



Office of the  
Schools  
Adjudicator

**LOCAL AUTHORITY REPORT**  
**TO**  
**THE SCHOOLS ADJUDICATOR**  
**FROM**

**Ealing Council**

**30 JUNE 2010**

**Report Cleared by**  
**David Archibald , Executive Director for Children and Adults**

**Date submitted**                      **30 June 2010**

**By**    **Tom Galvin**

**Contact email address**    **tgalvin@ealing.gov.uk**

**Telephone number**                      **0208 825 5501**

**SECTION 1**

**FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR IN WHICH THE REPORT IS MADE - 2009 - 2010**

**Please complete using data/information for the period 1 September 2009 to date of report**

***NOTE: This template is designed to be filled in electronically – boxes can/should be expanded as necessary.***

**Fair Access Protocol**

*Code 4.9 a) (i) how well the Fair Access Protocol has worked and how many children have been admitted to each school in the area under the protocol;*

NOTE: The Code at 3.44 requires (1) each local authority to have a Fair Access Protocol and (2) all schools and Academies to participate in their LA area's protocol

- a) Please confirm that the LA has a Fair Access Protocol that has been agreed with all the relevant schools in its area (relevant schools are all maintained schools and academies).

Tick as appropriate:

Yes	<b>X</b>	No	
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**If NO please explain:**

- b) Give your assessment of how well the Fair Access Protocol has worked since 1 September 2009. In particular in placing children, the co-operation of schools and Academies well as any other issues you have had in implementing the protocol.

All Pupils considered and allocated through Ealing's Fair Access protocol have been admitted to school. After 3 years of using the protocol it is firmly embedded and indeed some Fair Access pupils are now admitted when they first approach a school, and school then retrospectively claims the pupil under the agreed arrangements. There is thus minimal delay in the pupil starting at school . Schools have contributed and supported the review and revisions to the scheme required by the new admissions code.

**Any issues you have had in implementing the protocol.**

None, the protocol is now firmly embedded and working well.

- c) In Appendix A, please record for each school the number of children considered to be placed in (column O) and those actually placed in (column P) to the school under the protocol between 1 September 2009 and the date of this report.

**Data entered . It shows numbers of pupils placed as of June 11 th 2010.**

### **Infant Class Sizes**

*Code 4.9 a) (ii) whether primary schools are complying with infant class size legislation*

Are all Primary Schools in your area complying with infant class sizes?

Tick as appropriate:

Yes		No	x
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**If NO please comment and also include the number of schools where qualifying measures are being taken:**

These are a small number of classes over the limit, but these are exceptions due to the admission appeal decisions.

### **Admission Appeals**

*Code 4.9 a) (iii) the number of admissions appeals held for each and every school\* in the area, and the number of appeals that were upheld.*

\* Every school includes: community, voluntary controlled, voluntary aided, foundation, Academies, city technology colleges and city colleges for technology of the arts.

For the period 1 September 2009 to the date of this report please insert in

Appendix A the following for each school:

- column Q - the number of appeals held;
- column R - the number of appeals upheld; and
- column S - the number of appeals pending from the date of this report.

### Data entered

*Code 4.9 a) iv the extent to which the local authority and appeal panels in the area complied with the requirements of the Appeals Code, with reference to ensuring the timeliness and transparency of appeals, effective communications with parents and any other relevant matter.*

NOTE: other appeals panels have a duty to provide you with information on appeals (Section 88Q of Schools Standards and Framework Act).

Has your independent appeals panel complied with the requirements of the Appeals Code?

Tick as appropriate:

Yes	<b>X</b>	No	
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**If NO please explain including non-compliance and action taken:**

Have all other appeals panels for own admission authority schools complied with the requirements of the Appeals Code?

Tick as appropriate:

Yes		No		Don't Know	<b>X</b>
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**If NO or Don't Know please highlight any issues raised and if you have been unable to obtain information:**

Where the LA provides the appeals service for own admission authority schools (10 of 23) there is compliance, as with community schools. In respect of other schools we are not aware of any complaints. Were we to receive complaints these would be taken up with the admissions authority concerned.

## SECTION 2

### FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR WHICH STARTS AFTER THE REPORT IS MADE – 2010-2011

*Code 4.9 b) (i) the extent to which admission arrangements for schools in the authority's area serve the interests of children in care, children with disabilities, children with special educational needs and service children.*

NOTE: You may wish to point out if specialist staff from within the Council has contributed to this report and highlight any problems that may have occurred.

Children in care: All looked after children are in year fair access applicants and have been allocated and admitted to schools under the fair access protocol. All Ealing's admission authorities have looked after children as their first admission criteria

Children with disabilities: Children with disabilities are admitted using SEN provisions . LA admissions and SEN staff offer parents support to achieve admission and to claim special circumstances at application or

Children with Special Educational Needs:  
All SEN pupils with a school named in their statement have been admitted to that school.

Service Children: Ealing has no significant armed service population but a named admissions officer has developed specialist knowledge to ensure that families from the Services or overseas are advised and supported.

*Code 4.9 b) (ii) the effectiveness of co-ordination.*

NOTE: You may wish to report on the authority's assessment of the effectiveness of any scheme for co-ordinating:

a) the admission of pupils to LA schools in September 2010

Year 7 Admissions are co-ordinated across London Boroughs and with our neighbouring authorities outside Greater London. The co-ordination works very well. Reception class admissions to Ealing schools are co-ordinated within the borough and this also works well.

b) The admission of pupils in the authority's area to other admission authority schools in September 2010.

The Year 7 Admissions are co-ordinated across LA as described above. Co-ordination of reception admissions works well within the borough. There is effective exchange of information with neighbouring boroughs for those reception pupils seeking a place in another borough. Multiple offers and waiting lists are resolved.

### SECTION 3

**FOR ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS THAT HAVE BEEN DETERMINED IN THE APRIL IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE DATE OF THE REPORT IS MADE (determined by 15 April 2010 for admission in September 2011):**

*Code 4.9 c) (i) a statement of whether or not admission arrangements for maintained schools in the area complied with the mandatory requirements of this Code and admissions law.*

NOTE: All non-compliant admission arrangements must be corrected. All mandatory requirements can be changed by the admission authority. Any other non-compliant issues must be referred to the OSA.

Are you satisfied that the admission arrangements for all maintained schools in your area are fully compliant with the Code?

Tick as appropriate:

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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**If YES please provide a statement to confirm this:**

Following review of all admission authority arrangements in the borough to the best of our knowledge all such arrangements comply with the Code.

**If NO, please specify what action you are taking:**

Using column T in Appendix A, please identify those schools that you have identified with problems now or which you have referred to the OSA, or may be referring to the OSA by the 31 July 2010.

**There are none**

## SECTION 4

### OTHER MATTERS:

#### Admission Forum

*Code 4.9 d) (i) details about the current membership of the Admission Forum for the area*

NOTE: Please list the bodies represented and the number of representatives in each category. Do **NOT** give the names of members.

Members of the Council	(5)
Schools (Community)	(1)
Schools Foundation	(3)
Schools (Voluntary Aided)	(2)
Parent Governors	(2)
Diocesan Authorities	(2)
Local Community Representative	(2)
Academy Representative	(1)

Is the Admission Forum writing a report?

Tick as appropriate:

Yes		No	<b>x</b>
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If YES is the report attached or has it been sent separately?

Tick as appropriate:

Attached		Separately	
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If separately please provide the date the report will or has been sent to the OSA?

DATE:

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Please confirm whether the Admission Forum has seen, or will see, a copy of this LA report.

Tick as appropriate:

Has seen	<b>x</b>	Will see	
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#### Free School Meals

*Code 4.9 d) (ii) the proportion of children currently on free school meals at each school in the area.*

NOTE: The data provided by the Local Authority to the DCSF in January 2009 has been "cleaned" and is included in Appendix A.

If the data for 2010 is significantly different from 2009 please state how it differs.

No significant difference.

Using and interpreting the data, please comment on whether the allocation of school places meets parental preferences for those children on Free School Meals.

At both high and primary, pupils entitled to FSM are no less likely to be allocated their first or second or third preference school than those who are not entitled to FSM

*Code 4.9 d) (iii) any other matters which affect the fairness of admission arrangements for schools in the area.*

NOTE: Please identify any issues not covered elsewhere on this template.

None.

## SECTION 5

### OTHER ISSUES REQUESTED IN ADDITION THIS YEAR BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

#### Choice Advice

Please complete with reference to Choice Advice provided to parents applying for a secondary school place for the 2010/2011 school year.

Appendix 5 of the Code requires local authorities to provide an independent Choice Advice service that is focused on supporting the families who most need support in navigating the secondary school admissions process (paragraph 5). Choice Advice must be independent and free from any potential conflict of interest between the need of the local authority to allocate places and the advice that parents receive (paragraph 8). As a minimum, local authorities must ensure that Choice Advisers are not in the same management chain or reporting lines as the local authority's admissions staff (paragraph 9).

- a) Please confirm that your local authority has an independent Choice Advice service in place.

Tick as appropriate: 

Yes	<b>X</b>	No	
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- b) Please explain how you ensure the independence of the Choice Advice provided (for example, the Choice Advice service may be situated in the Parent Partnership service or Family Information Service).

Line management is to the Family Information Service, which is outside the admissions service line of management.

- b) Are your Choice Adviser(s) in the same line management chain or reporting lines as staff on the admissions team.

Tick as appropriate: 

Yes		No	<b>X</b>
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Choice Advice must be targeted at those parents who most need support with the secondary school admissions process (paragraph 10). Local authorities and Choice Advisers should market their service to ensure that they reach the families most in need of their support and that other relevant agencies and professionals are aware of the service they provide (paragraph 11). Choice Advisers should be proactive in reaching 'hard to reach' parents and should develop good links with organisations that may be able to refer parents to

them (paragraph 12).

- d) Please explain how you ensure Choice Advice reaches those parents who are most in need of it.

- a. The Choice Adviser is known to all primary schools, is in regular contact with them and has good relationships with them
- b. The Choice Advice Service is offered to about 10 primary schools who have the lowest rates of successful (first round) on time applications – whereby the Choice Adviser will visit the school early in the Autumn Term and meet with the Y6 parents, and with the Y6 classes, for a group information and advice session on the High School Admissions procedure. Individual meetings with parents as necessary are also offered, in the office or at schools, and where necessary in the home.
- c. All schools are reminded of the Choice Advice Service each summer term and invited to contact the adviser, and to refer (with their agreement) individual families considered in need of the service e.g. those with exceptional circumstances such as Domestic Violence or health problems, language difficulties, those who may have failed to apply on time in the past
- d. The School Attendance Service and Co-ordinated Admissions are aware of the Choice Advice Service and make frequent referrals
- e. Other agencies have been given information and invited to make referrals, and this is repeated annually including FIS, Childrens Centres, Pupil Parent Partnership, Parenting Co-Ordinator, Neighbourhood Nurse Leads (for HVs and SHAs), Somali Home-School Liaison Team, Traveller Achievement Service, Domestic Violence Agencies; Children and Families including CP and LAC teams etc.
- f. New arrivals who are known to the Casual (In-Year) Admissions Service are screened to identify those who may benefit from Choice Advice. This includes any who arrive in the LA after the closing date for applications ie late applicants. Schools are reminded to refer these pupils.

- e) Describe how Choice Advice has contributed to the fairness of the admissions process.

- a. By providing independent and impartial information and advice to assist in formulating informed and realistic preferences by (as above) reaching out to and working with those most in need i.e. least likely to have the skills, knowledge and ability to understand or navigate the Admissions Process, to ensure those pupils' relative disadvantage is minimised or negated. Conversely parents capable of understanding and managing the process and accessing independent advice and assistance, will be given information on how to do so and are not prioritised.
- b. More support is offered to targeted groups and individuals, by phone and meetings (with interpreters) as necessary, to assist with both Admissions and Appeals. For instance, where new information becomes known, or where not included at an earlier point because of extenuating circumstances e.g. poor English or Domestic Violence, a second Appeal could be undertaken on grounds of change in circumstances. Contact is made with agencies providing evidence to ensure it is presented in the most appropriate format (eg relates to a specific school)
- c. The Choice Adviser will assist prioritised families with their Admission and Appeal application forms, associated supplementary forms and other documentation and will be present at and support families at Appeal Hearings, speaking for them with their agreement as needed. Local agreement has been reached for the Choice Adviser to present appeals on behalf of parents.
- d. Late applications are similarly screened and followed through.
- e. Because of the limited targeted numbers dealt with (compared to the complete cohort) more time and attention can be given by the Choice Adviser than can be done by the Co-ordinated Admissions Team.
- f. Although the main focus is on Primary-Secondary Transfer, Choice Advice is also offered for Primary School Co-ordinated and In-Year applications and appeals.
- g. The service includes information and advice on Out of Borough schools.
- h. Good links are maintained with the Choice Advisers in neighbouring boroughs, and with Choice Advice and Quality Assurance Network and the Choice Adviser is a regular user of the network.

The Choice Adviser has successfully completed the CAS & QAN recommended training and qualification – L2 NQ - to ensure best practice. She is fully aware of the (revised) School Admissions Code (Including Appendix 5 Choice Advice) and the School Admissions Appeals Code

- g) Choice Advice is offered for in-year applications?

Tick as appropriate: 

Yes	<b>X</b>	No	
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It is good practice for Choice Advisers to provide support during the appeals process, particularly to those parents who accessed Choice Advice at the application stage.

h) The Choice Adviser provides support during the appeals process?

Tick as appropriate: 

Yes	<b>X</b>	No	
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i) If no, do you plan to provide support during the appeals process in future?

Tick as appropriate: 

Yes		No	
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### **Transport**

Admission authorities **must** explain clearly whether or not school transport will be available, and, if so, to which schools and at what cost (if any). Are details of the availability and cost of home to school travel and transport clearly set out in the composite prospectus?

Tick as appropriate: 

Yes	<b>x</b>	No	
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Details are in the prospectus but on review it is considered not to be clear or detailed enough. The details will be set out more clearly in the next prospectus.

#### **If No, please provide an explanation**

Currently the brochure states that if parents think they may be entitled to free travel they should contact the authority's Pupil Support team . The team's contact number and opening hours are given . In future the Authority will print the full scheme with details of availability and costs.

Paragraphs 1.90 and 1.91 of the Code provide guidance on how Governing Bodies **should** ensure that the cost of a school uniform does not inhibit the choice of school. In the following box, please provide details of where schools do not comply with this and what actions you or Governing Bodies have taken or are proposing to take.

The Authority is not aware of any parents being inhibited in applying to certain schools by the cost of the Uniform.

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Please provide details of any improvements that you feel can be made to this template.

Ealing's forum would ask that the Adjudicator note

1. The increasing pressure on school places within London and the subsequent likely increase in numbers and resourcing of appeals
2. The new requirement for LAs to co-ordinate in-year admissions does not have the flexibility within the scheme's regulations to allow parents to get the benefit of quick access to their local school. This was an advantage of Ealing's previous scheme. If a school in the parents' local community had a vacancy ,and parents approached the school , then school would admit the pupil. This is a real advantage in areas where there is high pupil mobility and vacancy levels.

Local authorities and admission forums could be invited to offer views on any aspect of the admissions process that they would wish to draw to the adjudicator's attention. This would be a wider scope than that invited at the current paragraph 4.9.d) (iii) , which just relates to fairness.

See comment above