

Common breaches of the School Admissions Code

1. Not consulting, determining and publishing arrangements on time

Consult only on changes or every 7 years. Schools must keep a record of when they last consulted in the minutes of the GB meetings. All admission authorities including VA, foundation schools and academies must determine their admission arrangements each year (February 28^h). It is sometimes difficult to understand if arrangements have been determined – a record must be kept in the GB minutes. Determined arrangements must be published as near to 28th February as possible. The code is very clear about what you need to do. Admission arrangements must be sent to the LA by 15th March.

2. Not publishing full arrangements, for example not making clear the year to which they apply, or the PAN

The admission arrangements must be the same on every website that they are displayed and the full arrangements must be displayed for years that admissions apply

3. Not having clear, compliant arrangements for admission to the sixth form

There needs to be very clear arrangements for the pupils already in the school and those applying for the first time.

4. Asking for prohibited information on the Supplementary Information Form

The code is very clear that no prohibited information is requested. A list of prohibited information can be found in paragraph 1.9

5. Including a statement about the admission of a child who has a statement of special educational or an educational health care plan need that names the school that implies the school has discretion over the admission

Once named a school must take – this must not be part of the oversubscription criteria

6. Including a statement about a looked after or previously looked after child that seems to imply the school has discretion over the admission.

Looked after children and previously looked after children must be given top priority

7. If permitted to admit up to 10% on the basis of aptitude, using assessments that test ability and not aptitude alone

Aptitude is often muddled with attitude

8. A lack of definitions, for example uncertainty about how distance is measured, or how addressed in a block of flats are dealt with.

Definitions must be clear and be included in the arrangements

9. A lack of a final tie-breaker

A final tie breaker must be included. If random allocation is being used schools must set out clearly how this will operate

10. Arrangements that are not clear or easy to understand

In drawing up their admission arrangements, admission authorities must ensure that the practices and criteria used to decide the allocation of school places are fair, clear and objective. Parents should be able to look at a set of arrangements and understand easily how places for that school will be allocated.