



Office of  
the Schools  
Adjudicator

**Local Authority Report**

to

**The Schools Adjudicator**

from

**Gloucestershire Local Authority**

to be provided by

**30 June 2020**

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**Date submitted: 20 June 2020**

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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 2020 and earlier if possible**

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## 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 Release<sup>1</sup> and the Education Middle School (England) Regulations 2002<sup>2</sup>.
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**.

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<sup>1</sup> [Department for Education Statistical First Release](#)

<sup>2</sup> [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:				
<p>The LA continues to have good relationships with all schools and academies in the co-ordination of main admissions rounds. We provide an admissions service to academies through our Traded Services scheme and schools and the LA sign up to a service level agreement which both parties agree to dates that we exchange data to ensure the success of the co-ordinated scheme.</p> <p>We continue to experience delays on receiving data from some other neighbouring LA's and at times this can be frustrating and puts pressure on the team.</p> <p>Last year we provided feedback on the introduction of a national exchange date for all Local Authorities – this would help underpin the success of the co-ordinated scheme.</p>				

#### 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 applicable<sup>3</sup>

- 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**?

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

Not at all  Not well  Well  Very well  Not applicable<sup>3</sup>

- 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 applicable<sup>3</sup>

- 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 applicable<sup>3</sup>

- 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.

Gloucestershire LA do not currently offer this priority. It would be helpful for the Code to specify what documentation is required to give priority for children who were previously in care abroad, as this would assist the applicant, the LA and the admissions authority to clarify what is needed to give the priority correctly..

- 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:**

Children in care and their families/carers have a positive experience at normal points of admission.

This year for September 2020 all 65 primary applications from looked after children/previously looked after children received their first preference. For secondary allocations all 64 applications received their first preference.

### 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:

All children supported with an Education, Health and Care plan that names a Gloucestershire School or Academy in the normal point of entry are automatically admitted to the school that is named in the plan.

Managing parental expectation from families who have a child with SEN/disability is difficult when they do not have an EHCP. These families have had to fight for services/care/benefits for their children and have therefore selected a school on the belief that this best meets their child's needs. However without an EHCP giving them priority for a school place this often leads to severe disappointment and frustration for the families who may need to appeal for places.

## **Section 2 - In-year<sup>4</sup> admissions**

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

Please provide any comments on the co-ordination of **in year admissions** if you wish.  
The LA do not coordinate any In Year admissions as families apply to each individual school directly.

### **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 applicable<sup>5</sup>
- ii. How well do the **in-year admission** systems in other local authority areas serve the interests of your looked after children?

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<sup>4</sup> 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.

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

Not at all  Not well  Well  Very well  Not applicable<sup>6</sup>

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 applicable<sup>6</sup>

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 applicable<sup>6</sup>

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:

Our In year admissions team have been very supportive and proactive in helping our children in care in other LA's gain a school place. They are an active partner in our Children Missing education Panel and work well with colleagues to support school places for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children.

### 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 applicable<sup>6</sup>

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:

There can be a delay in naming schools due to the consultation process. Schools

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

and parents do not always understand the admissions process for EHCPs, however we are keen to work with families and schools to help their understanding.

Where a child does not have an EHCP, the family need to follow normal admissions process. Additionally, some pupils who move into Gloucestershire from abroad or other areas within the UK may have plans designed from their home area, and we would need to review and write their current plans to ensure their needs are met in a Gloucestershire EHCP. This results in some children and young people with significant needs have to go through the standard admissions process for a school, where the school will not have the resources to assist the family until the EHCP is agreed. They may require support funds above what is available to a child whilst they don't have an EHCP, and in some cases local mainstream cannot meet need until a plan has been finalised which can cause delay.

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

**D. Fair access protocol**

i. Has your fair access protocol been agreed<sup>7</sup> 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	1	1
Foundation,	8	68

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

voluntary aided and academies		
Total	9	69

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 applicable<sup>8</sup>

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

Gloucestershire have worked extremely hard with their schools to maintain a good working relationship when allocating children under the Fair Access protocol.

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

There is no defined limit in the School Admission Code when a school should respond to an in year application for a school place, and this can delay the process, which can be particularly important for vulnerable children. The time taken to respond to applications in Gloucestershire Schools can vary from a few days to up to 30 school days. This can be a challenge for our team as pupils maybe classed as Children Missing Education due to schools not responding in a reasonable time. This delay can cause anxiety for parents who may not feel confident to keep contacting schools for the outcome of the application. If the parents contact us for help and guidance, we are not always able to help either parent or school, as there is no mention of how long this should take in the Code.

### **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**

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

We would be grateful if you could provide any feedback on completing this report to inform our practice for 2021.

Thank you for completing this template.

Please return to Lisa Short at [OSA.Team@schoolsadjudicator.gov.uk](mailto:OSA.Team@schoolsadjudicator.gov.uk) by 30 June 2020