

## **ADMISSION FORUM GUIDELINES**

### **Purpose**

To ensure a fair admissions system that is straightforward and easy for parents to understand.

Forums are responsible for monitoring compliance with the Admissions Code and if admission arrangements are considered to be unfair, OR not in accordance with the Code, and the matter cannot be resolved on a local basis, the matter may be referred to the Welsh Ministers for consideration.

### **Legal Requirement**

It is a requirement for all Local Authorities to establish an Admission Form to administer the following:-

Discuss the effectiveness of local admission arrangements;  
Deal with difficult admission issues;  
Provide advice and guidance with regards and suggest improvements where it is deemed necessary.

### **Role of the Forum**

To ensure a fair admissions system that promotes social equity and it is imperative that the following are adhered to :-

- Consider how well existing and proposed admission arrangements serve the interests of children and parents within the area of the LA;
- Promote agreement on admission issues;
- Consider the comprehensiveness and accessibility of the admissions literature and information produced for parents by each admission authority within the area of the forum;
- Consider the effectiveness of the LAs proposed co-ordinated admission arrangements;
- Consider the means by which admissions processes might be improved and how actual admissions relate to the admission numbers published;
- Monitor the admission of children who arrive in the LA's area outside a normal admission round with a view to promoting arrangements for the fair distribution of such children among local schools, taking account of any preference expressed;
- Promote the arrangements for children with SEN, children in care and children who have been excluded from school

### **Ensuring fair access**

Admission Forums must:

- Review the comprehensiveness, effectiveness and accessibility of advice and guidance for parents by the LA's and schools through the published composite

prospectus – each LA must publish an annual composite prospectus which sets out the determined admission arrangements to include a timetable for the admissions process to include relevant dates for the receipt and determination of applications and for the receipt of appeals. This prospectus must be published by 1 October in the school year immediately preceding the school year to which the admission arrangements apply or no later than 6 weeks before the date by which parents may express a preference;

- Agree procedures for ensuring that potentially vulnerable children and those who arrive in the area outside the normal admissions round are placed in a school as quickly as possible. Vulnerable children include those previously excluded from school, children in care, young offenders children with ALN and /or disabilities, Gypsy and Traveller children, or those who are hard to place, or have challenging behaviour. Managed transfers of such children should be handled as quickly and sensitively as possible;
- Monitor compliance with the School Admissions, and School Admission Appeals Codes and related legislation.

### **Reports on effectiveness of local admission arrangements**

A summary annual report needs to be made public to include the following:-

- Membership of forum;
- Dates of meetings held during the year;
- Number of attendees;
- Number of parental preferences that were met;
- Number of admission appeals made to include success rate;
- Ethnic and social mix of pupils attending schools in the area, including Gypsy and Traveller children;
- What admission arrangements have been put in place to serve the interests of vulnerable children;
- How well in year agreed admission procedures are working and the number of children admitted to each school under the procedures: and
- A short summary of the key admission issues in the area and how the forum has addressed them.

The report should be sent by 30 November annually to Schools Management and Effectiveness Division of the Welsh Assembly Government, and distributed to those with a vested interest in ensuring the needs of vulnerable children are met.

### **Tenure**

Core and school members of the forum are appointed for a period not exceeding 4 years, after which they are eligible for reappointment. Membership of the forum should be reviewed annually in September.

### **Procedure for meetings and appointment of officers**

The following guidelines need to be adhered to:-

- Forums need to meet at least twice a year;
- All members need to be given 7 working days notice of the time and date of the meeting and be provided with relevant documents 7 days in advance.

### **Promulgating advice and making objections**

The forum should wherever possible achieve a consensus among the whole membership rather than a majority and should only promulgate advice that represents the agreed views of the forum as a whole

The LA must publish the forum's advice on the school admissions section of their website and send copies to all admission authorities in the area. The advice should also be included in the composite prospectus published by the LA annually for parents.