



Office of
the Schools
Adjudicator

Local Authority Report

to

The Schools Adjudicator

from

Brent Local Authority

to be provided by

30 June 2020

Report Cleared by: Brian Grady

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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**.

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

² [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				✓
Year 7				✓
Other relevant years of entry				✓
ii. Please give examples to illustrate your answer if you wish:				
Lines of communication between schools and the local authority are very well established which meant it was very easy for all parties to resolve any queries.				

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.

The local authority introduced a priority for adopted children previously in care abroad to its admission arrangements for all community schools for September 2020. No requests were made to the local authority for children to be categorised under this criteria, but the local authority feels it is an important addition to admission arrangements, and will continue to give priority to these children in future admission rounds and for in-year admissions.

It would be helpful for parents, and would avoid confusion, if the Admissions Code could be revised to make this a requirement for all schools to include.

- 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**:

Communication between Brent and local schools and neighbouring local authorities regarding applications for looked after and previously looked after children is very good. The London Inter Authority Admissions Group has done a lot of positive work to improve communication and the application process between London boroughs.

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:

The Brent Admissions Team works closely with the Brent Special Education Needs Assessment Service and the SENDIAS service to achieve positive outcomes for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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.

The local authority co-ordinates in year admissions for some own-admission authority schools, but not all of them. If the local authority was required to co-ordinate in year admissions for all schools, it would create a simpler, single point of access for parents to make an application. This is particularly important in a borough as diverse as Brent where English is not the first language of a large number of parents, and where parents may struggle to understand how to make an application. From a safeguarding perspective, it would allow the local authority to ensure that all children without a school place are known to the admissions team and can be allocated a school place accordingly.

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?

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.

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

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:

The London Inter Authority Admissions Group have agreed a guide for the application and admissions process for Looked After Children, based on information from the School Admissions Code.

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:

Brent Admissions Team works closely with the local SENDIAS team where there are concerns about children with special educational needs and/or a disability who do not have an education, health and care plan and who are out of school or who would benefit from moving to a different school.

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

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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	0	0
Foundation, voluntary aided and academies	0	24
Total	0	24

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.

For the vast majority of children the process works well. However, in a small number of cases schools are sometimes reluctant to accept Year 11 children (for example due to

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.

safeguarding concerns or a lack of information from predecessor schools for those new to the borough/country) and each year a small number (3-5) are placed in alternative provision.

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

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?

The local authority welcomes the recent consultation on a revised School Admissions Code, which provides more detailed statutory guidance around In Year Admissions and the Fair Access process.

Section 4 - Feedback

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

While the reasons for providing a reduced report template this year are understood, the local authority would welcome a return to the full report for 2021.

Thank you for completing this template.

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