



Office of
the Schools
Adjudicator

LOCAL AUTHORITY REPORT
TO
THE SCHOOLS ADJUDICATOR
FROM

**London Borough of Richmond upon Thames Local
Authority**

30 JUNE 2016

Report Cleared by (Name): Charis Penfold

(Title): Director for Education Services

Date submitted: 29 June 2016

By (Name): Hatija Bhatia

(Title): Head of Education and Fair Access

Contact email address: Hatija.Bhatia@achievingfrochildren.org.uk

Telephone number: 020 8547 5284

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

Please email your completed report to: osa.team@osa.gsi.gov.uk

Introduction

1. Section 88P of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 requires Local Authorities to make an annual report to the adjudicator.
2. The School Admissions Code (the Code) at paragraph 6 sets out the requirements for reports by local authorities. 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 local issues.
3. There are other matters concerning admissions, some suggested by local authorities themselves, about which it would be useful to have a view. Rather than undertake a separate exercise in which information is sought from local authorities, you are asked to include any relevant information in your report to the adjudicator.

Completing the Template

This template is designed to be completed electronically - boxes will expand as necessary. Please note that we will contact you if any data boxes have not been completed. However if there are any blank comment boxes we will presume that you have no comments to make.

Throughout this report, please include middle deemed primary schools as for pupils up to age 11 and middle deemed secondary schools as for pupils over 11. For schools that have children of primary and secondary age and are not designated as a middle school please record them as all-through schools.

Where a type of school is given, foundation covers foundation schools and foundation schools with a foundation (trust schools). Academy schools should be recorded by the individual type of academy school, namely, academy, free school, UTC or studio school.

1. Local Authority school numbers

Please give the total number of schools by type within your local authority as at 30 June 2016.

Type of School	Number of Schools for pupils up to age 11	Number of Schools for pupils over age 11	Number of all-through schools
Community	24	0	0
Voluntary Controlled	0	0	0
Voluntary Aided	16	2	0
Foundation	0	0	0
Academy	1	7	0
Free School	4	1	0
UTC	N/A	N/A	0n

Studio School	N/A	N/A	n/a
---------------	-----	-----	-----

2. Admission Arrangements for Admissions in September 2016

The Code at paragraph 3.23 requires that each local authority provides “*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*”.

Please include details of:

1. Any ways in which each of the following groups of children have been especially well served; and
2. Any difficulties that have arisen for each group of children while allocating places for admission in September 2016.

(a) How well are the interests of **looked after children** served?

Tick as appropriate: Fully In part Not satisfactory

Comments: The borough has well established processes that work for the majority of the time with schools. However, our experience shows that a very small minority of academies have delayed or resisted admission of LACs. This has been less helpful particularly because the procedure to direct academies is unnecessarily lengthy and bureaucratic. In the end, it is this disadvantaged group of children and young people that are impacted by the very limited ability of the LA to effect timely change.

(b) How well are the interests of **previously looked after children** served?

Tick as appropriate: Fully In part Not satisfactory

Comments: There is still some inconsistency about interpretation of criteria for previously LAC and how some admission authorities prioritise children who may not have gone into care before an SGO or RO is put into place.

(c) How well are the interests of **children with disabilities** served?

Tick as appropriate: Fully In part Not satisfactory

Comments: The Council and its children's service provider Achieving for Children are continually working with partners to consider gaps in services, and those which require further development. A growing area of need within the Borough is provision for students and young people with complex needs associated with Autistic Spectrum Condition. This includes developing and

enhancing out reach services to schools, respite provision and local effective college courses. There may be elements of the community that we will not be meeting, as demand changes. However, the growth and changing needs of the population mean that demand will increase and change over time.

- (d) How well served are **children who have special educational needs and who have a statement of special needs** that names a school (or an education health and care plan)?

Tick as appropriate: Fully In part Not satisfactory

Comments: The Council and Achieving for Children are examining more effective ways of meeting the growing need of the population with SEND and with ever decreasing funding, by encouraging special free schools to better meet the needs without relying on independent provision where costs are not controlled or banded.

- (e) How well served are those **children who have special needs, but do not have a statement?**

Tick as appropriate: Fully In part Not satisfactory

Comments: The Local Offer provides information for all families including children or young people with SEND, including those who do not have an Education, Health and Care Plan. Pupils who do not have an EHCP receive high quality teaching and learning.

3. Co-ordination of admissions

A) During the normal admissions round

Please assess the effectiveness of co-ordination of primary and secondary admissions for September 2016 in your local authority, highlighting any particular strengths in the process or any problems that have arisen.

Primary

- (a) How well has the operation of national offer day worked for primary admissions this year compared with previous years?

Tick as appropriate: Better The same Less well

Comments: Home LA coordination of offers beyond national offer day has helped to facilitate a single offer per resident child.

Secondary

(b) How well has the operation of national offer day worked for secondary admissions this year compared with previous years?

Tick as appropriate: Better The same Less well

Comments: Centrally coordinating offers beyond national offer day has helped to maintain a single offer per child. However, where academies continue to contact and make direct offers, or increase the number of places to be offered, that undermines the principal benefits of coordinated admissions. One school increased its number of offers post offer day without there being any need, and that led to an unhelpful displacement of admissions to other local schools.

(c) If you have any UTCs or studio schools in your area, do you co-ordinate admissions for entry at the relevant year group for entry to these schools?

Tick as appropriate: Yes No N/A

If **YES**, please comment on how well the admissions process is working for these schools:

If **NO**, do you have any evidence about how well the admission process is working for individual UTCs or studio schools?

Tick as appropriate: Yes No

If **YES**, please comment:

B) In-year admissions

The Code sets out that in-year admissions do not have to be co-ordinated by the local authority.

(a) How many **pupils** have needed a school place because they do not have one or because parents have applied for a place as an in-year admission for any other reason between 1 September 2015 and 15 June 2016?

Number of pupils up to age 11	Number of pupils over age 11	Number of post-16 students
609	257	

(b) Does your local authority co-ordinate in-year admissions for all, some or none of the schools in your area?

Tick as appropriate: All Some None

If 'Some', please complete the table below as appropriate

Type of School	Number of Schools for pupils up to age 11	Number of Schools for pupils over age 11	Number of all-through schools
Community	24		
Voluntary Controlled			
Voluntary Aided	7	2	
Foundation			
Academy	1	7	
Free School	4	1	
UTC	N/A		
Studio School	N/A		

(c) Do you have any information about how many schools parents might approach before obtaining a place? Please comment on any issues that have come to your attention.

Comments: Unable to comment

(d) How confident are you that the requirements of the Code at paragraph 2.22, for schools to keep the local authority informed in a timely manner about applications and the outcomes, are being met? (If you co-ordinate all admissions for all schools then please tick not applicable.)

Tick as appropriate:

Very confident Confident Not confident Not applicable

(e) Across your local authority, how well have in-year admissions worked this year?

Tick as appropriate: Better than last year The same as last year
Less well than last year

(f) Please comment on the effectiveness overall of in-year admission arrangements across all types of schools in your local authority.

Comments: With a number of schools dealing with their own in year admissions, we are unable to confirm that we are fully aware of all children who may be missing education if they are not within our radar.

For purposes of safeguarding children and ensuring that the LA is able to properly identify children missing education (who may have applied directly to a school only), it would be better for all applications for schools in its area to be made via the LA so that there is a consistent and definite way of case managing children without a school place into a placement. This would also help parents who may not be familiar with schools or the variations in in year application process if they have to apply to some schools directly and not others. This will also help identify any children who may be school hopping

and families who may require support to manage situations for which changing schools may not be the solution. .

4. Fair Access Protocol

The Code at paragraph 3.9 requires each local authority to have agreed a Fair Access Protocol with the majority of schools in its area. Paragraph 3.11 of the Code requires that all admission authorities must participate in the Fair Access Protocol.

- (a) Please confirm that your local authority has a Fair Access Protocol that has been agreed with the majority of schools in your area.

Tick as appropriate: Yes No

If **NO**, please explain:

- (b) Although a majority of schools, and perhaps all, will have agreed the Fair Access Protocol, some may not have done so. Please state how many schools have not agreed your Fair Access Protocol.

Type of School	Number of Schools for pupils up to age 11	Number of Schools for pupils over age 11	Number of all-through schools
Community			
Voluntary Controlled			
Voluntary Aided			
Foundation			
Academy			
Free School			
UTC	N/A		
Studio School	N/A		

- (c) Where schools did not agree the Fair Access Protocol, please say why they did not agree.

Comments:

- (d) (i) Please give your assessment of how well your Fair Access Protocol has worked in the academic year 2015/16 in placing children without a school place in schools in a timely manner.

Tick as appropriate: Very well Mostly well Some difficulties

- (ii) What is your general assessment of the working of the protocol compared with last year?

Tick as appropriate: More effective As effective Less effective

(iii) How frequently has the protocol been used to place a child compared with last year?

Tick as appropriate: More frequently Same frequency Less frequently

(e) Have you any examples of particularly effective collaboration and working with individual schools, for example, placing children in year 6 of a primary school or years 10 and 11 of a secondary school?

Tick as appropriate: Yes No

Comments:

(f) Have you had specific problems in allocating a place through the protocol, for example, where a school has been reluctant to accept a child?

Tick as appropriate: Yes No

Comments:

(g) How many children have been admitted under the protocol to each type of school in your area? How many children have been refused admission to a school?

Type of School	Number of children admitted			Number of children refused admission		
	Schools for pupils up to age 11	Schools for pupils over age 11	All-through schools	Schools for pupils up to age 11	Schools for pupils over age 11	All-through schools
Community	31					
Voluntary Controlled						
Voluntary Aided	9	1				
Foundation						
Academy		1				
Free School	3					
UTC	N/A			N/A		
Studio School	N/A			N/A		

(h) If children have not been placed successfully in a school through the protocol, have you used the direction process to provide a place for a child?

Tick as appropriate: Yes No N/A

- (i) If **YES**, how many children have been placed and in which type of school as a result of a direction, including a direction via the EFA on behalf of the Secretary of State or after a referral to the Adjudicator?

Type of School	Number of Schools for pupils up to age 11	Number of Schools for pupils over age 11	Number of all-through schools
Community			
Voluntary Controlled			
Voluntary Aided			
Foundation			
Academy			
Free School			
UTC	N/A		
Studio School	N/A		

- (j) Please add any other relevant information you wish to include in sections g - i concerning Fair Access Protocols.

Comments:

5. Admission Appeals

The Code requires data to be collected about appeals. In order to meet this requirement the DfE will use the latest published Statistical First Release: admission appeals for maintained and academy primary and secondary schools in England.

Taking into account comments reported in 2014, and data gathered for the first time in 2015, in response to the invitation to *“add any comments about the appeals process in your area”*, it would be helpful to gather views once again across all local authorities on the extent to which schools that are their own admission authority continue to use local authority services for admission appeals.

- (a) Do any own admission authority schools use any of your services as part of the appeals process?

Tick as appropriate: Yes No

- (b) If yes, please indicate the number of schools that use at least some of your services

Type of School	Number of Schools for pupils up to age 11	Number of Schools for pupils over age 11	Number of all-through schools
Voluntary Aided	0		

Foundation			
Academy	0	4	
Free School	0		
UTC	N/A		
Studio School	N/A		

(c) Please indicate the services that are used :

Type of School	Schools for pupils up to age 11(Y/N)	Schools for pupils over age 11 (Y/N)	All- through schools (Y/N)
Full appeals process		4	
Legal advice			
Assistance in the preparation and presentation of case documentation		4	

(d) Please add any other service related to appeals obtained from your local authority

Comment: Advice, guidance and documents such as appeal statement templates.

(e) Please add comments about any aspects of the appeals process in your area that work well or that cause difficulties, as appropriate.

Comment:

6. Other Issues

A. Objections to admission arrangements

Paragraph 3.2 in the Code says *“local authorities **must** refer an objection to the Schools Adjudicator if they are of the view or suspect that the admission arrangements that have been determined by other admission authorities are unlawful”*.

(a) How many sets of admission arrangements of schools were queried directly by your local authority with schools that are their own admission authority because they were considered not to comply with the Code?

Type of School	Number of Schools for pupils up to age 11	Number of Schools for pupils over age 11	Number of all-through schools
Voluntary Aided			

Foundation			
Academy			
Free School			
UTC	N/A		
Studio School	N/A		

(b) How confident are you that own admission authority admission arrangements are now fully compliant with the Code?

Tick as appropriate: Very confident Confident Not confident

(c) How many schools did not send you a copy of their full admission arrangements, including any supplementary information form (or any such form by another name, for example, religious inquiry form) if one is used, by 15 March, as required by paragraph 1.47 of the Code?

Type of School	Number of Schools for pupils up to age 11	Number of Schools for pupils over age 11	Number of all-through schools
Voluntary Aided	11		
Foundation			
Academy	1	5	
Free School	1		
UTC	N/A		
Studio School	N/A		

B. Fraudulent applications

(a) Is there any concern in your local authority about fraudulent applications?

Tick as appropriate: Yes No

(b) Did your local authority make any offers on national offer days that were subsequently withdrawn as a result of a fraudulent application?

Tick as appropriate: Yes No

(c) If **YES**, how many for each type of school?

Type of School	Number of Schools for pupils up to age 11	Number of Schools for pupils over age 11	Number of all-through schools
Community			
Voluntary Controlled			
Voluntary Aided			
Foundation			
Academy		1	
Free School			

UTC	N/A		
Studio School	N/A		

(d) What action is your LA taking to prevent fraudulent applications?

Comment:

C. Summer-born children, deferred entry and part-time attendance

The DfE issued revised guidance in December 2014 “Advice on the admission on summer-born children” for local authorities, school admission authorities and parents ([Link to Guidance](#)). The Code at paragraph 2.16 deals with deferred entry and/or part-time attendance for children in the year they reach compulsory school age. Paragraph 2.17, 2.17A and 2.17B refer to the admission of children outside their normal age group.

(a) Do you keep data for any schools on the number of requests from parents who ask that their child is admitted to a class outside their normal age group?

Tick as appropriate: Yes No

(i) For community and voluntary controlled schools: Yes No

(ii) For own admission authority schools: Yes No

If **YES** in answer to (a) above, please complete the tables:

Type of School	In 2015, how many requests for deferred admission to year R in 2016 were agreed for a child who will have reached the normal age for Year 1?
Community & Voluntary Controlled	3
Own Admission Authority	4

Type of School	How many requests to defer admission to year R in 2016 were received?	How many of those requests were subsequently agreed?
Community & Voluntary Controlled	11 requests for a range of schools prior to national offer day	3 to date
Own Admission Authority	see above	0

(b) What reasons, if known, were given for seeking to defer the admission to year R of children for a full school year?

Comments: Parent does not consider that child is ready to start school

(c) Do you have any other comments on the matter of admission of summer-born children, including requests to delay admissions made after the allocation of places in the normal admissions round?

Comments: Parental expectations have been confused and misguided by the open letter sent by a minister in September 2015. This has led to subjective judgements of parents being put up against the professional views of Early Years practitioners and Head teachers whose experience, of dealing with the development of children over time and across many settings, has been repeatedly challenged when requests have been refused.

By creating the expectation that requests should be agreed without any evidence of need being provided, the government has not considered the impact on teaching and learning in the classroom of having a potential of up to 18 months difference in age range; the impact on school place planning, resourcing in schools and social development of children.

(d) Do you have any comments about paragraph 2.16c) in the Code concerning the offer and/or take-up of part-time attendance by children below compulsory school age?

Comments: It would be better to leave the final decision to allow the request to rest with the Headteacher to ensure consistency

D. Pupil, service and early years premium

The 2014 Code permits all schools to give priority for admission in 2016 to children eligible for the pupil, service or early years premium (paragraphs 1.39A and 1.39B). If admission authorities wish to introduce such a priority they must have consulted as required by the Code in paragraphs 1.42-1.45.

(a) Pupil and service premium

In respect of community and voluntary controlled schools:

Type of School	Has the LA considered giving priority to pupil/service premium? (Y/N)	If YES, have you consulted on this? (Y/N)	In response to consultation has the priority been implemented? (Y/N)
Community Primary			
Voluntary Controlled			

Primary			
Community Secondary			
Voluntary Controlled Secondary			

Comments:

In respect of own admission authority schools:

Type of School	Has the LA been consulted by any own admission authority of the type shown below on giving priority to pupil/service premium? (Y/N)	If YES in response to consultation, for how many schools has the priority been implemented? (Please give the number)
Voluntary Aided Primary		
Foundation Primary		
Academy Primary		
Free School Primary		
Voluntary Aided Secondary		
Foundation Secondary		
Academy Secondary		
Free School Secondary		
UTC		
Studio School		

Comments:

(b) Early years pupil premium - nursery priority

In respect of community and voluntary controlled schools:

Type of School	Has the LA considered giving priority to early years pupil premium? (Y/N)	If YES, have you consulted on this? (Y/N)	In response to consultation has the priority been implemented? (Y/N)
Community Primary			
Voluntary Controlled Primary			

Comments:

In respect of own admission authority schools:

Type of School	Has the LA been consulted by any own admission authority of the type shown below on giving priority to early years pupil premium? (Y/N)	If YES in response to consultation, for how many schools has the priority been implemented? (Please give the number)
Voluntary Aided Primary		
Foundation Primary		
Academy Primary		
Free School Primary		

Comments:

E. Local Authority Issues

Please provide details of any other issues that you would like to raise and/or comment on that have not been already covered in this report.

Comments:

Thank you for completing this report

Please email your completed report to: osa.team@osa.gsi.gov.uk