



Office of  
the Schools  
Adjudicator

**Local Authority Report**

to

**The Schools Adjudicator**

from

**Shropshire Council Local Authority**

to be provided by

**31 October 2022**

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**Please email your completed report to: [Office of the Schools Adjudicator](#) by  
31 October 2022 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 for 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. Local authorities do not have to include this introduction and guidance in their locally published report.
2. In 2020 and 2021, we asked far fewer questions than in previous years, asking only for the minimum information required by the Code. This was in response to the pressures on local authorities and others in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic. This year, we have again sought to keep the information requested to the minimum. We have, at the request of the Department for Education, asked a small number of additional questions relating to the impact of the new Code which came into force on 1 September 2021.
3. The new Code also changes the period to be covered by reports to the adjudicator and the deadline for submitting reports to the adjudicator. **This year's report must cover the 2021/2022 academic year and be submitted to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator by 31 October 2022.**

## 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:

#### 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

- v. Please confirm that your local authority has included children adopted from state care outside England in its definition of previously looked after children in admission arrangements for schools for which it is the admission authority

Yes    No    Not applicable

- vi. How confident are you that all other admission authorities in your area have included children adopted from state care outside England in their definitions of previously looked after children in admission arrangements for schools for which they are the admission authority?

Confident all have    Confident some have    Not aware of whether all or some have    Not applicable

vii 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**:

All our children were offered places in Shropshire schools through the normal round.

Difficulties sometimes arise where our children live in other LA areas, but this is usually where admission is through the SEND department for that LA.

### **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 SEN team work collaboratively with parents, young people and schools to ensure appropriate schools are identified and named within statutory timescales for children with an EHCP.

For those identified at SEN Support on admission to school, the school will use information available to support admission and where children are transferring from Early Years/nursery information available from LA officers

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

### **A. Effect of Code changes on in-year admissions**

Please provide any comments you wish to make on the effect of the changes to the Code's provisions for in-year admissions. It would be particularly helpful to have comments on whether you think the changes have made it easier or not for parents to secure places for children in-year?

This has had a minimal effect. When schools have made us aware that they have been unable to offer a place in-year, the local authority has been able to support parents in securing a place by offering an alternative school, signposting parents to the appeals process or through the Fair Access Protocol where appropriate. This is largely unchanged from the previous School Admissions Code.

There are still difficulties in receiving a prompt notification of an in-year application and the outcome from some admission authorities. We are heartened by the White Paper *Opportunity for All* and its stated intention for responsibility for managing in-year admissions to return to local authorities. This will, we believe, improve the monitoring of in-year response times. Where there is a prospect for all schools to join academy trusts by 2030, the backstop power for local authorities to direct trusts to admit children, also mentioned in the White Paper, would be a welcome safety net.

### **B. 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 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 applicable

- iii. How 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 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

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:

Shropshire schools are very good at understanding their responsibilities around priority admission for Previously Looked After Children (PLAAC) and Looked After Children (LAC).

We sometimes struggle with other LAs where they have a telephone answer message service, and it then takes several weeks to hear back and gain an agreement to admit and then finally a start date. This can impact on our children being out of education for weeks at a time..

Some other LA academies are reluctant to take pupils and because of the time it can take to pursue a direction action, this would impact on our children being out of school for an unknown period of time. This can sometimes cause the person with Parental Responsibility to choose a different school for admission. Despite the Admissions Code, there can be practice where schools consider behaviour records as a reason not to admit PLAAC / LAC.

### 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 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:

Mainstream schools are aware of their responsibilities to meet a young person's SEN and will admit as soon as possible following the 15 day consultation period, if they feel they are adequately resourced. Schools may try and delay admission due to insufficient Teaching Assistant support.

Not all specialist academies recognise their responsibility to admit pupils within an appropriate timeframe following the setting being named in Section I of the EHCP.

Schools' approach to meeting the needs of a young person's SEN without an EHCP is positive and often flexible around the individuals' need when necessary.

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

**D. 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 2021 and 31 July 2022?

| Type of school                            | Number of Primary aged children admitted | Number of Secondary aged children admitted |
|---|--|--|
| Community and voluntary controlled        | 2  | 1  |
| Foundation, voluntary aided and academies | 3  | 23   |
| Total                                     | 5  | 24   |

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

- Not at all well applicable     Not well     Well     Very well     Not applicable

v. Please provide any comments you wish on the protocol not covered above. It would be particularly helpful to have any comments on the impact of the Code changes on the operation of the FAP in your area and the ability to secure places for vulnerable children:

The FAP in Shropshire is well supported by schools and we have excellent buy-in from Head Teachers. Comprehensive discussions are held, which are child focused in their outcomes.

### E. Directions

How many directions did the local authority make between 1 August 2021 and 31 July 2022 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 |
|--------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| 3                        | 0                      | 3                          |

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

### 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 2023.

Thank you for completing this template.

Please return to [Office of the Schools Adjudicator](#) by 31 October 2022