



Office of
the Schools
Adjudicator

Local Authority Report

to

The Schools Adjudicator

from

East Riding of Yorkshire Local Authority

to be provided by

30 June 2021

Report Cleared by: Name Eoin Rush

Title Director of Children, Families and Schools

Telephone number 01482 392000

Email: eoin.rush@eastriding.gov.uk

Date submitted: 24th June 2021

By: Name Tom Chamberlain

**Title Strategic School Place Planning, Admissions and School Transport
Manager**

Telephone number 01482 392111

Email: tom.chamberlain@eastriding.gov.uk

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**Please email your completed report to: 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:

- a) 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;
- 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 should 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. 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**.

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				X
Year 7				X
Other relevant years of entry				X

ii. Please give examples to illustrate your answer if you wish:

All applications were processed and determined in time to despatch the allocation information on the national offer days, despite continued remote working throughout 2020 and 2021.

All applicants were offered a place at a school. All schools were notified of the allocations to their schools before the national offer day. Very high percentages of applicants were allocated places at their preferred schools. There were a lower number of applications than expected and since we have seen an increase in late applications, particularly for primary admissions as the third lockdown fell at the time of most parent/carers making applications for the primary admissions round.

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

³ 'Not applicable' will only be appropriate if there are no children falling within this definition.

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

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 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:

Some admissions authorities have made this change outside a requirement of the School Admissions Code on the basis of the ministerial letters; however, some admission authorities have indicated that they would make this change only when required to do so in the School Admissions Code.

vi. 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**:

The School Admissions Team work closely with the Education Welfare Service and the Virtual School for Looked After Children and others to identify children eligible for priority due to their current or previously looked after status.

The practice in other local authorities concerning the admission of East Riding children looked after varies considerably by LA. In some, the process and procedures work well and children are placed quickly and efficiently at a suitable school. In others, considerable difficulties occur in getting children looked after places at suitable schools, or within a reasonable timeframe.

C. 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:

The admission to school of children who have an EHCP are subject to a different code of practice and legislative provision from that applied to the admission of children without an EHCP, and coordination for these children works well between School Admissions and SEND colleagues. With different procedures and processes, some applicant parents do not feel that these arrangements take into account the needs of children without EHCPs.

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:

Coordinating in year admissions has historically reduced the burden on schools of processing applications and informing parents of outcomes in compliance with the Code and also means parents do not have to submit multiple applications if they are applying for more than one school.

It increases consistency in the way applications are administered. Coordinating admissions also minimises the risks of children missing education.

We welcome the additions to the School Admissions Code around other admission authorities having to inform the LA of whether they intend to take part in coordination by a specific date, but we believe this date may be practicably too late for LAs to accommodate any late requests from admission authorities to coordinate in the summer holidays preceding the start of an academic year.

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?

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.

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?

Not at all Not well Well Very well Not applicable⁵

- iii. 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

- 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 applicable⁵

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:

For admissions to schools in the East Riding of Yorkshire, for both East Riding and other local authorities' children in care, schools' normal admission arrangements comply with the requirement to give these children a high priority. For in year admissions, the Fair Access Protocol is used quickly and effectively in concert with other admission authorities to ensure that children in care and those formerly in care can be placed at the most suitable school, even when that school is full in the child's year group, without recourse to the lengthy and sometimes uncertain powers of direction.

For admissions of East Riding children looked after to schools in other local authority areas, the practice is variable depending on the local authority concerned.

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 applicable⁵

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

- 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 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:

-

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

Parental expectations of the service continues to increase and the demands upon the service have increased also. After a review of the relative numbers of staff per school and per head of population in this and neighbouring LA areas, this LA has recently invested additional resources to this work area as we are looking to constantly improve this service to residents in an increasingly fragmented educational landscape.

Reduced timescales for administering in year applications for school places as outlined in the new School Admissions Code, are expected to be challenging in terms of schools' roles in the process, particularly in the much reduced timeframes schools and other admission authorities have to consider applications.

D. Fair access protocol

- i. Has your fair access protocol been agreed⁶ 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 2020 and 31 March 2021?

⁶ An existing protocol remains binding on all schools up until the point at which a new one is adopted.

Type of school	Number of Primary aged children admitted	Number of Secondary aged children admitted
Community and voluntary controlled	30	13
Foundation, voluntary aided and academies	19	23
Total	49	36

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 applicable⁷

v. Please make any relevant comment on the protocol not covered above if you wish:

The Fair Access Protocol provides a mechanism to ensure that every child can be found a suitable school place quickly. The Protocol also ensures that schools' requests to refuse admission to children with histories of challenging behaviour are not used to any actor's advantage: such requests are determined by a Fair Access Panel of eight school representatives and four local authority representatives, and not by the admission authority for the school. There is recourse in some circumstances to a Review Panel to ensure there are opportunities for a review of all allocations.

The East Riding Protocol, which continues to evolve with work from all parties represented on the Fair Access Panel, also provides for the admission of many other categories of children including for example, of children looked after to oversubscribed schools where that school is the most appropriate, avoiding the need to use the powers of direction within the local authority area.

Changes to the School Admissions Code re: fair access are broadly welcome, in particular changes to define challenging behaviour.

E. If you wish, any other comments on the admission of children **in-year** not previously raised:

The system of coordination of in-year school admissions generally works well, and delivers for the needs of children and parents; but this workload has increased and has simultaneously become more complicated as places have become scarcer in:

a. some schools heavily preferred by parent/carers

⁷ 'Not applicable' would mean that there were no hard to place children for which the protocol was required.

- b. areas of high demand for school places around new housing and high levels of pupil mobility
- c. where the number of schools where the LA is not the admission authority has increased which means a large proportion of decisions are not for the LA to make solely
- d. where the LA and schools have jointly reduced the numbers of school places due to high surplus places aligned to a falling demographic

Resources to deliver in year coordination though added to recently to reflect legislative change, continue to be stretched, particularly at the time of peak admissions workload alongside the coordination of the national offer days, and this only increases in terms of complexity if not also in terms of aggregate number of applications, year on year. In particular elective changes of school through preference rather than circumstance are recommended to occur at the start of the next but one half term where possible in order for a smooth transition of pupils between schools.

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?

Work continues to increase the amount of coordination between the LA and other school admission authorities with a view of aligning admissions policies and procedures, to mutual benefit. The embedding and developing of these relationships will continue in future years, aided by the separation of some staffing into a distinct School Organisation team to focus on longer term strategic priorities alongside day to day admissions workstreams.

Section 4 - Feedback

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

A simplified version of the report and information required in light of the continued national pandemic is much appreciated.

Thank you for completing this template.

Please return to OSA.Team@schoolsadjudicator.gov.uk by 30 June 2021