

SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2025/2026

Public consultation



INDEX

1. [Background Information](#)
2. [Proposal and Rationale](#)
3. [Timeline](#)
4. [Methodology](#)
5. [The Consultation](#)
6. [The Consultation Survey](#)
7. [Decision to be taken](#)
8. [Equality Impact Assessment](#)

1. Background Information

Plymouth City Council is the admission authority for all community and voluntary controlled schools in the City. The School Standards and Framework Act 1998, as amended by the Education Act 2002 and the School Admissions Code (the Code) require all admission authorities to consult on admission arrangements at least every seven years and always when arrangements change. Each year, admission authorities must determine the admission arrangements that are to apply. This paper relates to coordinated admission schemes and the admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools only.

Determination of the admission arrangements for schools which are their own admission authority rests with the governing board of the individual school.

Improving school admission arrangements helps to maximise parental preference, which in turn enables the Council to identify more accurately where surplus capacity is located, thereby helping to meet the corporate objective of removing surplus school places.

Schools are a key facility within their local communities and support wider cohesion in the area. An equality impact assessment is included in this report. The determined admission arrangements are compliant with the Code. The Code takes account of primary legislation and regulations most relevant to admissions decisions and comments on the provisions of the Equality Act 2010, the Human Rights Act 1998 and the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

2. Proposal and Rationale

In respect of all community and voluntary controlled schools, the Council is under a statutory duty, where admission arrangements change, to consult upon and then determine the admission arrangements. The Council also has a statutory duty to ensure that as far as possible, the admission arrangements for other categories of school meet the requirements of the Code. The Council is also under a statutory duty to devise and agree upon a coordinated scheme of admissions in respect of the normal points of entry.

Not to determine the 2025/2026 school admission arrangements would leave the Council in breach of its statutory duties.

3. Timeline

Activity	Timetable for admission arrangements in 2024/2025
Earliest date to send admission arrangements to the Diocesan Board of education	1 October 2023 (last date 31 October 2023)
Earliest date to start consultation on proposed arrangements	1 October 2023
Plymouth own admission authority schools to send draft admission arrangements for consultation to Plymouth local authority (LA)	6 November 2023 to 11 November 2023
Plymouth consultation starts	Monday 4 December 2023
Plymouth consultation ends	Sunday 15 January 2024

Deadline for completion of consultation on arrangements	31 January 2024
Deadline for the local authority to formulate a coordinated scheme for state funded schools in their area, including any new school or Academy which is expected to open.	1 January 2024
Minimum length of consultation	Six weeks
Deadline for admission arrangements to be determined (even there have been no changes or no consultation)	Wednesday 28 February 2024
Deadline for notification of a qualifying scheme for coordination	Tuesday 28 February 2024
Deadline for admission authorities to send determined arrangements to LA	Friday 15 March 2024
Deadline for LA to publish on its website details of all new schools to open that year & details of where all other school arrangements can be viewed	Wednesday 15 March 2024
Deadline for objections to the Schools Adjudicator	Wednesday 15 May 2024

4. Methodology

When consulting on admission arrangements, the Council is required to consult all maintained schools in Plymouth, neighbouring admission authorities, and parents as well as others who the Council feel, have an interest in education. The Council detailed the arrangements for the consultation on its website and an online response form was available. The consultation was advertised using posters in schools, press notices, emails to Plymouth and surrounding district schools, MPs, City Councillors and others who the Council felt may have had an interest in admission arrangements. The Code also emphasises the local authority's role in ensuring that the admission arrangements for all admission authorities in the area, including academies, free, trust, foundation, studio, UTC and voluntary aided schools comply with the Code. Councils are under a duty to formulate and agree coordinated admissions schemes with the majority of admission authorities in its area.

5. The Consultation

For admissions in 2025/2026, consultations have been held in accordance with the Code on the basis of the admission arrangements set out in the In-Year admission arrangements 2025/2026, The parent's guide for Primary, Junior, Secondary and Key Stage 4 2023, as suitably amended.

The proposals for change comprised:

- I. New timetables for primary and secondary schools at the normal point of entry;

6. The Consultation Survey

Comments were received in response to the consultation as follows:

Consultation category	Undecided	Support	Against	No opinion
Primary, infant and junior coordinated admission scheme	0	0	0	0
Secondary coordinated admission scheme	0	0	0	0
In-Year locally admission coordinated scheme	0	0	0	0
Nursery school oversubscription criteria	0	0	0	0
Primary school oversubscription criteria	0	0	1	0
Secondary school oversubscription criteria	0	0	0	0

Comments were received from one parent for Hooe Primary School's oversubscription criteria. The following point was made:

Hooe/Turnchapel/Mountbatten is a unique location as it has water on three sides with one road out. A parent believes that Hooe should have a catchment area.

Response - Hooe Primary School previously had two catchment areas. The school and the MAT , Horizon Multi-Academy removed the catchment area in 2022/2023 and unified Hooe's oversubscription criteria into line with the other schools within the MAT.

7. Decision to be taken

Having completed the consultation process, the Council, as the admission authority for community and voluntary controlled schools, must determine the admission arrangements by 28 February 2024. In addition, the Council must also have agreed a qualifying scheme for coordination with the majority of schools in its area.

No objections have been received to the admission arrangements proposals during the period of consultation. It is therefore the recommendation is that the policy documents should be agreed as consulted upon.

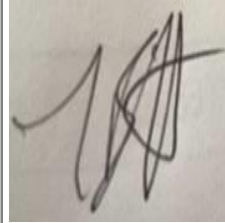
It is proposed that the determined school admission arrangements for 2025/2026 be based on those for 2025/2026 subject to the following amendments:

- I. New timetables for primary, junior, secondary and Key Stage 4 schools at the normal point of entry;

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Education, Participation and Skills – School Admission Arrangements 2025/2026

SECTION ONE: INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROPOSAL

Author(s): This is the person completing the EIA template.	Christine Davidson – Acting School Admissions Support Manager	Department and service:	Education, Participation and Skills, School Admissions Team	Date of assessment:	16/01/2024
Lead Officer: Please note that a Head of Service, Service Director, or Strategic Director must approve the EIA.	Jim Barnicott – Head of Education and Virtual School, Education, Participation and Skills	Signature:		Approval date:	18/01/2024
Overview:	The Determined Admission Arrangements take into account responses received during the consultation carried out between 4 th December 2023 to 14 January 2024.				
Decision required:	That the determined school admission arrangements for 2025/2026 be based on those for 2024/2025 subject to the following amendments: I. New timetables for primary and secondary schools at the normal point of entry;				

SECTION TWO: EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCREENING TOOL

Potential external impacts: Does the proposal have the potential to negatively impact service users, communities or residents with protected characteristics?	Yes	X	No	
Potential internal impacts:	Yes		No	X

Does the proposal have the potential to negatively impact Plymouth City Council employees?				
Is a full Equality Impact Assessment required? (if you have answered yes to either of the questions above then a full impact assessment is required and you must complete section three)	Yes	X	No	
If you do not agree that a full equality impact assessment is required, please set out your justification for why not.				

SECTION THREE: FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Protected characteristics (Equality Act, 2010)	Evidence and information (e.g. data and consultation feedback)	Adverse impact	Mitigation activities	Timescale and responsible department
Age	<p>Plymouth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 16.4 per cent of people in Plymouth are children aged under 15. 65.1 per cent are adults aged 15 to 64. 18.5 percent are adults aged 65 and over. 2.4 percent of the resident population are 85 and over. <p>South West</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15.9 per cent of people are aged 0 to 14, 61.8 per cent are aged 15 to 64. 22.3 per cent are aged 65 and over. <p>England</p>	<p>Education out of age cohort could result in additional provision to be made in school place planning but this is not a quantity that can be predicted.</p> <p>There is a danger that parents may request a place out of age cohort because the appropriate year group is full rather than looking at the best interest of the child.</p>	<p>Monitor the number of out of age cohort applications received and approved.</p>	<p>Admissions officer responsible for the stage of entry. Monitored over the academic year.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17.4 per cent of people are aged 0 to 14. • 64.2 per cent of people are aged 15 to 64. • 18.4 per cent of people are aged 65 and over. <p>(2021 Census)</p> <p>The determined admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools meet the requirements of the School Admissions Code. Educational provision is made for children from the term following their fourth birthday as specified in law.</p> <p>Whilst school admission policies are applicable to students within specified birth cohorts, provision is made for the parent/carer to apply for admission to non-birth cohort age group. Such requests will be considered fairly and the manner of consideration is specified within each admission policy and is compliant with the law.</p>			
<p>Care experienced individuals</p> <p>(Note that as per the Independent Review of Children’s Social Care recommendations, Plymouth City Council is treating care experience as though it is a</p>	<p>It is estimated that 26 per cent of the homeless population in the UK have care experience. In Plymouth there are currently 7 per cent of care leavers open to the service (6 per cent aged 18-20 and 12 per cent of those aged 21+) who are in unsuitable accommodation.</p> <p>The Care Review reported that 41 per cent of 19-21 year old care leavers are not in education, employment or training (NEET) compared to 12 per cent of all other young people in the same age group.</p>	None	None	None

protected characteristic).	<p>In Plymouth there are currently 50 per cent of care leavers aged 18-21 Not in Education Training or Employment (54 per cent of all those care leavers aged 18-24 who are open to the service).</p> <p>There are currently 195 care leavers aged 18 to 20 (statutory service) and 58 aged 21 to 24 (extended offer). There are more care leavers aged 21 to 24 who could return for support from services if they wished to.</p> <p>The determined admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools meet the requirements of the School Admissions Code with links to other relevant legislation.</p>			
Disability	<p>9.4 per cent of residents in Plymouth have their activities limited 'a lot' because of a physical or mental health problem.</p> <p>12.2 per cent of residents in Plymouth have their activities limited 'a little' because of a physical or mental health problem (2021 Census)</p> <p>The determined admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools meet the requirements of the School Admissions Code with links to other relevant legislation.</p> <p>Children with an Education, Health and Care will be ranked ahead of other applicants within the admission criteria and will be admitted to the school requested as this a requirement within the School Admissions Code.</p> <p>Priority is made within the admission criteria for the admission of children with exceptional</p>	None	None	None

	<p>medical or social need. Information regarding evidence required is clearly given in the admission policy.</p> <p>Special arrangements can be made in the case of selection testing admission arrangements to a grammar school where a child has a disability. In such a case, the admission authority will try to match the provision already made within school to ensure a level playing field.</p>			
Gender reassignment	<p>0.5 per cent of residents in Plymouth have a gender identity that is different from their sex registered at birth. 0.1 per cent of residents identify as a trans man, 0.1 per cent identify as non-binary and, 0.1 per cent identify as a trans women (2021 Census).</p> <p>The determined admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools meet the requirements of the School Admissions Code. This information is not collected or taken account of in the school admissions process. Taking account of gender reassignment would not be compliant with the School Admissions Code.</p>	None	None	None
Marriage and civil partnership	<p>40.1 per cent of residents have never married and never registered a civil partnership. 10 per cent are divorced, 6 percent are widowed, with 2.5 per cent are separated but still married.</p> <p>0.49 per cent of residents are, or were, married or in a civil partnerships of the same sex. 0.06 per cent of residents are in a civil partnerships with the opposite sex (2021 Census).</p>	None	None	None

	<p>The determined admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools meet the requirements of the School Admissions Code.</p> <p>This information is not collected or normally taken account of in the school admissions process. Taking account of gender would not be compliant with the School Admissions Code unless the school is designated as a single sex school.</p>			
Pregnancy and maternity	<p>The total fertility rate (TFR) for England was 1.62 children per woman in 2021. The total fertility rate (TFR) for Plymouth in 2021 was 1.5.</p> <p>The determined admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools meet the requirements of the School Admissions Code.</p> <p>This information is not collected or normally taken account of in the school admissions process. Taking account of gender would not be compliant with the School Admissions Code unless the school is designated as a single sex school.</p>	None	None	None
Race	<p>In 2021, 94.9 per cent of Plymouth's population identified their ethnicity as White, 2.3 per cent as Asian and 1.1 per cent as Black (2021 Census)</p> <p>People with a mixed ethnic background comprised 1.8 per cent of the population. 1 per cent of the population use a different term to describe their ethnicity (2021 Census)</p>	None	None	None

	<p>92.7 per cent of residents speak English as their main language. 2021 Census data shows that after English, Polish, Romanian, Chinese, Portuguese, and Arabic are the most spoken languages in Plymouth (2021 Census).</p> <p>The determined admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools meet the requirements of the School Admissions Code.</p> <p>This information is not collected or taken account of in the school admissions process. Taking account of race would not be compliant with the School Admissions Code.</p>			
Religion or belief	<p>48.9 per cent of the Plymouth population stated they had no religion. 42.5 per cent of the population identified as Christian (2021 Census).</p> <p>Those who identified as Muslim account for 1.3 per cent of Plymouth's population while Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish or Sikh combined totalled less than 1 per cent (2021 Census).</p> <p>The determined admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools meet the requirements of the School Admissions Code.</p> <p>None of the community or voluntary controlled schools prioritise children according to faith and will consider applicants equally regardless of faith, religion or belief.</p>	None	None	None
Sex	<p>51 per cent of our population are women and 49 per cent are men (2021 Census).</p> <p>The determined admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools meet the requirements of the School Admissions Code.</p>	None	None	None

	<p>This information is not collected or taken account of in the school admissions process.</p> <p>Children and young people who are LGBT should feel able to apply to a school without any restrictions. Where a school or college is co-educational, the gender a person associates with has no bearing on an admissions application. Plymouth’s application forms ask for the child’s gender. At this point, the gender appropriate to the birth certificate should be entered. Further information relating to gender identity and the reasoning for selection of a particular school can be given on the application form.</p> <p>In the case of transgender applicants, where a parent selects a placement in a single sex school opposite to the birth gender, the application will be considered and a decision made on the individual circumstances of the case. This is a complex decision and not all children will be competent to take it at the time of transfer. As part of the case consideration, we would seek evidence from the family that they have thought through the issues carefully and in most cases would expect them to be able to provide us with some independent evidence from a medical professional or other worker who has been involved in the situation.</p>			
<p>Sexual orientation</p>	<p>88.95 per cent of residents aged 16 years and over in Plymouth describe their sexual orientation as straight or heterosexual. 2.06 per cent describe their sexuality as bisexual, 1.97 per cent of people describe their sexual orientation as gay or lesbian. 0.42 per cent of residents describe their sexual orientation using a different term (2021 Census).</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>None</p>

	<p>The determined admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools meet the requirements of the School Admissions Code.</p> <p>This information is not collected or taken account of in the school admissions process.</p> <p>Children and young people who are LGBT should feel able to apply to a school without any restrictions. Where a school or college is co-educational, the gender a person associates with has no bearing on an admissions application. Plymouth’s application forms ask for the child’s gender. At this point, the gender appropriate to the birth certificate should be entered. Further information relating to gender identity and the reasoning for selection of a particular school can be given on the application form.</p> <p>In the case of transgender applicants, where a parent selects a placement in a single sex school opposite to the birth gender, the application will be considered and a decision made on the individual circumstances of the case. This is a complex decision and not all children will be competent to take it at the time of transfer. As part of the case consideration, we would seek evidence from the family that they have thought through the issues carefully and in most cases would expect them to be able to provide us with some independent evidence from a medical professional or other worker who has been involved in the situation.</p>			
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SECTION FOUR: HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

Human Rights	Implications	Mitigation Actions	Timescale and responsible department
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	None	None	N/A
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SECTION FIVE: OUR EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

Equality objectives	Implications	Mitigation Actions	Timescale and responsible department
Celebrate diversity and ensure that Plymouth is a welcoming city.	None	None	N/A
Pay equality for women, and staff with disabilities in our workforce.	None	None	N/A
Supporting our workforce through the implementation of Our People Strategy 2020 – 2024	None	None	N/A
Supporting victims of hate crime so they feel confident to report incidents, and working with, and through our partner organisations to achieve positive outcomes.	None	None	N/A
Plymouth is a city where people from different backgrounds get along well.	None	None	N/A