

Proposed In-Year Fair Access Scheme for Haringey Schools

INTRODUCTION

1. The Schools Admissions Code requires local authorities to have a scheme in place for fair access, which all local schools and Academies must participate in. This In-Year Fair Access Scheme complies with this requirement and has been revised and agreed by the Head teacher and local authority partnership following review of the implementation of the procedures.
2. Its aims are to:
 - Acknowledge the real needs of vulnerable young people who are not on the roll of a school to be dealt with quickly and sympathetically;
 - Fairly share the burden of admitting vulnerable students across all schools and Academies and where relevant other provision, taking account of their resources to support each student;
 - Arrange such admissions openly through a process which has the confidence of all.
 - Ensure that admissions made through the In Year Fair Access Panel (IYFAP) are made even if this is above the school's Published Admission Number (PAN).

STUDENTS WITHIN THE SCOPE OF THIS SCHEME

3. The admission to school of the following students falls within the scope of this scheme:
 - Children who are looked after by a local authority or were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after, became subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order ;
 - Children who are carers;
 - Children for whom the authority accepts have a significant social or medical need for a particular school where there are no vacancies including homeless children and young people; asylum seekers and refugees not in accommodation centres; those with unsupportive family backgrounds where a place has not been sought; Traveller/Gypsy/Roma children;
 - those permanently excluded or where there is evidence that they were at risk of exclusion prior to leaving their last school;
 - children removed from school and unable to find a place after a number of fixed term exclusions;
 - Children whose parents have moved into the area and are unable to find a school place;
 - pupils ready for reintegration from the Pupil Support Centre;
 - those known to the police or other agencies such as the Youth Offending;

- those returning from secure units;
 - those without a school place and a history of serious attendance problems – defined as 80% or less attendance in the last 12 months in any authority or where Haringey is pursuing a School Attendance Order ;
 - those who have been out of education for more than 6 weeks (half a term);
 - children of UK service personnel and Crown Servants;
 - Children with special educational needs, not covered by a Statement and with particular requirements that merit consideration by the Fair Access Panel;
 - Children who are homeless
 - Children requiring an educational place when all schools have reached their admission limit (PAN).
4. The Fair Access Panel will also monitor managed moves as detailed in the Managed Moves Protocol (Haringey, 2007). Schools should inform the School Admissions Service of any pupil who is subject to a managed move.
5. There are special admissions arrangements for children with statements of Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Children In Care (CIC), and this protocol does not override those arrangements. However, it has been agreed that pupils who are or could be placed through those arrangements will be noted by the IYFAP see later section.

COMPOSITION OF THE PANEL

6. A panel, consisting of three Head teachers (or their designated representative), will meet once a month (or as necessary) to ensure prompt and fair allocation of young people to schools. There will also be a member of the Local Authority. The quorum will be three, with at least two Head teachers and one local authority representative.
7. The Head of Admissions and School Organisation will Chair the panel.
8. Head teachers' representation on the panel will be agreed annually at the secondary Head teachers' meeting.
9. Where a young person is known to a particular service or agency, an officer with knowledge of that young person will be invited to the panel, or a short written statement may be submitted.
10. The Head of Behaviour & Alternative Provision will also sit on the panel.

THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

11. Cases will be brought to the panel by the Haringey Admissions Service which will be the point of referral for other CYPS teams and other agencies. The cases must be submitted under one of the categories given in paragraph 3 above and the child must be without a school place.

12. The Panel will be administered by the Haringey Admissions Service and will provide data on previous panels including applicants admitted by school, year group and number of points awarded. Data for the current and previous school year will be made available and will be reported as a four-term rolling figure. (Figures to be based on actual figures where IYFAP pupils have been admitted.)

13. The Panel will also have available to it the number of students with statements of special educational need allocated over number through the SEN procedures and the number of vacancies by year group. Pupils who have been admitted through the SEN procedures will not be counted in the number of pupils admitted through IYFAP procedures BUT points will be allocated for each pupil admitted through the SEN procedures with 1 point allocated for 'low incidence' SEN and 2 points for 'high incidence' SEN.

NOTE:

Points will only be allocated for pupils with statement of SEN where the admission has been part of the SEN Panel decision and therefore points will not be allocated to pupils with SEN admitted through the normal admissions arrangements.

14. The placement panel for CIC will continue to determine the most appropriate placement for each young person and their case will be presented by the CIC Manager to the IYFAP for confirmation and points allocation. Other than in exceptional circumstances, all CIC placements made this way will attract 3 points. In order to ensure that CIC are admitted to school quickly, it will not be possible for these cases to be brought back to the panel for reconsideration.

15. When making the decision as to appropriate placement for the child, the panel will take into account:

- preferences made
- the parents' views (including religious affiliation);
- the individual context of a school in relation to recently excluded students and measures taken to prevent exclusion of pupils already at a school;
- the number of students admitted through IYFAP.
- the number of 'points' accumulated by schools that have already admitted students under the protocol (please see explanation below);
- the needs of the student, where this is known;
- any capacity/capability reasons why the school may not be able to respond to the needs of the student.

NOTE

Over an academic year this should not exceed four additional pupils per year group and should not exceed a maximum of 15 pupils in total across all year groups.

Where a school has inadvertently admitted pupils above its admission number, these additional pupils will not count and cannot be off-set against IYFAP referrals.

15. The distance from home to school will also be considered. However the aim of the protocol is to ensure that the admission of vulnerable students is distributed fairly across all schools so the reasonableness of journeys to school will also be considered.
16. The panels will award points for each pupil admitted under the protocol. Points can range from 1 to 3, with 3 allocated to those pupils who, in the view of the panel, represent the greatest challenge to the schools to which they are allocated.

NOTE

The panel will also award points to a school where they have been named because a School Attendance Order has been instigated by Haringey. This will be 1 point in the first instance, pending the outcome of the legal process, but indicative points will be determined should the process be successful and the young person start at the school

17. The points allocation to The John Loughborough School will be multiplied by four to bring it into line with other schools.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISIONS

18. Decisions regarding placement of students under the Fair Access protocol will be made by the panel, and will be final.

Admission must take place within 15 school days of the school receiving notification of the decision.

19. In exceptional circumstances, the allocated school may request that the panel reconsider their decision at the next meeting. This will only be possible where the school has prior knowledge of the specific young person which was not known to the panel at the time of decision, which makes the placement inappropriate. This request must be made in writing to the Chair in writing within 5 school days of the school receiving notification of the decision. The formal offer letter will be sent on the 6th day.
20. The Department for Education recognises that admission of a young person through the Fair Access Panel could potentially take the school above the planned admission number for that year group.
21. It is recognised that there is usually little available information about the young people who are being admitted in-year to school. However, to ensure fair access, to avoid accusations of 'selection' and to avoid undue delay in a pupil starting school, there needs to be a balance of the degree of information required. The Admissions service will try to acquire as much educational information as practicable to accompany in-year admissions.
22. Where a young person has been allocated a school place and the school awarded points based on the best information available at the time, and this subsequently proves to be inappropriate/inaccurate, the school may bring the case back to the panel for a change in points allocation or, in very rare and extreme circumstances, reallocation.

RELATIONSHIP WITH APPEALS

23. Where young people are admitted to a school above the planned admission number in any year group under the protocol, this should not prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources of the school.
24. Appeal panels will be made aware of the conditions of the scheme, and that the admission of an additional student under this scheme is different from a school voluntarily exceeding its admission limit. Panels will also be made aware that any decision made to allow appeals will place further pressure on the school's resources.
25. A school placement made through IYFAP shall not remove a parent/carer's right to appeal for a school place elsewhere.

MONITORING THE OPERATION OF THE PROTOCOL

26. The anonymised details of all decisions will be made available to the Admissions Forum as a standing agenda item to demonstrate that the Protocol is being applied appropriately.
27. The Admissions Service will undertake scheduled checks and monitor admission dates and pupil days.
28. The school Attendance Officers will monitor whether a child referred to them by the IYFAP panel attends the school from the 16th day of notification. Pupils who fail to attend will be reported to the Admissions Service after 20 pupil days, accompanied by details of action already undertaken to secure attendance at the nominated school (to enable the authority to initiate the next stage of action).