

8. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS about IN-YEAR ADMISSIONS

Q1. What happens about vacancies?

A1. ALL schools MUST advise the In-Year Admissions Team by 12.00 on Mondays of their vacancies (and number on roll) by phone, email or using SAM, prior to the weekly allocation. Number on roll enables us to have a clearer picture of likelihood of those at top of waiting list getting a place. ONLY the LA can send out offer letters, and NOT THE SCHOOL.

Q2. What if schools aren't honest about declaring vacancies or hold them back till the week before the census then admit and benefit financially?

A2. We trust our schools to be honest and to respect and co-operate with other schools. Reconciliation will be made with the census returns which show number on roll. The team will be aware of other admissions through the appeal, Statementing or Fair Access processes. Regarding any issue of hold back, this would be the same under the old as the new system.

Q3. What happens about siblings, when one is offered a place?

A3. We will enter any sibling links when applications are received and these are declared. The Reply Slip attached to the Offer Letter asks parents to name any siblings. As soon as the team has the agreed start date from the school for the child offered a place, that pupil is considered on roll and then the sibling's application can be updated with the criterion of sibling priority.

Q4. In the past, schools have known more about their pupils before agreeing an admission date, than will be the case now. This means schools will not be so prepared or able to meet these pupils' needs and there will be delay whilst this information is obtained.

A 4. The School Admissions Code prescribes information which can be requested ie only that which relates to the published admission criteria. Once an offer has been made by the LA, then the school has some discretion over the date of admission if further information is required. The LA will send out an Information Request (also available in this pack and previously circulated to all high schools and which includes among other matters, questions about examination boards and subjects for older pupils) to the last school for all Y9-11 pupils as soon as an IYCAF is received, which will be forwarded to the school following the offer. Furthermore parents of high school applicants are asked to complete the Additional Information form which provides useful data for schools. (This was agreed as a late addition by the DCSF as it was).

Q5. Some schools, mainly high schools, choose to put pupils in other year groups eg a Y10 child who has limited English, may be placed in Y9, enabling the pupil to then undertake a full 2 year course during Y10-11. Will this be affected?

A5. Schools will continue to exercise their discretion following an offer, about deciding the most appropriate year group for that pupil.

Q6. Why aren't the In-Year Admissions Team checking birth certificates and name/s of parent/s at the point of application?

A6. This is not allowed under the School Admissions Code, presumably because information could lead to conscious or unconscious discrimination. However, when the school checks the proof of date of birth, if the information differs from that which the parent has entered on the IYCAF, this should be investigated and could lead to the invalidation of the application and withdrawal of the place. Schools MUST check proof of date of birth and parent/s or carer/s names and relationship to child at the pre-admission meeting. Refer back to the In-Year Admissions Team if appropriate. In all cases, schools (as well as the In-Year Admissions Team) will need to be vigilant in identifying any privately fostered children and ensuring they are appropriately referred to the Private Fostering Lead: contact

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Q7. What about Y11 pupils?

A 7. Pupils of this age group also complete the IYCAF. As in the past, the Y11 Admissions Officer will discuss with LBE parents the available alternative provision where this appears indicated and if they agree, and provision is available, they will be offered it. However now as before, if parents insist on wanting a school place and vacancies exist then the LA/own Admission Authority cannot withhold an offer, and the LA must send out the Offer Letter. The number of Alternative Provision places may be more limited than in previous years as budget constraints cut in.

With Out of Borough Y11 applicants, LBE would not offer them our alternative provision.

Some other boroughs offer their own ESOL. Again however now as before, if parents insist on a school place and vacancies exist then the LA/own Admission Authority cannot withhold an offer, and the LA must send out the Offer Letter.

Q8. What about Fair Access Panel?

A8. This continues as before and applies where the normal Admissions process has failed.

Schools can ask the Panel to agree updating against the quota retrospectively if not identified in advance.