The Doodle, a 495ft work of art on City Road

Scramble for schools will be decided by council lottery

DOMINIC HAYES
Education Correspondent

A CONTROVERSIAL lottery system has been introduced in an attempt to bring order to the scramble for schools. Brighton and Hove has become the first authority to adopt a new Government initiative to allocate secondary school places randomly to control demand for spaces at the most popular secondary schools.

Hundreds of thousands of children are currently waiting to find out whether they have been successful in getting a place at their first choice school. Letters will be sent out tomorrow from local education authorities.

In Brighton and Hove, the Labour-run parish has decided to use a lottery which is stipulated in the Government's new school admissions code, to enable more families in the east of the city to get into their neighborhood schools.

But critics said it would make it harder for poorer families to get into the most popular schools.

On either side of the argument were remedies, who said they were told by one of the borough's head teacher's that the council was considering different methods to allocate places, why not one school in the catchment area that is going to be added to a school in their catchment area.

WHERE there is no other school the catchment area that is going to be added to a school in their catchment area.

Brighton and Hove Council and the new system will allow more children in a better chance of getting into popular schools.

The local government, which is the subject of the Government's report, which is for the lottery system in the council.

They argue that it doesn't make sense to allocate places in the east and outer edges of the city. This was precisely the opposite of the Government's intention, which was for the lottery to end selection by house price, with middle class parents monopolising places by buying homes close to popular schools.

Pat Hawkes, who used her meeting to raise the issue of Brighton and Hove's families and schools, commented that the decision would help less well-off families get into good schools.

She said: "Brighton is a city of haves and have nots and the poor ones have been left out." The measures will come into effect from September next year.

The decision came after hundreds of parents had attended a public meeting last night about the new scheme. A petition was started with nearly 4,600 people and 16 of the borough's public meetings have already been held and distributed by campaigners.

Artists turn playwright for gallery's fundraiser

TOM TEOĐORCZUK
Arts Correspondent

TAKE some of the West End's leading actors, add the cream of the modern art scene and you have one of the star-studded events of the year.

A fundraiser for Whitechapel Art Gallery on 9 March seeks to raise a £1m charity sum for the east London venue.

The event will be organised by Evening Standard Film Awards winner Taller Holland and Gunergan Art Company director and socialite Mollie Dent-Brocklehurst.

The centrepiece will be played by artists including Turner Prize nominees Fiona Banner and Mark Titchner, New York-based artist Janet Jackson and Californian pop artist Ed Ruscha.

Ruscha's play is a monologue based on "undressing with words" is how it is described.

Although no stars have been confirmed to act in the play, actors linked with the project include Greta Scacchi, Samantha Morton and Rhys Ifans.

The supporting cast includes writer Charles Brooker, Rachel Whiteread, Alex James, Tracey Emin, Neil Tennant, Mike Figgis and Steve Ferris.

Whitechapel's annual Art Fair event is fact "fizzing" across Serpentine's Summer Party as the star-studded event in the capital's arts calendar.

Money raised from the £30-ticket event will go towards Whitechapel's £11m transformation programme.

Writer and curator Tessa Blaickow said: "Art Play London will hopefully show what will happen when different art forms are fused together."