

Admissions Arrangements

All schools must have Admission Arrangements that clearly set out how children will be admitted, including the criteria that will be applied if there are more applications than places at the school. Admission arrangements are determined by Admissions Authorities. The Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) produces guidance to support Admissions Authorities to determine their policies.

Admission Authorities must set ('determine') Admission Arrangements annually, even if they have not changed from previous years and a consultation has not been required. Where any material changes are proposed to Admission Arrangements, the Admissions Authority must first publicly consult on those arrangements for a minimum of 6 weeks between 1 October and 31 January. If no changes are made to Admission Arrangements, they must be consulted on at least once every 7 years. This consultation period allows parents, other schools, religious authorities and the local community to raise any concerns about proposed Admission Arrangements. We suggest that all consultations should try to be completed by the time schools break-up for Christmas. For information about who to consult, please see the Admissions Code.

If the changes proposed are to adhere to a determination of the Schools Adjudicator, to ensure compliance with the Admissions Code, to correct an error or for clarification then no consultation is required.

The Applications

Parents must complete the Local Authority (LA) Common Application Form and may also need to complete a Supplementary Information Form if this is required from individual schools such as 'faith' schools. These forms are in an agreed format to comply with legislation. In the normal admissions round parents apply to the LA in which they live for places at their preferred schools. Parents can express a preference for at least three schools. The application can include schools outside the LA where the child lives: a parent can apply for a place for their child at any state-funded school in any area.

The Offer of Places

If a school is undersubscribed, any parent that applies must be offered a place for their child or children. When oversubscribed, Admissions Authorities must rank applications in order against its published oversubscription criteria and send that list back to the LA. Published Admissions Arrangements must make clear to parents that a separate application must be made for any transfer from nursery to primary school, and from infant to junior school. All preferences are collated and parents then receive an offer from the LA. For primary schools, the offer is made on or about 16 April, in the year in which the child will be admitted. For secondary schools, the offer is made on or about 1 March, in the year in which the child will be admitted.

The Appeals

Parents, and in some circumstances children, have the right to appeal against an Admissions Authority's decision to refuse admission. The Admissions Authority must set out the reasons for the decision, that there is a right of appeal, the deadline for lodging an appeal and the contact details for making an appeal. The Admissions Authority must establish an independent appeal panel to hear the appeal. The panel will decide whether to uphold or dismiss the appeal. Where a panel upholds the appeal, the school is required to admit the child.

Admissions: The Process to Approve your Admission Arrangements

The Admissions Process runs over a two-year cycle. This begins in September when the governing board has to consider several questions.

a. Setting the Published Admission Number (PAN)

1. As part of determining their Admission Arrangements, all Admissions Authorities must set an admission number for each 'relevant age group'.
2. Admissions Authorities are not required to consult on their PAN where they propose either to increase or keep the same PAN. However, we would expect an Admissions Authority of a voluntary aided (VA) school to consult with the DBE if there is a proposal to increase the PAN as this could have significant implications for the building. Admissions Authorities must notify their LA of their intention to increase their PAN and we would also encourage a conversation with other local schools. Reference to an increase in PAN must be made on the school's website.
3. For a community or voluntary controlled (VC) school, the LA (as Admissions Authority) must consult at least the governing board of the school where it proposes either to increase or keep the same PAN.
4. All Admissions Authorities must consult where they propose a decrease to the PAN. The level of consultation expected is set out in the Admissions Code.
5. If, at any time following determination of the PAN, an Admissions Authority decides that it can admit above its PAN, it must notify the LA in good time to allow the LA to deliver its co-ordination responsibilities effectively. Admissions Authorities may also admit above their PAN in-year.

b. Agreeing the Admissions Criteria

Schools should determine priority criteria to determine the criteria against which pupil places will be allocated if the school is over subscribed. This should be done with reference to the Admissions Code and Derby DBE's Guidance (available on our website). Admissions Authorities must allocate places based on their determined Admission Arrangements only, and a decision to offer or refuse admission must not be made by one individual in an Admissions Authority. The governing body of an Admissions Authority, or an Admissions Committee to which that function has been properly delegated, must make such decisions.

All schools, including schools designated with a religious character, that have enough places available in the normal admissions round must offer a place to every child who has applied for one, without condition or the use of any oversubscription criteria.

Admissions Authorities must not refuse to admit a child solely because: a) they have applied later than other applicants; b) they are not of the faith of the school in the case of a school designated with a religious character.

c. Ensuring your Admissions Criteria are Approved

For Admissions Authorities NOT Consulting:

If you do not wish to make changes to your Admissions Criteria, and do not need to consult due to the 7 year rule, then we ask that your Admission Arrangements are sent to the DBE for checking by **30 November** at the latest. Please email them to officeDBE@derby.anglican.org. Your proposals will be responded to promptly.

For Admissions Authorities that ARE Consulting:

Church of England schools must consult with the DBE prior to public consultation. Please email your proposals to officeDBE@derby.anglican.org by **30 September** at the latest. Your proposals will be responded to by **15 October** so that public consultation can proceed.

Public consultation must then take place for a six-week period concluding by **31 January**. The DBE must be included as a consultee. Please email your draft policy to officeDBE@derby.anglican.org

It is important that the Governing Board approve your Admission Arrangements once they have been to consultation. Final approval and determination of the arrangements must then take place by the governing body by **28 February** at the latest. A minute of this formal determination should be taken in the relevant governing body meeting.

Useful Documents

The Admissions Code:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1001050/School_admissions_code_2021.pdf