



Office of
the Schools
Adjudicator

Local Authority Report

to

The Schools Adjudicator

from

Middlesbrough Local Authority

to be provided by

30 June 2020

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

**Please email your completed report to: osa.team@schoolsadjudicator.gov.uk
by 30 June 2020 and earlier if possible**

Contents

Section 1 - Normal point of admission	4
A. Co-ordination.....	4
B. Looked after and previously looked after children	4
C. Special educational needs and disabilities.....	5
Section 2 - In-year admissions.....	6
A. Co-ordination of in-year admissions.....	6
B. Looked after children and previously looked after children	6
C. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities	7
D. Fair access protocol.....	8
E. General comments on in-year admissions.....	8
Section 3 - Other matters.....	9
Section 4 - Feedback.....	9

Introduction and guidance on completing the report – Revised April 2020

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. This is a revised template issued in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic.
2. This template requests local authorities only for:
 - a) information about how admission arrangements in the area of 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 would 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. Local authorities are, of course, free to comment on any other matters not specifically addressed in this template if they wish to do so under section 3. The views expressed by local authorities in previous years also remain a matter of public record.
5. The report **must** be returned to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator by **30 June 2020**.

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		Not applicable		
ii. Please give examples to illustrate your answer if you wish:				

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

- 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**?

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

Not at all Not well Well Very well Not applicable³

v. Priority in admission arrangements for 2021 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.

This is very difficult to evidence. We would not wish to adopt such a priority unless it is clear about the evidence which must be provided. It would not be fair to accept applicants under this priority without any evidence.

vi. If you wish to please give any examples of good or poor practice or difficulties which exemplify your answers about the admission to schools of looked after and previously looked after children at the **normal points of admission**:

Our Roman Catholic primary schools give priority to all Catholics (LAC and non LAC) before 'other' LAC children. This is allowable in the Admissions Code.

Last year we had a none RC LAC child apply for a RC primary reception place. They did not get a place under the schools oversubscription criteria. Parents then applied later for a community school which was oversubscribed and that school was then expected to accept them and take over number because they are LAC. This was an unusual scenario. The community school could question the fairness of this situation as it was not fair on them.

C. Special educational needs and disabilities

- i. Please provide any comments you wish to make on the admission of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities at the normal points of admission:

Children with EHCPs and the school is named in the plan are given top priority above all schools oversubscription criteria.

Other children who may not have an EHCP but may have special educational needs or disabilities could be considered in the oversubscription criteria 'exceptional social and/or medical condition' which most Middlesbrough schools have (with the exception of all Catholic schools) in their oversubscription criteria.

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.

Middlesbrough LA co-ordinate all in year admissions for all schools within Middlesbrough

B. Looked after children and previously looked after children

- i. How well does the **in-year admissions** 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 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 applicable⁶

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 (ie 31 December) in normal years of admission.

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

⁶ 'Not applicable' will only be appropriate if there are no children falling within this definition.

iii. How well does your **in-year admissions** 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 applicable⁶

iv. How well does your **in-year admissions** system serve the interests of previously looked after children?

Not at all Not well Well Very well Not applicable⁶

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:

In the main, most schools accept LAC and previous LAC without question. However there have been some instances in academies where the academy is oversubscribed plus has provided other reasons such as issues in that particular year group, when an academy has refused to admit. In most cases, in other local authority areas the in year admission system works well, and looked after children are able to access schools that meet their needs rapidly and with few difficulties.

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 applicable⁶

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 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:

Lack of specialist provision in Middlesbrough can cause problems for children with ECHP transferring to the area.

Children moving from abroad with more severe special educational needs or disabilities with no assessments or plans in place, can sometimes find it difficult to

get a school place if a mainstream school or parent believes they should be in specialist provision

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

v.

The majority of transfers are processed with no problems. Lack of school places in Middlesbrough has led to delays in getting some children into school. Some schools also take too long to process requests / admit children when they have places and there is no enforcement to speed things up.

D. Fair access protocol

i. Has your fair access protocol been agreed⁷ 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 2019 and 31 March 2020?

Type of school	Number of children admitted	
	Primary aged children	Secondary aged children
Community and voluntary controlled	4	N/A
Foundation, voluntary aided and academies	118	90
Total	122	90

iv. How well do you consider hard to place children are served by the fair access protocol in your area?

⁷ An existing protocol remains binding on all schools up until the point at which a new one is adopted.

Not at all Not well Well Very well Not applicable⁸

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

E. Any other comments on the admission of children **in-year** not previously raised if you wish.

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 2021.

All schools data is kept by academic year, this report should not ask for data by financial year, ie 1/4/19 to 31/3/20. I do not believe any LA will record data in this way and it is difficult to try to work it out. It would make much more sense to ask for academic year

Thank you for completing this template.

Please return to Lisa Short at OSA.Team@schoolsadjudicator.gov.uk by 30 June 2020

⁸ 'Not applicable' would mean that there were no hard to place children for which the protocol was required.