

**Local Authority Report**

to

**The Schools Adjudicator**

from

**Medway Council**

to be provided by

**30 June 2021**

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**Date submitted:** 6 July 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:

1. 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;
2. 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[[1]](#footnote-1) and the Education Middle School (England) Regulations 2002[[2]](#footnote-2).

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**.

**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:

Working from home provided challenges and change this year.

The biggest change to co-ordinated admissions due to COVID-19 concerned the secondary transfer process whereby selection and banding tests were delayed and carried out differently to how they usually would be (e.g. with 2m distancing and over more days). Despite changes to the timetable parents, schools and children adapted and coped incredibly well. Our staff also adapted well to the changing environment. These changes did not impact upon the quality of application processing nor did we feel that they placed strain upon inter-LA relations and co-ordination of the admissions process.

## Looked after and previously looked after children

1. 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[[3]](#footnote-3)

* + 1. 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

* + 1. 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

* + 1. 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

1. 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:

Since the introduction of this provision across several admission authorities, we are finding the number of children being admitted on this basis slowly increasing which is a positive change. There can sometimes be minor issues in verifying whether a child has been in care abroad due to differences in procedures abroad and the need to translate documents from other languages but this has not posed a significant obstacle.

|  |
| --- |
| 1. 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**: |

## 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:

# Section 2 - In-year[[4]](#footnote-4) admissions

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

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

Medway schools process their own admissions applications and parents apply directly to schools. We are in constant communication with schools to ensure staff are clear on procedure and statutory requirements such as notifying the Local Authority of each application and it’s outcome.

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

1. 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[[5]](#footnote-5)

1. 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 applicable5

1. 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 applicable5

1. 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 applicable5

|  |
| --- |
| 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: |

## **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 Not well Well Very well  Not applicable5

* + 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 Not well Well Very well Don’t 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: |

|  |
| --- |
| * + 1. If you wish, please provide any comments about **in-year admissions** in respect of other children: |

## Fair access protocol

1. Has your fair access protocol been agreed[[6]](#footnote-6) 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 April 2020 and 31 March 2021?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Type of school | Number of Primary aged children admitted | Number of Secondary aged children admitted |
| Community and voluntary controlled | 3 | 0 |
| Foundation, voluntary aided and academies | 16 | 95 |
| Total | 19 | 95 |

1. 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[[7]](#footnote-7)

|  |
| --- |
| 1. Please make any relevant comment on the protocol not covered above if you wish:   We believe that a decrease in in-year admissions throughout COVID-19 has contributed to a decrease in secondary fair access panel referrals this year compared to the previous year.  Our primary aged fair access referrals is a similar figure to last year however the process had only been put in place part way through the last year. |

|  |
| --- |
| **E.** If you wish, 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?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

# Section 4 - Feedback

We would be grateful if you could provide any feedback on completing this report to inform our practice for 2022.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Thank you for completing this template.

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

1. [Department for Education Statistical First Release](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2018) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [The Education Middle School (England) Regulations 2002](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2002/1983/contents/made) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. ‘Not applicable’ will only be appropriate if there are no children falling within this definition. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
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 (31 December) in normal years of admission. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. ‘Not applicable’ will only be appropriate if there are no children falling within this definition. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. An existing protocol remains binding on all schools up until the point at which a new one is adopted. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. ‘Not applicable’ would mean that there were no hard to place children for which the protocol was required. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)