

Fair School Admissions Pledge

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the time commitment involved in the Fair School Admissions Pledge?

The Pledge takes around 2 months to complete. There are two parts to the Pledge. The first is a diagnostic review of your admissions processes. It will take you a couple of hours to collect all the data required and a further few hours to analyse and reflect on that data. This activity is supported by an optional one hour webinar and our Fair Access Review Guide. The second part will involve writing an action plan which is also supported by a one hour webinar, an action plan proforma and exemplars. Webinars are always on a Tuesday between 4pm and 5pm.

Previous school leaders who worked through the Pledge described the workload as manageable and highlighted the usefulness of the resources as well as the value in deadlines keeping them on track to finish the work.

Is there a cost?

There is no cost to joining the Fair School Admissions Pledge.

What kind of changes are you looking for us to make?

We take a bespoke rather than prescriptive approach to admissions, helping you to review your own unique context and look for evidence informed actions that work for your community. However, there are some actions that tend to be fairly universal, such as reducing the cost of uniform or more widely advertising the potential support for low income families in your school. Many of our schools have chosen to look at the accessibility of the language in their admissions processes, writing simplified documents to support all families. Schools with a desire to make bolder changes have looked directly at the nature of their policy with several introducing a Pupil Premium priority above distance or catchment in their over-subscription criteria.

What is the difference between the Fair School Admissions Pledge (FSAP) and the Fair School Admissions Award (FSAA)?

The FSAP is the programme of support, resources and expertise that we provide schools in order to make their admissions processes fairer for children from all socio-economic backgrounds.

The FSAA is the recognition of that work. We award schools either a Bronze, Silver or Gold award. This includes assets that you can use on your website and any documentation. Awards last for one academic year and schools can renew their award annually.

What are the criteria for Bronze, Silver and Gold award levels?

When deciding which award to give we use a favourable, best fit model bearing in mind the unique context and circumstances of the organisation. We recognise that school admissions are very complex and that we can't have hard and fast requirements for each level. Schools do not need to have met all criteria in a level to meet that level.

Bronze

Schools in this category are likely to have:

- Completed a Fair Access Review
- Reduced the cost of their uniform
- Have parent friendly, accessible admissions policies
- Have parent friendly, accessible Pupil Premium strategies or have a website page (or similar) that explains the support they will provide low-income families.

Silver

Schools in this category are likely to also have:

- Implemented a specific policy change that will increase the socio-economic diversity of their school such as Pupil Premium Priority, random balloting or banding.
- Removed policies that were contributing to socio-economic segregation

Gold

Schools in this category are likely to also have:

- Worked as part of a MAT or LA to make wide-sweeping policy change
 - Used their voice to advocate for Fair Admissions outside of their immediate domain
 - Utilised a combination of policy changes and approaches to maximise socio-economic diversity.
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I think my school already has fair admissions processes, can we skip the Pledge and apply directly for the Award?

Yes, schools can do this using the application form. You will need to explain the proactive steps you already take to ensure fair access to your school for children of all socio-economic backgrounds as well as reflect on the positive impact this has on your school. You will also need to attach supporting evidence such as your admissions policy. If you are part of the Pledge you do not need to complete the application form, your action plan will be your evidence.