Independent Appeals Committee: Lead Officer - Senior Solicitor

Action	By whom	By when	Progress/Comments
Agree mandatory training for all new panel members/chairs and officers	SLWG / Committee Services/Senior Solicitor	24/11/15	Recommendation in the report.
Agree the possibility of mandatory yearly updated training for all involved in the process and closer updates/training to when appeal will actually take place	SLWG / Committee Services/Senior Solicitor	24/11/15	Recommendation in the report.

Explore the costs for External training provider for the Chairs and Panel Members	Committee Services	24/11/15	Recommendation in the report.
Discuss and develop a yearly mandatory update for all panel members/ chairs and officers.	Senior Solicitor/Committee Services/Senior Education Manager (Inclusion & Pupil / Parent Support)	06/12/15	Recommendation in the report
Develop more case studies for all to include in training. These should include examples of the various issues raised during the SLWG and in the Survey Monkey.	Senior Solicitor/Committee Services/Senior Education Manager (Inclusion & Pupil / Parent Support)	14/01/16	Issues/ideas from the interested parties and survey monkey results were noted to consider for future training.
Explore how technology might be used more during the appeals process including for Chairs	Placing in schools team/ Committee Services/ Senior Education Manager (Inclusion & Pupil / Parent Support)/Management Information Systems Officer/Comms Client Manager	04/03/16	Review cost implications
Consider how the quality assurance of the process including the Independent Panel	Senior Solicitor	Ongoing	

Communications and improving perceptions of schools in relation to Placing in schools and Appeals: Lead Officer Communications
Client Manager

Action	By whom	By when	Progress/Comments
All data held should be in a similar format so that it is easier to share.	Committee Services /Senior Education Manager (Inclusion & Pupil / Parent Support)/Placing in schools team	08/12/15	
Many appeals are due to other siblings in schools. This needs to continue to be addressed more in communications	Comms Client Manager/Placing in schools team/ Senior Education Manager (Inclusion & Pupil / Parent Support)	Ongoing	
Share the Communications plan that already exists and add to this taking into account the views and issues raised via the SLWG.	Communications Client Manager / Parent Rep/Placing in schools team/Senior Education Manager (Inclusion & Pupil / Parent Support)	05/02/16	
Share good practice from the Open Days with schools and give further guidance on this to HT's	Communications Client Manager/Parent Representative/ Placing in schools team/Senior Education Manager (Inclusion & Pupil / Parent Support)/Quality	10/02/16	Guidance already exists but will be improved. Share good practice at a HT meeting.

	Improvement Manager - Primary		
Identify where the most out of catchment requests are being made and help publicise the school with the aim of addressing negative perceptions of the school.	Placing in schools team/ Communications Client Manager	01/04/16	Use the data collated to look at this.
Following appeals – why are not upheld need to encourage parents to visit their catchment school	Communications Client Manager/ Placing in schools team	01/04/16	Draft letter to be used by HT's