



Office of
the Schools
Adjudicator

**Template for
Local Authority Report
to
The Schools Adjudicator
from**

**Brent Local Authority
to be provided by
31 October 2025**

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**Please email your completed report to: [Office of the Schools Adjudicator](#) by
31 October 2025 and earlier if possible**

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Introduction

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 the annual report to the Secretary of State for Education. The School Admissions Code (the Code) sets out the requirements for reports by local authorities in paragraph 6. Paragraph 3.30 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. Paragraphs 6 and 3.30 of the Code require that each local authority publish its report locally.
2. **This year's report must cover the 2024/2025 academic year and be submitted to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator (OSA) by 31 October 2025.**
3. Please note that, in response to feedback on the previous template and in the light of consultation with a group of local authorities, changes have been made to various sections of this year's template.

Guidance on completing the template

4. We have included all the guidance on completing specific parts of the template in this section. There is no requirement for local authorities to include the introduction and the guidance in their published reports, but they are free to do so if they wish.
5. We should be grateful if in completing questions which ask for information about primary and secondary schools and/or pupils, local authorities would follow the approach to classification of schools used in statutory provisions and in the Department for Education Statistical First Release¹ and the Education Middle School (England) Regulations 2002².
6. The Code sets out some minimum requirements on the contents of each local authority report stating that each must cover as a minimum "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."
7. The Department for Education's aim through the annual reports from local authorities is to understand how well the admissions system is working nationally, rather than to hold individual local authorities to account. By understanding the effectiveness of the system, including outcomes, the Department hopes to identify areas where the admissions system is working well and areas where it could be improved. With that in mind, when the template asks, "how well does the admission system serve the needs of

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

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

children,” the Department appreciates that it is asking local authorities to make a subjective judgement, in the understanding that everyone’s experience with the admission system will be different. The Department encourages local authorities in responding to the open questions and spaces for open comments to set out challenges that are proving difficult to overcome.

8. Guidance on specific questions and/or meaning of specific terms in this report:

- a. “in-year admissions”: This means admissions (that is children admitted to a school and not applications for places):
 - i. to a year group which is not a normal point of entry for the school concerned (for example to Year 2 for a five to eleven primary school); and
 - ii. after the end of the statutory waiting list period (31 December) to a year group which is a normal year of admission for the schools concerned (such as Year R and Year 7).
- b. Not applicable means that there were no children falling within the relevant definition.

9. 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.

10. 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.

11. Where questions request a comparison with the previous year, any new local authorities formed as a result of reorganisation should note this on the form.

Information requested

Section 1 - Normal points of admission

A. Co-ordination

Which of the following best describes the level of challenge for your **main admissions round in 24/25 compared to 23/24?**

Year Group	Much less challenging	Less challenging	No change	More challenging	Much more challenging
Reception			✓		
Year 7			✓		
Other relevant years of entry			✓		

Please give examples to illustrate your answer if you wish:

There were no significant challenges during any of the co-ordination rounds in 2024/25. During co-ordination for Year 7 admissions in 2023/24 the Pan London co-ordinated iteration process was interrupted and had to be reset due to an issue in another local authority area. However, as all London Boroughs test and train for such an eventuality, this did not present any significant problems in Brent.

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

- 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

- 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

- 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

- v. 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**:

The requirement for all admission authorities to prioritise admissions of looked after or previously looked after children means these children routinely receive their highest preference, even if applications are received after the closing date.

The Commissioning Resources Team works in partnership with social work teams to prioritise looked after children's education when making placement decisions to establish whether a looked after child is able to remain in their current school or whether a new school place application is required. This includes decisions about placements both before and after key school years, for example Year 11.

Brent has a strong Virtual School that liaises with admissions authorities (including those of individual schools) to ensure looked after children obtain a school place as soon as possible

The London Inter Authority Admissions Group (LIAAG) has an agreed process for confirming the LAC/PLAC status of children to ensure there is no confusion when applications are sent to neighbouring authorities, and they are ranked correctly.

C. 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 at **normal points of admission**?

☐ Not at all ☐ Not well ☐ Well ☒ Very well ☐ Not applicable

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:

The Brent Admissions Team works closely with Brent's Inclusion Service to achieve positive outcomes for children with an Education, Health and Care Plan or requiring SEN Support. This also includes working with Brent's mainstream schools and Brent's School Attendance Service to ensure schools admit children in a timely way.

The School Admissions Team also works directly with each school involved in co-ordination to ensure any children with EHCPs from other local authority areas are considered in a timely way when reserving places, as these children are often not known to Brent services.

Section 2 - In-year admissions

A. Which of the following best describes the overall level of challenge for your in-year admissions in 24/25 compared to 23/24?

Phase	Much less challenging	Less challenging	No change	More challenging	Much more challenging
Primary			✓		
Secondary			✓		

If you wish, please explain the factors that have changed the level of challenge for your in-year admissions:

In 2024/25 we have continued to place children in higher year groups (years 9, 10 and 11) via Fair Access protocols. A new protocol was introduced in September 2024 in partnership with Brent schools, and the local authority has worked very well since then with secondary schools to ensure hard to place children receive a school placement quickly.

The Brent School estate currently has sufficient built capacity to meet in year demand for Primary and Secondary school places. This is supported by the Brent School Place Planning Strategy 2024 – 2028 which is refreshed annually, and which supports the effective oversight of school place sufficiency across the borough. The latest refresh of the strategy indicates potential future pressures in higher years groups from 2028/2029 and for which planning will commence to address. This will include having conversations with the secondary academies that are operating below their built capacity which limits the number of children who can be placed after the normal year of entry. Forward planning is required as secondary schools need time to recruit teachers and open additional classroom capacity in order to meet additional pupil numbers.

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

- ii. How well does 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

- iii. How well does the **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

- 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

- 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:

Looked after children in Brent continue to be very well supported by social work teams and Brent Virtual School staff who strongly advocate for them to receive a place at a good or outstanding school, and who are proactive in engaging with other relevant admission authorities.

We have good links with admission authorities in our neighbouring boroughs and across London which help support cross-border LAC in year admissions, where necessary.

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 well ☐ Not well ☐ Well ☒ Very well ☐ Not applicable

- 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 well ☐ Not well ☐ Well ☒ Very well ☐ Do not 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:

The local authority where required, responds to and supports Brent mainstream schools who may be reluctant to admit a child with an EHCP or requiring SEN support because of the immediate difficulties in meeting their needs in a safe way for both the child and other children at the school. This response has been developed as a protocol collaboration between the School Admissions Team, The School Attendance Service and the Inclusion Service. It aims to ensure children

with special educational needs receive the support they require to transition to new schools and that any delays for admission into a mainstream school are kept to an absolute minimum.

D. Fair access protocol

What proportion of the state-funded mainstream schools in your area have said that they agree to the local authority fair access protocol?

Primary

Between 0% and 49% ☐

Between 50% and 74% ☐

Between 75% and 89% ☐

Between 90% and 99% ☐

100% ☒

Secondary

Between 0% and 49% ☐

Between 50% and 74% ☐

Between 75% and 89% ☐

Between 90% and 99% ☐

100% ☒

If you have below 75% for either phase, please explain why:

A new Fair Access protocol has been developed and agreed with schools in the 2023/2024 academic year and implemented in September 2024.

- i. How many children were admitted to schools in your area under the fair access protocol between 1 August 2024 and 31 July 2025?

Type of school	Number of Primary aged children admitted	Number of Secondary aged children admitted
Community and voluntary controlled		0
Foundation, voluntary aided and academies		152
Total		152

- ii. If you have seen a change in the number of children referred to your Fair Access Protocol between 1 August 2024 and 31 July 2025 compared to the previous academic year please indicate what you consider the key reasons for this change to be?

The number of children referred to Fair Access in 2024/25 fell from the figure from 2023/24 (221) but is still well above the figure from 2022/23 (51). We continue to experience difficulties in placing children in higher year groups through the in-year process (years 9, 10 and 11) and the majority of applications from children without a school place are referred to the Panel.

The reduction in numbers may be attributed to the School Admissions Team working more closely with schools identified as having vacancies and working to place children outside Fair Access as much as possible. The DfE School Attendance data now available to local authorities helps us more easily identify vacancies and monitor start dates for children placed via Fair Access.

- iii. How well do you consider children referred to the Fair Access Protocol are served in in your area?

☐ Not at all well ☐ Not well ☐ Well ☒ Very well ☐ Not applicable

- iv. Please provide any comments you wish on the protocol not covered above:

The local authority has worked very well with secondary schools in implementing its new Fair Access Protocol and streamlining the processes and reporting required to manage the Fair Access meetings.

Fair Access Panel meetings are regularly well attended, and panel members engage very well in debating and agreeing placement for children who are hard to place and out of school.

E. Directions to maintained schools to admit children³

How many directions did the local authority make between 1 August 2024 and 31 July 2025 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	0	0

F. Other points on in-year admissions

- i. For the schools for which the local authority co-ordinates in-year applications, in the year between 1 Aug 2024 and 31 July 2025 did you receive

- ☐ Significantly fewer applications than last year
☐ slightly fewer applications than last year
☒ about the same
☐ slightly more than last year
☐ significantly more than last year

- ii. For what proportion of **primary** schools in your area did the local authority co-ordinate in-year admissions during the 2024/2025 academic year

- Between 0% and 24% ☐
Between 25% and 49% ☐
Between 50% and 74% ☒
Between 75% and 100% ☐

- iii. For what proportion of **secondary** schools in your area did the local authority co-ordinate in-year admissions during the 2024/2025 academic year

- Between 0% and 24% ☐
Between 25% and 49% ☒
Between 50% and 74% ☐
Between 75% and 100% ☐

³ It is important that only Directions to maintained schools are included here. Numbers of Directions to academies are already held by the Department.

iv. If you wish, please provide any comments about how **well in-year admissions** works for children who are **not** looked after or previously looked after and/or do **not** have SEND:

The local authority co-ordinates in-year admissions for all its community schools as well as a number of academies, foundation and voluntary aided schools.

Children's details are added to school waiting lists or preference offers are made as appropriate. Children without a preference offer and identified as being without a current school place will either receive an offer at an alternative school within a reasonable distance or will be referred to our Choice Access and Fair Access Interview assessment centre (for children in Years 10 and 11 who are new arrivals to the country) or the Fair Access Panel (for all other children). CAFAI and Fair Access Panels take place regularly and children referred are found a suitable placement.

v. If you wish, please provide any other comments on the admission of children **in-year** not previously raised (you may wish to include here any comments about cases where it has not proved possible to find places for children):

The School Admissions Code does not go far enough to support local authorities in ensuring they can meet their statutory duty to provide sufficient school places in their areas. The assertion that the Published Admission Number only applies to normal points of entry means that schools are free to reduce their admission numbers following the normal year of entry. While this supports the school with operational efficiencies, it means that some children requiring in-year placements face delays to their admissions.

Brent as a local authority has referred very high numbers of children, particularly in Year 10 and 11 to the Fair Access Panel because there are no vacancies in schools in the area. This is despite the Brent school estate having more than sufficient built capacity. Where we have approached schools to open up additional capacity, we have found on several occasions that schools are either unwilling to expand due to the perceived negative impact this may have on the school which is currently functioning well, or because of the difficulties in recruiting additional teaching staff. Other schools who may be willing to expand may be put off by the uncertainties around whether a new class would be undersubscribed, leading to further financial difficulties.

The local authority would welcome taking responsibility for the co-ordination of in-year admissions for all schools in its area to make the system easier for parents and to ensure children get a timely in-year offer.

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?

We hope that any future revision of the School Admissions Code would clarify in-year admission arrangements for looked after and previously looked after children and provide clear timescales for schools to admit children once an in-year offer or fair access placement has been made.

Section 4 - Feedback

We would be grateful if you could provide any feedback on completing this report to inform our practice for 2026.

Thank you for completing this template.

Please return to [Office of the Schools Adjudicator](#) by 31 October 2025