



FAO: Fiona Thomson, Admissions Officer

Ashlyns School
Chesham Road
Berkhamsted
Herts HP4 3AH

By email and post

8th December 2021

Dear Sir/Madam,

I write on behalf of Berkhamsted Town Council (BTC) regarding the Ashlyns School Proposed Admission Arrangements for the academic year 2023-24.

BTC would like to make the following comments about the proposed arrangements:

BTC welcomes the change to give priority to children from Berkhamsted and Northchurch with siblings in Years 7-12 as proposed in Rule 3.

However, BTC is disappointed to see that the Admissions criteria has not been further expanded upon to give further priority to (a) children who live in Berkhamsted and Northchurch who do not have siblings in Years 7-12 and then (b) to children who live in the Priority Area with siblings in Years 7-12, over (c) other children in the Priority Area. Whilst giving priority to "Berkhamsted and Northchurch siblings" over "Priority Area and Non-Priority Area siblings" may liberate a number of potential places for children falling within the Rule 5 category, BTC believes that Rule 5 is not sufficiently detailed in the case of a tie-break situation and in some circumstances, may put other children living in Berkhamsted and Northchurch who do not have a sibling at the school at a disadvantage.

Background

Berkhamsted sits within a valley and therefore the settlements of Berkhamsted and Northchurch have not been able to expand in the usual circular fashion. This means that Herts County Council "straight line" measurement from home to school to calculate how near a child lives to the school puts some areas of the "Priority Area" nearer to Ashlyns School than some of the furthest parts of Northchurch and Berkhamsted.

It is important to note that Ashlyns School is the only non-faith, co-educational, non-partially selective school for children in Northchurch and Berkhamsted and that these towns are poorly served by public transport to schools outside of Berkhamsted/Northchurch.

Proposal

BTC proposes that Rule 5 is split into 3 separate rules sitting above the general "Siblings" Rule (the current proposed Rule 6), as follows:

Proposed Rule 5 – Children living in the parishes of Berkhamsted or Northchurch

Children who live in the parishes of Berkhamsted or Northchurch on the basis of distance, with those living nearest to the school given priority.



Proposed Rule 6 – Siblings living inside the Priority Area, nearest school

Children living in the Priority Area who have a sibling at the school in Year 7 to 12 at the time of application, on the basis of distance, with those living nearest to the school given priority.

Proposed Rule 7 – Children living inside the Priority Area, nearest school

Children who live in the priority area and for whom it is their nearest Hertfordshire maintained, non-faith, co-educational, non-partially selective school or academy, with those living nearest to the school given priority.

The current proposed 'Rule 6: Siblings' would then become Rule 8 (and so on).

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions about our comments or wish to discuss further.

Yours faithfully,

Tony Noakes, Town Clerk
on behalf of Berkhamsted Town Council