



Office of the
Schools
Adjudicator

LOCAL AUTHORITY REPORT
TO
THE SCHOOLS ADJUDICATOR
FROM

Leeds City Council

30 JUNE 2010

Report Cleared by...Viv Buckland.....

Date submitted

By.....

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SECTION 1

FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR IN WHICH THE REPORT IS MADE - 2009 - 2010

Please complete using data/information for the period 1 September 2009 to date of report

NOTE: This template is designed to be filled in electronically – boxes can/should be expanded as necessary.

Fair Access Protocol

Code 4.9 a) (i) how well the Fair Access Protocol has worked and how many children have been admitted to each school in the area under the protocol;

NOTE: The Code at 3.44 requires (1) each local authority to have a Fair Access Protocol and (2) all schools and Academies to participate in their LA area's protocol

- a) Please confirm that the LA has a Fair Access Protocol that has been agreed with all the relevant schools in its area (relevant schools are all maintained schools and academies).

Tick as appropriate:

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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If NO please explain:

- b) Give your assessment of how well the Fair Access Protocol has worked since 1 September 2009. In particular in placing children, the co-operation of schools and Academies well as any other issues you have had in implementing the protocol.

All of our schools and academies are working together within the Fair Access Protocol. We record all children transferring school who fall to any of the Fair Access Protocol (FAP) categories. The data provided shows all children who meet the criteria of the Protocol that each school admitted. Only one school during the period had to be directed by the local authority to admit the pupil, and they complied with the direction. There were 716 children who met one or more of the FAP criteria which represents about 20% of the total in year transfers received at the point the data was produced.

Generally we find that primary schools are willing to admit children falling to most Protocol categories, and only when they feel they cannot meet the needs of the child do we use the Protocol to ensure another school make the offer of a place. In secondary we use the Protocol proactively to help to admit children above the admission number of the school, where this is in the best interests of the child, as well as protecting schools against taking excessive numbers of challenging children.

- c) In Appendix A, please record for each school the number of children considered to be placed in (column O) and those actually placed in (column P) to the school under the protocol between 1 September 2009 and the date of this report.

Infant Class Sizes

Code 4.9 a) (ii) whether primary schools are complying with infant class size legislation

Are all Primary Schools in your area complying with infant class sizes?

Tick as appropriate:

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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If NO please comment and also include the number of schools where qualifying measures are being taken:

Admission Appeals

Code 4.9 a) (iii) the number of admissions appeals held for each and every school in the area, and the number of appeals that were upheld.*

* Every school includes: community, voluntary controlled, voluntary aided, foundation, Academies, city technology colleges and city colleges for

technology of the arts.

For the period 1 September 2009 to the date of this report please insert in Appendix A the following for each school:

- column Q - the number of appeals held;
- column R - the number of appeals upheld; and
- column S - the number of appeals pending from the date of this report.

Code 4.9 a) iv the extent to which the local authority and appeal panels in the area complied with the requirements of the Appeals Code, with reference to ensuring the timeliness and transparency of appeals, effective communications with parents and any other relevant matter.

NOTE: other appeals panels have a duty to provide you with information on appeals (Section 88Q of Schools Standards and Framework Act).

Has your independent appeals panel complied with the requirements of the Appeals Code?

Tick as appropriate:

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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If NO please explain including non-compliance and action taken:

Have all other appeals panels for own admission authority schools complied with the requirements of the Appeals Code?

Tick as appropriate:

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/>
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If NO or Don't Know please highlight any issues raised and if you have been unable to obtain information:

SECTION 2

FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR WHICH STARTS AFTER THE REPORT IS MADE – 2010-2011:

Code 4.9 b) (i) the extent to which admission arrangements for schools in the authority's area serve the interests of children in care, children with disabilities, children with special educational needs and service children.

NOTE: You may wish to point out if specialist staff from within the Council has contributed to this report and highlight any problems that may have occurred.

Children in care: All Looked After Children received their appropriate priority in all admission policies. Where there were changes after the offer day allocations above admission number have been made where appropriate.

Children with disabilities: Priority 1b of our admission policy, after LAC, ensures that children with disabilities are able to receive the highest priority for the nearest suitable school that can meet their needs.

Children with Special Educational Needs: All children with a Statement of SEN have schools allocated according to the SEN legislation. Children with a high level of SEN but without a statement are covered in priority 1b of our admission policy

Service Children: There are no significant numbers of Service children in Leeds

Code 4.9 b) (ii) the effectiveness of co-ordination.

NOTE: You may wish to report on the authority's assessment of the effectiveness of any scheme for co-ordinating:

a) the admission of pupils to LA schools in September 2010

Coordination has been effective. Schools are able to view their updated allocation lists electronically. The local authority conveyed all offers on 1 March and continues to coordinate through the waiting list stage.

b) the admission of pupils in the authority's area to other admission authority schools in September 2010.

Coordination has been effective. Aided schools and academies are able to rank their applications and waiting lists electronically. All offers are conveyed by the local authority. Some Aided schools are still be uncomfortable with the extended coordination until the close of waiting lists.

SECTION 3

FOR ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS THAT HAVE BEEN DETERMINED IN THE APRIL IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE DATE OF THE REPORT IS MADE (determined by 15 April 2010 for admission in September 2011):

Code 4.9 c) (i) a statement of whether or not admission arrangements for maintained schools in the area complied with the mandatory requirements of this Code and admissions law.

NOTE: All non-compliant admission arrangements must be corrected. All mandatory requirements can be changed by the admission authority. Any other non-compliant issues must be referred to the OSA.

Are you satisfied that the admission arrangements for all maintained schools in your area are fully compliant with the Code?

Tick as appropriate:

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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If YES please provide a statement to confirm this: Some schools are still updating their policies with the deferred entry changes, although all will be compliant when this is complete. This will include some very recent parish boundary changes that will affect the Catholic School policies.

If NO, please specify what action you are taking:

Using column T in Appendix A, please identify those schools that you have identified with problems now or which you have referred to the OSA, or may be referring to the OSA by the 31 July 2010.

We will not be referring any school to the OSA this year.

SECTION 4

OTHER MATTERS:

Admission Forum

Code 4.9 d) (i) details about the current membership of the Admission Forum for the area

NOTE: Please list the bodies represented and the number of representatives in each category. Do **NOT** give the names of members.

<p>Two Councillors Two parents One CE Diocese member One Catholic Diocese member Two community schools representatives (one high and one primary) One voluntary controlled school member One voluntary Aided school member One Foundation school member One member from Jewish Aided primary One Academy member One College member Choice Adviser Fair Access Project Director Four community representatives</p>

Is the Admission Forum writing a report?

Tick as appropriate:

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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If YES is the report attached or has it been sent separately?

Tick as appropriate:

Attached	<input type="checkbox"/>	Separately	<input type="checkbox"/>
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If separately please provide the date the report will or has been sent to the OSA?

DATE:

<input type="text"/>

Please confirm whether the Admission Forum has seen, or will see, a copy of this LA report.

Tick as appropriate:

Has seen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Will see	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Free School Meals

Code 4.9 d) (ii) the proportion of children currently on free school meals at each school in the area.

NOTE: The data provided by the Local Authority to the DCSF in January 2009 has been “cleaned” and is included in Appendix A.

If the data for 2010 is significantly different from 2009 please state how it differs.

No significant differences. There are six schools whose FSM percentage has increased by 10% or more and nine schools where this has fallen by 10% or more.

Using and interpreting the data, please comment on whether the allocation of school places meets parental preferences for those children on Free School Meals.

The majority of schools with a high percentage of pupils eligible for FSM are amongst are least well subscribed, so in most cases parents requesting those schools are successful at gaining places. The schools in many cases admit a high number of children who fall to the Fair Access Protocol, however this is also reflective of the high levels of mobility in the area.

Code 4.9 d) (iii) any other matters which affect the fairness of admission arrangements for schools in the area.

NOTE: Please identify any issues not covered elsewhere on this template.

We have identified a greater number of fraudulent applications this year and withdrew the offers accordingly. Appeal panels that have heard these cases so far have offered places, despite class size legislation applying. It would appear they are making a judgement on the legality of the withdrawal of the place, despite these having been cleared with the Council’s legal team. We have asked that further training be given so the panels understand the situation better as the schools support the places being removed and are unhappy that they are now unable to challenge the decision made by the appeal panel.

The Appeals Code should be strengthened to support the approach towards parents who supply deliberately misleading information.

SECTION 5

OTHER ISSUES REQUESTED IN ADDITION THIS YEAR BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

Choice Advice

Please complete with reference to Choice Advice provided to parents applying for a secondary school place for the 2010/2011 school year.

Appendix 5 of the Code requires local authorities to provide an independent Choice Advice service that is focused on supporting the families who most need support in navigating the secondary school admissions process (paragraph 5). Choice Advice must be independent and free from any potential conflict of interest between the need of the local authority to allocate places and the advice that parents receive (paragraph 8). As a minimum, local authorities must ensure that Choice Advisers are not in the same management chain or reporting lines as the local authority's admissions staff (paragraph 9).

- a) Please confirm that your local authority has an independent Choice Advice service in place.

Tick as appropriate:

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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- b) Please explain how you ensure the independence of the Choice Advice provided (for example, the Choice Advice service may be situated in the Parent Partnership service or Family Information Service).

Leeds Choice Advice Service is based within the Parent Partnership Service.

- b) Are your Choice Adviser(s) in the same line management chain or reporting lines as staff on the admissions team.

Tick as appropriate:

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Choice Advice must be targeted at those parents who most need support with the secondary school admissions process (paragraph 10). Local authorities and Choice Advisers should market their service to ensure that they reach the families most in need of their support and that other relevant agencies and

professionals are aware of the service they provide (paragraph 11). Choice Advisers should be proactive in reaching 'hard to reach' parents and should develop good links with organisations that may be able to refer parents to them (paragraph 12).

- d) Please explain how you ensure Choice Advice reaches those parents who are most in need of it.

The Choice Advice Service targets the most deprived areas within Leeds. We do this by ensuring the families who need our support know how to access it by;

- **Attending community events**
- **Attending primary and secondary school events/ open evenings**
- **Distribution of leaflets to advertise the service, community buildings such as doctors surgeries, dentists, library's, all schools, bus stations, children centres etc**
- **Provide information sessions for year 5 and 6 parents in the identified areas**
- **Deliver training sessions to other professionals and organisations to ensure they know about the service so they can refer parents to us. For example corporate parents, social care, school governors, voluntary organisations etc.**
- **Work together with cluster co-ordinators**

- e) Describe how Choice Advice has contributed to the fairness of the admissions process.

We have contributed by ensuring that parents who are hard to reach are provided with all the information they need to help them understand the admissions process and make a realistic preference. We follow up late applications to ensure all parents in Leeds have made a preference of secondary school. We offer support to families who are appealing for a school place and have trained volunteers (Independent Parental Advisers, IPAs) who are available to all parents and carers should they request one.

Local authorities may provide Choice Advice at the primary school admission stage and for in-year applications (paragraph 5).

- f) Choice Advice is offered at the primary admissions stage?

Tick as appropriate:

Yes	√	No	
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- g) Choice Advice is offered for in-year applications?

Tick as appropriate:

Yes	√	No	
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It is good practice for Choice Advisers to provide support during the appeals process, particularly to those parents who accessed Choice Advice at the application stage.

h) The Choice Adviser provides support during the appeals process?

Tick as appropriate:

Yes	√	No	
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i) If no, do you plan to provide support during the appeals process in future?

Tick as appropriate:

Yes		No	
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Transport

Admission authorities **must** explain clearly whether or not school transport will be available, and, if so, to which schools and at what cost (if any). Are details of the availability and cost of home to school travel and transport clearly set out in the composite prospectus?

Tick as appropriate:

Yes	√	No	
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If No, please provide an explanation

Paragraphs 1.90 and 1.91 of the Code provide guidance on how Governing Bodies **should** ensure that the cost of a school uniform does not inhibit the choice of school. In the following box, please provide details of where schools do not comply with this and what actions you or Governing Bodies have taken or are proposing to take.

Where we receive feedback from parents about costly school uniform we take the matter up with the governing body on behalf of the parents to ensure that any inappropriate barrier to entry is removed. We have a customer feedback questionnaire that we send out with the application pack and intend to seek further feedback from parents about whether this was a concern for them when they applied.

Please provide details of any improvements that you feel can be made to this template.

