



Office of
the Schools
Adjudicator

LOCAL AUTHORITY REPORT
TO
THE SCHOOLS ADJUDICATOR
FROM
Waltham Forest Local Authority

30 JUNE 2016

Report Cleared by (Name): Brendan Wells

**(Title): Head of Commissioning, Education Capital &
Planning**

Date submitted: 30 June 2016

By (Name): Rhona Long

(Title): Acting Head of Admissions

Contact email address: Rhona.Long@walthamforest.gov.uk

Telephone number: 020 8496 3538

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	8	1
Voluntary Controlled	1	0	0
Voluntary Aided	6	1	0
Foundation	0	0	1
Academy	16	5	0
Free School	1	1	0
UTC	N/A	N/A	N/A

Studio School	N/A	N/A	N/A
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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: Looked after children are prioritised in the admission criteria for all schools in the borough, as required by the code. In year applications from looked after children are fast tracked and allocated as a priority.

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

Tick as appropriate: Fully In part Not satisfactory

Comments: Looked after children are prioritised in the admission criteria for all schools in the borough, as required by the code. In year applications from previously looked after children are fast tracked and allocated as a priority.

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

Tick as appropriate: Fully In part Not satisfactory

Comments: Children without SEN statements but with significant medical or social needs are prioritised in admission criteria for all schools in the borough, as required by the Code. These are assessed on a case by case basis.

Highams Park Academy does not allow medical /social as per 1.16 of the code. Highams Park Academy is its own admission authority and choose not to include this criteria

- (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 satisfactorily

Comments: Children who have a statement of special needs that names a school are placed through the arrangements set out in the SEN Code of Practice and not through any admission criteria.

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

Tick as appropriate: Fully In part Not satisfactorily

Comments: Children who do not have an SEN statement but have significant needs are given priority in the admissions criteria if there are special medical or social needs which are assessed on a case by case basis.

Highams Park Academy does not allow medical /social as per 1.16 of the code. Highams Park Academy is its own admission authority and chooses not to include this criteria.

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: There has been a single offer day in London for some years. The introduction of a national offer day had little impact on us, other than for ease of advising parents who were planning to move out of London during the application process.

Co-ordination was successful with 85% of applicants being offered their first preference and 97% of applicants being offered one of their top three preferences.

Of those who submitted an application on time, there was one primary aged pupil without a reasonable place offer for September. This was for a child

whose family moved to another borough shortly before final offers were made. The parents contacted Admissions to say that their new Local Authority were not able to accommodate their late change of preferences, and they withdrew their preferences for the Waltham Forest schools. We would have been able to offer an alternative Waltham Forest school but the parents said they did not want this as they had already moved house and they would not accept the offer. This was reported at the time to the DfE as the reason for not making a reasonable offer to this child. The new local authority took over their application after national offer day.

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: There has been a single offer day in London for some years. Having a national offer day had little impact on us, other than for ease of advising parents who were planning to move out of London during the application process.

Co-ordination was successful with 81% of applicants being offered their first preference school and 94% of applicants being offered one of their top three preferences. Of those who submitted an application on time, there were no secondary applicants without a school place on offer day.

(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
1809	612	n/a

- (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	8	1
Voluntary Controlled	1	0	0
Voluntary Aided	6	1	0
Foundation	0	0	1
Academy	16	5	0
Free School	1	1	0
UTC	N/A	n/a	n/a
Studio School	N/A	n/a	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: Currently the local authority co-ordinates in-year allocations for all state funded schools in the borough. Therefore parents do not need to apply separately to different schools.

- (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: All state funded schools in the borough currently participate in the in-year admission co-ordination, and arrangements are very effective.

Improving effectiveness of internal procedures is continually being explored. A review of in year processes was undertaken to ensure that data sharing between schools and the admissions service can better identify more complex cases at an earlier stage.

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	0	0	0
Voluntary Controlled	0	0	0
Voluntary Aided	0	0	0
Foundation	0	0	0
Academy	0	0	0
Free School	0	0	0
UTC	N/A	n/a	n/a
Studio School	N/A	n/a	n/a

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

Comments: n/a

(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: All primary and secondary schools work collaboratively to admit pupils in Yr 6 and in Yr 10 & 11 where appropriate for mainstream placements. As a London borough, there are high levels of migration throughout the year. Discussions have been held at FAP to focus on the importance of placing children in Years 6, 10 and 11, especially vulnerable children who may require additional support and have arrived in the borough with no school place. This was agreed by all schools and Admissions have not experienced any problems with placing such children.

(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
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	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	19	38	4	0	0	0
Voluntary Controlled	1	2	0	0	0	0
Voluntary Aided	0	0	0	0	0	0
Foundation	0	0	1	0	0	0
Academy	13	26	0	0	0	0
Free School	0	0	0	0	0	0
UTC	N/A	n/a	n/a	N/A	n/a	n/a
Studio School	N/A	n/a	n/a	N/A	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	n/a	n/a	n/a
Voluntary Controlled	n/a	n/a	n/a
Voluntary Aided	n/a	n/a	n/a
Foundation	n/a	n/a	n/a
Academy	n/a	n/a	n/a
Free School	n/a	n/a	n/a
UTC	N/A	n/a	n/a
Studio School	N/A	n/a	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	6	1	0
Foundation	0	0	1
Academy	16	4	0
Free School	1	1	0
UTC	N/A	n/a	n/a
Studio School	N/A	n/a	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	20	5	1
Legal advice	12	1	1
Assistance in the preparation and presentation of case documentation	1	1	1

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

Comment: None

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

Comment: When schools present their own case to the appeal panel they sometimes are not able to reference the relevant details of the co-ordinated admission process (because it's co-ordinated by the Local Authority) and are therefore unable to answer questions put by the panel.

The Local Authority has addressed this by offering full advice and guidance to any new Heads or Business Managers including key information regarding co-ordination and where further information can be obtained within the Code. We will also liaise with schools who conduct their own appeals sessions to ensure their training is up to date and thorough, offering support where necessary

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	0	0	0
Foundation	0	0	0
Academy	0	0	0
Free School	0	1	0
UTC	N/A	n/a	n/a
Studio School	N/A	n/a	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	0	0	0
Foundation	0	0	0
Academy	0	0	0
Free School	0	0	0
UTC	N/A	n/a	n/a

Studio School	N/A	n/a	n/a
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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	0	0	0
Voluntary Controlled	0	0	0
Voluntary Aided	0	0	0
Foundation	0	0	0
Academy	0	2	0
Free School	0	0	0
UTC	N/A	n/a	n/a
Studio School	N/A	n/a	n/a

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

Comment: Application addresses are cross-checked with addresses held by previous school/nursery and/or Council Tax records. We reserve the right to request additional information. We work closely with the Council's Housing Investigation team, referring cases to them if appropriate. Where it can be proved that false information has been provided in order to secure a school place, we withdraw the place.

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	n/a
Own Admission Authority	n/a

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	n/a	n/a
Own Admission Authority	n/a	n/a

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

Comments: There are very few requests for summer born children to be admitted outside of their normal age group. We would normally advise parents accordingly but will not keep a record of each request.

(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: Applications for allocation out of age group are considered on an individual basis. This decision is based on a range of different information sources including parental request, medical and professional evidence.

There has been a rise in applications for children attending part time until they reach statutory school age. This has been an area where we sought additional clarification from the DfE and we then provided clear guidance to all schools.

- (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: All primary schools have a part time policy which they share with any parents who request for their child to attend on a part time basis until they reach statutory school age.

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	Y	Y	N
Voluntary Controlled Primary	Y	Y	N
Community Secondary	Y	Y	N
Voluntary Controlled Secondary	n/a	n/a	n/a

Comments: As an authority with a high proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premiums, we feel giving priority to those who are eligible for pupil premium would impose an unfair disadvantage on those pupils who do not qualify. If some schools adopt this criteria while others do not, there would also need to be an understanding of the impact on other local schools.

The LA has consulted with all schools and requested feedback regarding whether to formally consult. No schools requested a formal consultation.

In respect of own admission authority schools:

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

Comments: If some admission authorities adopt this criteria while others do not, there would also need to be an understanding of the impact on other local schools.

(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	Y	Y	N
Voluntary Controlled Primary	Y	Y	N

Comments: Waltham Forest believe the impact of giving nursery priority would be to heighten the popularity of those nurseries attached to a primary school simply due to the connection with the Reception class, and significantly lessen the popularity of childrens centres and nurseries who are not attached to a primary school, which could affect the stability of some settings. Waltham Forest is a borough of high mobility and late migration. Providing nursery priority would clearly disadvantage families who arrive in the borough too late to secure a place in a nursery.

Our borough also has a high proportion of families from cultures who do not chose to place their children in a nursery setting, and prefer to have them at home. This group would clearly be disadvantaged. In addition, as there are not enough nursery places attached to a primary school, and this priority would place an unfair advantage on those parents who secure a place in a

nursery which is attached to a primary school.

The LA has consulted with all schools and requested feedback regarding whether to formally consult. No schools requested a formal consultation.

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	N	
Foundation Primary	N	
Academy Primary	N	
Free School Primary	N	

Comments: If some admission authorities adopt this criteria while others do not, there would also need to be an understanding of the impact on other local schools.

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: Waltham Forest has seen emerging changes to its demographic profile in different areas of the borough which has had an effect on the admissions to local schools. Some schools are experiencing more in year churn due to migration patterns, whereas others are being listed as preferred schools from families hoping to be rehoused inside the borough but their children are then having to make very long journeys to school each day.

While these and many other similar challenges are common across London, the LA is committed to working proactively and effectively with the schools in the borough to ensure Admissions continues to offer a highly efficient service which meets the needs of the families and provides professional advice and guidance to schools.

Thank you for completing this report

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

