

**Local Authority Report**

to

**The Schools Adjudicator**

from

**Medway Council**

to be provided by

**31 October 2023**

**Report Cleared by: Celia Buxton**

**Assistant Director – Education and SEND**

**01634 331013**

**celia.buxton@medway.gov.uk**

**Date submitted: 21 August 2023**

**By: Robert Lancaster**

**School Admissions Manager**

**01634 331159**

**robert.lancaster@medway.gov.uk**

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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 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 3.30 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 2022/2023 academic year and be submitted to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator (OSA) by 31 October 2023.**
3. Please note that, in response to feedback on the draft template, changes have been made to section 2C of this template.
4. Please also note that the OSA and Department for Education are planning a small project to ensure that the report is as useful as possible to local authorities, the OSA, DfE and others. As a result of this, there are likely to be changes made to the template for the 2023/2024 academic year.

**Guidance on completing the template**

1. 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.
2. 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 Release[[1]](#footnote-2) and the Education Middle School (England) Regulations 2002[[2]](#footnote-3).
3. Guidance on specific questions and/or meaning of specific terms in this report:
   1. “in-year admissions”: This means admissions (that is children admitted to a school and not applications for places):
4. at the start of any school year to a year group 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
5. 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).
   1. Not applicable means at questions:
6. Section 1: B.i. - B.iv. that there were no children falling within the relevant definition.
7. Section 2: Ai - iv that there were no children falling within the relevant definition.
8. Section 2: B.i. that there were no children falling within the relevant definition.
9. Section 2: C.v. that there were no children falling within the relevant definition.
10. 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.
11. 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.

**Information requested**

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

## 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 |  |  |  | X |
| Year 7 |  |  |  | X |
| Other relevant years of entry |  |  |  | X |

|  |
| --- |
| 1. Please give examples to illustrate your answer if you wish:   All on-time applicants were offered a school place on national offer day. Late applicants were offered a place in good time after national offer day.  Inter-LA data exchange was completed successfully and on-time.  Applicants made their way through the process with limited issues.  Preference and first preference offers statistics are close to regional and national averages. |

## 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

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

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

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

|  |
| --- |
| 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**:  Children in care are given high priority for school places, second only to those with an EHCP, meaning they are almost always able to be offered a place at the preferred school. The exception is when a grammar school is named as first preference but the child was not assessed as suitable for grammar school through the Medway Test. |

## 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:  Most schools give priority in their admissions policy to children with a health/medical need for attending the school. Evidence must be provided by a medical professional to support this. Not all schools include health/medical/special access reasons within their admissions arrangements as it is not mandatory and is an admission authority decision.  Importantly, SEN/disabilities is not a reason to refuse admission to children therefore does not disadvantage children at point of entry. |

# Section 2 - In-year admissions

## **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

How 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

1. How 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

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: |

## **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 main challenge with in-year admissions, which is not specific to children with SEN/disabilities, is a lack of capacity in most areas. This year we have seen significantly more inward migration than we would normally expect. The two biggest contributing factors appear to be the cost of living causing families to move into the area from areas that are more expensive to live in and local healthcare recruitment.  Prior to that, many families joined us from Afghanistan, Hong Kong and Ukraine.  We welcome new families to Medway but this naturally inflates our school cohorts and has made it gradually more challenging to find placements for new arrivals. |

## 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 2022 and 31 July 2023?

| Type of school | Number of Primary aged children admitted | Number of Secondary aged children admitted |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Community and voluntary controlled | 24 | N/A |
| Foundation, voluntary aided and academies | 188 | 351 |
| Total | 212 | 351 |

|  |
| --- |
| 1. If you have seen a change in the number of children referred to your Fair Access Protocol between 1 August 2022 and 31 July 2023 compared to the previous academic year please indicate what you consider the key reasons for this change to be? |

1. 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

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| --- |
| 1. Please provide any comments you wish on the protocol not covered above:   As explained in Section 2, answer B iii – we have few vacancies across Medway compared to a year ago. Most new arrivals to the area will need to be presented to the fair access panel for places to be allocated. |

## D. Directions

How many directions did the local authority make between 1 August 2022 and 31 July 2023 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 |

## Other points on in-year admissions

1. For the schools for which the local authority co-ordinates in-year applications, in the year between 1 Aug 2022 and 31 July 2023 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

1. For what proportion of schools in your area did the local authority co-ordinate in-year admissions during the 2022/2023 academic year

None

All

Some but less than or equal to half

More than half but less than all

|  |
| --- |
| 1. 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:   Due to challenges outlined above, it is usually very unlikely that those who are on roll of a Medway school but apply to change schools (e.g. due to moving across the area) will be successful.  Those who do not have a school place, e.g. if they are new to the area, often need to be referred to the fair access panel for placement where schools are required to go further over PAN to ensure we are able to offer a placement to every child residing in Medway.  This often takes longer than if applicants were able to find places through the standard in-year admissions process but is unavoidable as we are unable to create the capacity we currently require, such is the scale of our current in-year demand. |

|  |
| --- |
| 1. 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): |

# 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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|  |

# Section 4 - Feedback

We would be grateful if you could provide any feedback on completing this report to inform our practice for 2024.

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|  |

Thank you for completing this template.

Please return to [Office of the Schools Adjudicator](mailto:OSA.Team@schoolsadjudicator.gov.uk) by 31 October 2023

1. [Department for Education Statistical First Release](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2018) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. [The Education Middle School (England) Regulations 2002](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2002/1983/contents/made) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)