



In-Year admission applications

Guidance to schools on how to deal with in-year admission enquiries and applications

This information is to help guide schools through the process of dealing with enquiries and requests for school places outside of the normal admission round. This is to ensure that all legal requirements are met and schools can be confident in ensuring that they comply with the requirements of the School Admissions Code. Further advice can be obtained from Rebecca Tonks, Governance Adviser here at the Diocesan Education Service on 01675 464755 ext 110, mobile 07443 404188 or at r.tonks@bdes.org.uk

Parents have the right to apply to any school at any time and schools need to ensure that processes are in place to treat every enquiry for a school place in a consistent way. The process for every enquiry, whether or not there is a place in the relevant year group **MUST** be:

1. The parent contacts the school to enquire about transferring their child.
2. Whoever deals with that initial enquiry should advise the parent on how they apply. If the local authority co-ordinates the schools in-year applications, you need to signpost them to the admissions department. If you manage your own in-year applications, the parent **MUST** be given/sent an application, even if the class that they are enquiring for is full. It is the parent's right to apply even if there is no place available at that point. If the class is full there is no harm in advising them of this, but situations change and a class that is full today may not be tomorrow, so it must be the parent's decision whether to apply or not, not the school's as to whether they will accept an application.
3. Any applications submitted **MUST** considered by the governors, academy committee or Directors as appropriate, or by an admissions committee set up by such and the School Admissions Code requires parents to be advised of the outcome of their application ideally within 10 school days but if this is not possible, then it **must** be within 15 school days. The meeting **MUST** be quorate and minutes of the consideration be maintained. The School Admissions Code prevents any individual making a decision on an admissions application. That rule applies to anyone, be it a Head Teacher, Admissions Officer or Administration Officer. It is essential that individuals taking enquiries in the office are aware of this. An Administration Officer advising a parent that a class is full and that they will add their name to a waiting list is in breach of the Code as the application has effectively been turned down by an individual and when an application is turned down the parents always have the right to appeal.
4. Parents must be informed formally, in writing, of the outcome of their application within at least 15 school days and reason for the refusal if a place is not offered. The letter **MUST** also provide information about the right to appeal, the deadline for lodging an appeal and the contact details for making an appeal. They must be advised that if they wish to appeal then they must set out their grounds for the appeal in writing and schools cannot limit the grounds on which appeals can be made. Schools must never tell parents that they are wasting their time in appealing because they won't win, or make

any comments or suggestions to discourage parents from appealing. It is the parent's absolute right to appeal if they wish, regardless of anyone's opinion on the likelihood of that appeal being upheld.

5. A child can only be added to a waiting list after a formal application has been considered and turned down. No child should be added to a waiting list on the grounds that a general enquiry was made, an individual advised that the class was full and their details taken for future use should a place become available.

Schools responsibilities of sharing information with the local authority regarding in-year admissions

The School Admissions Code also requires schools to advise the local authority, ie your local admissions department, of certain information. The Code states that schools **MUST**:

- Advise the local authority of all in-year applications that it receives and the outcome of all of those applications.
- Keep the local authority up to date of the number on role and the number of places available in each year group.

This is so the local authority is kept up to date of the figures of available places in the area. If your school does not comply with the above two points, then it is in breach of the School Admissions Code as it is a requirement of the Code that schools do so.