



**Doncaster
Council**

**EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND
INCLUSION**

**DONCASTER METROPLITAN
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Due Regard Statement

**School Admission Arrangements
2023/24 Academic Year**

Due Regard Statement

A **Due Regard Statement** (DRS) is the tool for capturing the evidence to demonstrate that due regard has been shown when the council plans and delivers its functions. A Due Regard Statement must be completed for all programmes, projects and changes to service delivery.

- A DRS should be initiated at the beginning of the programme, project or change to inform project planning
- The DRS runs adjacent to the programme, project or change and is reviewed and completed at the relevant points
- Any reports produced needs to reference “Due Regard” in the main body of the report and the DRS should be attached as an appendix
- The DRS cannot be fully completed until the programme, project or change is delivered.

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| <p>1 Name of the ‘policy’ and briefly describe the activity being considered including aims and expected outcomes. This will help to determine how relevant the ‘policy’ is to equality.</p> | <p>The document relates to the annual determination of the following statutory school admission arrangements for the 2023/2024 school year:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary School Co-ordinated Admission Arrangements; • Secondary School Co-ordinated Admission Arrangements; • Community School Admission Arrangements; • Community School Nursery Admission Arrangements. <p>The above arrangements cover two areas; the Council’s duty to co-ordinate the application processes for all pupils resident within the area i.e. the mechanism by which parents may apply for a school place and the Community School Admission arrangements for both school and school nurseries i.e. the mechanism by which priority for places is determined for admission to community schools.</p> |
| <p>2 Service area responsible for completing this statement.</p> | <p>Learning and Opportunities, Children and Young People: Learning Provision Organisation Service</p> |
| <p>3 Summary of the information considered across the protected groups.</p> <p>Service users/residents</p> <p>Doncaster Workforce</p> | <p>In addition to the requirements of the Equalities Act, the School Admissions Code published by the Department for Education make it clear that all admission authorities, including Doncaster Council must not discriminate on the grounds of disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; or sexual orientation, against a person in the arrangements and decisions it makes as to who is offered admission as a pupil.</p> <p>The Co-ordinated Admission Arrangements</p> <p>The co-ordinated admission arrangements allow a parent or carer to make an application for a school place. The status of the applicant is not a factor in the application process.</p> <p>The application process is available predominantly through the internet in line with the Council’s Digital Strategy and the movement of online access to services. Parents make applications</p> |

through the Synergy Online software which is used by a large number of councils. The software has an accessible version for parents to use.

Due regard is given to those residents who do not wish to access services online and continue to require more traditional access methods. These access channels will remain for customers wishing to contact the Council in this way. Direct assistance is available in person or over the telephone through the Customer Contact Centre or School Admission Officers.

Where necessary, paper applications are available through other channels i.e. by requesting one in person, by telephone or email through the Customer Contact Centre. Assistance is also available in person or over the telephone through the Customer Contact Centre or School Admission Officers. In addition, the majority of applicants will already have their child in a school or nursery. In these cases further assistance is available directly from the school which will be familiar with their individual communities and the support which they require.

Community School Admission Arrangements

The Community School Admission Arrangements contain the oversubscription criteria. The status of the applicant is not a factor in determining eligibility for a school place. The Code requires that the oversubscription criteria must be reasonable, clear, objective, procedurally fair, and comply with all relevant legislation, including equalities legislation.

The School Admission Code sets out permissible criteria as well as those which must not be used. The criteria set by the Local Authority i.e. Catchment areas, Siblings, Feeder School Link and distance are all permissible criteria within the Code and so are compliant with the Equalities Act.

In cases where an application is unsuccessful, parents are offered the right to an independent appeal and language support is provided as necessary for the family.

Equalities Act Protected Characteristics

Age – These arrangements will have no negative impact on this protected group.

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| | | <p>Disability – These arrangements will have no negative impact on this protected group. (Where a child has an Education, Health and Care Plan, applications are considered under separate provisions.)</p> <p>Race – These arrangements will have no negative impact on this protected group.</p> <p>Sex – These arrangements will have no negative impact on this protected group</p> <p>Sexual Orientation – These arrangements will have no negative impact on this protected group.</p> <p>Religion or Belief – These arrangements will have no negative impact on this protected group.</p> <p>Whilst parents may apply for a school on the basis of their faith or religion, the relevant schools adhere to strict arrangements in compliance with the School Admissions Code. The Council does not determine admission to these schools.</p> <p>Maternity and Pregnancy - These arrangements will have no negative impact on this protected group.</p> <p>Gender Reassignment – These arrangements will have no negative impact on this protected group.</p> <p>Service Personnel and Crown Servants</p> <p>Special provision has also been made within the In Year Fair Access protocol to prioritise applications in the line with the requirements of the Code and the Service Forces Covenant. The admission policies include provision for applications to be considered one term in advance of a change of address in accordance with the guidance from the DfE.</p> |
| 4 | <p>Summary of the consultation/engagement activities</p> | <p>The consultation undertaken is determined by regulation. This includes consultation with all schools and neighbouring local authorities. Governing Bodies, which include parent representatives, are consulted during the autumn term and the arrangements are placed on the Council’s website. A feedback form is also provided within the various admission to school booklets which are also available on the website.</p> |
| 5 | <p>Real Consideration: Summary of what the evidence shows and how has it been used</p> | <p>Co-ordinated Admission Arrangements - Admission Process</p> <p>In accordance with the Council’s Digital Strategy and the movement of online access for service provision, significant changes were to the mechanism for parents to apply for school places from 2015 and the application process is now available predominantly online. Applications through this method have risen significantly since being introduced fully in 2015 demonstrated by the following table:-</p> |

| % of Parents Making On-line Applications* | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Year | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
| Secondary | 14 | 21 | 34 | 85 | 86 | 89 | 93 | 93 | 98 | 99 |
| Primary | 13 | 24 | 15 | 81 | 89 | 89 | 88 | 93 | 98 | 99 |

*

Additional support is made available where schools are identified as having significant numbers of paper applications.

Admission Arrangements – Community School Admission Criteria

A consistently high proportion of applicants have been offered a place at a preferred school. These rates compares favourably with local and national outcomes.

| | Secondary (Year of Entry 2021/22) | | | Primary (Year of Entry 2021/22) | | |
|---------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|-----------------|--|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| | Doncaster | Yorkshire and The Humber | National | Doncaster | Yorkshire and The Humber | National |
| Parents First Preference | 88.00% | 86.90% | 81.10% | 97.10% | 93.30% | 91.80% |
| One of 3 Preferences | 96.60% | 95.20% | 93.40% | 98.80% | 98.30% | 98.40% |
| Online Applications | 95.58% | 95.32% | 93.92% | 98.04% | 97.60% | 97.30% |

Those pupils not offered a school place at one of their preferred schools were allocated a local alternative school.

6 Decision Making

This Due Regard Statement will be specifically referred to and deliberated within the agenda item at Cabinet meeting on 2 February 2022.

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| | | The Mayor and Portfolio holder will be provided with the statement in advance of the Cabinet meeting. |
| 7 | Monitoring and Review | The arrangements are determined on an annual basis in line with statutory requirements and guidance from the Department for Education. Progress at a more operational level is covered under the council's standard performance management framework; and is monitored on an on-going basis. |
| 8 | Sign off and approval for publication | Learning Provision Organisation Service Manager Learning and Opportunities: Children and Young People |