

Department for Education

Admissions Advice September 2020

The governing board of maintained voluntary aided schools are reminded that their policies for admissions in 2022/2023 are due to be determined by the governing board by the 15th March 2021 and both published on the school's website and supplied to the Local Authority and the Diocesan Department for Education.

All information required by the Local Authority must be provided by the 8th August 2021 to allow the authority to publish online and in hard copy by the 12th September 2021.

Consultation on policies for 2022/2023 (minimum of six weeks) on any proposed changes must take place between the 1st October 2020 and the 31st January 2021. Governing boards are, therefore, urged to review this year's arrangements **as soon as possible in the autumn term** and, if changes are needed, starting the consultation before the end of the term.

Consultation must be determined by the 28th February 2021 and published on the school website and sent to the relevant local authority by the 15th March 2021. Objections must be submitted to the adjudicator by the 15th May 2021.

Some general points:

- If variations are made to policies as a result of comments received during the consultation period, there is no need to begin the consultation again.
- The Diocesan Department for Education should be included as a consultee.
- The Bishop expects governing boards to have regard to advice offered by the Diocesan Department for Education, but the ultimate responsibility for ensuring the policy complies with the Code of Practice rests with the governing board.
- Our model admission arrangements have been very clear not to apply any requirement about the timing of baptism; simply that the parent must be able to provide a baptism certificate at the point of application. That is a very clear and simple requirement which can be objectively applied. If they do not have such a certificate, then they will not qualify to be considered under a Catholic criterion. Schools must not make a judgement, about whether a child would have been baptised but for COVID, they should continue to apply their admission criteria consistently. This means not giving priority to children who cannot provide evidence of baptism. Baptisms were suspended in March but have been allowed to be restarted from July. Therefore, parents should have ample opportunity to arrange their child's baptism in good time for the next admission round in January 2021. It is difficult to understand why a parent would leave having their child baptised until the year before the child starts school, but some may do. It is for the parents to manage the timing to ensure that they are able to comply with that requirement.

For further advice on admissions please contact Margaret Moore on 0161 817 2204 or margaret.moore@dioceseofsalford.org.uk

Please forward a copy of your 2022/2023 Admissions Policy to
education@dioceseofsalford.org.uk