



Office of  
the Schools  
Adjudicator

**Template for  
Local Authority Report  
to  
The Schools Adjudicator  
from  
Gateshead Local Authority  
to be provided by  
31 October 2023**

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**Date submitted: 31<sup>st</sup> 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 Release<sup>1</sup> and the Education Middle School (England) Regulations 2002<sup>2</sup>.
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

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

<sup>2</sup> [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:  
Despite a shortage of school places in some areas of the borough, we still continue to be able to offer a reasonable school place to all who applied at the normal point of entry.

#### 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**:

### **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:

## 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:  
Due to a lack of secondary school places, we are often not able to offer a place to all looked after children moving to the borough. We do however offer the fair access process to social workers as a potential one-off solution i.e. no school within a reasonable distance as we would to all other parents or leave it to the home LA to negotiate with the academy direct.  
We have also had to issue a direction to an academy which refused to admit one of our LAC students, however, upon receipt of the intention to direct letter they arranged admission.

### 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:  
 There is a lack of school places in the specialist sector therefore depending in the needs and complexity of the child and parental choice in year transfers have limited choice an availability.  
 If a mainstream setting is chosen admission is usually much quicker, though again there is pressure on mainstream school places.

**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	75	39
Foundation, voluntary aided and academies	19	117
Total	94	156



- 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 main reason at both primary and secondary panels is the referral of young people unable to access school place within a reasonable distance. We have seen a massive increase in the in-year transfer market with people moving to the borough for work and study. There has also been an increased number of EHE referrals that require a school place and the continued number of asylum seekers and refugees placed by the Home Office in the borough who are living in hotel accommodation.

- 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: We have continued to provide additional transitional support via our Education Support Officers for both the families and young people placed in school by the panel. These staff ensure that any issues are dealt with quickly so children are placed in school without any delay. Our fair access process was praised in Ofsted CQC report in May 2023 which identified the appropriateness of both the placements which matched the needs of the children.

#### 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
None		

#### 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:

As identified above, we are struggling for school places across the secondary sector and some areas of the borough for primary where we have had an unexpected influx of people taking up rented accommodation. From September 2024 we have used our basic need allocation to increase the number of secondary school places in the west of the borough where there is large scale house building.

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?

None

### **Section 4 - Feedback**

We would be grateful if you could provide any feedback on completing this report to inform our practice for 2024.

The shorter form is much more focussed and easier to complete than previous versions.

Thank you for completing this template.

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