



Office of the
Schools
Adjudicator

**LOCAL AUTHORITY REPORT
TO
THE SCHOOLS ADJUDICATOR
FROM**

Herefordshire Council

30 JUNE 2011

Report Cleared by: Jo Davidson

Director of People's Services

Date submitted: 30th June 2011

By: Andrew Blackman – Admissions & Transport Manager

Contact email address: ablackman@herefordshire.gov.uk

Telephone number: 01432 260927

www.schoolsadjudicator.co.uk

SECTION 1

FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR IN WHICH THE REPORT IS MADE - 2010 - 2011

Please complete using data/information for the period 1 September 2010 to date of report

NOTE: This template is designed to be filled in electronically – boxes can be expanded as necessary.

Fair Access Protocol

Code 4.9 a) (i) how well the Fair Access Protocol has worked and how many children have been admitted to each school in the area under the protocol;

NOTE: The Code at 3.44 requires (1) each local authority to have a Fair Access Protocol and (2) all schools and Academies to participate in their LA area's protocol

- a) Please confirm that the LA has a Fair Access Protocol that has been agreed with all the relevant schools in its area (relevant schools are all maintained schools and academies).

Tick as appropriate:

Yes	X	No	
-----	----------	----	--

If NO please explain:

- b) Give your assessment of how well the Fair Access Protocol has worked since 1 September 2010. In particular in placing children, the co-operation of schools and Academies as well as any other issues you have had in implementing the protocol.

Following feedback from some schools we are reviewing effectiveness and impact of the current protocol.

- c) In Appendix A, please record for each school the number of children considered to be placed in (column O) and those actually placed in (column P) to the school under the protocol between 1 September 2010 and the date of this report.

Infant Class Sizes

Code 4.9 a) (ii) whether primary schools are complying with infant class size legislation

Are all Primary Schools in your area complying with infant class sizes?

Tick as appropriate:

Yes	X	No	
-----	----------	----	--

If NO please comment and also include the number of schools where qualifying measures are being taken:

Admission Appeals

Code 4.9 a) (iii) the number of admissions appeals held for each and every school in the area, and the number of appeals that were upheld.*

* Every school includes: community, voluntary controlled, voluntary aided, foundation, Academies, city technology colleges and city colleges for technology of the arts.

For the period 1 September 2010 to the date of this report please insert in Appendix A the following for each school:

- column Q - the number of appeals held;
- column R - the number of appeals upheld; and
- column S - the number of appeals pending from the date of this report.

Code 4.9 a) iv the extent to which the local authority and appeal panels in the area complied with the requirements of the Appeals Code, with reference to ensuring the timeliness and transparency of appeals, effective communications with parents and any other relevant matter.

NOTE: other appeals panels have a duty to provide you with information on appeals (Section 88Q of Schools Standards and Framework Act).

Has your independent appeals panel complied with the requirements of the Appeals Code?

Tick as appropriate:

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----	-------------------------------------	----	--------------------------

If NO please explain including non-compliance and action taken:

Have all other appeals panels for own admission authority schools complied with the requirements of the Appeals Code?

Tick as appropriate:

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------	------------	-------------------------------------

If NO or Don't Know please highlight any issues raised and if you have been unable to obtain information:

No known issues. The Council has received information when it has been requested.

SECTION 2

FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR WHICH STARTS AFTER THE REPORT IS MADE – 2011-2012:

Code 4.9 b) (i) the extent to which admission arrangements for schools in the authority's area serve the interests of children in care, children with disabilities, children with special educational needs and service children.

NOTE: You may wish to point out if specialist staff from within the Council has contributed to this report and highlight any problems that may have occurred.

Children in care:

Children in care are a national priority. Herefordshire has also prioritised former looked after children whose permanence has been sought through adoption.

All looked after children get the school of preference when starting school and on transition. Requests for in year moves are generally met with the rare exception posing difficulties, in these cases there often mitigating circumstances.

Occasionally there are difficulties placing children and young people from other authorities where education provision is not discussed before a placement move. Delays are often due to the lack of supporting information to inform choice and unreasonable expectations regarding the nature of that provision.

Children with disabilities:

Children with Special Educational Needs:

- When a child has a Statement of SEN, the SEN team advises Admissions when a child/young person starts at or leaves a school.
- In Autumn Term of Year 6, the SEN Team and Admissions liaise regarding Phase Transfer of children with a Statement of SEN; no later than 15th February these children have a Final Statement naming the high school from the following September.

Service Children:

Parent Partnership service works very closely with Service welfare officers, staff from military pre-school, HIVE the forces information service. It is a priority to support all military families throughout the appeal process.

Code 4.9 b) (ii) the effectiveness of co-ordination.

NOTE: You may wish to report on the authority's assessment of the effectiveness of any scheme for co-ordinating:

a) the admission of pupils to **LA schools** in September 2011

All offers made according to the published co-ordination timetable.

b) the admission of pupils in the authority's area to **other admission authority schools** in September 2011.

All offers made according to the published co-ordination timetable.

SECTION 3

FOR ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS THAT HAVE BEEN DETERMINED IN THE APRIL IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE DATE OF THE REPORT IS MADE (determined by 15 April 2011 for admission in September 2012):

Code 4.9 c) (i) a statement of whether or not admission arrangements for maintained schools in the area complied with the mandatory requirements of this Code and admissions law.

NOTE: All non-compliant admission arrangements must be corrected. All mandatory requirements can be changed by the admission authority. Any other non-compliant issues must be referred to the OSA.

Are you satisfied that the admission arrangements for all maintained schools in your area are fully compliant with the Code?

Tick as appropriate:

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----	-------------------------------------	----	--------------------------

If YES please provide a statement to confirm this:

Determined admission arrangements for all maintained schools for the 2012/2013 academic year were ratified by the Local Admission Forum on March 15th 2011.

If NO, please specify what action you are taking:

Using column T in Appendix A, please identify those schools that you have identified with problems now or which you have referred to the OSA, or may be referring to the OSA by the 31 July 2011.

SECTION 4

OTHER MATTERS:

Admission Forum

Code 4.9 d) (i) details about the current membership of the Admission Forum for the area

NOTE: Please list the bodies represented and the number of representatives in each category. Do **NOT** give the names of members.

2 elected Members of Herefordshire Council
2 Community School Representatives (1 Primary & 1 Secondary)
1 Voluntary Controlled School representative
1 Voluntary Aided School representative
2 Foundation School representatives
1 Academy School representative
1 Church of England representative
1 Roman Catholic representative
3 Parent Representatives
1 Armed Forces Representative
1 Consortium of Special Needs Representative
1 Choice Advisor
1 School Governor Representative
1 Independent Sector Representative

Is the Admission Forum writing a report?

Tick as appropriate:

Yes		No	X
-----	--	----	----------

If YES is the report attached or has it been sent separately?

Tick as appropriate:

Attached		Separately	
----------	--	------------	--

If separately please provide the date the report will or has been sent to the OSA?

DATE:

--

Please confirm whether the Admission Forum has seen, or will see, a copy of this LA report.

Tick as appropriate:

Has seen		Will see	X
----------	--	----------	----------

Free School Meals

Code 4.9 d) (ii) the proportion of children currently on free school meals at

Document Title: LA report Herefordshire Council June11
Document Status: draft

each school in the area.

NOTE: The data provided by the Local Authority to the DCSF in January 2010 has been “cleaned” and is included in Appendix A.

If the data for 2011 is significantly different from 2010 please state how it differs.

Using and interpreting the data, please comment on whether the allocation of school places meets parental preferences for those children on Free School Meals.

Generally parents of those children eligible/taking up FSM state a preference for their local/catchment school.

Code 4.9 d) (iii) any other matters which affect the fairness of admission arrangements for schools in the area.

NOTE: Please identify any issues not covered elsewhere on this template.

SECTION 5

OTHER ISSUES REQUESTED IN ADDITION THIS YEAR BY THE DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION.

Choice Advice

Please complete with reference to Choice Advice provided to parents applying for a secondary school place for the 2011/2012 school year.

Appendix 5 of the Code requires local authorities to provide an independent Choice Advice service that is focused on supporting the families who most need support in navigating the secondary school admissions process (paragraph 5). Choice Advice must be independent and free from any potential conflict of interest between the need of the local authority to allocate places and the advice that parents receive (paragraph 8). As a minimum, local authorities must ensure that Choice Advisers are not in the same management chain or reporting lines as the local authority's admissions staff (paragraph 9).

- a) Please confirm that your local authority has an independent Choice Advice service in place.

Tick as appropriate:

Yes	X	No	
-----	----------	----	--

- b) Please explain how you ensure the independence of the Choice Advice provided (for example, the Choice Advice service may be situated in the Parent Partnership service or Family Information Service).

Choice Advice is situated within the Parent Partnership with separate line management arrangements from the services themselves, in this case the admissions team. Ultimately both services are under the responsibility of the Director of People's Services (see response below)

- b) Are your Choice Adviser(s) in the same line management chain or reporting lines as staff on the admissions team.

Tick as appropriate:

Yes		No	X
-----	--	----	----------

Choice Advice must be targeted at those parents who most need support with the secondary school admissions process (paragraph 10). Local authorities and Choice Advisers should market their service to ensure that they reach the families most in need of their support and that other relevant agencies and professionals are aware of the service they provide (paragraph 11). Choice Advisers should be proactive in reaching 'hard to reach' parents and should develop good links with organisations that may be able to refer parents to them (paragraph 12).

- d) Please explain how you ensure Choice Advice reaches those parents who are most in need of it.

Staff ensure that they network with a wide range of local authority officers for example, Equality and Gypsy Roma Traveller Officer, Social Inclusion Officer etc. The team are active in marketing the service in Early Years Settings, Schools, Locality Teams and through meeting parents at Health Clinics etc. Information on how to access the service is via marketing materials, telephone contact, email and information is provided on the web.

- e) Describe how Choice Advice has contributed to the fairness of the admissions process.

Staff member attends on behalf of and contributes to the In Year Fair Access Panel. Staff challenge local authority decisions on behalf of parents/carers where their school preference is not agreed by assisting with paperwork and if necessary attending Appeals.

Local authorities may provide Choice Advice at the primary school admission stage and for in-year applications (paragraph 5).

- f) Choice Advice is offered at the primary admissions stage?

Tick as appropriate:

Yes	X	No	
-----	----------	----	--

- g) Choice Advice is offered for in-year applications?

Tick as appropriate:

Yes	X	No	
-----	----------	----	--

It is good practice for Choice Advisers to provide support during the appeals process, particularly to those parents who accessed Choice Advice at the application stage.

- h) The Choice Adviser provides support during the appeals process?

Tick as appropriate:

Yes	X	No	
-----	----------	----	--

- i) If no, do you plan to provide support during the appeals process in future?

Tick as appropriate:

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

Transport

Admission authorities **must** explain clearly whether or not school transport will be available, and, if so, to which schools and at what cost (if any). Are details of the availability and cost of home to school travel and transport clearly set out in the composite prospectus?

Tick as appropriate:

Yes	X	No	
-----	----------	----	--

If No, please provide an explanation

SECTION 6

OTHER ISSUES REQUESTED IN ADDITION THIS YEAR BY DEPARTMENT.

6TH Forms

Paragraphs 1.42 to 1.45 of the Code provide guidance on applications for Year 12 and transfer from Year 11.

Do you have any 6th forms within your Authority?

Tick as appropriate:

Yes	X	No	
-----	----------	----	--

If Yes, how Many?

4

Have you considered the admission arrangements for 6th forms in line with recommendations of the Code?

Tick as appropriate:

Yes	X	No	
-----	----------	----	--

Are you going to take any further action with regard to these arrangements?

Tick as appropriate:

Yes		No	X
-----	--	----	----------

If Yes, please specify what action you are taking:

Aptitude

Paragraphs 2.78 to 2.82 provide guidance on partial selection by aptitude.

Do you have any schools which select pupils by aptitude for a subject?

Tick as appropriate:

Yes		No	X
-----	--	----	----------

If 'yes' how many?

--

If yes, do you check the tests that these Schools use to ensure that they are compliant with law?

Tick as appropriate:

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--