



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

23rd November 2018

Labour councillors call for scrapping of Grammar School 180 rule

Bexley's Labour Group of councillors have called for the scrapping of the "180 rule" which prioritises a Grammar school place to students who achieve one of the highest 180 scores in selection tests, no matter where they live.

Figures released after the last Full Council meeting show that of the 3,957 students attending one of the borough's four Grammar schools, 1,983 (50.1%) do not live in the London Borough of Bexley. This follows figures released to councillors in July which show in the 2017 tests that 75% of students achieving the top 180 did not live in Bexley with students who achieved a place via this criteria living as far as Bedford, Buckinghamshire, Hampshire and Reading. Overall in 2017, 558 Bexley students were deemed selective with 1,314 students who do not live in Bexley deemed selective.

While it is illegal to deny a child a school place because they live outside of the local authority area, distance from home to school can be used as criteria. However, the borough's four academy Grammar schools use the "180 rule" and criteria relating to siblings and students of staff working at the school above the home to school distance criteria; in effect ensuring that less than 30% of those deemed selective in 2017 live in Bexley.

The position is exacerbated as students living outside of Bexley who have not achieved one of the highest 180 scores, are still being offered a place because their older sibling achieved a place by scoring in the highest 180 or because their parent works at the school.

Councillor Wendy Perfect, Shadow Spokesperson for Education said "Whatever your views on Grammar schools, it is clear that Bexley parents are being offered a false promise. They are being told that Grammar schools are provided in Bexley to allow their children to fulfil their potential, but last year Bexley's four Grammar schools' admission criteria resulted in less than 30% of those students deemed selective at the test living in Bexley.

She continued "Scraping the "180 rule" would supply an even playing field for those living in the borough as it would remove the main route in which non-Bexley residents living a long distance from our schools are achieving a place for themselves and in turn their siblings. The average Bexley resident will rightly think it is a nonsense that last year, students living in Somerset, Warwickshire and Wolverhampton sat the Bexley test knowing if they achieved one of the highest 180 scores they would have been guaranteed a place at a Bexley Grammar school. Bexley's Tory council needs to urgently work with these four academies to find a solution that offers a fairer chance for Bexley students".

-ENDS-

BEXLEY LABOUR GROUP PRESS RELEASE



Figures of pupils currently attending Bexley's four Grammar schools released to councillors on 16th November 2018:

All Pupils					
	Total Pupils	Bexley	Bexley	Non Bexley	Non Bexley
Beths	953	454	47.6%	499	52.4%
Chis & Sid	969	373	38.5%	596	61.5%
Townley	1078	515	47.8%	563	52.2%
Bexley Grammar	957	632	66.0%	325	34.0%
	3957	1974	49.9%	1983	

Figures outlining the number of students that took the examination in 2017 can be found on Item 8 of the Communities OSC papers at <https://bit.ly/2QhRDlZ>

Notes to editors

- For further information, please contact Cllr Wendy Perfect.