



Office of
the Schools
Adjudicator

Local Authority Report

to

The Schools Adjudicator

from

Ealing Local Authority

to be provided by

30 June 2020

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www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-of-the-schools-adjudicator

**Please email your completed report to: osa.team@schoolsadjudicator.gov.uk
by 30 June 2020 and earlier if possible**

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Introduction and guidance on completing the report – Revised April 2020

1. Section 88P of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (the Act) requires every local authority to make an annual report to the adjudicator. The Chief Adjudicator then includes a summary of these reports in her annual report to the Secretary for State for Education. The School Admissions Code (the Code) sets out the requirements for reports by local authorities in paragraph 6. Paragraph 3.23 specifies what must be included as a minimum in the report to the adjudicator and makes provision for the local authority to include any other matters. This is a revised template issued in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic.
2. This template requests local authorities only for:
 - a) information about how admission arrangements in the area of the local authority serve the interests of looked after children and previously looked after children, children with disabilities and children with special educational needs, including any details of where problems have arisen;
 - b) an assessment of the effectiveness of Fair Access Protocols and co-ordination in their area, including how many children were admitted to each school under them.
3. We would be grateful if local authorities would follow the approach used in statutory provisions and in the Department for Education Statistical First Release¹ and the Education Middle School (England) Regulations 2002².
4. Local authorities are, of course, free to comment on any other matters not specifically addressed in this template if they wish to do so under section 3. The views expressed by local authorities in previous years also remain a matter of public record.
5. The report **must** be returned to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator by **30 June 2020**.

Information requested

¹ [Department for Education Statistical First Release](#)

² [The Education Middle School \(England\) Regulations 2002](#)

Section 1 - Normal point of admission

A. Co-ordination

| i. How well did co-ordination of the main admissions round work? | Not well | A large number of small problems or a major problem | Well with few small problems | Very well |
|---|----------|---|------------------------------|-----------|
| Reception | | | | x |
| Year 7 | | | | x |
| Other relevant years of entry | | | | x |
| ii. Please give examples to illustrate your answer if you wish: All applications were processed in line with Pan London co-ordination deadlines and offers made in accordance with the School Admissions Code on national offer day for reception high and junior places. All applicants that applied on time received an offer on national offer day. | | | | |

B. Looked after and previously looked after children

- i. How well does the admissions system in your local authority area serve the interests of looked after children at **normal points of admission**?

Not at all Not well Well Very well Not applicable³

- ii. How well do the admissions systems in other local authority areas serve the interests of children looked after by your local authority at **normal points of admission**?

Not at all Not well Well Very well Not applicable³

- iii. How well does your admissions system serve the interests of children who are looked after by other local authorities but educated in your area at **normal points of admission**?

Not at all Not well Well Very well Not applicable³

³ 'Not applicable' will only be appropriate if there are no children falling within this definition.

iv. How well does the admissions system in your local authority area serve the interests of previously looked after children at **normal points of admission**?

Not at all Not well Well Very well Not applicable³

v. Priority in admission arrangements for 2021 for adopted children previously in care abroad. Please comment on the use of a priority in admission arrangements for a child adopted who was previously in care abroad if you wish.

Priority is given under this criterion for all community schools in Ealing and 1 Foundation School. All remaining Academies, Foundation and Voluntary Aided schools have not given priority to adopted children previously in care abroad.

vi. If you wish to please give any examples of good or poor practice or difficulties which exemplify your answers about the admission to schools of looked after and previously looked after children at the **normal points of admission**:

Until the School Admissions code affords children that are previously looked after from abroad there will not be consistency in prioritising children that meet this criteria.

C. Special educational needs and disabilities

- i. Please provide any comments you wish to make on the admission of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities at the normal points of admission:

Admissions for children with an EHC Plan has been carried out in line with section 38(3) of the Children and Families Act (“**CAFA**”) 2014; whereby the Local Authority must secure a placement in the parents’/ carer’s or young person’s preferred setting. On rare occasions, where placement at preferred school has not been possible, the LA has ensured that the type of setting is in line with parental preference.

Children with EHCP may be admitting at different times throughout the academic year as following EHC needs assessment, a specialist provision may be deemed more appropriate.

Placement for children with an EHCP transitioning to High School have finalised by the 15th February. Similarly, young people transitioning to Post 16 have had their placement secured by 31st March.

Section 2 - In-year⁴ admissions

A. Co-ordination of in-year admissions

Please provide any comments on the co-ordination of **in year admissions** if you wish.

In-year co-ordination ensures that pupils who are without a school place are tracked and reduces the risk of pupils missing education. Were parents apply direct to schools the LA is reliant on each school providing details of applicants. In addition, co-ordination allows parents to apply for up to three schools on one application and be offered a place at the highest preference school. Applying direct to each school is more complicated for parents and could result in multiple offers for one child whilst other children receive no offer.

⁴ By in-year we mean admission at the start of any school year which is not a normal point of entry for the school concerned (for example at the beginning of Year 2 for a five to eleven primary school) and admission during the course of any school year after the end of the statutory waiting list period (ie 31 December) in normal years of admission.

B. Looked after children and previously looked after children

- i. How well does the **in-year admissions** system serve children who are looked after by your local authority and who are being educated in your area?

Not at all Not well Well Very well Not applicable⁵

- ii. How well do the **in-year admission** systems in other local authority areas serve the interests of your looked after children?

Not at all Not well Well Very well Not applicable⁶

- iii. How well does your **in-year admissions** system serve the interests of children who are looked after by other local authorities but educated in your area?

Not at all Not well Well Very well Not applicable⁶

- iv. How well does your **in-year admissions** system serve the interests of previously looked after children?

Not at all Not well Well Very well Not applicable⁶

- v. If you wish please give examples of any good or poor practice or difficulties which support or exemplify your answers about **in-year admissions** for looked after and previously looked after children:

Ealing LA in-year admissions has strong local protocols that all in-borough schools are signed up to. Therefore, it is able to be fast and efficient. Schools and services, both the in-year Admissions and other relevant services, such as the local alternative provision work in a partnership and communication and advice between all parties is swift and always helpful, working together in the interest of the child.

In other LAs, the in-year Admission's team can work more separately from AP and/or services and in those cases, it can require a greater level of communication with providers to ensure an appropriate education provision or school is secured.

In some cases, where the local context is more complex or fragmented, contact with other virtual school heads can be helpful in ensuring admission applications for looked after children are prioritised.

Unfortunately, in a recent out borough case, in spite of many attempts to gain the support of the LA and in spite of the school's support for an alternative plan, an Ealing looked after child with an EHCP was permanently excluded from a

⁵ 'Not applicable' will only be appropriate if there are no children falling within this definition.

⁶ 'Not applicable' will only be appropriate if there are no children falling within this definition.

mainstream school and not offered an alternative provision as per the DFE guidance. We believe that this was due to poor communication between In-year Admissions and SEN Services in the borough and a lack of action and/or understanding of the DFE exclusion guidance in respect of looked after children with SEN.

This is not usually our experience of most LAs in-year Admissions. The best practice is always underpinned by effective and supportive communication, good local protocols and shared ownership of the need for speedy admission to the most appropriate educational provision between all parties involved.

C. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities

- i. How well served are children with special educational needs and/or disabilities who have an education health and care plan that names a school when they need to be **admitted in-year**?

Not at all Not well Well Very well Not applicable⁶

- ii. How well served are children with special educational needs and/or disabilities who do not have an education health and care plan when they need to be **admitted in-year**?

Not at all Not well Well Very well Don't know

- iii. Please give examples of good or poor practice or difficulties which support or exemplify your answers about **in-year admissions** for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities:

Large demand on special school placements means that children who have undergone assessment in-year, may need to remain in waiting list until a place becomes available in a special school. In such cases, full time funding has been granted to ensure that identified needs can be fully met within a mainstream setting

- iv. If you wish please provide any comments about **in-year admissions** in respect of other children:

D. Fair access protocol

i. Has your fair access protocol been agreed⁷ with the majority of state-funded mainstream schools in your area?

Yes for primary

Yes for secondary

ii. If you have not been able to tick both boxes above, please explain why:

iii. How many children were admitted to schools in your area under the fair access protocol between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020?

| Type of school | Number of children admitted | |
|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| | Primary aged children | Secondary aged children |
| Community and voluntary controlled | 3 | 5 |
| Foundation, voluntary aided and academies | 0 | 10 |
| Total | 3 | 15 |

iv. How well do you consider hard to place children are served by the fair access protocol in your area?

Not at all Not well Well Very well Not applicable⁸

v. Please make any relevant comment on the protocol not covered above if you wish.

The in-year admissions team work very closely with Ealing Alternative Provision, with the Head of EAP chairing the Fair Access Panel. This ensures that difficult to place children who require additional support are able to access services quickly and efficiently. The remaining panel members include the mainstream school Head's/SLT, who are fully involved and committed to working co-operatively in making decisions that are in the best interests of the children that are referred.

E. Any other comments on the admission of children **in-year** not previously raised if you wish.

None

⁷ An existing protocol remains binding on all schools up until the point at which a new one is adopted.

⁸ 'Not applicable' would mean that there were no hard to place children for which the protocol was required.

Section 3 - Other matters

Are there any other matters that the local authority would like to raise that have not been covered by the questions above?

None

Section 4 - Feedback

We would be grateful if you could provide any feedback on completing this report to inform our practice for 2021.

Thank you for completing this template.

Please return to Lisa Short at OSA.Team@schoolsadjudicator.gov.uk by 30 June 2020