



Annual Review of Admissions Arrangements

Guidance for Governors/Trustees

April 26



Annual Review of Admissions Arrangements

Overview

Why are we doing this?

To check that our admission arrangements are working fairly and clearly, reflect our Christian vision and comply with the law and diocesan expectations. Not every review leads to a change.

Who should take part?

The Admissions Committee (or equivalent) plus the headteacher/admissions lead and clerk. Invite a governor with inclusion/equalities oversight if you feel it is appropriate.

What will we need?

- This guide
- Last cycle's admission data (see 'Data to have ready' section below)
- The school's current admission arrangements (policy)
- Diocesan guidance documents
- School Admissions Code (2021)

How long will it take?

Allow 60–90 minutes for the committee meeting, plus time to fill in the Reporting Form.

When should we do it?

We recommend that the annual review be conducted **during the summer term**. This allows:

- Adequate time for discussion at the committee and full board level.
- Time to develop **draft amended arrangements**, if required.
- Sufficient time for the Diocese to review your draft policy **before consultation**.
(This deadline is essential if consultation is required.)

Data to have ready (tick as you gather)

- ☐ PAN (Published Admission Number) and total applications received.
- ☐ Numbers allocated under each criterion, including EHCP and looked after/previously looked after (LAC/PLAC).
- ☐ Tie-break usage and largest home-school distance allocated (if applicable).
- ☐ Any in-year admissions information/trends.
- ☐ Appeals outcomes (number lodged/upheld).
- ☐ If available: first/second/third preferences data from the application round.

Notes for Governors/Trustees

- Not every review will lead to a change, but every admission authority should still conduct the review.
- If amendments are proposed, statutory consultation rules may apply.
- Keep written records of discussions and decisions as these may be needed in the event of an objection to the Schools Adjudicator.

Diocesan Guidance: Key messages

Here are the key expectations of the Diocese in relation to admissions:

1. **Follow the School Admissions Code (2021)** and check you are compliant with all mandatory requirements.
2. Ensure your **oversubscription criteria reflect your Christian vision** and are fair, clear and objective.
3. **Schools should *not* use church attendance as oversubscription criteria.** However, if using church attendance as oversubscription criteria, schools should adhere to Diocesan Guidance on the matter (see below).
4. **Use the Church of England Admissions Builder (Online Toolkit)** to create/review arrangements.
5. **Review your admissions arrangements annually.**
6. **Build admissions tasks and key dates** into your governing board's annual calendar.

Recommended Order of Activity

1. Prepare Your Intake Table (Table A: Reporting form, the final page of this document)

- Replace the example criteria with **your school's current oversubscription criteria**.
- Populate the table using the most recent admissions data.
- This provides a factual basis for your discussion, showing how each criterion has operated in practice.

2. Work Through the Annual Review Question Prompts

Use the reflective questions to explore:

- How well the arrangements match the school's Christian vision.
- Whether oversubscription criteria are functioning as intended.
- Any unintended consequences, barriers, or patterns in admissions.
- The inclusivity, clarity and fairness of the policy.

Use the 'What are we looking for?' and 'Sentence starters' for support.

You may adapt or omit questions depending on your school context.

The Admissions Committee should make brief written notes for each section.

3. Summarise your Key Findings (Reporting Form – Part B)

Provide a clear summary covering:

- Key strengths of your current arrangements.
- Any issues or emerging concerns.
- Any recommended amendments.
- Any points requiring further advice (e.g. diocesan or legal advice).

This summary will form the basis of the report to the full governing board.

4. Report to the Governing Board

- Share the completed Reporting Form with the full board at the next scheduled meeting.
- Ensure that any decisions about proposed amendments are clearly minuted.

Annual Review Question Prompts

Compliance

Evidence to look at: current policy and school website.

Q1. Is our current admissions policy published on our website and easy to find?

Q2. Do we know the key national dates (consultation window, determination, publication, objections)?

Q3. Has at least one governor completed admissions training or read the School Admissions Code (2021) summary?

Q4. Are we aligned with all six key messages from the diocesan guidance? If not, what advice is required?

What are we looking for? Our documents are easy to find, up to date, and we have at least one informed governor. There is clear alignment with diocesan expectations and early engagement where advice is needed.

Sentence starters:

- “Our policy is available at...”
- “We understand that determination must be by...”
- “We are fully aligned with all six key messages of the Diocesan guidance”

Communication

Evidence to look at: admissions webpage, FAQs, communications from the office.

Q5. Is the language in our policy and website plain English? Do parents understand it, how do we know?

Q6. Do we provide simple, helpful explanations (e.g., what “oversubscription criteria” means)?

What are we looking for? Parents can quickly grasp how places are allocated and what to do.

Sentence starters:

- “We could simplify the wording in section...”
- “We added a short explainer on...”

What our intake tells us

Evidence to look at: Part A table, trend vs last year.

Q7. Which criteria were most used to allocate places?

Q8. Did local children miss out? Roughly how many and why (e.g., distance, tie break)?

Q9. Are there patterns we didn't intend (e.g. fewer disadvantaged pupils, long distances)?

What are we looking for? The pattern of allocations broadly matches our aims (serving local community, fairness, clarity).

Sentence starters:

- "Most places were allocated under..."
- "We noticed that local children at [X] edge of catchment missed out because..."

Christian vision and foundation

Evidence to look at: school vision, demographic profile of intake vs local area, feedback from families.

Q10. Do all of the arrangements and key messaging align with our Christian vision and values?

Q11. Does our intake broadly reflect the local community (e.g., socio-economic, languages, backgrounds)?

Q12. Do we welcome people of all faiths and none and is this clear in our communications?

What are we looking for? Our policy reflects our Christian vision and promotes inclusion and diversity.

Sentence starters:

- "Our vision emphasises... which we see reflected in..."
- "Our intake is broadly similar to the local area in..."

Oversubscription criteria

Evidence to look at: policy criteria, complaints/queries received, tie-break use.

Q13. Are the criteria clear and objective (can parents easily understand how places are ranked)?

Q14. Do our criteria prioritise vulnerable/disadvantaged children appropriately (beyond the mandatory priority for LAC/PLAC)?

Q15. Are there any unintended consequences (e.g., criteria that advantage certain groups without intent)?

What are we looking for? Criteria are **simple to explain, do what we intend** and do not create unintended barriers.

Sentence starters:

- “Parents would understand our criteria because...”
- “We think criterion X may unintentionally...”

Serving local families

Evidence to look at: distance method used; map points; largest distance allocated.

Q16. Is our distance measurement method clear and objective (e.g., straight line; walking route)?

Q17. Do distance/catchment rules help us serve local families fairly?

What are we looking for? Distance arrangements are transparent and help the school serve its local community.

Sentence starters:

- “We measure distance by... which is explained at...”
- “We support our local community because...”

Appeals and in-year admissions

Evidence to look at: appeals information, in-year process page.

Q18. Is our appeals information clear and easy to find?

Q19. Is our in-year admissions process clearly explained (who applies to whom and how)?

What are we looking for? Families know how to appeal and how to apply in-year; the process feels fair.

Sentence starters:

- “The appeals page is at...”
- “Our in-year route is explained by...”

Short glossary (plain English)

- **Admission arrangements / policy:** The rules the school uses to admit pupils each year.
- **Oversubscription criteria:** The order used to rank applications if more people apply than places available.
- **PAN (Published Admission Number):** The number of places the school offers in the main entry year.
- **EHCP:** Education, Health and Care Plan. If an EHCP names a school, the child must be admitted.
- **LAC / PLAC:** Looked after / previously looked after children—must receive highest priority in criteria.
- **Tie-break:** The rule used when two or more applications are equally ranked for the final places (often distance).
- **Determine / Determination:** The formal board decision to set the arrangements for a given year.

Other useful documents: [available via the Diocesan Website](#)

- **School Admissions Code (2021)** — statutory requirements and timelines.
- **Church of England Admissions Builder (Online Toolkit)** — for creating/reviewing arrangements.
- **Diocesan Admissions Guidance : Use of Church Attendance as Oversubscription Criteria** — required if your school chooses to use them.
- **Admissions Consultation Guidance** — supports compliant consultation.
- **Annual Review of Admissions Arrangements**— structured support for your annual review.
- **Admissions Annual Process Flowchart**
- **Diocesan Admissions checklists**
 - **Autumn Term**
 - **Spring Term**
 - **Summer Term**

Annual Admissions Review Report to the Board

Reviewed by		Admission Year:	
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A: Our intake

Complete the table below, adjust the oversubscription criteria to match your own.

PAN: (published admission number)		Total Applications:	
		Total allocations:	
Admission criteria			Number allocated
Pupils admitted due to their special educational needs who have an EHCP			
Oversubscription criteria- <i>this is an example (insert your own here)</i>			
1. Pupils who are either currently or have previously been 'looked after'			
2. Children who have an exceptional medical or social need			
3. A child who has a sibling			
4. A child who resides within the catchment area of the school and is eligible for the pupil premium			
5. A child who resides within the catchment area			
6. Other children			
Largest home-school distance- where a tie break has been applied			

If you have information on the number of first-choice, second-choice, and third-choice applications, you may want to note it in your report to the board.

B: Findings

Answer the questions in this document and summarise below

Key strengths of our current arrangements.
Any issues or emerging concerns.

Any recommended amendments.		
Any points requiring further advice (e.g., diocesan or legal advice).		
Recommendation: Keep as is / Amend / Seek advice / Other		
Rationale (1 or 2 lines):		
Presented to the board on:		
Actions agreed as a result:		
Actions	By whom	By when

Should the board decide to change their admission arrangements (excluding cosmetic changes, such as dates or names) then a consultation process should be followed. See guidance on the Diocesan website, speak to your named diocesan adviser or email admission.ed@leeds.anglican.org.