



Office of
the Schools
Adjudicator

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

**Coventry Local Authority
to be provided by
31 October 2023**

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**Please email your completed report to: [Office of the Schools Adjudicator](#) by
31 October 2023 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 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 2022/2023 academic year and be submitted to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator (OSA) by 31 October 2023.**
3. Please note that, in response to feedback on the draft template, changes have been made to section 2C of this template.
4. Please also note that the OSA and Department for Education are planning a small project to ensure that the report is as useful as possible to local authorities, the OSA, DfE and others. As a result of this, there are likely to be changes made to the template for the 2023/2024 academic year.

Guidance on completing the template

5. 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.
6. 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.
7. 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. 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 primary school); and

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

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

- 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 at questions:

- i. Section 1: B.i. - B.iv. that there were no children falling within the relevant definition.
- ii. Section 2: Ai - iv that there were no children falling within the relevant definition.
- iii. Section 2: B.i. that there were no children falling within the relevant definition.
- iv. Section 2: C.v. that there were no children falling within the relevant definition.

8. 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.

9. 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 points 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 | | | | x |

ii. 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 but offers were made correctly and on time.

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. 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 Admissions staff and meetings take place to ensure all pupils are allocated an appropriate school place and that any changes of circumstance for looked after children are dealt with in a timely manner.

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:

Coventry has an established process in place for securing the right provision for children with SEND at the right time. Coventry works closely with early years settings, schools and professionals across health and social care to identify needs at the earliest point to aid children's transition into school and forward plan suitable specialist placements accordingly. There have been significant challenges due to the high number of complex early years children coming through the system. The Statutory Assessment and Review (STAR) Service continues to work closely with the Early Years' Service to ensure places are offered to the children with the most complex needs during the spring term, even before they have secured an Education, Health and Care Plan. This enables a supportive transition for reception children. However, demand in the system continues to grow putting additional pressure on the Local Authority to increase additional specialist school places, as well as continuing to support mainstream provision to be able to meet more complex needs in future years.

Section 2 - In-year admissions

A. 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 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 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 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 staff work together to 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. They work in partnership with Coventry schools to help to ensure timely placements for all young people. There can be delays for those with an EHCP or who require some form of bespoke package to ensure that placements do not fail. 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.

B. 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 can offer places to in year 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 expanding capacity to meet the growing needs which include those 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.

C. 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:

- iii. How many children were admitted to schools in your area under the fair access protocol between 1 August 2022 and 31 July 2023?

| Type of school | Number of Primary aged children admitted | Number of Secondary aged children admitted |
|---|--|--|
| Community and voluntary controlled | 28 | 0 |
| Foundation, voluntary aided and academies | 17 | 183 |
| Total | 45 | 183 |

- iv. If you have seen a change in the number of children referred to your Fair Access Protocol between 1 August 2022 and 31 July 2023 compared to the previous academic year, please indicate what you consider the key reasons for this change to be?

Due to a lack of school places in two year groups, we used the fair access arrangements to ensure that all unplaced children received an offer of a school place within a reasonable distance. This has significantly increased the number of children admitted through fair access arrangements. Coventry has seen a larger than average number of in-year applications over the last two years, additionally a smaller than average number of pupils leaving the city. This could not have been forecast as it is not in line with normal trends and has significantly impacted sufficiency of places across the city, across all year groups.

- v. How well do you consider children referred to the fair access protocol are served in in your area?

Not at all Not well Well Very well Not applicable

- vi. 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.

Some schools are raising concerns about building capacity due to the increased FAP allocation. We are working closely with all schools to respond to the need for additional places and have a primary/secondary expansion programme in progress; this will be a combination of temporary/permanent increases.

D. Directions

How many directions did the local authority make between 1 August 2022 and 31 July 2023 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 |

E. 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 2022 and 31 July 2023 did you receive

- Significantly fewer applications than last year
 slightly fewer applications than last year
 about the same
 slightly more than last year
 significantly more than last year

- ii. For what proportion of schools in your area did the local authority co-ordinate in-year admissions during the 2022/2023 academic year

- None
 All
 Some but less than or equal to half
 More than half but less than all

iii. 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:

The co-ordination of in year admissions in line with School Admissions Code timescales ensures that parents have greater clarity on how and when applications will be assessed. With limited surplus places in some year groups, it is not always possible to offer places at preferred schools which leads to disappointment and an increasing level of appeals. Where key stage one appeals are generally unsuccessful due to infant class size legislation, this is particularly frustrating for parents and uses significant resources for schools and the local authority.

iv. 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):

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 2024.

Thank you for completing this template.

Please return to [Office of the Schools Adjudicator](#) by 31 October 2023