

What to do if a CLA needs a school place

Admissions Procedures for 'Looked After Children'

Admissions are governed by DfE statutory guidance called the School Admissions Code. This requires all authorities to give Children Looked After top priority in the over subscription guidance.

There are national deadlines for applications for starting and transferring school to be made and it's really important that Social Workers/Foster Carers make 'on time' applications for CiC as once the year group has been filled; there is no requirement for an Admission Authority to offer a place even for a CLA.

For in-year admissions and school moves, please refer to the document '**What to do if a CLA needs a school place during the school year**'.

NO MOVE FOR A CHILD LOOKED AFTER SHOULD BE DISCUSSED WITHOUT THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL

Cyclical Admissions (Natural admissions at usual transition points)

Actions for the Social Worker

- Ensure the Virtual School is involved in all discussions around admissions for any Child Looked After
- Go to the County Council website – Somerset.gov.uk and follow the links to the 'Choosing A School' page which has details of all Somerset Schools and links to the application process for all
- Consider all schools in the area. There is a catchment map on Somerset CC Admissions Team's website that you can use to check the catchment school for any address in Somerset
- Applications should be made to schools that are rated by OfSTED as 'good' or 'outstanding' unless there are exceptional circumstances and the Virtual School has been consulted.
- Consider how the child will be transported to school and the long term care plan for the child. If transport has a cost this must be discussed and agreed with CSC managers

- The application must be made by the person with Parental Responsibility following the website guidance and in the knowledge that there are very strict deadline dates by which applications must be made – all details on the website
- Children with a statement or EHCP will have school places agreed by the SEND team. Each school has an SEND casework officer. Discuss school admissions with that caseworker
- Make sure that all applications are documented (new schools should be recorded in the PEP prior to transfer) and that LCS is updated. Be prepared to chase for answers. Contact the Virtual School if there are any issues with the process.

Actions for Schools/Education Settings – The Designated Teacher

- Make sure that the transition section of the PEP includes positive planning for a school move and that the new school is invited to attend the meeting if at all possible
- Support the child in making a good transition e.g. facilitating attendance at additional transition days and to have a positive ending to the current school placement – time to say goodbye etc.

Actions for the Foster Carer

- Liaise with the social worker to identify who is going to take the lead with the admissions process including visiting schools, researching the best options etc.
- Support the admissions process, helping the child to prepare for the new school.
- Contact the social worker or Virtual School if there are any concerns or issues

Actions for the Virtual School

- Ensure the new school is listed on the Virtual School register, that Capita is updated, that the education advisor for the new school is alerted and that the attendance monitoring organisation is aware of the change of school.
- Complete a case handover form where this is appropriate.
- Liaise with the SW to ensure an early PEP date is agreed in the new setting