

Proposed changes to the School Admissions Code relating to in year admissions.

The DFE have proposed changes to the School Admissions Code to better support the in-year admission of vulnerable children thus reducing to a minimum any gaps in their education. In practice, this means making changes to the in-year admissions process and Fair Access Protocols.

There will be a dedicated section in the Code setting out a clear process for managing in-year admissions.

- Requirement for the local authority and own admission authorities (Academies, Voluntary Aided, Foundation and Free Schools) to provide information on their websites as to how in-year applications can be made and how they will be dealt with, including providing a suitable application form for parents to complete when applying for a place.
- Requirement for own admission authorities to provide the local authority within two school days; details of the number of places available, this is to enable the local authority to assist parents to identify schools with available places.
- Clarification that parents must not be refused the opportunity to make an application, must be informed of the outcome of their application in writing, including if applicable the reason for refusal, and must be given information about the right to appeal.
- Require local authorities to publish information on their website by 31 August each year on how in-year applications can be made and how they will be dealt with. This includes setting out details of which schools they will coordinate applications for, and which schools will manage their own in-year applications.
- A requirement for own admission authority schools to inform the local authority by 1 August each year if they intend to be part of the local authority's in-year co-ordination scheme (where one is offered).
- Require own admission authority schools to set out on their websites by 31 August each year how in-year applications will be handled.
- Require local authorities, and own admission authority schools who will coordinate their own in-year admissions, to provide a suitable application form for parents to complete when applying for a place in-year.
- To require admission authorities (or the local authority if it is co-ordinating the admission authority's in-year admissions) to notify parents of the outcome of their in-year application in writing within 10 school days. This is to address concerns regarding the length of time some admission authorities take to process in-year applications and offering parents the right of appeal in a more timely manner.

Action for own admission authority schools (some of which should already be in place)

- Ensure the in-year admissions process set out by the School Admissions Team is being implemented.
- Ensure that the Governing Body, Trust or Admissions Committee is considering all applications in accordance with the school's admission arrangements and that these are recorded, along with consideration against the relevant oversubscription criteria and reason for refusal/offer. Evidence of such may be required for the School Admissions Team to process any of the schools appeals.
- Ensure that applications are being processed and an outcome issued to applicant and local authority within 10 school days.