



Office of
the Schools
Adjudicator

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

**North Somerset 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				✓
Year 7				✓
Other relevant years of entry				✓

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**:

For most schools in the North Somerset Council area, looked after children and previously looked after children who are subject to adoption or special guardianship order, are given priority in the oversubscription criteria. The only exception is our three Catholic schools who place non-Catholic looked after and previously looked after children after all other Catholic criteria. This is in line with their Trust requirements.

Such children have also been allocated places over number as permitted exceptions to infant class size limits.

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:

As per the School Admissions Code, any child with an Education, Health and Care Plan, is given priority at the school named in their statement/plan.

No North Somerset school has a criterion for children with disabilities and/or special educational needs who do not have an Education Health and Care Plan. These children are allocated places in the same way as any other child. All mainstream schools are equally able to manage children with additional needs. If these children cannot travel to their school due to their additional needs, they may appeal to the Council's Transport Appeal Panel for assistance.

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 Authorities within North Somerset would typically admit a looked after child if they felt they were able to accommodate them.

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:

As per the School Admissions Code, any child with an Education, Health and Care Plan is given priority at a school that has been named in their plan.

North Somerset schools do not include a criterion in their over subscription criteria for children with disabilities and/or special educational needs who do not have an Education Health and Care Plan. These children are allocated places in the same way as any other child, including use of the Fair Access Protocol, where appropriate.

This year we have seen increasing queries from schools where a child with special educational needs who does not have an education health care plan has been offered a place in-year, then stating that they are unable to meet need.

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	0	0
Foundation, voluntary aided and academies	1	11

Type of school	Number of Primary aged children admitted	Number of Secondary aged children admitted
Total	1	11

- 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?

There is a hotel within North Somerset that is currently being used as dispersal accommodation for asylum seeker families. Geographically, the hotel is in a difficult location; there are no secondary schools within the statutory walking distance and the catchment school is within another LA.

As there are no local secondary schools available for these children, each child is being referred to the Fair Access Protocol in order for a school to be identified, which in itself is causing a delay in securing these vulnerable children a school place.

- 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:

The majority of schools in North Somerset are Academy schools meaning that the Local Authority is reliant on schools agreeing to admit children considered under the Fair Access Protocol. If a school refuses to do so, this results in it taking longer to place some of our most complex and vulnerable students, and often parents will change their school preference(s) to ensure their child is not out of education.

If the LA, as the facilitator, could be granted powers of direction for Fair Access cases to all schools and academies, this would mean that pupils would miss less full-time education and their re-integration could be administered more quickly and effectively and serve hard to place children "Very Well".

Additionally, being able to identify the relevant vulnerable children is exceptionally difficult when admission authorities are not allowed to ask questions on the CAF which would enable vulnerable children to be identified. The LA is also reliant on school that process their own in year applications to notify the LA of all applications and their outcomes.

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):

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?

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