

Admissions Consultation Process Guidance

When changes are proposed to admission arrangements, or at least once every 7 years if no changes have been made, admission authorities must consult on their admission arrangements.

Any admissions consultation must last for a minimum of 6 weeks and must take place between 1 October and 31 January. For 2025/2026 main round admissions you will consult between October 2023 and January 2024. Final arrangements MUST be formally agreed (determined) by the end of February 2024 by the full governing board.

To consult on your proposed admission arrangements, the new policy, any supplementary forms and a letter highlighting any changes that are being made, including the rationale underlying any changes, needs to be sent to a wide group of consultees and published on the website, together with the details of the person to whom comments may be sent. It is acceptable to consult by email, although it is also advisable to have a paper copy of the information available at the school and to inform parents in the newsletter that they can ask for this if they wish.

The 2021 Admissions Code states:

*Admission authorities **must** consult with:*

- a) parents of children between the ages of two and eighteen*
- b) other persons in the relevant area who in the opinion of the admission authority have an interest in the proposed admissions*
- c) all other admission authorities within the relevant area (except that primary schools need not consult secondary schools)*
- d) whichever of the governing body and the local authority who are not the admission authority*
- e) any adjoining neighbouring local authorities where the admission authority is the local authority; and*
- f) in the case of schools designated with a religious character, the body or person representing the religion or religious denomination.*

The persons in (b) might include the PCC, local nurseries and playgroups, neighbouring schools, whether or not they are their own admission authority and neighbouring dioceses.

For all our schools, proposed admission arrangements MUST be sent to the diocesan education office before going out to wider consultation, as well as in the full consultation round.

A list of consultees and notes of any comments received must be kept, in case of any issues around the consultation arising.

The variant agreed for church closure and attendance at worship cannot be removed without formal consultation. We advise keeping the variant in both the policy and SIF as it may need to be applied in future years.

The LA can advise on the relevant area for your school and may help you with informing the necessary consultees.

After the diocese has seen and agreed the proposed arrangements:

- Send emails or post notices to all consultees as advised in the code/information on consultation. The LA may be able to help with contacts, especially with the relevant area.
- Keep a record of all those consulted, and the method used. It is important to retain this in case of any challenge to the process of the consultation.
- The email needs to state the changes (if any) being proposed and any reasons why these are being made. If the consultation is required as it is seven years since you last consulted and no changes are being proposed, state that. It must also be clearly posted on the school website for the whole of the consultation period.
- Add a link to the current and proposed admission arrangements, to include the policy and any SIF, in the email and state where paper copies can be obtained
- Give the time period for the consultation, the start date and the end date (6 weeks minimum required).
- State where any comments on the proposals should be sent, usually a specific email address for comments, to the chair of the admissions panel, or GB chair, this must be a school address. You also need to state where paper comments can be sent, usually a box at reception in the school.

It is usually sent by the chair of the GB, to include their name and signature.