



Office of  
the Schools  
Adjudicator

**Template for  
Local Authority Report  
to  
The Schools Adjudicator  
from**

**Gloucestershire Local Authority  
to be provided by  
31 October 2023**

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**Please email your completed report to: [Office of the Schools Adjudicator](#) by  
31 October 2023 and earlier if possible**

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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

5. 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.
6. 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<sup>1</sup> and the Education Middle School (England) Regulations 2002<sup>2</sup>.
7. Guidance on specific questions and/or meaning of specific terms in this report:
  - a. "in-year admissions": This means admissions (that is children admitted to a school and not applications for places):
    - i. 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

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

<sup>2</sup> [The Education Middle School \(England\) Regulations 2002](#)

- ii. 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).

b. Not applicable means at questions:

- i. Section 1: B.i. - B.iv. that there were no children falling within the relevant definition.
- ii. Section 2: Ai - iv that there were no children falling within the relevant definition.
- iii. Section 2: B.i. that there were no children falling within the relevant definition.
- iv. Section 2: C.v. that there were no children falling within the relevant definition.

- 8. 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.
- 9. 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

#### 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:

The LA continues to have good relationships with all schools and academies in the co-ordination of the main admissions round. We continue to provide an admissions service to academies through our Traded Services scheme which all parties sign up to through a service level agreement. This enables us to meet all key deadlines and milestones to ensure the success of the co-ordinated scheme.

We continue to experience delays in receiving data from neighbouring authorities which is very frustrating and makes the process more complex than it needs to be. We would fully support the introduction of a national exchange date for all local authorities, to ensure the effectiveness and success of the co-ordinated scheme. This would ensure that all LA's work more effectively and collaboratively, minimising delays and pressures on LA staff and resourcing.

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

i. 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

ii. 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

- iii. 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

- iv. 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

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**:

Our experienced and knowledgeable admissions team provide expert advice and guidance for Children in care, helping them navigate a complex system.

Children in care and their families/carers continue to have a positive experience at normal points of admissions. The admissions team work collaboratively with social workers to ensure applications are submitted on time.

This year 22 children in care were in the secondary transfer group and 21 received their first preference.

For primary we received 17 applications and 16 received their first preference.

## 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:

GCC identified appropriate placements for 97.6% of children with EHCPs by 15th February. The LA saw an increase in the number of requests for special school placements, with 240 requests for specialist placements 66% of phase transfer requests.

The belonging regs and scarcity of school places is creating difficulties for our Social Workers and Care Teams to apply for schools/academies and receive responses for the pupil to start school. We are reliant on another casework team and schools whom we have no knowledge and relationships to ensure consults/ reasonable adjustments are completed in a timely manner. This has been further complicated re the issues surrounding recoupment of these costs.

However, our Virtual School and Fair Access Team continue to work together to ensure that Social Workers and Care Teams know who to contact if they need advice relating to Admissions.

## **Section 2 - In-year admissions**

### **A. Looked after children and previously looked after children**

- i. 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

- ii. 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

- iii. 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

- iv. 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

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:

We liaise with schools to assist with admission queries relating to Children In Care, however, oversubscribed schools have requests from a number of children under their priority admissions categories, that they are unable to offer to all.

### **B. 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 well ☐ Not well ☒ Well ☐ Very well ☐ Not applicable

- 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 well ☐ Not well ☒ Well ☐ Very well ☐ Do not 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:

We are experiencing an increase for In Year Requests for Looked After Children from Out of County placed in Gloucestershire. Some Authorities agree to pay for and support the placement as the child is Looked After by their Authority, increasingly other Local Authorities consider that as the pupil is now residing in Gloucestershire then the funding responsibility lies with the receiving County. Clarity on this matter would be useful.

EHCP can be a barrier if a child is placed out of county. The belonging regs and scarcity of special school places as the national picture for children needing specialist support grows, is leading to a diminishing resource. We are reliant on another casework team and schools whom we have no knowledge and relationships to ensure consults/ reasonable adjustments are completed in a timely manner.

### **C. Fair access protocol**

- i. 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

- 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 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	3	0
Foundation, voluntary aided and academies	3	26
Total	6	26

- iv. 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?

Increase in number of exclusions. Lack of school places in some year groups in some areas of the county and a general lack of special school places across the county and neighbouring authorities.

- v. 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

- vi. Please provide any comments you wish on the protocol not covered above:

All children in Gloucestershire are well served by the protocol. We have regular panel meetings and a dedicated outcome coordinator who liaises with parents and schools to ensure that any transitions into new settings are made swiftly.

## 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
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0		
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## E. Other points on in-year admissions

- i. 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

- ii. 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

- iii. 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:

All schools in Gloucestershire have been delegated the responsibility for processing in year applications to their schools. The majority of schools respond well to the agreed process of sharing in year application information with the LA however there are some who are more challenging and need to be followed up with reminders. There has been a noticeable increase in applications from out of country/out of county which has put pressure on school places in some areas. This has caused an increase in parents appealing, which has had an impact on the time that children have been out of education.

iv. 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):

Some schools are finding that providing a place for children who have additional needs (but without an EHCP) is really challenging and are requesting additional resources from the LA to support them. This can result in a child being out of school for some time while arrangements are negotiated.

### **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 2024.

Thank you for completing this template.

Please return to [Office of the Schools Adjudicator](#) by 31 October 2023