

Admissions Consultation Guidance

When changes are proposed to admission arrangements, or at least once every 7 years if no changes have been made, admission authorities must consult on their admission arrangements.

Any admissions consultation must last for a minimum of 6 weeks and must take place between 1 October and 31 January. Final arrangements **MUST** be formally agreed (determined) by 28 February by the school or academy's full governing board.

To consult on your proposed admission arrangements, the new policy, any supplementary forms and a letter highlighting any changes that are being made, including the rationale underlying any changes, needs to be sent to a wide group of consultees and published on the website, together with the details of the person to whom comments may be sent. It is acceptable to consult by email, although it is also advisable to have a paper copy of the information available at the school and to inform parents in the newsletter that they can ask for this if they wish.

The 2021 Admissions Code states:

Admission authorities **must** consult with:

- a) *parents of children between the ages of two and eighteen*
- b) *other persons in the relevant area who in the opinion of the admission authority have an interest in the proposed admissions*
- c) *all other admission authorities within the relevant area (except that primary schools need not consult secondary schools)*
- d) *whichever of the governing body and the local authority who are not the admission authority*
- e) *any adjoining neighbouring local authorities where the admission authority is the local authority; and*
- f) *in the case of schools designated with a religious character, the body or person representing the religion or religious denomination.*

The persons in (b) might include the PCC, local nurseries and playgroups, neighbouring schools and neighbouring dioceses.

For all our schools, draft admission arrangements **MUST** be sent to the DBE office before going out to wider consultation, as well as in the full consultation round. The deadline for sending us your draft is 01 November, and we will respond with comments by 01 December.

After the diocese has seen and agreed the draft proposed arrangements:

- Either email or post the notice to all consultees as advised in the code (see previous page). The Local Authority (LA) can advise on the relevant area for your school and may help you with informing the necessary consultees.
- The notice is usually sent by the chair of governors and includes their name and signature.
- Keep a record of all those consulted, and the method used. It is important to retain this in case of any challenge to the process of the consultation.
- Any comments received must be logged and kept.
- State the changes being proposed and the reasons why. If the consultation is required because it is 7 years since you last consulted and no changes are being proposed, state that.
- The notice must be clearly posted on the school website for the whole of the consultation period.
- Add a link to the current and proposed future admission arrangements and state where paper copies can be obtained.
- State the consultation period, with the start and end dates (6 weeks minimum required).
- State where any comments on the proposals should be sent. This must be a school address, usually email, for the attention of the chair of the admissions panel, or chair of governors. You must also state where paper comments can be sent, usually a box at reception in the school.