

Governing Board Agenda - Autumn 2019

APPENDIX 1

Admissions Arrangements – September 2021 consultation process

Statutory Requirements

Governing boards of all schools should be consulted by admission authorities seeking to change their admission arrangements. They may object to the admission arrangements of other admission authorities. Any school that converts to an academy or becomes voluntary aided or a foundation school by the beginning of the consultation period (1 October 2019) should ideally consult to create a new admissions policy for the 2021 admissions round.

For **Community and Voluntary Controlled schools**, the Local Authority (LA) is the admission authority, and it is required to consult those governing boards over the proposed admission arrangements for the next academic year. It must also consult the admission authorities for all other maintained schools, academies, university technical colleges (UTCs) and free schools within the relevant area on its policies and the co-ordinated admissions scheme.

For **Foundation and Voluntary Aided schools**, the governing board is the admission authority. For an **Academy**, the Academy Trust is the admission authority. These schools must consult the LA as well as the admission authorities for all other schools and academies within the relevant area on their proposed arrangements. Any consultation must be for a minimum of 6 weeks and run between 1 October 2019 and 31 January 2020. Best practice would be to increase the 6 weeks by 2 weeks if the consultation is run over the Christmas period, in which case the latest date to launch a consultation would be 6 December 2019.

Recommended Action

Autumn Term

- **Community and Voluntary Controlled School** governing boards should review the LA's current admission arrangements (including the planned admission number) in relation to *their school*, and advise the LA if they would wish to comment on the current rules and/or request a change to the admission number for the school. They should notify the Admissions and Transport Team as soon as possible following the governing board decision and, at the latest, by **Monday 7 October 2019**.
- **Voluntary Aided, Foundation School and Academy** governing boards should consider and agree the school/academy's own proposed admission arrangements for the **2021** admission year. There is no obligation to consult annually **unless there is any change proposed**. Otherwise, the obligation is to consult every seven years. If you do propose to change your admission arrangements, then a link to, or a copy of, the consultation document should be forwarded to the Admissions and Transport Team by Thursday 5 December 2019 (this is the latest point you can fit a 6 week consultation in so there is 6 weeks of term-time consultation). More detail about your obligations follows in this document.
- **All governing boards** should consider how the admission schemes have operated to date and whether they would wish the LA to vary any part of them in its new arrangements for 2021. Please ensure that any requests are still compliant with the Admissions Code and received by the Admissions Team by **Monday 7 October 2019**.

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Summary notes for Voluntary Aided (VA) and Foundation schools and Academies

Check that your rules comply with the mandatory provisions of the Admissions Code (link below).
The consultation timeline for 2021 entry is, in summary:

ACTION	DATES
Where changes to the admission rules are proposed or you have not consulted in the last 7 years: consultation of at least 6 weeks between	1 October 2019 to 31 January 2020
Determine admission rules by	28 February 2020
Inform the LA about your rules by	15 March 2020
Deadline for anyone to object to the Office of the School's Adjudicator	15 May 2020
Deadline for providing the LA with a link to your website for inclusion in the composite prospectus	8 August 2020

Governors should ensure that the rules are clear and unambiguous and that there is clarity about how they should be applied. A Supplementary Information Form (SIF) will only be required where information needs to be collected that is not gathered on the Common Application Form (CAF). If used, a SIF (including any church affiliation form) needs to be included in the consultation and can only ever be optional for parents to complete.

Ensure your rules incorporate the following (where appropriate):

- A clear statement that full time places are offered for all Reception admissions to start in September
- A clear statement that parents can choose to delay that admission and/or take up the offer on a full or part time basis in the first instance
- A clear statement about your school's policy regarding children educated out of year group
- Your admission number for each point of entry (including 6th form). **NB:** If you are proposing to increase your admission number, please ensure you contact the School Place Planning Team before consulting so that the request can be considered in the light of the school place planning process.
- Your application procedures
- A link to the catchment map. Catchment Maps for all schools can be found on the [school directory](#)
- The oversubscription criteria/rules
- Definitions of any rules used. Please note, we would recommend that wherever possible you align your rules with the standard rules/definitions adopted by the County Council. The standard definitions can be viewed [here](#)
- Whether straight line or routed distance measurement is used, if you want to use our measurements then make sure you say they measure from the geocoded point of the home address to the nearest school gate (Note - we do NOT measure front door to front door) see *below for more information. Our definition is [here](#)
- Whether a Supplementary Information Form (SIF) is used and what information it collects (the SIF is compulsory if, to apply your rules correctly, you need to collect information over and above that collected on the common application form). Please note if you wish to adopt different residence requirements over and above the county rules then this will necessitate the creation of a SIF.
- If there is an ability test or aptitude test for admission (optional)
- Year 12 and / or Nursery admission arrangements (if appropriate)

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When you consult you must:

- Consult for a minimum of 6 weeks between 1 October 2019 and 31 January 2020
- Consult with admission authorities including the County Council and neighbouring LAs. VA schools must consult their Diocese. When consulting with schools, particularly feeder schools, please request that they share the link with their parent body. Also consult with relevant parents (parents with children 2-18 years old) and other local groups that might have an interest (for example community groups, nurseries etc). Keep a record of how you did this and what the responses were.
- Place a copy of the consultation document on the school's website and send the Admissions and Transport Team a link to the website, or a copy of the consultation document, for inclusion on the County Council website which is a service we offer to complement your consultation and to widen parental access. It is a good idea to save dated screenshots to prove your consultation was posted for the relevant period.
- When notifying the LA please highlight any proposed changes to your admission rules document.

Whether you consult or not, you must:

- Complete the process by determining your admission arrangements formally at an appropriate governing board meeting ensuring a clear record is kept.
- Ensure that any dates in the admission arrangements are refreshed to reflect the new academic year's schedule/deadlines.
- Clearly place the admission rules on your website. Please do not bury them in 'school policies' instead set up a clear, unambiguous link from the home page.
- Always ensure you have the current rules for in-year admissions and the new admission rules for the next year intake on the website.
- Send the admissions and transport team a URL link to the new admissions policy so that the data provided to parents in the 'Find my child a school place' webpages can be kept current.

In considering whether their rules are fit for purpose, governing boards should consider how straightforward their rules are to apply, any feedback from independent appeal panels and whether it was easy to explain the rules to an independent appeal panel. Governing boards are advised not to rely on being undersubscribed as a way of avoiding giving careful consideration to their rules.

*The County's admission rules for 2021 entry will use straight line distances for measuring home to school distances for admission purposes and we will retain catchment areas for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools. From 2020 entry we have also included a staff priority rule, and revised the definitions of 'children looked after' to include children previously looked after who were adopted from care abroad. For 2021 we are proposing to fully consult on revising the junior school admission rules to put feeder infant school pupils above catchment residents.

We can provide straight line and routed distances for any Voluntary Aided/Foundation and Academy schools. We measure from the geocoded point of the home address to the geocoded point of the nearest open school gate that you have advised us pupils can use to access the school (unless you specify a particular alternate point in the school).

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Contacts for Further Information

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Useful Links

The [Admissions Code](#)