



Office of  
the Schools  
Adjudicator

**Local Authority Report**

**To**

**The Schools Adjudicator**

**From**

**Redcar and Cleveland Local Authority**

**30 June 2017**

**Report Cleared by (Name & Title): Sue Beevers, Principal Manager, Services to Schools**

**Date submitted: 29 June 2017**

**By (Name & Title): Mr M Sivills, School Admissions Officer**

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**Please email your completed report to: [osa.team@osa.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:osa.team@osa.gsi.gov.uk)**

## 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 Schools Adjudicator (CA) 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 issues. The report **must** be returned to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator by **30 June 2017**.

The questions have been revised for 2017 with the purpose of:

- a) making the information gathered statistically robust and as useful as possible to the local authorities which provide the information; that is: the Office of the Schools Adjudicator (OSA) which receives the information; the Department for Education (DfE) to which the CA provides her annual report; and the children and families for whom the Code is designed to make sure that places are allocated and offered in an open and fair way;
- b) minimising the work required by local authorities in providing information; and
- c) avoiding duplication of effort.

This revised format therefore, in addition to statutory requirements as described in the Code, explores: points raised by local authorities in previous reports and matters which have arisen in the CA's Annual Report and areas of interest to the DfE. If information is already collected elsewhere, such as the number and type of schools and data relating to appeals, then it is not asked for again here but will be available for inclusion in the CA's Annual Report.

## Information requested

### 1. Looked after children and previously looked after children

It is a requirement of the Code that there is information in the local authority's annual report about how admission arrangements in the area of the local authority serve the interests of looked after children and previously looked after children.

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

Not at all                       Not well                       Well                       Very well

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

Not at all                       Not well                       Well                       Very well

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

Not at all                       Not well                       Well                       Very well

Please give examples of good or bad practice or difficulties which support your answer and provide any suggestions for improvement:

In line with the Code of Practice for School Admissions, all looked after children are offered places in schools of the parents/corporate parents first preference at the point of transition.

As a matter of good practice, when it has been necessary to change the school of a looked after child mid-year, schools and academies in Redcar and Cleveland have always been willing to go over number to admit the child. This was always been without recourse to the independent appeal mechanism.

Communication between the Redcar School Admissions Team and the Virtual School has always been excellent to ensure that the interests of previously looked after children are supported.

On a very few occasions this has not been the case when seeking to place a looked after child in schools in other local authority areas outside of Redcar & Cleveland, where the child has moved under emergency circumstances. In order to avoid the delay in admitting a child to a preferred school by appealing against decisions, admissions have been agreed to alternative schools. It is noted that on these few occasions, the admission request have been made for a place in academies.

## 2. Children with disabilities and children with special educational needs

It is a requirement of the Code that there is information in the local authority's annual report about how admission arrangements in the area of the local authority serve the interests of children with children with disabilities and children with special educational needs.

- a. How well served are children who have 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?

Not at all                       Not well                       Well                       Very well

- b. How well served are children who have disabilities and/or special educational needs who do not have an education health and care plan or a statement of special educational needs?

Not at all                       Not well                       Well                       Very well

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

A multi-agency panel Education, Health and Care Plan considers all requests for statutory assessment; this includes representation from primary, secondary and

special schools.

Requests for a school place for children and young people who have an Education, Health and Care Plan are undertaken by the Special Educational Needs Team through a consultation process; this is in conjunction with the requirements of the SEND Code of Practice.

Each school has an allocated SEN Link Officer which allows for effective joint working and information sharing to ensure that the needs of the child/young person are met. The SEN Link Officer also attends termly 'Cluster meetings' with their schools to discuss SEND issues.

Placement Planning meetings are held with special schools and schools with high needs funded support bases, to help ensure that places are allocated dependent on need and where possible to meet parental preferences.

School are required to publish a SEN Information Report each year which highlights how they can meet the needs of children with additional needs.

### 3. Consultation

Paragraph 1.44 of the Code states who needs to be consulted if consultation on admission arrangements is required. The CA has noted that these requirements are not always fulfilled in the arrangements which come to the attention of the OSA and, in particular, consultation with parents is not always as full as it should be. The OSA therefore wishes to get a better understanding of the wider situation and provide examples of good practice.

- a. When did the local authority last consult on its arrangements?

Please provide the year.

November 2016 to January 2017 for 2018/2019 year.

- b. Please describe the means by which the local authority consulted with parents. Highlight all those means used:

- Committee paper on the local authority's proposals on admissions on the council's website.
- Consultation paper designed for parents on the local authority's proposals on admissions on council's website.
- Request to all schools to provide information on the local authority's consultation on its admission arrangements to parents and providing support to make this possible such as posters, leaflets and links to the relevant information on council's website for the schools' newsletters.
- Request to all early years settings to make information on the local authority's consultation available to parents by providing support to make this possible

such as posters, leaflets and links to the relevant information on the council's website for the settings' newsletters.

Social media (please provide some detail).

Adverts in local press.

Articles in local press.

Posters in supermarkets, doctors' surgeries, early years health centres and similar

Other (please specify)

How confident are you that other admission authorities in your area are consulting parents properly as required by paragraph 1.44a of the Code?	Not at all confident	Many concerns	Few concerns	Completely confident
c. Voluntary aided			n/a	
d. Foundation			yes	
e. Academy			yes	
f. Free			n/a	
g. UTC			n/a	
h. Studio			n/a	
Please give examples of good practice by schools that are their own admission authority. Examples of good practice in consulting with parents whose children are under compulsory school age will be particularly welcome.				

#### 4. Pupil, service and early years pupil premiums

Has your local authority consulted for admissions in 2018 on using any of the pupil premiums as an oversubscription criterion in community or voluntary controlled schools?	For entry to reception year	For entry to year 7
a. Pupil premium	No	No
b. Service premium	No	No
c. Early years premium	No	N/A

d. If the local authority consulted on any of the pupil premiums please provide a summary of the responses received:

e. If you did not consult on introducing the **pupil premium** please indicate up to three main reasons for not doing so:

Unsure how it will help social mobility;

Unsure how it will reduce educational inequality;

- Could displace children living locally to a school;
- Potential transport cost to local authority for local children displaced;
- Some very disadvantaged families do not apply for free school meals and so would be further disadvantaged;
- Feel community needs already well met;
- Would introduce unnecessary complication;
- Lack of capacity; or
- i.  Other (please explain):

f. If you did not consult on introducing the **service premium** please indicate up to three main reason for not doing so:

- Unsure how it will help social mobility;
- Unsure how it will reduce educational inequality;
- Could displace children living locally to a school;
- Potential transport cost to local authority for local children who might be prevented from being offered a place at their local school;
- Would introduce unnecessary complication;
- Lack of capacity; or
- Other (please  explain):

g. If you did not consult on introducing **early years premium** please indicate up to three main reasons for not doing so:

- Application of early years' pupil premium priority for those attending a nursery at the school could unfairly disadvantage those who did not choose to use the nursery at the school;
- Application of early years' pupil premium priority for those attending a nursery at the school could affect the sustainability of other early years' provision;
- Unsure how it will help social mobility;
- Unsure how it will reduce educational inequality;
- Could displace children living locally to a school;
- Potential transport cost to local authority for local children who might be prevented from being offered a place at their local school;
- Some very disadvantaged families do not apply for free school meals and so would be further disadvantaged;
- Feel community needs already well met;
- Would introduce unnecessary complication;
- Lack of capacity; or
- Other (please  explain):

How many community or voluntary controlled schools in the local authority area will use pupil premium as an oversubscription criterion for	Primary including middle deemed primary	Secondary including middle deemed secondary
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admissions in 2018?		
h. Pupil premium	Nil	Nil
i. Service premium	Nil	Nil
j. Early years pupil premium	Nil	N/A

How many own admission authority schools consulted you on the use of a pupil premium oversubscription criterion for admissions in 2018?	Primary including middle deemed primary			Secondary including middle deemed secondary	
	Early years	Pupil	Service	Pupil	Service
k. Voluntary aided	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
l. Foundation	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
m. Academy	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
n. Free	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
o. UTC	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
p. Studio	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

How many own admission authority schools in your area will use one of the premiums as an oversubscription criterion for 2018?	Primary including middle deemed primary			Secondary including middle deemed secondary	
	Early years	Pupil	Service	Pupil	Service
q. Voluntary aided	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
r. Foundation	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
s. Academy	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
t. Free	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
u. UTC	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
v. Studio	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

w. Do you have any further comments with regards to the pupil premiums in addition to the above?

**5. Determined arrangements**

The OSA has noted that some admission authorities have not determined their arrangements as required by the Code and so seeks further information on this. Paragraph 3.2 of the Code requires local authorities to refer admission arrangements determined by other admission authorities to the Schools Adjudicator if they are of the view that they are unlawful.

a. On which date did your local authority determine its arrangements for admissions in 2018?

b. When were the determined arrangements published on the local authority's website?

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?	Primary including middle deemed primary	Secondary including middle deemed secondary
c. Voluntary aided	N/A	N/A
d. Foundation	Nil	Nil
e. Academy		NiNil
f. Free	N/A	N/A
g. UTC	N/A	N/A
h. Studio	N/A	N/A
i. Overall, in your consideration of the admission arrangements for 2018 determined by other admission authorities, which paragraphs of the Code gave you greatest concern because of possible non-compliance with requirements? Paragraphs 1.46 and 1.47.		

j. Further comment: please provide any examples or views regarding the determination of admission arrangements that have not been covered above

## 6. Co-ordination

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
a. Reception				Yes
b. Year 7				Yes
c. Other relevant years of entry (please specify)				N/A
d. Please give examples to illustrate your answer:				

e. There has been an increase in the number of schools for which the governing body or academy trust is the admission authority. Please describe the effect of this on the admissions system in your area. No effect at all.

To how many schools of each type does the local authority delegate responsibility for <b>in-year</b> admissions?	Primary including middle deemed primary	Secondary including middle deemed secondary
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f. Community	Nil	Nil
g. Voluntary controlled	Nil	Nil
h. What do you consider to be the advantages and disadvantages of this? We feel that if schools did their own mid-year admissions some children, particularly those with behaviour issues, may have difficulty finding a school. If the mid year transfers are done by the Local Authority, children who may come under the fair Access Protocol can be identified early, and could then be placed in school faster.		

For how many schools of each type does the local authority co-ordinate <b>in-year</b> admissions?	Primary including middle deemed primary	Secondary including middle deemed secondary
i. Voluntary aided	N/A	N/A
j. Foundation	17	2
k. Academy	14	8
l. Free	N/A	N/A
m. UTC	N/A	N/A
n. Studio	N/A	N/A
o. What do you consider to be the advantages and disadvantages of this? See h. above and also helps us to keep track of children and keep up to date numbers of children on roll in schools.		

## 7. Appeals

Information on the number of appeals lodged and the proportion upheld is collected separately so this information is not requested again. The information requested below is to add to that information.

	a. How many schools of each type engage the local authority to provide <b>all</b> aspects of the appeals process?		b. How many schools of each type engage the local authority to provide <b>some</b> aspects of the appeals process?	
	Primary including middle deemed primary	Secondary including middle deemed secondary	Primary including middle deemed primary	Secondary including middle deemed secondary
Voluntary aided				
Foundation	4	2		

Academy	1	2	2	2
Free				
Studio	N/A		N/A	
UTC	N/A		N/A	

c. Any comments related to this: The above figures are obviously for schools that have had appeals. We do not know what other schools would do if they did have appeals.

d. How confident are you that admission appeals for schools which are their own admission authorities meet the requirements of the School Admission Appeals Code?

Not at all confident     many doubts     a few doubts     Very confident

e. Please describe your areas of concern, if any: no concerns as schools that have had appeals did use the Authority's legal service.

f. Please provide examples of good practice which have come to your attention:

## 8. Fair Access Protocol

a. Do you have a Fair Access Protocol agreed with the majority of state-funded mainstream schools in your area?

Yes     No

b. If no, please explain why:

c. How many children have been admitted or refused admission under the Fair Access Protocol to each type of school in your area?

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				
Voluntary controlled				
Voluntary aided				
Foundation	1	2		

<b>Academy</b>	1	8		
<b>Free</b>				
<b>UTC</b>	N/A		N/A	
<b>Studio</b>	N/A		N/A	

d. 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

e. Please explain your answer giving examples of good and bad practice; successes and difficulties as appropriate. All our secondary schools accepted a child under the protocol. Sometimes parents will not accept the school offered under the protocol which can lead to problems as we then have to try and get the child admitted into the school the parent would like under the normal admission process.

f.

## 9. Directions

How many directions did the local authority make between 31 March 2016 and 31 March 2017 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
a. Voluntary aided	None	None	None	None
b. Foundation	None	None	None	None

c. Please add any comment with regard to strengths or difficulties relating to this.

How many directions did the local authority make between 31 March 2016 and 31 March 2017 for looked after children in another local authority area?

	For primary aged child	For secondary aged child
d. Community	None	None
e. Voluntary controlled	None	None
f. Voluntary aided	None	None
g. Foundation	None	None

h. Please add any comment with regard to strengths or difficulties relating to this.

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How many requests for directions did the local authority make to the EFA between 31 March 2016 and 31 March 2017?

	For primary aged children (not looked after)	For primary aged looked after children	For secondary aged children (not looked after)	For secondary aged looked after children
i. Academy	None	None	None	None
j. Free	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
k. Studio	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
l. UTC	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

m. Please add any comment with regard to strengths or difficulties relating to this.

## 10. Other matters

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

Some of our schools have raised concerns about the number of mid-year transfer requests they have to deal with when families are not actually moving address. Parents appear to be requesting transfers following any minor issues involving their child at school and sometimes the child can be moved more than once in the same academic year. This is not good for the child's education. The current School Admissions Code of Practice states that these requests have to be processed if places are available. It is felt that this issue should be investigated by the Education department. One suggestion has been that there should be a "transfer window" for mid-year transfers where a house move is not involved e.g. these transfers can be made up to October and then pupils should stay in their current school for the remainder of the academic year. Another suggestion is that as moving schools is detrimental and often done as a knee jerk reaction. Schools, students and families should be allowed to attempt to resolve concerns and issues.

Thank you for completing this template.

Please return to Lisa Short at [OSA.Team@osa.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:OSA.Team@osa.gsi.gov.uk) by 30 June 2017