



Office of  
the Schools  
Adjudicator

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

**Rutland Local Authority**

to be provided by

**31 October 2022**

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**Please email your completed report to: [Office of the Schools Adjudicator](#) by  
31 October 2022 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 for 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. Local authorities do not have to include this introduction and guidance in their locally published report.
2. In 2020 and 2021, we asked far fewer questions than in previous years, asking only for the minimum information required by the Code. This was in response to the pressures on local authorities and others in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic. This year, we have again sought to keep the information requested to the minimum. We have, at the request of the Department for Education, asked a small number of additional questions relating to the impact of the new Code which came into force on 1 September 2021.
3. The new Code also changes the period to be covered by reports to the adjudicator and the deadline for submitting reports to the adjudicator. **This year's report must cover the 2021/2022 academic year and be submitted to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator by 31 October 2022.**

## Guidance on completing the template

4. In a departure from previous practice, we have included all the guidance on completing specific parts of the template in this section. We hope that this will be helpful. This is in response to feedback that including guidance and definitions in the body of the template could make the report harder for readers to follow and less accessible. 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.
5. 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>.
6. Guidance on specific questions and/or meaning of specific terms in this report:
  - a. "in-year admissions": This means admission 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

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

<sup>2</sup> [The Education Middle School \(England\) Regulations 2002](#)

primary school) **and** admission during the course of any school year after the end of the statutory waiting list period (31 December) in normal years of admission.

b. Not applicable means at questions:

Section 1: B.i. - B.iv. that there were no children falling within the relevant definition.

Section 1: B.v. that there were no schools for which the local authority was the admission authority at 1 September 2021.

Section 1: B.vi. that there were no schools in the local authority's area for which the local authority was not the admission authority at 1 September 2021.

Section 2: B.i. - B.iv. that there were no children falling within the relevant definition.

Section 2: C.i. that there were no children falling within the definition.

Section 2: D.iv. that there were no hard to place children referred to the protocol.

7. 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.
8. 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 point of admission

#### A. Co-ordination

i. How well did co-ordination of the main admissions	Not well	A large number of small problems or a major problem	Well with few small problems	Very well
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round work?				
Reception				√
Year 7				√
Other relevant years of entry				N/A

ii. Please give examples to illustrate your answer if you wish:

We continue to have an effective working relationship with our schools in regard to the co-ordinated admissions rounds due to the small number of schools within the local authority area.

There is a continuing issue, which has previously been reported, with regard to delays with neighbouring local authorities sending over applications for their residents for Rutland schools. The delay can impact on these parents receiving an offer due to the fact that a place may have been available when they submitted their application to their home LA but the place had been offered to another child by the time we receive the application.

**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. Please confirm that your local authority has included children adopted from state care outside England in its definition of previously looked after children in admission arrangements for schools for which it is the admission authority

Yes  No  Not applicable

- vi. How confident are you that all other admission authorities in your area have included children adopted from state care outside England in their definitions of previously looked after children in admission arrangements for schools for which they are the admission authority?

Confident all have  Confident some have  Not aware of whether all or some have  Not applicable

vii 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**:

Processes around the admission to school of looked after and previously looked after children continue to work well as a result of ongoing partnership working with the Virtual Head and colleagues within the local authority. Reporting mechanisms that are in place ensure that we have up to date information on children looked after and the Virtual Head has a clear understanding of admissions processes so that school applications can be processed as quickly as possible.

### **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:

Our SEND team provides us with a list of children who will fall within the normal admissions round, that have either an EHCP or assessment for EHCP in process. The SEND team then keep us updated as EHCPs are finalised and schools named so that we can monitor numbers going into each school. Having this information to hand also allows us to support those parents who may require additional help and advice when completing their application.

## **Section 2 - In-year admissions**

### **A. Effect of Code changes on in-year admissions**

Please provide any comments you wish to make on the effect of the changes to the Code's provisions for in-year admissions. It would be particularly helpful to have comments on whether you think the changes have made it easier or not for parents to secure places for children in-year?

Rutland County Council only coordinates in-year admissions for the one voluntary controlled primary school for whom it is the admission authority. The school is not oversubscribed and in-year admissions to the school are therefore processed very quickly. The remaining 16 primary schools and 3 secondary schools are all own admission authority schools and administer their own in-year admissions.

The changes within the Code with regard to provisions for in-year admissions have been positive and it is helpful to have more detailed guidance on this when working with our schools. At the beginning of the new academic year, September 2022, we sent a reminder to Rutland admission authorities of their statutory responsibilities regarding in-year admissions.

Paragraph 2.26 – it is a positive step to have statutory guidance that requires own admission authorities to set out clearly on their website how in-year applications will be dealt with and to provide a suitable application form. Previous to this, some admission authorities did not provide suitable information to parents or an application form on their website and instead, advised parents that they must contact the school to discuss their intended application.

Paragraph 2.30 – the addition of the guidance that parents must not be refused the opportunity to make an application is welcomed. We have, in the past, been advised by parents that they have contacted a school about applying for a place and have been told that the year group is full and then not been offered the opportunity to submit a formal, written application, to place their child's name onto the school waiting list, or to submit an appeal.

Paragraph 2.30 - it is helpful to have clear, statutory guidance on the deadline for responding to an in-year application. This allows the local authority to support parents if there is a delay in them receiving the outcome of an application and challenge an admission authority if they have not met the statutory timescale. This can also reduce the amount of time that a child may be without a school place.

**B. 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 do 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 your **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:

As referred to in Section 1, B, the working practices put in place with our Virtual Head ensure that in-year admissions are processed as quickly and efficiently as possible.

**C. 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:

In-year applications for children with an EHCP are dealt with by our SEND team working directly with the school named in the EHCP. The SEND team would contact the Admissions Service if they felt any guidance or advice was required.

As Rutland County Council does not coordinate in-year admission applications, an application received for a child with additional needs but without an EHCP would be submitted to and processed by the admission authority for the preferred school. Should a parent require additional support in this process, the admissions service



would work with the SEND and Inclusion service to ensure that the application is processed in line with statutory guidance.

- iv. If you wish, please provide any comments about **in-year admissions** in respect of other children:

In-year admissions to primary schools in Rutland work well.

However, our 3 secondary schools, which are all academies, are oversubscribed in most year groups with approximately 65% of students on roll living out of county. This results in a number of children being refused an in-year place at all 3 Rutland secondary schools. As all 3 Rutland secondary schools are academies, the local authority has no power to direct the schools to admit a Rutland resident child who is without a school place and, in most circumstances, has to also explore the option of securing a place at a school in another local authority area.

However, the pressure on school places in neighbouring authorities is impacting on the length of time a child may be without a school place.

Our DfE Pupil Place Planning Advisor recognises the unique situation within Rutland, and we continue to work closely with them to review the options available to the local authority. However, at this stage, no sustainable solution has been identified which can ensure Rutland resident children can be guaranteed a school place in county.

The LA has commissioned a capital expansion programme to increase one of the secondary schools in Rutland from a 7-form to an 8-form entry with effect from September 2022. However, admissions data identifies that whilst in 2021 9% of normal round admissions offers for this school were made to out of county residents, in 2022, this increased substantially to 24%. This confirms the issue that Rutland faces in securing sufficient in-year places for children resident in county.

#### **D. 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 2021 and 31 July 2022?

Type of school	Number of Primary aged children admitted	Number of Secondary aged children admitted
Community and voluntary controlled	0	N/A
Foundation, voluntary aided and academies	0	0
Total	0	0

iv. How well do you consider hard to place children are served by the fair access protocol in your area?

- Not at all well   
 Not well   
 Well   
 Very well   
 Not applicable

v. Please provide any comments you wish on the protocol not covered above. It would be particularly helpful to have any comments on the impact of the Code changes on the operation of the FAP in your area and the ability to secure places for vulnerable children:

Rutland is experiencing significant pressure on secondary school places which is increasing the risk of children and young people being unable to secure a school place through the in-year school admission process and we are seeing increasing requests for school places through the fair access process. We are aware that our current Fair Access Protocol, particularly in relation to those children and young people who are difficult to place, is not enabling the local authority to secure a school place for some of our young people. In recognition of this, we have organised a full review of the process which will include scrutiny of actions taken by schools prior to making a permanent exclusion. The local authority has organised meetings with academy leads/headteachers to challenge existing processes and for them to agree more effective ways of working collaboratively to improve cooperation within the fair access process.

We are in a unique position in Rutland where we have only three secondary schools which are all academies and are extremely popular and therefore oversubscribed. As demonstrated over time, approximately 65% of secondary school places in Rutland are taken by children from out of county, and the location of our secondary schools, with two having 'catchment areas' which include areas out of county, drastically impacts on the ability of the local authority to create additional capacity for Rutland resident pupils.

An example of the difficulties we are experiencing with allocating places through fair access is that we have a secondary school student who previously attended one of our secondary schools but the parent moved the child to another Rutland secondary school due to issues with other students. The second Rutland secondary school has now permanently excluded this student and the only option we have for placement through fair access is the third Rutland school which is full and has already won appeals based on being at capacity.

Additional places have been made available in the county but these are immediately taken up by children from out of county who are on schools' waiting lists. One of our colleges, Casterton College, increased its PAN from 180 for September 2021 to 210 for September 2022 and the number of out of county places offered subsequently rose by 41. At Catmose College, Oakham, the school has worked with the local authority to increase capacity from 210 in 2021 to 240 in 2022, and the number of out of county places offered has risen by 39.

We have raised this issue with colleagues in the Department for Education Pupil Place Planning Team and are keeping them updated on the situation. However, it is looking increasingly likely that the local authority will, in the near future, be forced to request direction by the secretary of state.

**E. Directions**

How many directions did the local authority make between 1 August 2021 and 31 July 2022 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

**F.** If you wish, please provide any other comments on the admission of children **in-year** not previously raised:

### **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?

The increase locally and nationally in permanent exclusions is placing an additional burden on the local authority's ability to ensure that every child within its area can be allocated a school place within the expected timeframe.

### **Section 4 - Feedback**

We would be grateful if you could provide any feedback on completing this report to inform our practice for 2023.

Following submission of this report, whilst we recognise that the subsequent report from the OSA will provide helpful, national information, where local authorities are identifying specific contextual issues, it would be beneficial for those local authorities to have the opportunity to discuss these further with the OSA.

Thank you for completing this template.

Please return to [Office of the Schools Adjudicator](#) by 31 October 2022