

## JOINT BOARD OF EDUCATION

Dear Headteacher, Chair of Governors and Clerks,

The information below and attached guidance is for all Governing Boards of Voluntary Aided schools and academies to assist in the preparation of their Admissions Policies for **2024**.

Would you also please ensure that the word '**determined**' is used in the minutes when the GB agrees the policy. This is something that has come up often at Adjudications panels and minutes need to be clear that the governing board has considered and 'determined' the policy.

### **Summary of Governing Board (GB) Responsibilities**

Please remember to consult with diocese before any public consultation including the Local Authority (LA), please see paragraph 1.38 of the Admission Code.

### **Consultation and Determination**

1. Admission Authorities (AA) **MUST** determine admission arrangements annually by the 28 February in the determination year. This is a decision made at a quorate, full governing board meeting.
2. Where changes are proposed the AA **MUST** first publicly consult for a minimum of 6 weeks between **1 October and 31 January** of the school year before the arrangements are to apply.
3. Where no changes are proposed the AA **MUST** consult once every 7 years.
4. When a school consults it **MUST** consult on all the admission arrangements including any supplementary information forms (SIF).
5. Public consultation mentions parents, other schools, religious authorities and the local community. See the Admissions Code 2021, paragraph 1.47 for a full list and see paragraph 1.48 on how to publicise the consultation.

6. Once determined by the GB the arrangements **MUST** be published. Please see the Admissions Code 2021, paragraph 1.5 for how to do this.
7. After determination, admission arrangements can be objected to and referred to the Schools Adjudicator. Objections **MUST** be made by **15 May** in the determination year.

### **Applications**

8. For the normal admissions round - parents apply to the LA. Parents are able to express a preference for at least three schools. The date for applications for Year R (or year 3) is **15 January** and for Secondary **31 October**.
9. If a school is undersubscribed, any parent that applies **MUST** be offered a place.
10. When oversubscribed the AA **MUST** rank applications in order against the published oversubscription criteria and send the list back to the LA.
11. Parents are then offered a place at the highest preference school at which a place is available.
12. The offer date (in the year in which the child will be admitted) for Primary is on **16 April** or the next working day.
13. Parents and in some circumstances, children, have the right to appeal against the AA's decision to refuse admission. The AA **MUST** set out the reasons for the decision to refuse an offer of a place, that there is a right of appeal and the process for hearing such appeals.
14. The AA **MUST** establish an independent appeals panel to hear the appeal. This is usually done by the LA. A Schedule of dates for Appeal Hearings should be on the school website.

### **To consider**

15. Please consult the diocese if you are considering changing your PAN.
16. Year R places – remember full time places **MUST** be offered to children in the September following their fourth birthday. Only parents have the right to defer entry or for their child to attend 'part time' (Please see paragraph 2.17 of the Admissions Code 2021).

### **In Year Admissions**

17. Whilst LA's do not have to coordinate In Year Admissions, some do, however all AA's **MUST** notify the LA of any in year applications and the outcome. (Please

see paragraph 2.23 or the Admissions Code 2021). AA's **MUST** be consulted before the LA offers a place especially if this will increase the PAN.

### **Template Admissions Policy for schools**

A revised policy template can be found on the diocesan websites along with a copy of the Supplementary Information Form and guidance notes. Please use this to support you with your admissions policy as the wording has been checked and is compliant with the code.

If you would like any further help or support with your Admission Policy for September 2023, then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

**Rob Sanders**  
**Diocesan Deputy Director of Education**

Dioceses of Portsmouth & Winchester,  
First Floor, Peninsular House, Wharf Road, Portsmouth, PO2 8HB

[robert.sanders@portsmouth.anglican.org](mailto:robert.sanders@portsmouth.anglican.org)

Diocesan Office • Peninsular House • Wharf Road • Portsmouth • PO2 8HB  
schoolgovernance@portsmouth.anglican.org • www.portsmouth.anglican.org  
T: 07725 278104 •

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