

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 01 October and 31 January. Final arrangements **MUST** be formally agreed (determined) by the school or academy's full governing board by 28 February.

To consult on 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 (see below). Details must be published on the school website, together with details of who to send comments to. It is acceptable to consult by email, but paper copies of the information should be available in school and given to anyone who requests it.

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 and academies, 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 is 01 November for draft documentation, and we will respond with comments by 01 December.**

After the DBE 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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 in the school's reception area.
- All comments received must be logged and kept.