

In-Year (mid term) Admissions Procedures for ‘Looked After Children’

- Admissions to Local Authority and academy schools 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. However, it is not automatically the case that a place can be found for a CLA at a preferred school. A lengthy appeals process does exist and may be appropriate but CLA status is not sufficient to guarantee a school will admit a child in-year.

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

- Although sometimes a school move can seem like a sensible way forward there are many reasons why it may not be helpful. Any suggestion of a school move should start with a conversation with the Virtual School advisor for the school where the child is currently on roll.
- Every attempt should be made to minimise any negative impact on school attendance of discussions and planning of school moves.
- Children Looked After with a statement of EHCP cannot be moved school without the involvement of the SEND team who will be able to advise as to the suitability of another school to meet the child’s needs as detailed in the plan.
- A meeting that includes, carers, CSC, the Virtual School and current school staff should be convened. This meeting needs to consider whether a school move is in the child’s best interests, whether a new school can meet needs and what the impact of a move is likely to be.
- If the outcome of the meeting and the view of the Virtual School is that a school move is necessary, an appropriate school must be identified. This should only be a school that is ‘Good ‘ or ‘Outstanding’ as judged by Ofsted:
 - ✓ The social worker should make the application in writing (this could be an online form) even if the school says there are no places – A PHONE CALL DOES NOT CONSTITUTE AN APPLICATION
 - ✓ Apply to as many suitable schools within a reasonable distance at the same time. This will save time later!
 - ✓ Chase for a response every two to three days to ask if a decision has been made
 - ✓ Let the school admissions team know that you have made an application
 - ✓ Keep the Virtual School involved and aware of developments.

- ✓ As soon as a start date is agreed, ensure all parties know what is needed and a transition plan is in place
- ✓ An initial PEP is needed in the new school within 20 school days of the start date
- If a school declines to offer a place there is a process. Contact [Somerset's admissions team](#) and the Virtual School to be supported through the next steps. The appeals and direction process is not an easy or quick route to securing a school place for a Child Looked After
- A CLA should NOT be removed from any school roll until they have been accepted and the Unique Pupil Number/Common Transfer Form has been exchanged with the new school
- There may be different admissions processes in other Local Authorities. If you are seeking a place for a Somerset CLA out of county please contact the admissions team in the Local Authority where you wish the child to attend school for guidance.

Revised summer 2018