

School Admissions Code 2021 - What this means for you.

Academies, Voluntary Aided and Free schools are their own admissions authority. Therefore, they will be responsible for varying their own admissions arrangements. Subject to agreement, admission authorities must also ensure a copy of the full varied admission arrangements are published on their school's website by 1 September 2021.

As the local authority is the admissions authority for community schools the LA will be varying the admissions arrangements for community schools. Community schools will be contacted separately with updated text to add to the admission arrangements already published on the school's website.

Please see below Hillingdon's variation to the 'looked after child' priority that will be published in our determined admissions arrangements for 2021/22 & 2022/23. You may wish to use this text in your variation.

'A looked after child (as defined in the Children Act 1989) or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements, or special guardianship order including those who appear [to the admission authority] to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.'

How will admission authorities be able to verify that a child is an IAPLAC?

Subject to ministerial approval, the government plan to publish non-statutory guidance on the admission of IAPLAC in time for the new Code coming into force. This guidance will aim to assist and support admission authorities in assessing evidence provided by parents who want their child to be considered under the IAPLAC criterion.

The LA will notify all schools of the supporting guidance as soon as it is published by the Department of Education.

Additional Changes to the new School Admissions Code:

In addition to the changes specified above the government has proposed some further changes to the code. These changes are in response to the recommendations made in the Children in Need Review and the Domestic Abuse White Paper. The following areas are also proposed to come into effect:

1. Introducing a dedicated section in the Code which sets out a clear process for managing in-year admissions including:
 - Introducing timescales for different stages of the application;
 - Requiring local authorities and admission authorities to provide information on the in year application process;
 - Making the in-year process easier for parents to navigate
2. Changes to improve the effectiveness of Fair Access Protocols by:
 - Making the purpose of Fair Access Protocols clearer;

- Introducing timescales for placement decisions;
- Ensuring Fair Access Protocols are only used to support the most vulnerable children;
- Clarifying the provisions relating to the use of Fair Access Protocols for children with challenging behaviour.

Please note that an overview of changes to Hillingdon's Fair Access Protocol was recently shared with all schools, alongside the minutes from the Panel meeting held on 9 June 2021.

3. Providing clarification on which address to use for admission of service or crown servant children.

4. Some minor drafting changes to improve clarity.

Please note that additional changes listed above DO NOT require a variation. Once the 40-day period has expired, Hillingdon's School Placement and Admissions Team will provide you with further guidance on the above changes to admissions practise.

If you would like to discuss any of the points raised above further, then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards

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