



Office of  
the Schools  
Adjudicator

## Determination

**Case reference:** REF429, REF430 and REF431

**Referrer:** A member of the public

**Admission authority:** Northwick Park Trust for William Read Primary Academy, Northwick Park Primary and Nursery Academy and Leigh Beck Infant Academy and Nursery, Canvey Island, Essex

**Date of decision:** 1 December 2023

### Determination

I have considered the admission arrangements for September 2024 for William Read Primary Academy, Northwick Park Primary and Nursery Academy and Leigh Beck Infant Academy and Nursery in accordance with section 88I(5) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and find that in relation to the provisions relating to the admission of children below compulsory school age, deferred entry to school and the admission of children outside their normal age group, the arrangements do not conform with the requirements of the School Admissions Code.

I also find that the 2024 admission arrangements for these three schools were not published on the schools' websites by the required deadline of 15 March 2023.

I have also found that there are other matters which do not conform with the requirements relating to admission arrangements in the ways set out in this determination.

By virtue of section 88K(2) the adjudicator's decision is binding on the admission authority. The School Admissions Code requires the admission authority to revise its admission arrangements within two months of the date of the determination unless a different date is set by the adjudicator. In this case, the admission authority for the schools is required to make the necessary revisions within one month of the date of this determination. I have set this earlier date in mind of the fact that the deadline for primary school applications is 15 January 2024, and parents are likely to begin considering their applications in December 2023.

## The referral

1. Under section 88H(2) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (the Act), an objection has been referred to the Office of Schools Adjudicator (OSA) by a member of the public (the referrer), about the admission arrangements (the arrangements) for William Read Primary Academy (WRA), for September 2024, the date of the objection was 15 October 2023. The referrer also brought the adjudicator's attention to the admission arrangements for Northwick Park Primary and Nursery Academy (NPA) and Leigh Beck Infant Academy and Nursery (LBA), referred to collectively as the schools.
2. The referral relates to the admission of children below compulsory school age, deferred entry to school and the admission of children outside their normal age group, and to a failure to publish the 2024 admission arrangements on the schools' websites by the required date.
3. When the arrangements for the schools were brought to my attention I considered that a number of additional matters did not, or might not, conform with the requirements for admission arrangements. These additional matters are listed in paragraphs 12 and 30 of this determination.
4. The parties to the case are the schools, Northwick Park Trust (the trust), Essex County Council (the local authority) and the referrer.

## Jurisdiction

5. The terms of the Academy agreement between the trust and the Secretary of State for Education require that the admissions policy and arrangements for the schools are in accordance with admissions law as it applies to maintained schools. These arrangements were determined under section 88C of the Act by the trust, which is the admission authority for the schools on 25 January 2023 on that basis.
6. The referrer submitted an objection to these determined arrangements on 15 October 2023. The School Admissions Code (the Code) requires objections to admission arrangements for 2024 to be made to the adjudicator by 15 May 2023. As this deadline was missed, the case cannot be treated as an objection. However, as the arrangements for the schools have been brought to my attention, I have decided to use the power conferred under section 88I(5) of the Act to consider whether the arrangements conform with the requirements relating to admission arrangements and I am treating the objection as a referral.

## Procedure

7. In considering this matter I have had regard to all relevant legislation and the Code.
8. The documents I have considered in reaching my decision include:

- a) the referrer's form of objection dated 15 October 2023, accompanying documents and subsequent correspondence;
- b) copies of the minutes of the meeting of the trust at which the arrangements for the schools were determined;
- c) copies of the determined arrangements for the schools;
- d) the response from the trust to the matters raised by the referrer and the additional matters raised by me; and
- e) comments from the local authority which confirmed that the authority understands the adjudicator's observations in respect of the admission arrangements.

## The Referral

9. Essentially, the referrer raised two issues. First that the 2024 admission arrangements for WRA were not available on the school's website in October 2023. Second, that the arrangements which were available on WRA's website (which I found to be the 2023 admission arrangements when I checked), did not contain the information set out in paragraphs 2.17 – 2.20 of the Code, and did not explain clearly the criteria and procedures for the admission of children below compulsory school age, deferred entry to school and the admission of children outside their normal age group. The referrer asserted that the school was not operating these provisions in accordance with the Code, and gave an example of a parent who had been given incorrect information.

10. The referrer also brought to my attention the fact that the 2024 admission arrangements for NPA and LBA were not published on the respective schools' websites. The referrer sent in a copy of the 2022 admission arrangements for these other schools which also did not contain the information set out in paragraphs 2.17 – 2.20 of the Code, and did not explain clearly the criteria and procedures for the admission of children below compulsory school age, deferred entry to school and the admission of children outside their normal age group.

11. I have now been sent the 2024 admission arrangements for WRA, NPA and LBA. The 2024 arrangements for NPA and LBA are the same, in all material respects, as the arrangements for WRA, and therefore also lack sufficient detail in the section relating to requests for the admission of children outside of their normal year group and children who are summer born.

## Other Matters

12. The following additional matters also appeared not to comply with the requirements of the Code:

- a). Oversubscription criterion 1 appeared not define the terms “Looked after children and previously looked after children” in accordance with paragraph 1.7 of the Code or with sufficient clarity required in order to comply with paragraph 14 of the Code.
- b). The definition of “siblings” in oversubscription criterion 2 appeared not to be sufficiently clear (paragraph 14 of the Code).
- c). The arrangements appeared to mis-state the requirements of paragraph 1.6 of the Code in respect of children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which names the school.
- d). The arrangements provide that “exceptional medical circumstances” may override the oversubscription criteria.
- e). The arrangements appeared not to set out how the distance from home to school is measured with sufficient clarity nor to explain how the home address is determined for a child whose parents live separately (paragraph 1.13 of the Code).
- f). The arrangements appeared not to state that each added child will require the waiting list to be ranked again in line with the published oversubscription criteria, and that priority is not to be given to children based on the date their application was received, or their name was added to the list (paragraph 2.15 of the Code).
- g). The arrangements appeared not to explain with sufficient clarity how applications, including late applications, are handled (paragraph 14 of the Code).
- h). The closing date for applications and method of applying for places appeared not to be made clear (paragraph 14).
- i). The arrangements appeared not to provide for, or make clear that, parents (including parents of in-year applicants) must be told that they will be given reasons if an application is refused. Neither did they appear to provide that parents must be told that they can appeal a decision to refuse the admission of an in-year applicant (paragraph 2.32 of the Code ).
- j). The provisions for in-year applications appeared not to set out how places are allocated (namely that, if there are children on the waiting list, the applicant’s name will be added in order of the oversubscription criteria), nor to explain whether waiting lists are kept for year groups other than Reception.

## Background

13. WRA is a coeducational primary school for pupils aged three to eleven. The school opened as an academy on 1 September 2022 and does not yet have an Ofsted rating. NPA is a coeducational primary school for children aged three to eleven and is rated as ‘Good’ by Ofsted. NPA opened as an academy in December 2014. LBA is a coeducational infant school for children aged three to seven. It opened as an academy in March 2015. The

schools are part of the Northwick Park Trust, and are located on Canvey Island in the county of Essex.

14. I have been sent essentially the same arrangements in respect of each of the schools for admissions in September 2024, the only material differences being the published admission numbers. Because the arrangements are short, and because most of their provisions are mentioned in this determination, I have set out the text of the arrangements in full rather than summarise. The 2024 admission arrangements for the schools have been revised recently because they are different to the arrangements for previous years which are published on each of the schools' websites. I have not asked whether any of the revisions were consulted upon because I have no jurisdiction under section 88I(5) of the Act to consider the question of consultation. I will point out to the trust, however, that there is no requirement upon the trust to consult on any revisions made to the 2024 arrangements in consequence of my determination because these are permitted under paragraph 3.6 of the Code.

15. The 2024 admission arrangements for the schools are as follows:

“Where applications for admissions exceed the number of places available, the following criteria will be applied, in the order set out below, to determine which children to admit.

1. Looked after children and previously looked after children (as defined on page 12 of the Primary Education in Essex 2021 booklet)
2. Children with a brother or sister attending the school.
3. Proximity of home to school measured by straight line distance, those living closest being given the highest priority.

In the event of oversubscription within any of the above criteria, priority will be determined by the straight line distance from home to school, those living closest being given the highest priority.

### **Siblings**

Are defined as children with a brother or sister, step brother/sister, adopted brother/sister, in the same family unit, living at the same address. Extended family members such as cousins living at the same address are not counted as siblings.

### **Children with EHCP**

Children with an EHCP may override the above over-subscription criteria.

### **Deferred Entry and Part-time Start**

At Northwick Park Primary and Nursery Academy, we strongly promote and actively prepare for all children to start school in the September during the academic year in which they turn four years of age.

As required by law, the school will provide for the full-time admission of all children offered a place in the Reception year group from the September following their fourth

birthday. Therefore, if a parent wants a full-time place for their child from September, then they are entitled to that full-time place.

Parents can request that the date their child is admitted to school is deferred until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which the offer of admission is made.

Parents can also request that their child attends part-time until they reach compulsory school age. Any parents interested in taking up a part-time place initially should contact the school for further details as to what this would entail.

If you plan to defer your child's start date until later in the school year, you must still apply at the usual time. Where entry is deferred, the school will hold the place for that child and not offer it to another child. Where parents choose to defer entry, the school may reasonably expect that the child would start at the beginning of a new school term/half term.

### **Summer-born children**

Where a parent of a summer-born child (1 April – 31 August) wishes their child to start school in the autumn term following their fifth birthday, they will need to apply for a place at the correct time for the normal admission round for the following academic year.

Supporting evidence from relevant professionals working with the child and family stating why the child must be placed outside their normal age-appropriate cohort should be submitted.

The admission authority for the school will then decide whether the application for a Reception place will be accepted or whether it will be treated on an application for a Year 1 place, the child's normal age appropriate cohort. If the application for a Reception place is not accepted, this does not constitute a refusal of the place and there is no right to an Independent statutory appeal.

### **Fair Access Protocol**

Wherever possible, we participate in Essex County Council's Fair Access Protocol. This helps ensure that all children, including those who are unplaced and vulnerable, or having difficulty in securing a school place in-year, get access to a school place as quickly as possible.

### **Mid-year admission (admission outside of entry in September to Reception)**

Mid-year admission (all admissions outside of normal entry into Reception in September) are coordinated by the school. Please contact the school office for an application form or visit our school website. Forms should be returned to the school office.

The school will consider your application and where space is available will send out an offer letter no later than fifteen school days later. Where space is not available, the school will send out a refusal letter no later than fifteen school days later. Copies of offers and refusal letters will be sent to Essex County Council's Admissions Inbox

([admissions@essex.gov.co.uk](mailto:admissions@essex.gov.co.uk)) within two school days in accordance with legal requirements.

### **Nursery**

Attendance at the nursery does not guarantee admission to the school. Parents of children who are attending the nursery **must apply** for a place at the school if they want their child to attend the reception class. The application will then be considered against the published admission criteria for the school. There is no guarantee that a place will be offered.

### **Medical Circumstances**

Exceptional medical circumstances (supported by relevant medical evidence) may override the above oversubscription criteria.

### **Waiting Lists**

Unsuccessful applicants will be placed on a waiting list. The criteria for the waiting list will comply with the published oversubscription criteria set out in this document. Waiting lists will be maintained for the duration of the reception year.

### **How applications are handled**

Applications, including late applications will be handled in accordance with the Local Authority's Scheme of Co-ordinated Admissions, details of which can be found in the 'Essex Primary Education in Essex Admissions' booklet.

### **Appeals**

Parents will appreciate that if a school is over-subscribed, it will not always be possible to offer a place in their first choice of school. Many parents will wish to make alternative and definite arrangements for their child.

The 1996 Education Act does, however, give parents the right to appeal against the decision of the Directors regarding Admissions. Parents wishing to appeal should contact the Essex Team at <http://www.essex.gov.uk/after-your-schools-offer/appeals>

### **Monitoring Arrangements**

This policy will be reviews (sic) and approved by the Trustees every year".

## **Consideration of Case**

### **Section One**

#### **Matters raised in the referral dated 15 October 2023 in respect of the arrangements for William Read Primary Academy**

16. Further to the late objection, I have been informed by the admission authority that the 2024 admission arrangements for the school have now been published on the trust's website. I accessed this website on 7 November 2023 using the general link provided, but

was unable to locate the 2024 admission arrangements for WRA in the section titled General Policies.

17. Before the admission authority sent in the 2024/25 admission arrangements, I had been looking on the school's website and had found only the 2023/24 arrangements. A search for the school's website brings up the following address [Home - William Read Primary Academy](#). Again, on 7 November 2023 I was unable to locate the 2024 admission arrangements on the school's website.

18. Paragraph 1.49 of the Code requires that all admission authorities must determine their admission arrangements, including their published admission number, every year, even if they have not changed from previous years. Arrangements must be determined by 28 February in the determination year (so admission arrangements for September 2024 must have been determined by 28 February 2023). Once admission authorities have determined their admission arrangements, they must notify the appropriate bodies and must publish a copy of the determined arrangements **on the school's website** by 15 March in the determination year and continue displaying the arrangements for the whole offer year (the school year in which offers for places are made).

19. The admission arrangements for September 2024 were required to be published on the school's website by 15 March 2023 at the latest. If a multi-academy trust decides to publish the admission arrangements for its schools on its own website, this is entirely a matter for the trust, but this of itself will not fulfil the legal requirements on publication in paragraph 1.50 of the Code.

20. The referral mainly related to the admission of children outside of their normal age group. The referrer said, in an email of 7 November 2023, that he had been unable to find any mention of the relevant policy or process for this on the school's website in October. A parent who had made a request for delayed entry to Reception was allegedly given information which indicated that the requirements of the School Admissions Code were not being applied correctly by the school. The referrer sent to for my attention the school's admission arrangements for September 2022. These are different to the arrangements for September 2024, which I have now been sent by the trust.

21. I have been told by the trust that the complaint which led to this referral has been resolved, which I am pleased to learn. However, the referrer asserts that the 2024 admission arrangements for WRA which have been sent to me by the admission authority still lack sufficient detail in the section relating to requests for the admission of children outside of their normal year group and children who are summer born. I agree with this assertion.

22. There are a number of ways in which the sections relating to deferred entry, part time start and summer born children do not comply with the requirements of the Code. I have set out the Code requirements in paragraphs 2.17 – 2.20 below for ease of reference. Also, paragraph 14 of the Code provides that the practices and criteria used to allocate school places must be clear. Where admission arrangements mis-state the Code's requirements or



do not provide sufficient detail, they are unclear and misleading. The requirement in paragraph 14 is that parents should be able to look at a set of admission arrangements and understand easily what they need to do in order to make an application correctly and how places will be allocated. It is not necessary to have all of the necessary information in the arrangements themselves, but where an admission authority chooses to set out more detail and guidance in separate documents or web pages, these must be clearly signposted as part of the arrangements either by appending the additional information or making it easily accessible by means such as via a one-click link. Paragraphs 2.17 to 2.20 of the Code are as below.

#### “Admission of children below compulsory school age and deferred entry to school

2.17 Admission authorities **must** provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. The authority **must** make it clear in their arrangements that where they have offered a child a place at a school:

- a) that child is entitled to a full-time place in the September following their fourth birthday;
- b) the child’s parents can defer the date their child is admitted to the school until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which it was made; and
- c) where the parents wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.

#### Admission of children outside their normal age group

2.18 Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. In addition, the parents of a summer born child may choose not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to reception rather than year 1. Admission authorities **must** make clear in their admission arrangements the process for requesting admission out of the normal age group.

2.19 Admission authorities **must** make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of the parent’s views; information about the child’s academic, social, and emotional development; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional; whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group; and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely. They **must** also take into account the views of the head teacher of the school concerned. When informing a parent of their decision on the year group the child should be admitted to, the admission authority **must** set out clearly the reasons for their decision.

2.20 Where an admission authority agrees to a parent's request for their child to be admitted out of their normal age group and, as a consequence of that decision, the child will be admitted to a relevant age group (i.e. the age group to which pupils are normally admitted to the school) the local authority and admission authority **must** process the application as part of the main admissions round, unless the parental request is made too late for this to be possible, and on the basis of their determined admission arrangements only, including the application of oversubscription criteria where applicable. They **must not** give the application lower priority on the basis that the child is being admitted out of their normal age group. Parents have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied. This right does not apply if they are offered a place at the school, but it is not in their preferred age group."

### **Ways in which WRA's 2024 admission arrangements do not comply with the requirements of the Code:**

23. The arrangements say that parents may request that their child defer admission or attend part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age. Whilst I appreciate that the arrangements describe the school's procedure for dealing with these matters, the reference to a 'request' in this context gives the appearance that the school may refuse to allow such a request or has discretion. In fact, as paragraph 2.17 states, deferral and part-time attendance are entitlements pending a child reaching compulsory school age. A school cannot refuse such a request. The arrangements are required to explain this clearly, and the wording of paragraph 2.17 must be reflected accurately.

24. Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group in any year group. The provision does not simply apply to summer born children. It is clear that the Code expects admission arrangements to explain the process for requesting admission out of the normal age group in terms of what the parent needs to do in order to make an application; how and when the application must be made; how it will be dealt with; and who makes the relevant decision. Paragraphs 2.18 – 2.20 of the Code set out the factors which must be taken into consideration. A parent would need to know what these factors are in order to fully understand the process and criteria for determining an application. However, because the information is detailed, it may be clearer not to insert all of the necessary information in the arrangements themselves.

25. The referrer suggests a link in the arrangements to the relevant DfE Guidance, ([Making a request for admission out of the normal age group - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-a-request-for-admission-out-of-the-normal-age-group)), which is a reasonable option for the admission authority should they not wish to provide the necessary level of detail in the arrangements themselves. An alternative option would be a link to paragraphs 2.18 – 2.20 of the Code ([School admissions code 2021 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/guidance/school-admissions-code-2021)). The arrangements should also make clear that, when informing a parent of their decision on the year group the child should be admitted to, the admission authority will set out clearly the reasons for its decision as this is part of the process.

## Section Two

### **Northwick Park Primary and Nursery Academy and Leigh Beck Infant Academy and Nursery**

26. The referrer implied in the late objection that the admission arrangements for NPA and LBA also failed to comply with the relevant provisions of the Code. He sent in the 2022 arrangements, which presumably were the arrangements published on the schools' websites. The 2022 arrangements for the two schools very obviously did not contain provisions which complied with the Code requirements on delayed entry, summer born and admission outside of the normal year group.

27. However, I have now been sent the 2024 admission arrangements for both of these schools. I have also found these arrangements on the trust's website. They are the same, in all material respects, to the 2024 arrangements for WRA. Therefore, the 2024 arrangements for these schools will need to be revised as described in section 1.

28. I looked on the website for NPA, and could only find the 2022 admission arrangements, therefore the requirement to publish the 2024 arrangements on the school's website by 15 March 2023 appears not to have been complied with. The arrangements are accessible on the trust's website; however this alone does not fulfil the publication requirements set out in paragraph 1.49 of the Code.

29. I looked on the website for LBA. Again, only the 2022 admission arrangements have been published on the school's website. I was unable to find the 2024 admission arrangements. They are published on the trust's website; however this alone does not fulfil the publication requirements in paragraph 1.49 of the Code.

## Section Three

### **Additional matters common to the 2024 admission arrangements for all three schools which do not appear to comply with the requirements of the Code.**

30. As a matter of record, I have set out below the additional matters which concerned me, and to which I have drawn to the trust's attention. The trust has indicated that it welcomes the points raised and agrees to revise the admission arrangements to comply with the legal requirements imposed under education legislation and the Code. I am grateful to the trust for its cooperation in this matter. I had indicated in the Jurisdiction and Information Paper that I hoped the trust would view my observations in a constructive manner, and I hope they will prove helpful.

a). Oversubscription criterion 1 refers to: "Looked after children and previously looked after children (as defined on page 12 of the Primary Education in Essex 2021 booklet)." There was no link to the web page where the booklet is located, and no adequate description of where it could be found.

As mentioned above, paragraph 14 of the Code provides that, “In drawing up their admission arrangements, admission authorities **must** ensure that the practices and the criteria used to decide the allocation of school places are ... clear.”

The definitions of ‘looked after and previously looked after children’ in the arrangements **must** comply with the definitions of these terms in the Code. The meaning of this terminology was not made sufficiently clear, and ideally should be set out in the arrangements themselves.

b). Oversubscription criterion 2 is ‘Children with a brother or sister attending the school’. ‘Siblings’ are then defined as “children with a brother or sister, stepbrother/sister, adopted brother/sister, in the same family unit, living at the same address. Extended family members such as cousins living at the same address are not counted as siblings”. It was not clear when the relevant sibling must be in attendance. I asked whether this was at the time of application or at the date the second child will be admitted. Also, the definition does not include foster siblings (which is unusual) or siblings of former pupils (which is less usual). I asked whether both omissions are intentional.

c). The arrangements stated “Children with an EHCP may override the above oversubscription criteria”. Paragraph 1.6 of the Code says that arrangements **must** make clear that, if the school is not oversubscribed, all applicants **must** be offered a place and that all children whose Education, Health and Care Plan names the school **must** be admitted. The use of the word ‘may’ is misleading as it implies that there may be circumstances in which a child with an EHCP naming the school may not be admitted. I suggested to the trust that the arrangements need to use the wording in paragraph 1.6 of the Code.

d). The arrangements stated: “Exceptional medical circumstances (supported by relevant medical evidence) may override the above oversubscription criteria”. There was no definition of what constitutes ‘exceptional medical circumstances’, how this is determined, or by whom. The lack of clarity about which children will be given priority under this provision constitutes a breach of paragraph 14 of the Code.

Paragraph 1.16 of the Code states that, if admission authorities decide to use social and medical need as an oversubscription criterion, they **must** set out in their arrangements how they will define this need and give clear details about what supporting evidence will be required (e.g. a letter from a doctor or social worker), and then make consistent decisions based on the evidence provided.

Paragraph 1.7 of the Code provides that highest priority **must** be given to all looked after children. However well-intentioned it is to give priority to children with exceptional medical needs, the Code does not allow children with such needs to have higher priority than looked after and previously looked after children. If this priority is given, it needs to be part of the oversubscription criteria and clearly explained as required by the Code.

e). Paragraph 1.13 of the Code says that “admission authorities **must** clearly set out how distance from home to the school and/or any nodal points used in the arrangements will be

measured. This must include making clear how the 'home' address will be determined and the point(s) in the school or nodal points from which all distances will be measured. This should include provision for cases where parents have shared responsibility for a child following the breakdown of their relationship and the child lives for part of the week with each parent..."

The arrangements did not contain any mechanism for determining the home address of a child whose parents live separately; there was insufficient detail about the methodology for measuring the distance from home to school (most admission authorities name the system used by the local authority); and no mechanism for a tie breaker, for example where more than one applicant lives in a flat at the same postal address as another.

g) The arrangements said that unsuccessful applicants will be placed on a waiting list, and that the criteria for the waiting list will comply with the published oversubscription criteria set out in this document. Also, that waiting lists will be maintained for the duration of the reception year. The arrangements mostly comply with the Code in this regard, apart from one point. Paragraph 2.15 of the Code provides that admission arrangements **must** state that each added child will require the list to be ranked again in line with the published oversubscription criteria, and that priority is not to be given to children based on the date their application was received, or their name was added to the list. The arrangements did not contain the required statement about re-ranking of the waiting list.

h). The arrangements state that "applications, including late applications, will be handled in accordance with the Local Authority's Scheme of Co-ordinated Admissions, details of which can be found in the 'Essex Primary Education in Essex Admissions' booklet." There was no link to the relevant web page where the booklet can be found, and it was not appended to the admission arrangements. For the reasons I have described above this aspect of the arrangements is not sufficiently clear to comply with paragraph 14 of the Code. A parent could not easily understand what this statement means or where to look for the relevant information from reading the arrangements.

i). The closing date for applications and method of applying for places were not made clear (paragraph 14).

j). Parents were not told that they will be given reasons if an application is refused. Parents of in-year applicants are also not told this. Neither are the parents of in-year applicants told that they can appeal a decision to refuse admission (paragraph 2.32 of the Code ).

k). The provisions for in-year applications also did not set out how places are allocated (namely that, if there are children on the waiting list, the applicant's name will be added in order of the oversubscription criteria), or whether waiting lists are kept for year groups other than Reception.

## Determination

31. I have considered the admission arrangements for September 2024 for William Read Primary Academy, Northwick Park Primary and Nursery Academy and Leigh Beck Infant Academy and Nursery in accordance with section 88I(5) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and find that in relation to the provisions relating to the admission of children below compulsory school age, deferred entry to school and the admission of children outside their normal age group, the arrangements do not conform with the requirements of the School Admissions Code.

32. I also find that the 2024 admission arrangements for these three schools were not published on the schools' websites by the required deadline of 15 March 2023.

33. I have also found that there are other matters which do not conform with the requirements relating to admission arrangements in the ways set out in this determination.

34. By virtue of section 88K(2) the adjudicator's decision is binding on the admission authority. The School Admissions Code requires the admission authority to revise its admission arrangements within two months of the date of the determination unless a different date is set by the adjudicator. In this case, the admission authority for the schools is required to make the necessary revisions within one month of the date of this determination. I have set this earlier date in mind of the fact that the deadline for primary school applications is 15 January 2024, and parents are likely to begin considering their applications in December 2023.

Dated: 1 December 2023

Signed:

Schools Adjudicator: Marisa Vallely