

Setting admission arrangements for 2014/15



Guidance for schools that have changed status to academy or trust or will be changing before 01 January 2013

October 2012

NB: This document is intended as a guide only. Schools must refer to the Regulations and Codes on admissions for the detailed guidance.

Introduction

All schools have an admission authority which sets the admission arrangements for the school including the oversubscription criteria and published admission number (PAN). For community and voluntary-controlled schools, the admission authority is the Local Authority (LA). For academies, free schools, foundation, trust and voluntary-aided schools, the admission authority is the academy trust or governing body.

If your school has changed status from community or voluntary-controlled to one of the above, or will be doing so in the near future, you may have either already consulted on and determined your own admission arrangements in previous years, or you are thinking about doing this for the first time.

If you have already consulted on your own arrangements for 2013/14

What if we don't want to make any changes to the arrangements that we consulted on last year, including the PAN?

If you decide not to make any changes this year, you will not need to consult again. Admission authorities are only required to consult every seven years unless there are changes proposed before this time.

If we don't need to consult, will we need to do anything at all relating to our arrangements for 2014/15?

If you decide that you do not want to make any changes, you will still need to:

- Agree your 2014/15 arrangements by **15 April 2013**
- Let the LA know that you won't be consulting this year – email admissionsandtransport@cornwall.gov.uk
- Notify parents/carers of these arrangements
- Publish the arrangements on your website
- Send a copy of the arrangements to the LA by **1 May 2013** (send to admissionsandtransport@cornwall.gov.uk).

What if we want to make a change or changes to our admission arrangements that we consulted on last year?

If you decide you want to make a change to them for 2014/15, you will need to consult again, as you did before.

What about our PAN?

As part of determining your own arrangements, you will have set a published admission number (PAN). If you decide to **increase** your PAN for 2014/15, you do not need to consult on this change, but you **must** inform the LA as soon as possible and make specific reference to this on your website. If you decide to **decrease** your PAN, you must consult fully as per the Admissions Code (as described below).

If you are planning to consult on your own arrangements for the first time

We have changed status/will be changing status before January 2013. When can we start using our own admission arrangements?

If you have yet to consult on your own arrangements having changed status, please bear in mind that the first academic year in which your own arrangements can come into effect is **2014/15**, (providing you follow the regulations on consultation), as the LA has already consulted on and determined arrangements for 2013/14 for your school and these will continue to apply for that academic year.

Can we just carry on using the LA's criteria?

It might be that you decide to use the same order of oversubscription criteria that the LA use for community and voluntary-controlled schools. You will still need to put these in your own school template and amend the details as appropriate to your school and determine them as your own arrangements for 2014/15. Don't forget to include the school's PAN and any other details that are particular to your school such as how you will measure the distances relating to admissions. The LA's arrangements also refer to specific issues that might not apply to your school so you will need to check for these and take them out/amend them as necessary. It isn't just a case of changing the logo on the document!

What do we need to put in our arrangements?

Below is some guidance on what to include – but you should refer to the Admissions Code 2012 for detail.

- Published Admission Number**
- Oversubscription criteria.** As part of your admission arrangements, you must set out the criteria against which places will be allocated at the school when there are more applications than places available. See below for details.
- Definitions** relating to your oversubscription criteria.

If you include reference to in-year applications, you will need to say that parents can apply at any time during the school year but it is yet to be confirmed whether schools or the LA will be handling in-year applications by 2014/15 (see recent information sent out to schools).

Schools with sixth forms should describe their particular entry arrangements and oversubscription criteria.

What can we put in our oversubscription criteria?

- All children whose Statement of SEN names your school must be admitted. You should mention this in your arrangements and then refer to the fact that after the admission of these pupils, the following priority order will apply...
- Priority 1 **must** be children in care and those that were previously in care but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order immediately after being in care.
- The order of priority after that is up to you, however: *'Oversubscription criteria **must** be reasonable, clear, objective, procedurally fair, and comply with all relevant legislation, including equalities legislation. Admission authorities **must** ensure that their arrangements will not disadvantage unfairly, either directly or indirectly, a child from a particular social or racial group, or a child with a disability or special educational needs, and that other policies around school uniform or school trips do not discourage parents from applying for a place for their child. Admission arrangements **must** include an effective, clear and fair tie-breaker to decide between two applications that cannot otherwise be separated.'* (Admissions Code 2012).
- There is a list of unacceptable criteria in the Code – please refer to this when preparing your criteria. This includes interviews for places which are strictly forbidden.
- If you decide to have siblings as one of your criteria, you need to define the term 'siblings' in the arrangements. You will also need to define other aspects such as distances, social and medical need, feeder schools etc. where these are used as a priority.
- The Admissions Code 2012 allows you to prioritise children of staff in your oversubscription criteria, however, bear in mind that this can only be in either or both of the following circumstances:
 - a) where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, and/or
 - b) the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage
- Faith schools should seek advice from the Diocese for their faith criteria and supplementary information forms.

When do we need to consult?

You must consult for a **minimum of eight weeks** between **01 November and 01 March** in the determination year – i.e. for your 2014/15 arrangements you will need to consult between 01 November 2012 and 01 March 2013.

Who do we consult with?

You must consult with:

- parents of children between the ages of two and eighteen;
- others in Cornwall who you think have an interest in the proposed admissions;

- all other admission authorities within the relevant area (except that primary schools need not consult secondary schools);
- the Local Authority;
- any adjoining neighbouring local authorities where the admission authority is the local authority; and
- in the case of faith schools, the Diocese.

How do we need to consult?

For the duration of the consultation period you must publish a copy of the full proposed admission arrangements on your website together with the details of the person to whom comments should be sent. You must also send a copy on request to those listed above inviting comment. NB: Failure to consult effectively may be grounds for subsequent complaints and appeals.

Please send a copy of the arrangements and details of the consultation period to admissionsandtransport@cornwall.gov.uk.

We would suggest referring to the consultation in your school newsletter and perhaps putting a notice up in the entrance/s to school, to ensure that parents are aware of it. You could even let the local press know, however this is not specified in the Code.

What do we do after the consultation?

- The governing body must decide on the final arrangements by **15 April 2013**
- Publish the arrangements on your website (and for the whole of the offer year)
- Notify the LA, Diocese (if a faith school) and other schools in the area
- Send a copy of the arrangements to the LA before **01 May 2013**
- Where you have increased the PAN – notify the LA

Key dates

01 November 2012 – 01 March 2013: Consultation (at least 8 weeks) to take place

15 April 2013: Admission arrangements to be determined by this date

01 May 2013: Admission arrangements sent to LA by this date and specific reference to the change made on school website

Where to get more information

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/schooladmissions>

Email: admissionsandtransport@cornwall.gov.uk

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October 2012