
School Admissions Arrangements for 2026/2027

Executive Decision

Decision to be taken by: Assistant City Mayor for Children
and Young People

Decision to be taken on: 6 March 2025

Lead director/officer: Sophie Maltby

Useful information

■ Ward(s) affected: All

- Report author: Michael Wilsher, Head of Education Sufficiency and Admissions
- Author contact details: Michael Wilsher 0116 454 5361
michael.wilsher@leicester.gov.uk
- Report version number: 1.0

1. Summary

Approval is required to adopt revised School Admissions Arrangements for the 2026/27 academic year. There is a legal requirement for the council to determine its admissions arrangements by no later than 28 February each year.

A public consultation exercise was undertaken between 13 December 2024 and 31 January 2025 regarding the proposal to update to the definition of what is considered to be 'home/permanent address' for the purpose of the oversubscription criteria.

This report sets out the result of that consultation.

Approval is sought to adopting the revised arrangements to take effect from the start of the 2026/27 academic year.

2. Recommended actions/decision

The Assistant City Mayor is recommended to:

2.1 Note the contents of the report.

2.2 Approve the adoption of the revised arrangements for 2026/2027 and for them to be determined by the 28th February 2025 and published by 15th March 2025, as required by the School Admissions Code.

3. Scrutiny / stakeholder engagement

The following have been consulted on the proposed changes to the Admissions Arrangements 2026/27:

- 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;
- d) whichever of the governing body and the local authority is not the admission authority;
- e) any adjoining neighbouring local authorities where the admission authority is the local authority;

4. Background and options with supporting evidence

4.1 Background

Leicester City Council is responsible for setting the admission arrangements for all its mainstream community and voluntary controlled schools. Our voluntary aided, trust, free and academy schools are their own admitting authorities and, as such, they are responsible for setting their own admission arrangements. However, trust schools in

Leicester generally maintain their admissions arrangements in line with mainstream community and voluntary controlled schools.

4.2 Proposed changes to the current Admission arrangements

One change to the existing arrangements is proposed:

- Change to a definition of Home / Permanent Address within Leicester scheme for the admissions arrangements for pupils (**Appendix 1**), oversubscription criteria for primary and infant (**Appendix 2**), junior (**Appendix 3**) and secondary schools (**Appendix 4**).

4.3 Rationale behind the proposed change.

Definition of Home / Permanent Address included within the admissions arrangements requires a change to meet the requirements of the School Admissions Code (“The Code”).

In relation to split households, the current arrangements refer to an address of the person who receives Child Benefit to be a deciding factor in a decision-making process. One of neighbouring Local Authorities, that use the same criteria, has been challenged by the adjudicator who established that this does not meet the requirements of The Code. It is proposed that instead Local Authority as the admission authority will decide on the balance of probabilities where the child lives for the majority of the week, as suggested by the adjudicator.

Moreover, based on the number of applications received in the last few years that used fraudulent addresses in order to secure a place at a popular school, the information around what considers to be a Home / Permanent Address was proposed to be clarified.

4.4 Public Consultation on the proposed changes

A public consultation on the proposed changes to the admissions arrangements regarding the Home / Permanent Address was opened from 13th December 2024 to 31st January.

14 responses were received to the consultation, of which 11 supported the proposal while 2 respondents were not in favour.

Upon consideration of the feedback received during the consultation, it is proposed to implement an additional minor change (**in bold**) to the proposed Admissions Arrangements 2026/27 as per below:

Home address is a child’s permanent address or where the child lives for most of the time Monday to Friday during school terms, at the time of application. ‘At the time of application’ means the closing date for applications (31 October 2025 for Secondary Applications and 15 January 2026 for Primary, Infant and Junior applications).

Informal accommodation arrangements with family and friends are not accepted, unless a parent can prove that their child lives elsewhere with someone who has legal care and control of their child. We will need legal evidence of this.

An address used for childcare arrangements cannot be used as the home address for the purpose of applying for a school place.

We will check the home address provided in an application against our records and those held by other organizations. Parents can be asked to provide a proof of their address, i.e. evidence of the name being on the electoral, proof of Council Tax payment or utility bill etc.

We will refuse to accept an address that might be considered to be only a temporary address for the purpose of obtaining a place at a popular school where:

- *The original home is still owned **or rented**, and the new address is a rented property within the area of a popular school.*
- *Only part of the family moves unless this was due to a divorce or permanent separation arrangement. We will need legal evidence of this.*
- *A child moves to a home other than with their parent or carer unless it was due to a formal fostering or care arrangement through social services. We will require official letters from the professionals involved confirming this and these must be submitted at the time of application.*

We can only accept one application per child and parents are expected to agree school preferences before applying. The admissions team cannot become involved in any disputes or differences over the application.

Where there is a disagreement between the parents, Local Authority as the admission authority will decide, on the balance of probabilities, where the child lives for the majority of the week.

We have the right to withdraw any offer of a school place up to one term after admission if it is shown that it was obtained based on a fraudulent or misleading application.

4.5 Options available

Option 1 - Maintain the current admissions arrangements with no new changes.

Maintaining the current arrangements will mean that:

- a) we chose not to follow indirect advice issued by the School Adjudicator to steer away from using an address of the recipient of Child Benefit as a deciding factor in establishing children's home / permanent address.

Option 2 - Approve proposed changes to the admissions arrangements as outlined in the report appendices

Approving the proposed changes would ensure compliance with the School Admissions Code and guidance from the adjudicator. The revised admission arrangements for 2026/2027 are required to be determined by the 28th February 2025 and published by 15th March 2025, as per the School Admissions Code.

4.5 Proposed outcome

It is recommended that option 2 is agreed and the proposed changes to the Admissions Arrangements for 2026/27 are approved by LMB. Adopting the revised arrangements would also ensure they are compliance with the School Admissions Code.

5. Financial, legal, equalities, climate emergency and other implications

5.1 Financial implications

There are no additional cost implications as a result of this paper.

Signed: Mohammed Irfan, Head of Finance

Dated: 7 February 2025

5.2 Legal implications

The School Admissions Code (the “Code”) is issued under Section 84 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The Code imposes mandatory requirements in relation to the discharge of functions relating to admissions.

The report sets out the change that is proposed regarding the definition of ‘Home/Permanent Address contained in the admission arrangements proposed for the year 2026/2027. As the relevant admission authority, the Council was required to consult in relation to this proposed change. A failure to consult effectively may be grounds for subsequent complaints and appeals.

The report sets out the consultation which has been undertaken in compliance with the requirements of the Code and the results of that consultation. The results of the consultation should be taken into account when making a final decision on the proposals.

As set out in the body of the report, the Council must determine the admission arrangements by 28 February 2025 and publish those by 15 March 2025. A party may object to those admission arrangements to the Schools Adjudicator by 15 May 2025.

Signed: Julia Slipper, Principal Lawyer (Education & Employment)

Dated: 7 February 2025

5.3 Equalities implications

Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities have a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that, in carrying out their functions, they have a statutory duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act, to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

The report seeks to adopt revised School Admissions Arrangements for the 2026/27 academic year. A preferred option going forward is proposed following public consultation, adopting the revised arrangements would also ensure that the authority is compliant with the School Admissions Code.

Schools have a key part to play in providing opportunities for young people from different backgrounds to learn with, from, and about each other; by encouraging through their teaching, an understanding of, and respect for, other cultures, faiths and communities. The

school admissions system is designed to make sure that all children can exercise their right to education. Every child should have the same opportunity to attend a school that makes appropriate provision for them.

Signed: Equalities Officer, Surinder Singh, Ext 37 4148

Dated: 5 February 2025

5.4 Climate Emergency implications

I believe this change would not have significant climate implications, as the new dwelling is within the school's vicinity and is unlikely to generate additional travel demand or increase carbon emissions from driving.

Signed: Colleen Ryan, Sustainability and Energy Manager

Dated: 10 February 2025

5.5 Other implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

6. Background information and other papers:

7. Summary of appendices:

Appendix 1: Determined Leicester scheme for the admission arrangements for pupils to schools 2026/27

Appendix 2: Determined admission arrangements for first time admission to infant and primary school 2026/27

Appendix 3: Determined admission arrangements for first time admission to junior school 2026/27

Appendix 4: Determined admission arrangements for first time admission to secondary school 2026/27

8. Is this a private report (If so, please indicate the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?

9. Is this a "key decision"? If so, why?