

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE IN-YEAR FAIR ACCESS PROTOCOL

To ensure that the needs of the child and the needs are taken into account, the School Admissions Code requires every LA, admission authority and Admissions Forum which does not already have one, to agree an In-Year Fair Access Protocol.

Principles

In order for the protocol to be successful:

- Schools and the LA will abide by the “collective agreement”
- **All** schools will take part
- Schools will continue to admit local pupils who apply for an available place, under normal admission arrangements
- Schools cannot say they are oversubscribed if they are asked to admit a pupil under the protocol, and vulnerable children will be given priority for admission over any others on a waiting list or awaiting appeal
- Schools must respond immediately to requests for admission so that the admission of the pupil is not unduly delayed.
- All admission authorities should follow best practice to ensure compliance with the admissions code by showing how they can take a share of the responsibility for meeting the needs of vulnerable children.
- Wherever possible, decisions on a placement will take account of a pupil’s expressed religious affiliation.

Aims

The protocol is designed to:

- Acknowledge the real need of vulnerable young people who are not on the roll of any school to be dealt with quickly and sympathetically to minimise the danger of rejection, disaffection and demotivation
- Effectively promote inclusion of young people within the local school community to ensure an efficient use of resources
- Ensure that all schools take a shared responsibility for the admission of pupils with challenging educational needs on a turn-taking basis
- Provide a rational structure for decision making which is seen as fair, transparent and has the confidence of all schools

This protocol covers strategies for ensuring the admission of

1. Looked-after children
2. Permanently excluded children
3. Children who require reintegration into mainstream school, children with no school place and children faced with barriers to education. These are:

- Children who are currently out of education and require reintegration back to mainstream (for example, children in the PRU, children who have been absent from school for over half a term and children who have been out of school for medical reasons)
- Children with no school place (for example, refugees and asylum seekers, homeless and refuge accommodated children, children who have moved into area after the normal admissions round)

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- Children with barriers to education (for example children with special educational needs but no statement, children with disabilities, young carers, children who have committed offences, children of traveller families)

1. Looked-after children

During the normal admissions round the following will take place:	
Rising 5, Junior Transfer and Secondary Transfer points	<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ To ensure that during the annual consultation phase, all schools comply with the admissions code to give priority admission to looked-after children in their admissions rules.□ The LA will challenge the admission arrangements of any school that does not prioritise looked after children in the admission rules.
After the normal admissions round:	
During key stage 1:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ If the catchment school for the child is full then the LA will either admit the child (VC/Community), or direct the admission (VA/F) of a looked-after child as a permitted exception within the Key Stage 1 legislation. This would be followed even if other schools locally could accept.
During key stage 2 and key stage 3:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ To adopt the same policy as at Key Stage One, follow the same procedure and to admit the child even if in doing so the school is required to go above the admission number.
During key stage 4:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ To adopt a more flexible response to maximise the curriculum continuity for a child where possible and/or to look at other sources of support especially in Yr 11. However, where possible the LA would try to ensure the child could attend a local school.

Each time a school admits a child under the arrangements listed above, the LA would consider offering a one-off Reintegration payment equal to 5 hours of LSA time to facilitate the child's reintegration. In addition to this the school could expect the support of the ECPC team.

2. Permanently Excluded Pupils

Following a permanent exclusion, the LA will find a suitable full-time educational placement with minimum disruption to the education of the pupil by:	
1	Following the normal process laid down in exclusions guidance. {link}
2	Referring cases to a Pupil Placement Panel which would meet regularly and which would consider:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Which school would be best placed to successfully reintegrate the child ❑ The reintegration plan for the child ❑ The parents wishes ❑ The relative distances to alternative provision and the appropriateness of a child's placement there ❑ Whether the admission of a child was required above the published Admission Number of the proposed school.
3	Formally asking (and where necessary directing) schools to admit the child where they are identified by the panel as the school best placed to reintegrate each child.

3. Children who require reintegration into mainstream school, children with no school place and children faced with barriers to education

The LA will admit a small number of children in excess of the published admission number as indicated by the following process:	
1	An initial check would be made to see whether the child has been permanently excluded from their last school in which case their admission will be managed as per (2) above.
2	Where the child has not been permanently excluded then either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ If the preferred school has a place- the child should be admitted, or ❑ If the preferred school has no place - then the school must refer the parents to the LA (without at this stage issuing a formal refusal to admit).
3	On receipt of the referral, the LA will review the situation at the school <i>that is the closest catchment school</i> to the child's address, establishing how many children are already in the year group and any prior commitments to admit excluded children: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ During Key Stage 1 the child will be offered a place, where possible, under the excepted clauses and the LA will formally notify the governors of this. Where this is not possible the LA would offer a school place at the next nearest school with a place available (with transport if necessary) and advise the parent that if they still wish to pursue their first preference they should appeal. ❑ After Key Stage1, the LA will admit the child if there is no other place within a reasonable distance and will commit schools up to a maximum of 1 child in 30 above the Admission Number (for example with an Admission of 180, the maximum the LA would ask a school to admit up to is 5 extra). If any school is already at, or above, this number (for example, as a result of appeals) then the LA will place the child (with transport, if necessary) at the next nearest school and advise the parent of their right of appeal.

4. All other applications

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All other applications will be considered in line with the published admission number and, if the school is full, the parents will be required to appeal for a place in excess of the admission number.