



Office of
the Schools
Adjudicator

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

Guidance on completing the template

4. In a departure from previous practice, we have included all the guidance on completing specific parts of the template in this section. We hope that this will be helpful. This is in response to feedback that including guidance and definitions in the body of the template could make the report harder for readers to follow and less accessible. 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.
5. 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 Release¹ and the Education Middle School (England) Regulations 2002².
6. Guidance on specific questions and/or meaning of specific terms in this report:
 - a. "in-year admissions": This means admission 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

¹ [Department for Education Statistical First Release](#)

² [The Education Middle School \(England\) Regulations 2002](#)

primary school) **and** admission during the course of any school year after the end of the statutory waiting list period (31 December) in normal years of admission.

b. Not applicable means at questions:

Section 1: B.i. - B.iv. that there were no children falling within the relevant definition.

Section 1: B.v. that there were no schools for which the local authority was the admission authority at 1 September 2021.

Section 1: B.vi. that there were no schools in the local authority's area for which the local authority was not the admission authority at 1 September 2021.

Section 2: B.i. - B.iv. that there were no children falling within the relevant definition.

Section 2: C.i. that there were no children falling within the definition.

Section 2: D.iv. that there were no hard to place children referred to the protocol.

7. 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.
8. 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 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				

ii. Please give examples to illustrate your answer if you wish:

There were technical difficulties exchanging information with neighbouring authorities due to disparate education management systems.

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**:

No issues in this area. The County Council identifies CLA Year 6 pupils at the start of the academic year and then liaises with the child's social worker to ensure that an on-time application is made and that there is an understanding of the admissions process and the priority the child will have for a place in any school.

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:

No issues in this area. Effective processes in place between school admissions and Inclusion to exchange information and secure places at preferred schools.

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?

The introduction of the requirements of the Code on in year admissions has created many challenges in respect of dealing with the volume of applications received and meeting the statutory deadlines of an offer. The LA received no additional funding to take on this new area of statutory work and the County Council's current EMS system is not fit for purpose. Against a backdrop of rising pupil numbers and increased levels of migration into Lancashire, the new ways of working have led to parents experiencing delays in securing a school place.

Despite extensive work with own admission authorities, it has proved difficult to ensure that school websites and school offices inform parents of their right to apply and to appeal for a place if the school is full.

Without having live attendance data, it has not been possible to progress applications during school holiday periods leading to a back log of forms at the start of each term and pupils unnecessarily out of school whilst these are processed.

LCC is currently procuring a new EMS, with an implementation date of September 2023. It is hoped that a new system will enhance the IYA process for pupils, parents and schools and allow more effective tracking of pupils moving in to and within Lancashire.

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:

Reply to question 3. In some areas of the County Council, there has been a proliferation of independent children's homes used for the placement of pupils with complex difficulties. Under the threat of Direction, other local authorities are seeking to place disproportionate numbers of CLA in a small number of Lancashire schools, who are struggling to meet needs.

To illustrate, a school with a Published Admission Number of 135 has 25 looked after children on roll - of which 20 are from out of County.

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 difficulties which support or exemplify your answers about **in-year admissions** for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities:

Reply to questions C i and ii above.

In year admission forms are often completed without parents disclosing additional needs in respect of their child/children. Although pupils can now be tracked [which improves safeguarding], there have been a number of cases where pupils have been admitted to a school without the necessary background information provided - which would enable to necessary support to be put in place.

This is a particular issue for pupils who are new to country with extensive special educational needs, that have not been assessed – or - where documentation is unavailable or has not been translated.

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

The introduction of the requirements of the Code on in year admissions has created many challenges in respect of dealing with the volume of applications received and meeting the statutory deadlines of an offer. The LA received no additional funding to take on this new area of statutory work and the EMS system is not fit for purpose. Against a backdrop of rising pupil numbers and increased levels of migration into Lancashire the new ways of working have led to parents experiencing delays in securing a school place.

Despite extensive work with own admission authorities, it has proved difficult to ensure that school websites and school offices inform parents of their right to apply and to appeal if the school is full.

Without having live attendance data, it has not been possible to progress applications during school holiday periods leading to a back log of forms at the start of each term and pupils unnecessarily out of school whilst these are processed.

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:

N/A

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	27	39
Foundation, voluntary aided and academies	25	139
Total	42	178

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

☐ Not at all well
☐ 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:

Primary school Fair Access figures will not be 100% accurate. Many primary schools proceed with admission for children who meet the Fair Access threshold, but don't always contact to LA to get clarification, or to request recognition of the Fair Access admission.

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
0	0	0

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

N/A

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?

N/A

Section 4 - Feedback

We would be grateful if you could provide any feedback on completing this report to inform our practice for 2023.

N/A

Thank you for completing this template.

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