

## Key aspects of the Admissions Process for Aided Schools and Academies

The School Admissions Code, December 2014 **sets** out in detail the **MUSTS** for own admission authorities. The key points are summarised here and covered in detail in our guidance document, *Guidance for own admission authorities*, on our website.

- All governing boards must publish a set of admission arrangements which are compliant with the Code annually. This means reviewing and determining (agreeing formally) the current arrangements each year by February 28th. If any changes are proposed, and at least every seven years, whether or not changes are made, a consultation process **MUST** be followed before the arrangements are set. All church schools **MUST** consult with the diocese by emailing their proposed changes and the complete arrangements to the education office, before any wider consultation takes place. A timeline is available on the website setting out the dates when these steps must be completed.
- Each policy should set out in detail, enough information to enable parents/guardians to be clear about how to apply and the steps to take if their application is unsuccessful. It is essential that the policy has a clear, fair and transparent set of over-subscription criteria with guidance on how further information relating to any criterion is to be submitted. We recommend that a Supplementary Information form (SIF) is used to obtain this information. Details of oversubscription criteria, SIFS and DBE guidance on faith criteria are on our website; please see *Guidance for own admission authorities*, *Admission Oversubscription Guidance*, *Admissions Timeline*.
- Once a policy has been determined and published, no changes can be made, apart from increasing the published admission number (PAN) unless the changes are to bring it into compliance with the code. If an increase in PAN is being considered, we advise you to consider the impact on other schools and to contact the Diocese and the LA before making any changes as although an increase can be made without consultation, a formal consultation is required to reduce a PAN.
- Local authorities administer all main round (i.e. September) applications. They may also handle in year applications. The arrangements need to set out how in year applications are processed and it is essential that the LA are informed of any applications and places allocated, for safeguarding reasons.
- Each admission authority **MUST** publish an appeals timetable on their website every year, by February 28<sup>th</sup>. A suggested timetable is available on our website. For maintained schools, the LA will normally hear an appeal on behalf of the school, however, the governing board has responsibility for defending the appeal and presenting evidence. Further guidance is available on request.
- We provide regular training and guidance on admissions and appeals, please see the website for further information.