



Office of  
the Schools  
Adjudicator

**LOCAL AUTHORITY REPORT  
TO  
THE SCHOOLS ADJUDICATOR  
FROM  
WANDSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**30 JUNE 2021**

**Report Cleared by: Ana Popovici,  
Director of Children's Services**

**Date submitted: 30 June 2021  
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**[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-of-the-schools-adjudicator](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-of-the-schools-adjudicator)**

**Please email your completed report to: [osa.team@schoolsadjudicator.gov.uk](mailto:osa.team@schoolsadjudicator.gov.uk)  
by 30 June 2021 and earlier if possible**

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## Introduction and guidance on completing the report

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.

2. This template requests the same information as that set out in the revised template we sent on 15 April 2020:

- a) information about how admission arrangements in 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 should be grateful if local authorities would follow the approach used in statutory provisions and in the Department for Education Statistical First Release<sup>1</sup> and the Education Middle School (England) Regulations 2002<sup>2</sup>.

4. In the template last year we did not ask about the determination of admission arrangements because of continued constraints on local authorities. Again, we have not asked for that information this year, but we intend to return to this area in future years given the importance of determination and checking compliance of all admission authorities. It is a key role for the local authority's leadership to encourage schools to determine arrangements in line with the provisions in the Code.

5. We welcome all comments that local authorities make in the comment boxes and we aim to reflect those comments in the Annual Report, but we ask for the comments to be entered under the right headings. Section 3 invites comment on any other matters not specifically addressed in this template if local authorities wish to do so. The views expressed in previous years also remain a matter of public record.

6. We ask that where possible, you return the template in Word instead of PDF formatting. A number of you have commented on the formatting of the template and we have tried to make it as accessible as possible, but we are aware that some local authorities use different versions of Word.

7. The report **must** be returned to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator by **30 June 2021**.

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<sup>1</sup> [Department for Education Statistical First Release](#)

<sup>2</sup> [The Education Middle School \(England\) Regulations 2002](#)

## Information requested

### 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				Y
Year 7				Y
Other relevant years of entry				Y

ii. Please give examples to illustrate your answer if you wish:

- **A simpler system for parents to understand**
  - **Common closing dates and offer date**
  - **One form/online application**
  - **One offer of school place on National Offer Day thereby increasing offer of preferred school to more families**
  - **LA Admissions Team as main point of contact.**
- **Close partnership working with all state funded schools and the LA**
  - **Co-operation of all schools**
  - **Open accountability for own admission authority schools including quality assurance of ranked application lists. All late submissions and queries were resolved in good-time ahead of pan-London deadlines for submission.**
  - **LA continues to administer waiting lists from National Offer Day to 31 August with school input where necessary eg faith or medical/social applications.**
- **Inter LA working**
  - **A prime example of close working between LAs on a regional basis leading to the development of the Pan London Admissions Hub and London Eadmissions Portal.**

#### 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 applicable<sup>3</sup>

- 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 applicable<sup>3</sup>

- 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 applicable<sup>3</sup>

- 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 applicable<sup>3</sup>

- v. Priority in admission arrangements for 2022 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:

**Arrangements varied to introduce this priority for 2021 and 2022 as required by the new Admissions Code.**

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

**As required by the Admissions Code, looked after children and previous looked after children have first priority in the published admission criteria of maintained schools and academies. In the main managed rounds (Reception and Secondary Transfer), this has served the interests of LAC and previous LAC very well. All have been offered their first preference school.**

### C. Special educational needs and/or disabilities

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

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

**Pupils with an EHCP or statement of SEN are not considered under the mainstream admissions process and are covered by separate legislation. Six of Wandsworth's seven special schools are judged outstanding or good by Ofsted. There are also 18 resource bases, meaning that overall children are extremely well served in terms of admissions options. Mainstream schools and standalone academies accept statemented children readily where they can demonstrably meet their needs but there are some difficulties placing children in academies run by larger chains.**

**For children who have disabilities and/or special educational needs but who do not have an education health and care plan or a statement of special educational needs, most admission authorities have an exceptional social/medical need criterion if there is an exceptional need to attend a particular school.**

## **Section 2 - In-year<sup>4</sup> admissions**

### **A. Co-ordination of in-year admissions**

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

**Wandsworth continues to operate a centralised application system so parents need only make one application. Where it is not possible to offer a preferred school, applicants will be offered an alternative school or advised of schools with vacancies as appropriate.**

**This has been effective in seeking to ensure that all children changing schools or moving into the area can secure a school place. Following on from statutory co-ordination, it has enabled the monitoring and tracking of applications in order to safeguard pupils at a time when they can be most vulnerable to missing education.**

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<sup>4</sup> 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 (31 December) in normal years of admission.

**B. Looked after children and previously looked after children**

i. How well does the **in-year admission** 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 applicable<sup>5</sup>

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 applicable<sup>5</sup>

iii. How well does your **in-year admission** 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 applicable<sup>5</sup>

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

Not at all  Not well  Well  Very well  Not applicable<sup>5</sup>

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:

**As required by the Admissions Code, looked after children and previous looked after children have first priority in the published admission criteria of maintained schools and academies. This has served the interests of LAC and previous LAC well.**

**It would be helpful to have clarity within the Admissions Code, around the expectation that schools should admit LAC and previous LAC over number where they are the preferred school.**

**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 applicable<sup>5</sup>

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

- 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 any 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:

**Pupils with an EHCP or statement of SEN are not considered under the mainstream admissions process and are covered by separate legislation. Six of Wandsworth's seven special schools are judged outstanding or good by Ofsted. There are also 18 resource bases, meaning that overall children are extremely well served in terms of admissions options. Mainstream schools and standalone academies accept statemented children readily where they can demonstrably meet their needs but there are some difficulties placing children in academies run by larger chains.**

**For children who have disabilities and/or special educational needs but who do not have an education health and care plan or a statement of special educational needs, most admission authorities have an exceptional social/medical need criterion if there is an exceptional need to attend a particular school.**

- 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 agreed<sup>6</sup> 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:

<sup>6</sup> An existing protocol remains binding on all schools up until the point at which a new one is adopted.



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

Type of school	Number of Primary aged children admitted	Number of Secondary aged children admitted
Community and voluntary controlled	0	5
Foundation, voluntary aided and academies	0	16
Total	0	21

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 applicable<sup>7</sup>

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

**Wandsworth LA co-ordinates the secondary phase in-year fair access protocol through the Wandsworth Improving Behaviour & Attendance Partnership which includes representation from all secondary schools, the secondary PRU and officers from the LA Inclusion Service. There is generally a good level of engagement by schools and very few cases are discussed at meetings as work to place pupils is conducted between times as an early intervention to prevent drift and delay. This is also effective as not all schools attend partnership meetings on a regular basis.**

**A revised primary in-year fair access process was introduced from 2017-18 to improve admissions for hard to place children and ensure that such children are admitted equitably across schools. Fair Access Panel members are drawn from headteacher nominations together with representatives from the Primary PRU and LA Inclusion Service and Pupil Services section. As with the secondary protocol, there is good level of engagement from schools.**

**A challenge in both primary and secondary phases lies in ensuring the system is equitable and fair with all schools participating fully in the process.**

**E. If you wish, any other comments on the admission of children in-year not previously raised:**

<sup>7</sup> '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 2022.

None

Thank you for completing this template.

Please return to [OSA.Team@schoolsadjudicator.gov.uk](mailto:OSA.Team@schoolsadjudicator.gov.uk) by 30 June 2021