



Office of
the Schools
Adjudicator

Local Authority Report

To

The Schools Adjudicator

From

Harrow Local Authority

30 June 2018

**Report Cleared by (Name & Title): Patrick O'Dwyer, Divisional Director
Education Services**

Date submitted: 27 June 2018

**By (Name & Title): Rajeshree Parmar, Head of School Organisation,
Admissions and Attendance**

Contact email address: raj.parmar@harrow.gov.uk

Telephone number: 020 8416 8286

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

Please email your completed report to: osa.team@osa.gsi.gov.uk by **30 June 2018 and earlier if possible**

Introduction

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 of 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 issues. The report **must** be returned to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator by **30 June 2018**.

The report to the Secretary of State for 2017 highlighted that at the normal points of admission the main admissions rounds for entry to schools work well. The Chief Adjudicator expressed less confidence that the needs of children who need a place outside the normal admissions rounds were so well met. In order to test this concern, local authorities are therefore asked to differentiate their answers in this year's report between the main admissions round and in year admissions¹. The order of this template for the annual report by local authorities reflects this.

Information requested

1. Normal point of admission

A. Determined arrangements

- i. Please specify the date your local authority determined its arrangements for admissions in 2019 for its voluntary controlled and community schools. Please state if this question is not applicable as there are no voluntary controlled or community schools in the local authority area.

28/02/2018

- ii. Please specify the date the determined arrangements for voluntary controlled and community schools were published on the local authority's website. Say if not applicable.

28/02/2018

¹ 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.

iii. What proportion of arrangements for own admission schools was provided to the local authority by 15 March?

Not applicable None Minority Majority All

	Primary including middle deemed primary	Secondary including middle deemed secondary	All through
iv. How many sets of admission arrangements of schools that are their own admission authority were queried directly by your local authority because they were considered not to comply with the Code?	None	None	None
v. If, when you considered arrangements for own admission authority schools for 2019, you had any concerns about Code compliance, please indicate which paragraphs of the Code you thought were mainly being breached. N/A			
vi. Further comment: please provide any comments on the determination of admission arrangements not covered above.			

B. Co-ordination

i. Provision of rankings: what proportion of own admission authority schools provided their rankings correctly undertaken by the agreed date?

Not applicable None Minority Majority All

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
ii. Reception				✓
iii. Year 7				✓
iv. Other relevant years of entry				✓
v. Please give examples to illustrate your answer: All pupils were offered a place on National Offer Day.				

C. Looked after and previously looked after children

- i. How well do admission arrangements 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 admission arrangements in other local authority areas serve the interests of your looked after children at normal points of admission?

Not at all Not well Well Very well Not applicable

- iii. How well do admission arrangements 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

- iv. Please give examples of good or poor practice or difficulties which support your answer, and provide any suggestions for improvement:

All our schools respond quickly to requests to place Children in Care and work closely with us to ensure children start school as quickly as possible.

D. Special educational needs and disabilities

- i. How well served are children with disabilities and/or special educational needs who have an education health and care plan or a statement of special educational needs that names a school at normal points of admission?

Not at all Not well Well Very well Not applicable

- ii. How well served are children with disabilities and/or special educational needs who do not have an education health and care plan or a statement of special educational needs at normal points of admission?

Not at all Not well Well Very well Not applicable

iii. Please give examples of good or poor practice or difficulties which support your answer, and provide any suggestions for improvement.

Before allocating places we liaise with our SEN department to obtain the details of pupils who have a statement or an EHC plan and the school that is being named. We reserve places for these pupils before allocating the remaining places.

For pupils with disabilities and/or special educational needs who do not have an education health and care plan or a statement of special educational needs, most schools in the local authority have a social/medical criterion which allows these needs to be considered in accordance with their oversubscription criteria. All Harrow schools are expected to meet the needs of children who do not have an EHC plan.

2. In year admissions

A. The number of in year admissions. We are asking for two years' data for comparative purposes. If you do not have the data for the year 1/9/16 to 31/8/17 available, please still provide the data for 1/9/17 to 31/3/18.

i.	Primary aged children	Secondary aged children
Number of in year admissions between 1/9/17 and 31/3/18	1340 pupils were offered a place, that was accepted and the pupil started at the school	590 pupils were offered a place, that was accepted and the pupil started at the school
Number of in year admissions between 1/9/16 and 31/8/17	1820 pupils were offered a place, that was accepted and the pupil started at the school	727 pupils were offered a place, that was accepted and the pupil started at the school
The reasons for children seeking in year admission will vary across the country. What do you consider to be the main reasons in your area?	These are mainly pupils who have moved into an area or moved within Harrow requesting a place. There are also some parents who want to send heir child to a specific school(s) so will submit an application annually.	

ii. The Code requires the setting of a published admission number (PAN) for each normal year of entry. In the annual reports for 2017 several local authorities referred to problems in relation to in year admissions when schools which are their own admission authority refuse to admit applicants even if the year group concerned contains fewer children than the relevant PAN suggested could be accommodated. This was referred to sometimes as 'capping' in-year admissions and local authorities observed that it reduced the number of places available below that anticipated by the local authority. Please comment on your experience as a local authority.

Schools in Harrow have not advised the local authority that they are “capping” their PAN for in-year admissions. We are however, working with a small number of primary schools where the demand for places in the area has reduced. This has had an impact on the number of applications that the schools have received and so we have agreed to work to lower PANs, where parental preference and the ability of the local authority to offer all applicants a place at a school within a reasonable distance is not affected. The schools that we are working with also know that if the demand changes they will be required to reopen classes.

B. Co-ordination of in year admissions

i. To what proportion of community and voluntary controlled schools does the local authority delegate responsibility for in year admissions?

- a) Primary: Not applicable None Minority Majority All
b) Secondary: Not applicable None Minority Majority All
c) All-through: Not applicable None Minority Majority All

d) What do you consider to be the advantages and disadvantages of delegating responsibility for in year admissions (where applicable)?

Where in-year admissions are not co-ordinated, parents need to complete multiple applications for individual schools and co-ordinate the process themselves. New arrivals could find this a difficult process without having access to independent advice. Schools could establish different procedures in place for allocating places and this might slow the process down for parents. Where in-year admissions is co-ordinated, if none of the schools that the parent has listed on the application form are able to offer the pupil a place, the local authority can offer an alternative place at a school within a reasonable distance with a vacancy. The local authority can also apply their FAP without delay if required to ensure a place is offered as quickly as possible and reduce the time that parents wait to be allocated a place.

ii. For what proportion of own admission authority schools does the local authority co-ordinate in year admissions?

- a) Primary: Not applicable None Minority Majority All
b) Secondary: Not applicable None Minority Majority All
c) All-through: Not applicable None minority Majority All

d) What do you consider are the advantages and disadvantages of the local authority co-ordinating in year admissions (where applicable)?

By co-ordinating in-year admissions we are able to ensure that all children who have requested a school place and want to attend school are offered a place or provided with access to suitable education. It also helps us to monitor the demand for places in different year groups. In previous years as we co-ordinate the applications we identified shortfalls which made it possible for the local authority to open in-year bulge classes. We make offers on a weekly basis and there are able to fill vacancies quickly and ensure all applications are processed in a timely manner. For parents who applying for a school place it is helpful to be able to go to one place and make an application. They can apply on line, we co-ordinate the process with our schools and send then the outcome within 10 school days. We also have system where parents can see track their waiting list positions and are automatically placed on waiting lists for higher ranked preferences.

C. Looked after children and previously looked after children

i. How well do in year admission arrangements in your local authority area serve the interests of looked after children?

Not at all Not well Well Very well Not applicable

ii. How well do the in year admission arrangements 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 do in year admission arrangements in your local authority area serve the interests of previously looked after children?

Not at all Not well Well Very well Not applicable

vii. Please give examples of good or poor practice or difficulties which support your answer, and provide any suggestions for improvement:

We receive notifications about children who are taken into care and we proactively contact the social worker and the virtual school and offer assistance in securing a school place if a change of school is required. We also co-ordinate in-year applications and so have system in place that officers who input applications alert managers as soon as an application for a child who is in care is received, so that there are no delays in processing the applications.

D. Children with disabilities and children with special educational needs

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

Not at all Not well Well Very well Not applicable

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

Not at all Not well Well Very well Not applicable

- iii. Please give examples of good or poor practice or difficulties which support your answer, and provide any suggestions for improvement:

We are receiving a higher volume of applications from new arrivals with complex needs without EHCP. Generally they have limited documentation. We process the applications and offer places and request the support for the school from the Educational Psychology service. If required and where possible cases are fast tracked in agreement with parents.

E. Other children

- i. How well served are other children when they need to be admitted in year?

Not at all Not well Well Very well Not applicable

- ii. Paragraph 3.12 of the Code - several local authorities referred to paragraph 3.12 in their annual report for 2017 stating that this was being used "*inappropriately*" by some admission authorities. Please could you comment on your experience as a local authority:

We work closely with our schools as we co-ordinate in-year applications and provide advice and guidance to schools that refuse to admit a pupil referring to 3.12 of the code. So far this academic year, we have had less than 10 cases referred to the FAP by schools and all pupils have been placed following the decision of the panel.

3. Fair Access Protocol

- A. Has your Fair Access Protocol been agreed with the majority of state-funded mainstream schools in your area?

- Yes for primary
 Yes for secondary

B. If you have not been able to tick both boxes above, please explain why:
 N/A

C. How many children have been admitted or refused admission under the Fair Access Protocol to schools in your area between 31 March 2017 and 31 March 2018?

Type of School	Number of children admitted		Number of children refused admission	
	Primary aged child	Secondary aged child	Primary aged children	Secondary aged children
Community and voluntary controlled	105	0	0	0
Own admission authority schools	25	17	0	1
Total	130	17	0	1

D. If a number of children have not secured school places following the use of the protocol, please indicate what provision is made for these children.

The case where the pupil has not been admitted by the school following a FAP decision has been referred to the ESFA for a direction and is currently on roll at The Helix Education Centre.

E. 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

F. Please explain your answer giving examples of good and poor practice, successes and difficulties as appropriate.

For primary we only need to use the FAP to place children who are new to the area where there are no places within a reasonable distance from their home. We have places in secondary schools so the reliance on the FAP is limited to hard to place pupils. Schools in Harrow work well with the LA to ensure all pupils are admitted into school.

4. Directions

A. How many directions did the local authority make between 31 March 2017 and 31 March 2018 for children in the local authority area?				
	Primary aged children (not looked after)	Primary aged looked after children	Secondary aged children (not looked after)	Secondary aged looked after children
Voluntary aided or foundation	none	none	none	none
<p>B. Please add any comments on the authority's experiences of making directions.</p> <p>We have not had to direct a Voluntary aided school in Harrow to take a pupil for a number of years. We do not have any schools that are classed as foundation schools.</p>				

C. How many directions did the local authority make between 31 March 2017 and 31 March 2018 for a maintained school in another local authority area to admit a looked after child?	
For primary aged children	For secondary aged children
none	none
<p>D. Please add any comments on the authority's experiences of making directions.</p> <p>We are in the process of directing a school in another local authority, where the pupil is in care. The school have referred the matter to the OSA and we await the outcome. Having different processes based on the status of the school can be confusing especially when schools call themselves academies when they are not lot listed as an academy. Also we have noted some local authorities have processes that include additional forms which request detailed additional information that they require as part of the application process which can slow the process of securing a place at a school down and do not appear to be compliant with the School Admissions Code.</p>	

E.	How many requests to the ESFA to direct an academy to admit	How many children were admitted to school as a result of the request for a	How many requests were outstanding as at 31 March 2018?
----	---	--	---

	a child did the local authority make between 31 March 2017 and 31 March 2018?	direction by the local authority to the ESFA between 31 March 2017 and 31 March 2018?	
For primary aged children (not looked after)	None	N/A	N/A
For primary aged looked after children	None	N/A	N/A
For secondary aged children (not looked after)	None	N/A	N/A
For secondary aged looked after children	One	One	None

F. Please add any comments on the authority's experiences of requesting directions.

We referred a case to the ESFA after the 31/3/2018 to direct a school to take a pupil who is not looked after. This process seems to be very lengthy. The decision to offer a place at school was made before the 31/3/2018. However, there is a prescribed process and set timeframes which has to be followed. It is not ideal and if the pupil had been out of school it would seem an unreasonable time to wait while the school and local authority follows a process.

G. Any other comments on the admission of children in year.

5. Pupil, service and early years pupil premiums (the premiums)

A. How many community or voluntary controlled schools in the local authority area will use a premium as an oversubscription criterion for admissions in 2019?	Primary including middle deemed primary	Secondary including middle deemed secondary	All through
	0	0	0
Service premium	0	0	0
Early years pupil premium	0	N/A	0
Total number of	0	0	0

schools using at least one premium in their oversubscription criteria			
---	--	--	--

B.		How many own admission authority schools in your area will use one of the premiums as an oversubscription criterion for 2019?	Total number of own admission authority schools using at least one of the premiums in their oversubscription criteria for 2019
Primary including middle deemed primary	Early years	0	0
	Pupil	0	
	Service	0	
Secondary including middle deemed secondary	Pupil	0	0
	Service	0	
All through	Early years	0	0
	Pupil	0	
	Service	0	
C. Do you have any further comments on the use of premiums?			

6. Electively home educated children

A. How many children were recorded as being electively home educated in the local authority area on 29 March 2018?

116

<p>B. Any comments to make relating to admissions and children electively home educated?</p> <p>It is not mandatory for parents to notify the local authority that they are home educating their child. On occasion parents exercise their right to home educate following an incident at a particular school, or because they did not get a place at a school of preference and will electively home educated while they are seeking an alternative placement.</p>

7. Other matters

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

8. Feedback on the Local Authority Report template

In previous years we have asked for feedback on the process of completing the template in the following November to inform what is asked in the following year. We are aware that it may be easier to provide feedback on providing information for the annual report at the time rather than later. We would therefore be grateful if you could provide any feedback on completing this report to inform our practice for 2019.

Thank you for completing this template.

Please return to Lisa Short at OSA.Team@osa.gsi.gov.uk by 30 June 2018