



Office of  
the Schools  
Adjudicator

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

**Coventry Local Authority  
to be provided by  
31 October 2025**

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**Please email your completed report to: [Office of the Schools Adjudicator](#) by  
31 October 2025 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 the annual report to the Secretary of 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.
2. **This year's report must cover the 2024/2025 academic year and be submitted to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator (OSA) by 31 October 2025.**
3. Please note that, in response to feedback on the previous template and in the light of consultation with a group of local authorities, changes have been made to various sections of this year's template.

## Guidance on completing the template

4. We have included all the guidance on completing specific parts of the template in this section. 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 Release<sup>1</sup> and the Education Middle School (England) Regulations 2002<sup>2</sup>.
6. The Code sets out some minimum requirements on the contents of each local authority report stating that each must cover as a minimum "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."
7. The Department for Education's aim through the annual reports from local authorities is to understand how well the admissions system is working nationally, rather than to hold individual local authorities to account. By understanding the effectiveness of the system, including outcomes, the Department hopes to identify areas where the admissions system is working well and areas where it could be improved. With that in mind, when the template asks, "how well does the admission system serve the needs of

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<sup>1</sup> [Department for Education Statistical First Release](#)

<sup>2</sup> [The Education Middle School \(England\) Regulations 2002](#)

children,” the Department appreciates that it is asking local authorities to make a subjective judgement, in the understanding that everyone’s experience with the admission system will be different. The Department encourages local authorities in responding to the open questions and spaces for open comments to set out challenges that are proving difficult to overcome.

8. Guidance on specific questions and/or meaning of specific terms in this report:

- a. “in-year admissions”: This means admissions (that is children admitted to a school and not applications for places):
  - i. to a year group which is not a normal point of entry for the school concerned (for example to Year 2 for a five to eleven primary school); and
  - ii. after the end of the statutory waiting list period (31 December) to a year group which is a normal year of admission for the schools concerned (such as Year R and Year 7).
- b. Not applicable means that there were no children falling within the relevant definition.

9. 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.

10. 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.

11. Where questions request a comparison with the previous year, any new local authorities formed as a result of reorganisation should note this on the form.

## Information requested

### Section 1 - Normal points of admission

#### A. Co-ordination

Which of the following best describes the level of challenge for your **main admissions round in 24/25 compared to 23/24?**

Year Group	Much less challenging	Less challenging	No change	More challenging	Much more challenging
Reception			X		
Year 7				X	
Other relevant years of entry			X		

Please give examples to illustrate your answer if you wish:

**There were some technological difficulties with data exchanges between neighbouring authorities, which had an impact on our ability to meet all process deadlines. In one case this led to applications from 15 students from another authority not being considered on time, but this was resolved to ensure offers were made correctly.**

#### B. Looked after and previously looked after children

- i. How well 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 well 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 well 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 well 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. 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**:

**The Coventry Virtual School has good communication links with the Admissions team and meetings take place to ensure all pupils are allocated an appropriate school place and that any changes of circumstance are dealt with in a timely manner.**

### C. 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 at **normal points of admission**?

☐ Not at all ☐ Not well ☒ Well ☐ Very well ☐ Not applicable

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:

**Coventry has a well-established process in place to ensure children with SEND receive appropriate provision at the right time. Coventry works closely with early years settings, schools and professionals in health and social care to identify needs early, supporting transition into school and enabling forward planning for specialist placements.**

**Over the past 3 years there has been a significant increase in demand across pupil year groups, driven by in-city migration and a rise in pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) and Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) diagnoses. This has placed additional pressure on specialist provisions.**

**Coventry transitioned over 250 pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) from Year 6 into secondary provision. With only two all-through special schools, transitions are carefully planned to ensure sufficient secondary specialist placements. An additional 50 mainstream pupils moved into specialist provision this year which was a record high. To meet growing demand, the Local Authority is increasing specialist placements by creating new Enhanced Resource Bases on mainstream sites and expanding special school places where possible. This is part of a broader strategy that includes upskilling mainstream school staff to develop in-house SEND provision and competencies for more complex needs.**

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

**A. Which of the following best describes the overall level of challenge for your in-year admissions in 24/25 compared to 23/24?**

Phase	Much less challenging	Less challenging	No change	More challenging	Much more challenging
Primary			x		
Secondary			x		

If you wish, please explain the factors that have changed the level of challenge for your in-year admissions:

**We continued to pursue an expansion programme and worked closely with schools to respond to the need for additional places especially in primary schools. We have needed to use fair access arrangements to ensure all unplaced children received an offer of a school place within a reasonable distance. The lack of choice in schools with spaces available led to a high level of appeals for in year places.**

### **B. Looked after children and previously looked after children**

- i. How well 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 well does 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 well does the **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 well 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:

**Coventry Virtual School and Admissions team work together in regular meetings and provide information to social workers and Children's Services staff on procedures to follow in applying to secure school places both inside and outside Coventry. Coventry Virtual School have arranged social worker 'drop in sessions' this year – one of these focuses on admissions and the Admissions team support with information and guidance for this session.**

**We work in partnership with Coventry schools to help to ensure timely placements for all young people. Where a school has not taken a child looked after on first request, the Virtual School and Admissions team work together to support and challenge schools to reach an outcome that best meets the needs of the child.**

**There can be delays for those with an EHCP (through the consultation process not the school admissions process). Temporary education options through home tutors or online learning are put in place during any delays, whilst we work with other Virtual Schools, Childrens Services and SEN teams to establish appropriate placements.**

### **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:

**For the most complex cases Coventry Local Authority offers in-year places to children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Coventry follows due process to admit pupils with an EHCP consulting with local provisions and in most cases will admit to the nearest school that has capacity to meet their needs.**

**Coventry is continually reviewing the range of special educational provision within the city and is upskilling the education workforce and expanding**



capacity to meet growing demand which includes new to city with complex needs and an increasing number of early years children with very complex needs.

The Local Authority continues to support mainstream and academy schools with developing strategies and best practice in meeting the needs of children with notional SEN.

## D. Fair access protocol

What proportion of the state-funded mainstream schools in your area have said that they agree to the local authority fair access protocol?

### Primary

Between 0% and 49% ☐

Between 50% and 74% ☐

Between 75% and 89% ☐

Between 90% and 99% ☐

100% ☒

### Secondary

Between 0% and 49% ☐

Between 50% and 74% ☐

Between 75% and 89% ☐

Between 90% and 99% ☐

100% ☒

If you have below 75% for either phase, please explain why:

**Not applicable**

- i. How many children were admitted to schools in your area under the fair access protocol between 1 August 2024 and 31 July 2025?

Type of school	Number of Primary aged children admitted	Number of Secondary aged children admitted
Community and voluntary controlled	169	N/A
Foundation, voluntary aided and academies	128	138
Total	297	138

- ii. If you have seen a change in the number of children referred to your Fair Access Protocol between 1 August 2024 and 31 July 2025 compared to the previous academic year please indicate what you consider the key reasons for this change to be?

**We have still needed to use fair access arrangements to ensure all unplaced children received an offer of a school place within a reasonable distance but a combination of ongoing expansion work in collaboration with schools, and a reduction of in-year applications means we have reduced these placements.**

- iii. How well do you consider children referred to the Fair Access Protocol are served in in your area?

☐ Not at all well ☐ Not well ☒ Well ☐ Very well ☐ Not applicable

- iv. Please provide any comments you wish on the protocol not covered above: **The schools in Coventry generally work well with the local authority when placing pupils via FAP. Difficulties can arise when placing children who have arrived from overseas with medical conditions (diagnosed and undiagnosed) where there is no EHCP, little information, and schools require additional support to admit.**

## E. Directions to maintained schools to admit children<sup>3</sup>

How many directions did the local authority make between 1 August 2024 and 31 July 2025 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. Other points on in-year admissions

- i. For the schools for which the local authority co-ordinates in-year applications, in the year between 1 Aug 2024 and 31 July 2025 did you receive

☐ Significantly fewer applications than last year

<sup>3</sup> It is important that only Directions to maintained schools are included here. Numbers of Directions to academies are already held by the Department.

☒ slightly fewer applications than last year

☐ about the same

☐ slightly more than last year

☐ significantly more than last year

- ii. For what proportion of **primary** schools in your area did the local authority co-ordinate in-year admissions during the 2024/2025 academic year

Between 0% and 24% ☐

Between 25% and 49% ☐

Between 50% and 74% ☐

Between 75% and 100% ☒

- iii. For what proportion of **secondary** schools in your area did the local authority co-ordinate in-year admissions during the 2024/2025 academic year

Between 0% and 24% ☐

Between 25% and 49% ☐

Between 50% and 74% ☐

Between 75% and 100% ☒

- iv. If you wish, please provide any comments about how **well in-year admissions** works for children who are **not** looked after or previously looked after and/or do **not** have SEND:

**Although in year admission decisions are made and communicated within required timeframes, the lack of spaces available means that those applying to transfer between city schools are often unsuccessful, leading to a high level of appeals which frustrates and disappoints families and has a significant financial and workload impact on schools and the local authority.**

- v. If you wish, please provide any other comments on the admission of children **in-year** not previously raised (you may wish to include here any comments about cases where it has not proved possible to find places for children): **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?

No

### **Section 4 - Feedback**

We would be grateful if you could provide any feedback on completing this report to inform our practice for 2026.

Thank you for completing this template.

Please return to [Office of the Schools Adjudicator](#) by 31 October 2025