



Dear Head Teacher and Chair of Governors

Admissions Arrangements 2022-2023

The admission authority of voluntary aided maintained schools is the governing body. Similarly, the admission authority of an academy (whether previously VC or VA) is the academy trust. Every year 'admission authorities' must produce their school's admissions arrangements (Admissions Policy) for the academic year which is two years ahead of the current school year. **This means that the process for determining the 2022-2023 admissions arrangements must now begin.**

For a single academy trust (i.e. with one school only) and for voluntary aided governing bodies, it is relatively straightforward understanding that the academy board (or the governing body) is responsible for producing the admissions arrangements. However, where a school is an academy within a multi academy trust (MAT), you will need to check with your MAT where the delegated authority to deal with the individual school's admissions arrangements sits. Usually, it will be delegated to the local governing body of the academy, but you must check with the MAT itself.

Statutory guidelines covering procedures, processes and timescales have to be followed. The key one to know at this stage is that the admissions arrangements must be determined by the admission authority by 28th February 2021.

To support you in this important process, the Salisbury Diocesan Board of Education has produced model admissions arrangements in partnership with our Admissions Consultants (the legal firm 'Stone King'). This is part of the Board's free 'Core Foundation Provision' for all church schools. We have prepared model admissions policies for primary, middle and secondary schools as well as an Explanatory Booklet and model SIFs (Supplementary Information Forms). Admission authorities will need to tailor the finer points within these to fit their own context, which will include considering whether the oversubscription criteria for the school is appropriate. It is important to reiterate that the model policies only contain exemplar oversubscription criteria, not an exhaustive list. For example, this year we have included criterion e) in the 2022-2023 model which relates to feeder schools. If an admission authority proposes to adopt a policy which includes over subscription criteria that were not included in previous adopted policies, or have been significantly amended, **then there will be a consequent requirement for that admission authority to undertake a formal consultation.**

The 2022-2023 model policies differ in two key ways from the ones which the Board of Education issued for 2021-2022 (and the preceding 2 years); 1) the provision in this model for schools to reference feeder schools 2) the footnote relating to the closure of a Recognised Church or Religious Group to public worship during the period specified for attendance.

The model policies issued by the Board before 2018-2019 were significantly different to our current model policies. Schools using our current model policies in 2019-2020 or 2020-2021 or 2021-2022 for the first time had to consult on them at that time.

Public Worship Footnote (faith criteria only)

Admission authorities will note that there is a footnote regarding the issue of closure of churches for public worship. This wording is similar but not identical to the wording suggested to admission authorities for in year variations for 2021/2022 admission policies. If you propose to adopt this footnote within your admission policy, then this will require a formal consultation process to be undertaken because you are materially amending your admission arrangements. Please note that if you adopted the wording as per the suggested in year variation wording then you are not required to adopt the footnote wording,

If your school proposes no changes to its present admission arrangements (other than dates)

If your school does not amend its admission arrangements (other than dates) then, you will not need to consult on your policy. **You will however still need to formally determine the policy.** The Explanatory Booklet includes a section dealing specifically with determination of admissions policies.

If your school is adopting the model admissions arrangements for the first time this year

If you have not used one of our model policies before but plan to do so this year, please read the Explanatory Booklet carefully as the consultation process which must be followed is detailed there and it has strict time limits.

If your school has consulted upon and adopted your own admissions arrangements

Schools are not required to use the diocesan model policies but must comply with the admissions code and timescales and must include us in their consultation.

If no changes, other than dates, are planned in your policy for 2022-2023 then there is no need to consult now subject to the rule that there must be consultation every 7 years (see the Explanatory Booklet and next section for details).

If your school has not consulted upon its admissions arrangements for 7 years

An important reminder that **all schools** must consult on their admissions arrangements at least once every 7 years even if there have been no changes. Admissions authorities which have not consulted since their 2015-2016 arrangements will, therefore, need to do so this year. If this is the case, please first check the guidance on consultation in the Explanatory Booklet

Explanatory Booklet

There are two additions to the Explanatory Booklet from the September 2019 version:

- (i): reference to the feeder school oversubscription and an explanation of this
- (ii): reference to the ongoing consultation in Admission arrangements (Section I)

The rest of the Booklet is unchanged.

When draft / finalised Policies must be sent to the Diocese

Please note if your school plans to have different criteria to demonstrate membership of faith or practice than those in the model arrangements then the admission authority **must** send a draft to the diocese for its observations **before** any public consultation. The finalised policy would also then need to be re-sent to the diocese as part of the full consultation.

This also applies if your school is seeking to have an Admissions Policy which is not based on our model policy.

Timetable for 2022-2023 Admissions

I have copied the full timetable from the Explanatory Booklet below. However it is important that the full Explanatory Booklet is read by admissions authorities.

October 1 st 2020 to January 31 st 2021	Consultation of 6 weeks to take place in this period
February 28 th 2021	Date by which governors must determine admission arrangements every year
February 28 th 2021 onwards	The governors must publish the determined admission arrangements on the school website and keep it on the website until the end of the Offer Year.
February 28 th 2021	Date by which Admission Appeal timetable is to be published on your school website
March 15 th 2021	Date by which determined arrangements are sent to the Local Authority
May 15 th 2021	Deadline for lodging objection to Office of the Schools Adjudicator (OSA)
August 8 th 2021	Deadline for governing bodies to provide admission arrangements information to the local authority to allow them to compile composite prospectus.
October 31 st 2021	National closing date for secondary school applications
January 15 th 2022	National closing date for primary school applications
March 1 st 2022	National offer day for secondary schools
April 16 th 2022	National offer day for primary schools

Please can all correspondence with the diocese about admissions arrangements be sent to Pam Clemett – pam.clemett@salisbury.anglican.org. Thank you.

With my best wishes to all admission authorities,



Dan Roberts
Foundation Governance and Academy Trusts Adviser