



Office of
the Schools
Adjudicator

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

**Bristol City Council 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:

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**:

At normal points of admission we see clear guidance, advice and understanding of regarding children in care and previously looked-after children to ensure they are prioritised appropriately. At normal points of admission the tasks and timeline for applications and admissions are clear and allows for carers and social workers to be supported through the process.

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:

In early 2020, Bristol City Council pledged to create an additional 450 specialist provision places by 2024. This programme aiming to create additional capacity, within Bristol City's SEND estate, to deliver sustainable sufficiency of places and improve areas of the existing estate to create improved accommodation for children and young people, with special educational needs and disabilities.

This programme of work aspires to bring improved community connections for Bristol children and their families; fostering an improved sense of belonging as one of the many important foundations for preparation for adulthood and, in the longer term, quality of life. Children experiencing shorter travelling times, to a suitable education, will also support to build on a child's readiness to learn.

The first phase of this programme has created and delivered a total of 142 special school places.

The second phase aims to deliver the full quota of places by 2024. This will support to improve outcomes and attainment as more children and young people, with EHCP's, will be able to access suitable education within their own locality.

Despite this emphasis, there continues to be children and young people, with an EHCP, who wait for a protracted period for a specialist placement. This is in part due to the increasing volume and demand into the SEND service (average 18% rise YOY of EHC Needs Assessment requests).

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:

Admissions to some out of Bristol Local Authorities can be protracted in length resulting in delays admitting children and young people to the appropriate school setting. Although the majority of children are found places in a timely manner we do see more delay for in-year admissions outside of Bristol.

Admissions is also lengthy for children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan due to the consultation process and preparation time required prior to enrolment. In addition, the availability of suitable provision when children are moved to live out of authority. This has resulted in increased numbers of children being designated Children Missing Education while awaiting a positive consult response and suitable provision.

The experience with schools in Bristol is positive due to strong working partnerships and practices committed to supporting children in care and children previously in care. We have seen some pressure on availability for in-year admissions due to schools already being at or over Published Admission Numbers but are often able to find a solution with our existing partnerships.

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:

Pressure on places continues in 2023. Some children and young people will have to wait until the end of an academic year to take up a place at a suitable school. In these circumstances, children and young people will access support either within a mainstream setting or through Alternative Learning Provision and some will be Educated Other than in School (EOTIS).

This pressure impacts 3.8% of children and young people, with an EHCP in 2023, but is a reduction of 1.0% when compared to 2022. The pressure is more significant in the 11-15 years age range.

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	4	0
Foundation, voluntary aided and academies	7	310
Total	11	310

- 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?

The number of Primary FAP cases has remained fairly static with a small increase from 9 in 2021-22 to 11 in 2022-23. These cases are primarily for children with needs above which the schools feel they can meet.

The number of secondary FAP cases has increased by almost 50% from 2021-22 where we placed 209 children to 310 placed in the last academic year. There are two main reasons for this increase in referrals:

1. There was an increase in the number of referrals for children from families who were refugees placed in the city and those moving into the city from outside of the UK.
2. Schools across the city were either at their Pupil Admission Number (PAN) or above in the majority of schools. Direct applications were therefore not successful requiring the use of the FAP to place children.

- v. 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

- vi. Please provide any comments you wish on the protocol not covered above:

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:

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):

The sufficiency of secondary school places is challenging resulting in the Fair Access Protocol increasingly utilised to source secondary places for children and young people moving into the area.

As stated in previous reports, the Local Authority would welcome the reintroduction of the coordinated admissions scheme for in-year admissions to reduce the need for parents and carers to make multiple applications to schools and improve the efficiency and transparency of the in-year school admissions process.

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?

For children and young people with SEN support, speech, language and communication needs is the most common primary need type in Bristol.

For children and young people, with an EHCP, the most common primary need type is Autistic Spectrum Condition followed by social, emotional and mental health.

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