

Annex 1

Role and Duties of the Local Admission Forum

Specifically, the Code of Practice states that:

Admission Forums **must**:

consider how well existing and proposed admission arrangements serve the interests of children and parents within the area of the authority;

promote agreement on admission issues;

consider the comprehensiveness and accessibility of the admissions literature and information produced for parents by each admission authority within the area of the forum;

consider the effectiveness of the authority's proposed co-ordinated admission arrangements;

consider the means by which admissions processes might be improved and how actual admissions relate to the admission numbers published;

monitor the admission of children who arrive in the authority's area outside a normal admission round with a view to promoting arrangements for the fair distribution of such children among local schools, taking account of any preference expressed in accordance with arrangements made under section 86(1) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and in accordance with the Code of Practice;

promote the arrangements for children with special educational needs, children in care and children who have been excluded from school;

consider any other admissions issues that arise.

Ensuring fair access

In discharging these responsibilities, Admission Forums should:

refer an objection to the Schools Adjudicator where either it identifies policy, practice or oversubscription criteria of a school that may be unfair, unlawful or that contravene the mandatory provisions of the Code, or where their advice has been disregarded by admission authorities;

review the comprehensiveness, effectiveness and accessibility of advice and guidance for parents by the local authority, both through the published Guide for Parents and the delivery of Choice; and

agree, promote and monitor local authority In-Year Fair Access Protocols for potentially vulnerable children including those previously excluded from school, children in care, children with special educational need and/or disabilities, children who are hard to place, and those who arrive in the area outside the normal admissions round.

Reports on effectiveness of local admission arrangements

Admission Forums have an important power, under section 85A(1A) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (as inserted by section 41 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006), to publish an annual report. Regulations set out the matters that reports will cover which include:

- a) a breakdown of preferences met by ranking (1st, 2nd, 3rd preference etc), and the main factors affecting whether preferences were met;
- b) the number of admission appeals made for schools in the area;
- c) the ethnic and social mix of pupils attending schools in the area, and factors which affect this;
- d) the extent to which existing and proposed admission arrangements serve the interests of vulnerable children;
- e) how well In-Year Fair Access Protocols are working and the number of children admitted to each school under the protocol;
- f) whether primary schools are complying with infant class size legislation;
- g) details of other matters that affect how fairly admission arrangements serve the interests of local children and parents;

any recommendation or recommendations that the forum wishes to make in order to improve parental choice and access to education in the local authority's area.