

SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2027/2028

Public consultation Breifing Paper



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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 2027/2028 school admission arrangements would leave the Council in breach of its statutory duties.

3. Timeline

Activity	Timetable for admission arrangements in 2026/2027
Earliest date to send admission arrangements to the Diocesan Board of education	1 October 2025 (last date 31 October 2025)
Earliest date to start consultation on proposed arrangements	1 October 2025
Plymouth own admission authority schools to send draft admission arrangements for consultation to Plymouth local authority (LA)	3 November 2025 to 8 November 2025
Plymouth consultation starts	1 December 2025
Plymouth consultation ends	11 January 2026
Deadline for completion of consultation on arrangements	31 January 2026

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 2026
Minimum length of consultation	Six weeks
Deadline for admission arrangements to be determined (even there have been no changes or no consultation)	28 February 2026
Deadline for notification of a qualifying scheme for coordination	28 February 2026
Deadline for admission authorities to send determined arrangements to LA	15 March 2026
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	15 March 2026
Deadline for objections to the Schools Adjudicator	15 May 2026

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 2027/2028, consultations have been held in accordance with the Code on the basis of the admission arrangements set out in the In-Year admission arrangements 2026/2027, The parent's guide for Primary, Junior, Secondary and Key Stage 4 2026, as suitably amended.

The proposals for change comprised:

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

6. The Consultation Survey

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	0	0
Secondary school oversubscription criteria	0	0	0	0

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 2026. 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 2027/2028 be based on those for 2026/2027 subject to the following amendments:

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