

IN YEAR FAIR ACCESS PROTOCOL 2010/2011

Introduction

1. Principles

The educational needs of children and young people are best met in a stable and continuous environment. Evidence suggests that many children are disadvantaged by moving between schools. Only in very exceptional circumstances should a child need to move school and particularly mid-year. Sometimes however, children can find themselves without a school place, because their personal circumstances are such that they have had to move home; or they are Children Looked After (CLA); or they have been permanently excluded from a school.

In those exceptional circumstances, Oxfordshire schools and the LA recognise that they share a collective responsibility for all pupils, including those deemed hard to place and are committed to work in partnership to ensure that the in year admissions procedures are fair, transparent and timely.

This protocol aims to ensure that:

- values are agreed and shared
- statutory responsibilities are fully met
- procedures are agreed and clear for the management of all types of in year admissions, including fair access, planned transfers and parental requests for a change of school

2. The Legal Framework

In accordance with the School Admissions Code 2007, all admission authorities and Admission Forums must have an In Year Fair Access Protocol in place to ensure that unplaced children arriving outside the normal admissions round, especially the most vulnerable, are offered a place as quickly as possible and to ensure that all schools in an area admit their fair share of children with challenging behaviour.

In line with the School Admissions Code 2009, the following groups are included in this Oxfordshire protocol;

- Children attending PRUs who need to be reintegrated back into mainstream education;
- Children who have been out of education for longer than one school term;
- Children whose parents have been unable to find them a place after moving to the area, because of a shortage of places;

- Children withdrawn from schools by their family, following fixed term exclusions and unable to find another place;
- Children of refugees and asylum seekers;
- Homeless children;
- Children from unsupportive family backgrounds, where a place has not been sought;
- Children known to the police or other agencies;
- Children without a school place and with a history of serious attendance problems;
- Traveller children
- Children who are carers;
- Children with special educational needs (but without a statement);
- Children with disabilities or medical conditions;
- Children returning from the criminal justice system;
- Children of UK personnel and other Crown Servants.

3. Agreed Expectations and Procedures

All schools in Oxfordshire are included in this protocol including those responsible for their own admissions. Schools will continue to admit pupils whose parents apply for an available place under normal admission arrangements as set out in the coordinated schemes for admission.