

As you may already be aware, there is a new admissions code, which comes into force on 1 September 2021 and will apply with immediate effect. The final approval is expected to go through parliament on or around 1 July.

For all schools, the main change is that the over-subscription criterion relating to Previously Looked After children for the highest priority in over-subscription criteria is now extended to include children who appear to the admission authority to have been in state care outside of England and were adopted. This means that all determined admissions arrangements will now require updating to ensure that highest priority in over-subscription criteria is given to this group of children, as part of the Looked -After, Previously Looked After group of children. To ascertain this, admission authorities are permitted to request evidence that demonstrates that the child was in state care outside of England prior to being adopted.

For schools that are their own admission authorities, this means that previously determined admission arrangements for admission in September 2021 and September 2022 must be updated to provide for new mandatory requirements of the Code, which means that the approval of the Office of the Schools Adjudicator (for maintained schools) or ESFA (for academies) will not be needed as it was for the in-year variation for church closures we requested last summer.

The best way for admissions authorities to make the changes is to arrange a meeting of the governing board, which can of course be a virtual meeting, before 31 August 2021, to make the necessary variations to the admission arrangements. If your board meeting takes place before the Code has been approved by Parliament, which as stated above should happen around 1 July, the resolution must be conditional on the Code passing through Parliament and come into effect on 1 September 2021. The new arrangements then need to be published on the school's website and sent to your LA. Admissions arrangements for September 2023 (which need to be determined by 28 February 2022) will also need to include the changes.

Other changes to the code relate to children of service personnel and crown servants, fair access protocols and in-year admissions. Further details and wording for the Previously looked after children is on [our website](#).