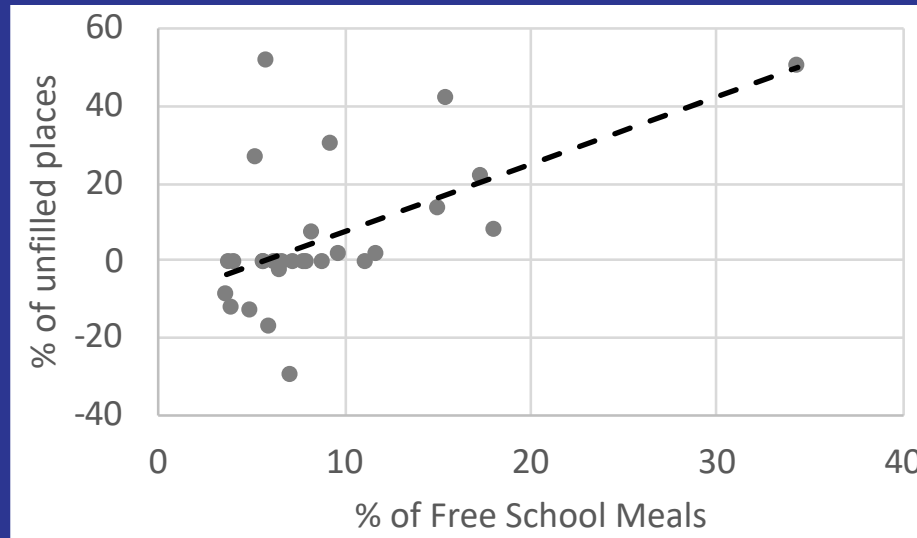


# What factors influence parental preference of schools, and what are the outcomes of those preferences (and for whom)?

# Our main sources of information

- Literature on the influences of parental preference on national and international level
- Admission data provided by the Business Intelligence Team
- Survey filled out by 282 parents in Cambridgeshire
- Data from 34 admission appeals
- Interviews with members of the management teams of two primary schools

# Recommendation 3: Investigate the possibility of including Pupil Premium (PP) eligibility as an oversubscription criterion.



Cambridgeshire admissions data: more popular secondary schools have fewer underprivileged pupils

Sutton Trust (2018)  
*“The cost of travel was regarded as an important factor by 65% of parents in social group D, but just 43% of group A.”*

# Current Oversubscription Criteria

1. Looked After Children
  2. Children living in the catchment area with sibling in the school
  3. Children living in the catchment area
  4. Children living outside of catchment area with a sibling in the school
  5. Children who have been unable to gain a place at their catchment area school because of oversubscription
  6. Children outside of catchment, but nearest to school
- 
- Eligible for PP
- Not eligible for PP
- Not eligible for PP
- Eligible for PP

# Proposed Oversubscription Criteria

1. Looked After Children
2. Children eligible for PP, living in the catchment area with sibling in the school
3. Children who are not eligible for PP, living in the catchment area with sibling in the school
4. Children eligible for PP, living in the catchment area
5. Children who are not eligible for PP, living in the catchment area
6. Children living outside of catchment area with a sibling in the school
7. Children who have been unable to gain a place at their catchment area school because of oversubscription
8. Children outside of catchment, but nearest to school

# Recommendation 1: Use web-based tools to facilitate families' access to information on schools and admissions processes.

(a)

Create microsites on containing the guidance that is currently presented in the *First Steps* and *Next Steps* PDF booklets.

(b)

Enhance the Schools Directory by adding admissions-related information to each school's page.

(c)

Investigate the viability of establishing an online carpool board to help parents coordinate school runs.

# Data sources: (i) a survey of Cambridgeshire parents (ii) a selection of school admissions appeal cases


**282 parents**

submitted complete responses  
to a survey about opinions  
and experiences  
of school admissions  
(survey period: 25 June – 25 July)

**34 appeals**

were summarised by LGSS Law  
to provide a representative  
summary of admissions appeals  
heard for September 2018  
school entry

# Recommendation 1(a): Create microsites on the Council web page containing school admissions guidance.



**First Steps**  
Admission to primary school: a guide for parents

**2019  
2020**

Application Deadline  
15 January 2019

Apply online at  
[www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/admissions)

With the addition of:

- An acknowledgement that many families may have a limited range of choice in schools, due to limited educational budgets
- Advice about the grounds on which school admissions appeals are usually upheld.
- Highlighting information that is of particular concern to parents (e.g. school open days, home-to-school transport entitlements).



# Recommendation 1(b): Enhance the Schools Directory by adding admissions-related information to each school's page.

Chesterton Community College

Details

**School Head:** Lucy Scott

**Telephone:** [01223 712150](tel:01223712150)

**Fax:** [01223 300786](tel:01223300786)

**Email:** [office@chesterton.cambs.sch.uk](mailto:office@chesterton.cambs.sch.uk)

**Website:** [www.chestertoncc.net](http://www.chestertoncc.net)

**Address:**  
Chesterton Community College, 297 Gilbert Road, Cambridge, CB4 3NY

**Type:** Secondary School

**Age range:** 11 - 16

**Inspection:** See latest Ofsted report

**PAN** ⓘ: 180

**Catchment area:** [Chesterton Community College catchment area](#)

Search

enter a keyword

Keyword

All ages

Clear search

Sort by: name

Map

**• Chesterton Community College Academy**  
Gilbert Road, Cambridge, CB4 3NY  
☎ 01223 712150  
🌐 [www.chestertoncc.net](http://www.chestertoncc.net)

<b>School Code</b>	4029	<b>Age Range</b>	11 - 16
<b>PAN for 2019</b>	180	<b>School Type</b>	Academy

**Catchment area:** The area serving the following primary schools falls within the catchment area: Arbury, Milton Road, Mayfield and St. Luke's.

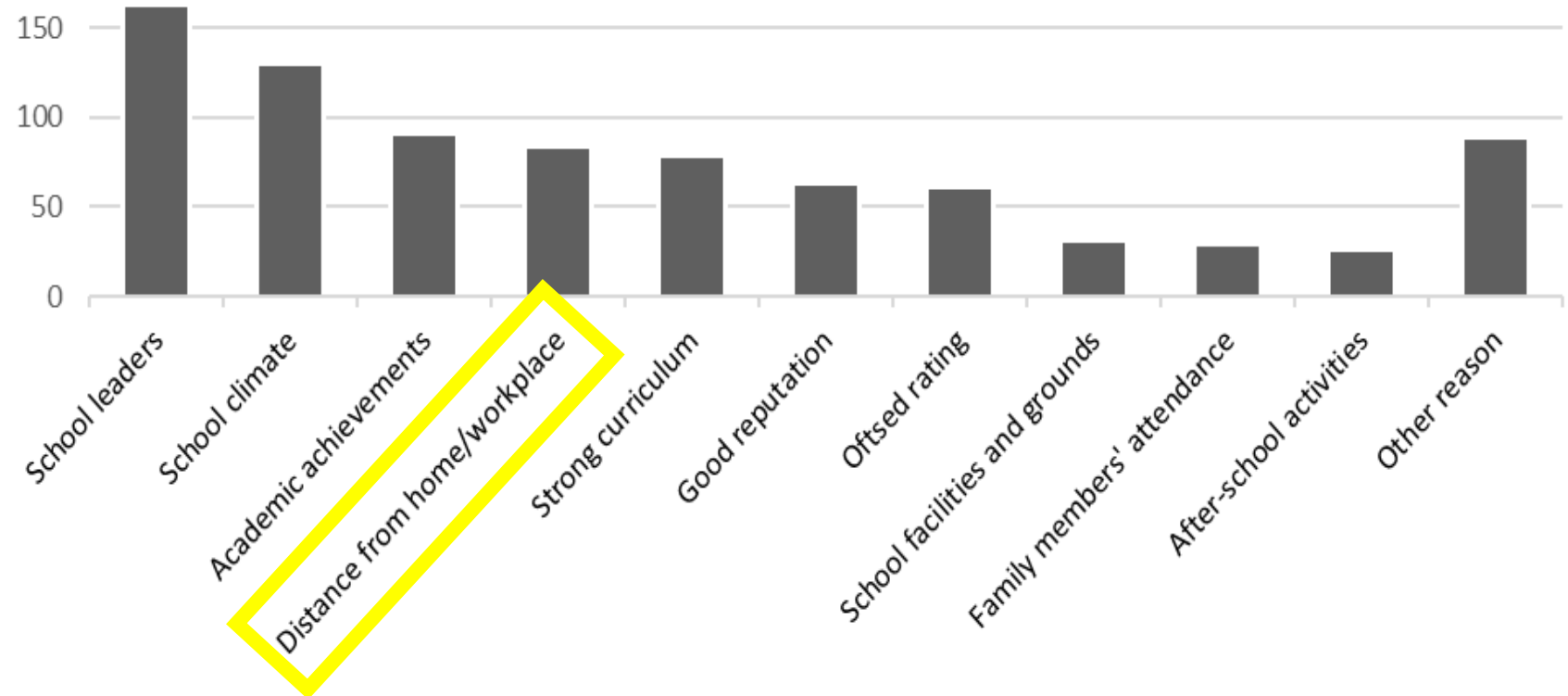
**Oversubscription Criteria:** Children who have a statement of special educational needs that names the school will be admitted. Those children with a statement of special educational needs or educational needs who do not have a statement will be considered in accordance with the Statutory Assessment Regulations.

1. Children in looked after

2018 allocation information:	1st	2nd	3rd
Preferences received:	248	174	75
Places allocated:		200	
Criterion allocated to:		9	
Appeals heard:		18	

# Recommendation 1(c): Investigate the viability of an online carpool board to help parents coordinate school runs.

Which of the following reasons for choosing a school are most important?  
*Select up to 3.*



## Recommendation 2: Ensure that schools have sufficient information to plan strategically for future admissions

(a)

Increased communication between the council and schools, especially in terms of long-term strategy as well as anticipated changes in incoming student numbers.

(b)

Council brokerage of collaboration between schools (especially between high- and low-performing schools), to foster school improvement.

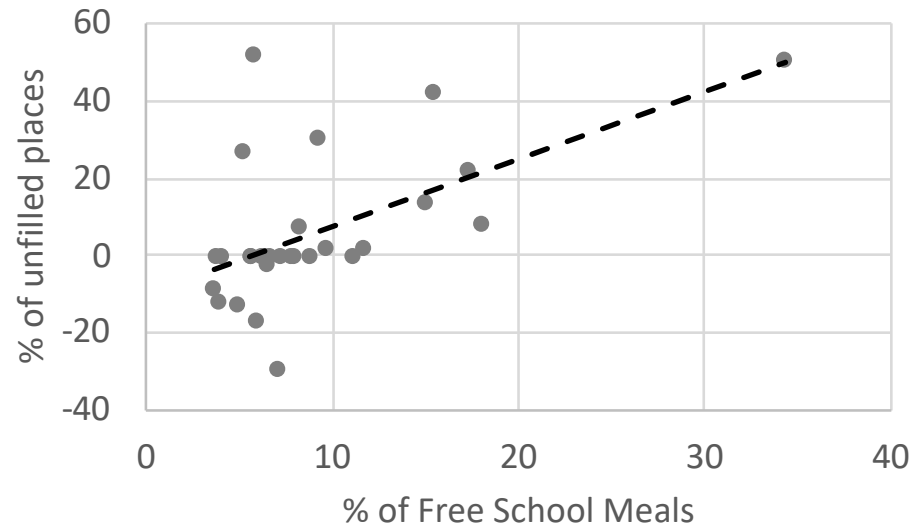
(c)

An automated system of email notifications from the school admissions portal to schools when a change in admission allocations is made.

## Recommendation 2(a): Increased communication between the council and schools.

- An interview with the headteacher of an oversubscribed school highlighted the need for information from the local authority to be shared with schools, to enable a more proactive approach which may prevent schools going into 'requires improvement'.
- It would be helpful if the local authority shared its long-term strategy with schools.
- It is important to champion all schools in Cambridgeshire.

# Recommendation 2(b): Council brokering of collaboration between schools, to foster school improvement.



**Figure 3. The percentage of unfilled places as a function of % of pupils eligible for free school meals (N=26 Cambridgeshire secondary schools)**

- Analysis of school admissions data showed that some schools were more popular than others, and that popularity is linked to the proportion of underprivileged pupils in school.
- An interview with the headteacher of an oversubscribed school also noted that it would be useful if details were provided by the local authority on how outstanding schools can help other schools.

## Recommendation 2(c): An automated system of email notifications from the school admissions portal.

- An interview with the business manager of an undersubscribed school outlined the difficulties of planning when pupil numbers fluctuate.
- It would be useful if there was a cut-off in the term where pupils need to stay in school.
- It would help if the local authority improved communication to schools, and found fair ways to limit in-year pupil movements between schools.

## Recommendation 2: Officer response

Points (a) and (b) were considered as part of the Education Strategy at the September Committee. Building collaboration across Cambridgeshire is key in our improvement journey and we have strengthened our data capability to support this aspiration. Updated demographic data will be published later this term. This will be shared with schools to ensure we make appropriate decisions in relation to school place planning. Discussions will be scheduled with Capita, to determine how the Admissions and Transport module of the ONE system could be adapted to produce automated email notifications (point (c)).

# Conclusions

- What factors influence parental preference in schools?
- What sources of information do parents use to influence their preference of schools?
- What demographic factors influence differences in parental preference in schools?
- What are the outcomes (and for whom)?
- Lessons for future CUSPE teams.



# Thank you for your time!

Are there any questions?