

**Local Authority Report**

to

**The Schools Adjudicator**

from

**London Borough of Newham**

**Report Cleared by: Peter Gibb**

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**Date submitted: 1 December 2022**

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**Information requested**

# [Section 1 - Normal point of admission](#Text69)

## Co-ordination

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. 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 |  |

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

Atypical admissions into UTCs and Studio schools continue to create some challenges for all stakeholders including families, as the process is led by the school funding agreement rather than the Admissions Code. The most significant being timelines different to other normal admission rounds, information sharing pre/post offer and the fact schools have different normal points of entry making the process unclear for families.

The problems could be easily resolved if these types of schools had to follow the secondary normal admission elements of the Code.

All-through schools also poise challenges for secondary transition as whilst the expectation is that children move up from year 6 to year 7, many families opt to take up their right to express a preference for other schools meaning on offer day they unlike other families may actually have two school options for September – a preferred school and a place at their existing school. It is also a challenge when explaining the number of places available for year 7.

The Code should have a section relating to all-through schools detailing at which stage an offer or place can be withdrawn and this would need to be reflected in the reasons for removal from roll for attendance and CME purposes.

## Looked after and previously looked after children

1. How 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

* + 1. How 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

* + 1. How 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

* + 1. How 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

* + 1. Please confirm that your local authority has included children adopted from state care outside England in its definition of previously looked after children in admission arrangements for schools for which it is the admission authority

Yes No Not applicable

* + 1. How confident are you that all other admission authorities in your area have included children adopted from state care outside England in their definitions of previously looked after children in admission arrangements for schools for which they are the admission authority?

Confident all have  Confident some have Not aware of whether all or some have Not applicable

|  |
| --- |
| vii If you wish, please give 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**:  Successful and timely placements are a result of the strong and positive working partnership between the admissions and the virtual school teams, with timely identification. |

## Special educational needs and/or disabilities

# 

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:

A strong and positive partnership between the admissions team and the 0-25 SEND Service throughout the normal admission process delivers positive outcomes for the majority of families and delivers robust data sharing.

Late identification of named schools for children with statutory assessment that are not complete by national offer day can be a challenge impacting on places being offered above PAN (in the main due arrivals to years 2 and 6) and the later potential impact at appeals for other families without a plan, as prejudice may be difficult to prove.

# Section 2 - In-year admissions

## **Effect of Code changes on in-year admissions**

Please provide any comments you wish to make on the effect of the changes to the Code’s provisions for in-year admissions. It would be particularly helpful to have comments on whether you think the changes have made it easier or not for parents to secure places for children in-year?

As we have always operated full co-ordination across the borough for all types of schools, the impact of the changes to the Code were minimal.

Whilst the changes have made the national position stronger key points for which the Code is still silent remain a challenge:

PAN - only applying to normal points of entry: it was hoped that whilst schools do commonly agree to adopt PAN as their admission limit for all other year groups changes the Code to reflect this would have made for a transparent and clear position for all parties, including families. With no published limit it is possible (but does not occur locally) that a child is a refused a place because the school is ‘full’ but there is no published definition of what ‘full’ actually means.

Application forms – whilst it is clear the reason behind the limitations of what information can be requested on an application form, this is a barrier to FAP and ensuring children are placed in suitable schools.

Data sharing – to deliver robust places available information and safeguard children there should be a requirement to share ‘start date’ information within XX days of offer.

Looked after children – the Code should make it clear if a school should admit even at their ‘admission limit’ or if the child should be added to the number one place on the waiting list.

Looked after children – how should an LA manage a maintained school who refuses to admit, as direction is not an option?

Waiting lists – still no clarity regarding the requirements for in year.

Consequences – the Code needs to include advice on what happens if a school does not comply with the requirements.

## **Looked after children and previously looked after children**

1. How 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

1. How 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

1. How 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

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

Not at all Not well Well Very well Not applicable

|  |
| --- |
| 1. If you wish, please give examples of any good or poor practice or difficulties which support or exemplify your answers about **in-year admissions** forlooked after and previously looked after children:   Predominantly successful and timely placements are a result of the strong and positive working partnership between the admissions team and the virtual school with timely identification.  Challenges occur when schools state they are full and will add the child to the top of the waiting list, as per the Code. |

## **Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities**

* + 1. 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 well Not well Well Very well  Not applicable

* + 1. 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 well Not well Well Very well Do not know

|  |
| --- |
| * + 1. 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:   The key challenges are in relation to the growing numbers of children with significant needs in mainstream classrooms and the pressure this can create on staff, resources and budgets where the notional funding is deemed as insufficient.  In year new arrivals from outside of England pose particular challenges as the Code does not allow a child’s needs to be considered when naming a school. This means the majority of arrivals, irrespective of their level of need, are placed in the schools with vacancies. |

|  |
| --- |
| * + 1. If you wish, please provide any comments about **in-year admissions** in respect of other children:   In year admissions works really well as all schools (maintained and academies) have always participated in the LA’s co-ordination. This means we have only one form per child, clear and transparent process with children being placed quickly in their highest possible preferred school. Where preference cannot be met we immediately know an alternative allocation is required (if they are not currently on roll at another local school). This is particularly important for families where English is not their first language or they have literacy challenge. |

## Fair access protocol

1. Do you have a fair access protocol agreed with the majority of state-funded mainstream schools in your area?

Yes for primary

Yes for secondary

|  |
| --- |
| 1. If you have not been able to tick both boxes above, please explain why: |

1. How many children were admitted to schools in your area under the fair access protocol between 1 August 2021 and 31 July 2022?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Type of school | Number of Primary aged children admitted | Number of Secondary aged children admitted |
| Community and voluntary controlled | 1 | 8 (6 of which are to the PRU) |
| Foundation, voluntary aided and academies | 2 | 7 |
| Total | 3 | 15 |

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

Not at all well Not well Well Very well Not applicable

|  |
| --- |
| 1. Please provide any comments you wish on the protocol not covered above. It would be particularly helpful to have any comments on the impact of the Code changes on the operation of the FAP in your area and the ability to secure places for vulnerable children:   The application of 3.10 can be very challenging with the limitations on the information that can be gathered at the point of application. If it is established at the admission meeting it is almost impossible to withdraw the offer as none of the conditions of the Code apply.  In general whilst FAP appears clear, the language used and other conditions of the Code means it is very difficult to apply. |

1. **Directions**

How many directions did the local authority make between 1 August 2021 and 31 July 2022 to maintained schools for which the local authority is not the admission authority to admit children (including children looked after by the local authority but resident in another area)?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Total Number of children | Of which, looked after | Of which, not looked after |
| 0 | N/A | N/A |

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

# 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?

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| --- |
| This annual report could be improved if LAs were given benchmarks to determine the outcomes for the well, very well etc. questions.  Also I think it could focus on more specific areas that are challenging. |

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# Section 4 - Feedback

We would be grateful if you could provide any feedback on completing this report to inform our practice for 2023.

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| --- |
| An electronic version would be preferable. |

Thank you for completing this template.

Please return to [Office of the Schools Adjudicator](mailto:OSA.Team@schoolsadjudicator.gov.uk) by 31October 2022