

A summary of responses to Cheshire East Council's

# School Admission Arrangements Consultation 2024

## Contents of report

---

Contents of report .....	1
Introduction .....	2
Section 1: Summary of results .....	3
Appendix 1: Demographic breakdowns .....	6

FINAL

Open

Fair

Green

# Introduction

---

## Purpose of the consultation

During October - December 2024 Cheshire East Council conducted a consultation to seek views on its co-ordinated scheme and proposed admission arrangements for 2026-27 for all community and voluntary controlled schools in the local authority's area.

The main changes were as follows:

- Separation of the Co-ordinated Scheme and Admissions Arrangements into different documents
- Improvements to the accessibility of the documents to use plain English where possible
- More detail about how Cheshire East would deal with deciding which address to use for admissions purposes where separated parents share responsibility for a child
- More detail about how Cheshire East would deal with a request for admission outside their normal year group
- Changes to Published Admission Numbers (PAN) for a small number of schools

## Consultation methodology and number of responses

The consultation was hosted online and promoted to:

- Residents of Cheshire East
- Schools within Cheshire East
- Members
- Town and Parish Councils

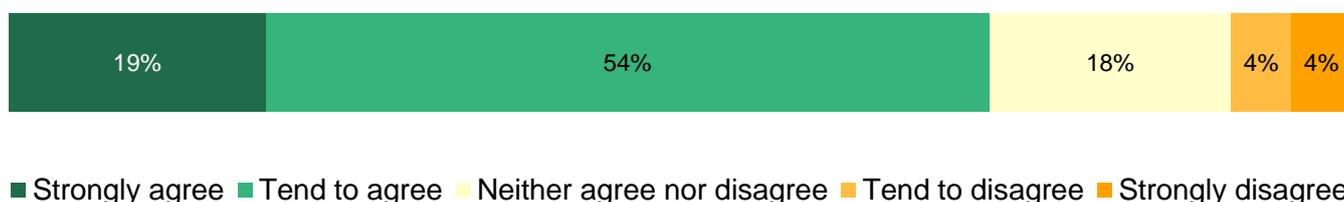
In total, 89 responses were received during the consultation. A breakdown of survey demographics can be viewed in Appendix 1.

# Section 1: Summary of results

The co-ordinated scheme and admissions arrangements set out how applications will be dealt with. Admission authorities must ensure that the practices and the criteria used to decide the allocation of school places are fair, clear, and objective. Parents should be able to look at a set of arrangements and understand easily how places for that school will be allocated.

The majority of respondents (73%) agreed that after looking at the co-ordinated scheme and admission arrangements they understand how places for schools will be allocated, see Figure 1. The associated comments can be viewed in Table 1.

**Figure 1: How strongly do you agree or disagree that after looking at the co-ordinated scheme and admission arrangements you understand how places for schools will be allocated?**



Base for % = 89

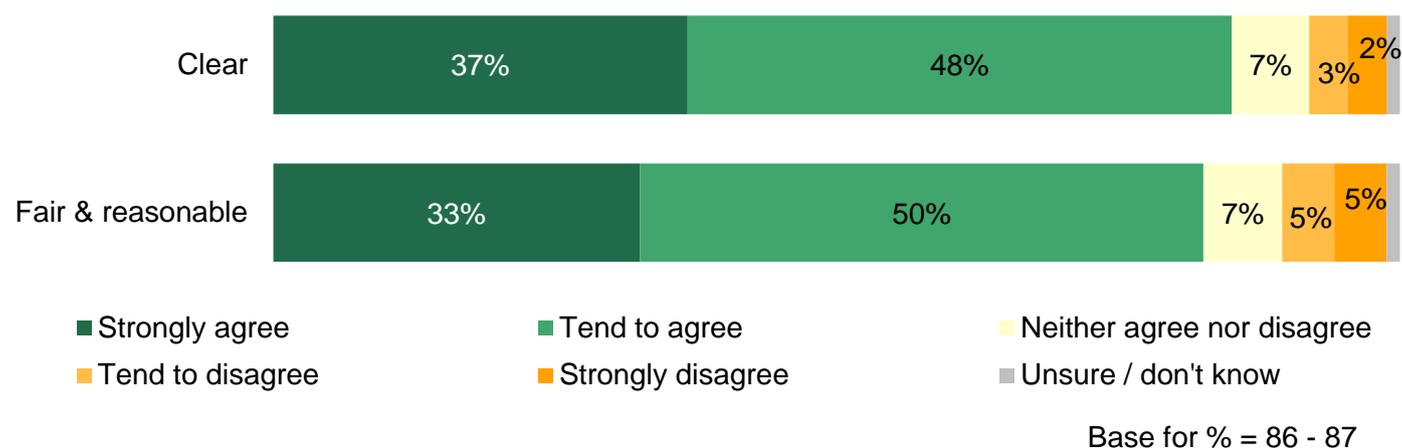
**Table 1: Comments received in relation to the co-ordinated scheme and admission arrangements documentation (comments have been summarised to highlight key points)**

Could be difficult to get the child's parents to agree to the terms with each other.
Documentation is lengthy, confusing and not in plain English. Consider a flow chart so that people can move through the sections that are applicable to them.
Should consider parents and children's wishes. More flexibility for children with special needs.
Should go to closest school to cut down on travel miles and traffic.

The revised admission arrangements provided more detail about how Cheshire East would decide which address to use for admissions purposes where separated parents share responsibility for a child.

The majority of respondents agreed that the process to determine the address used for school admissions where separated parents share responsibility for a child was clear (85% agreed) and fair & reasonable (83% agreed), see Figure 2. The associated comments can be viewed in Table 2.

**Figure 2: How strongly do you agree or disagree that the process to determine the address used for school admissions where separated parents share responsibility for a child is clear / fair & reasonable?**



**Table 2: Comments received in relation to the process to determine the address used for school admissions where separated parents share responsibility for a child (comments have been summarised to highlight key points)**

Leading with 'parents should agree' suggests they can choose to suit themselves – should be a fact that in shared responsibility families, the home the child stays most in, is the address that should be put on the form.

Let the parents decide.

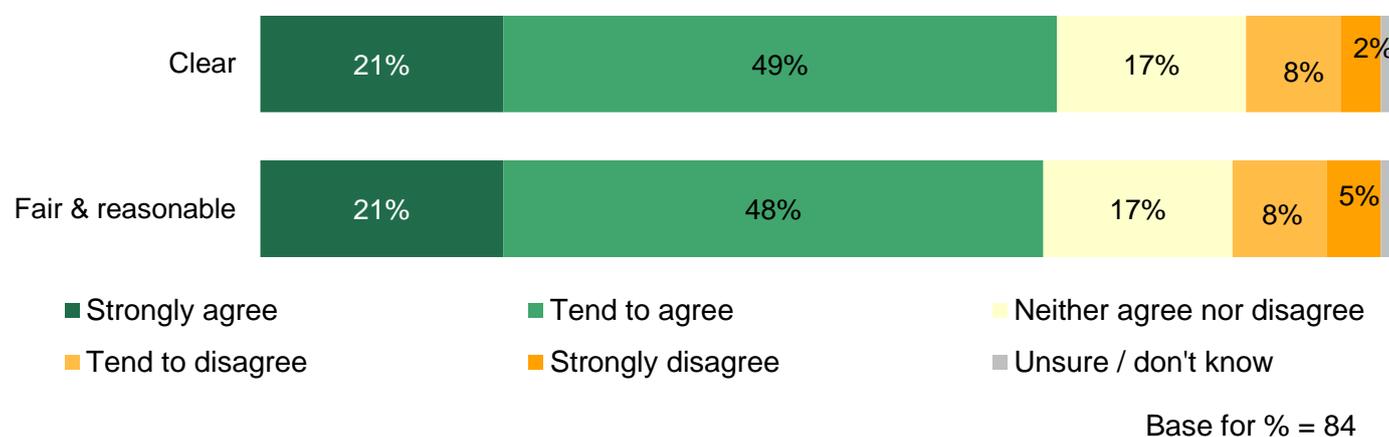
Child's journey was impossible, poor tribunal experience [SEND].

Very important - a decision must be made about the future welfare of the child.

The revised admission arrangements provide more detail about how Cheshire East would deal with a request for admission outside their normal year group.

The majority of respondents agreed that the process for admission of children of out of their normal age group is clear (70% agreed) and fair & reasonable (69% agreed), see Figure 3. The associated comments can be viewed in Table 3.

**Figure 3: How strongly do you agree or disagree that the process for admission of children out of their normal age group is clear / fair & reasonable?**



**Table 3: Comments received in relation to the process for admission of children out of their normal age group (comments have been summarised to highlight key points)**

Agree with the statement and arrangement for this to happen. Consider those who have trouble understanding English.

As long as the decision is a reasonable request and benefits the child.

Consider the emotional and social development of the child, some children need to be carefully assessed to check that they would be able to cope / it would be beneficial to move up an academic year.

Should someone in the Local Authority be making this decision – teachers may be better placed.

The information moves back and forth between points which obscures the meaning. It simply needed to say, 'if you feel your child is not ready to start school at the normal age, you can request that they start later, but we cannot guarantee to meet your request'.

At the end of the questionnaire respondents were asked if they had any other comments to make on the Cheshire East Co-ordinated Scheme and Admissions Arrangements. The comments received can be viewed in Table 4.

**Table 4: Any further comments (comments have been summarised to highlight key points)**

Concerned that they will not be enough places for the influx of new children in Macclesfield and Congleton with all the new house builds.

Consideration should be given for a child born in September to be put a year above their normal age group.

Cut education budget.

Find whole process stressful.

Good that there is consultation on this subject.

If academies do their own admissions how does the choices work?

It is very wordy - it would be helpful to have a flowchart or diagram to aid understanding of the process.

It should be compulsory to go to the school closest to your home.

It wasn't an easy read, could it be revised?

It will be a difficult to decide on placing children in their first-choice option unless a considerable amount of money is spent on creating more spaces. Rather than keep building houses, new schools should be built.

More allowance should be made for proximity to preferred school vs primary school feeder.

More details required on catchment areas.

Priority for the said area, make sure the process is easy to implement.

Reduce catchment areas which in turn would reduce cars around the school.

Whilst the need for a policy is undeniable, this level of documentation begins to rival UCAS processes. The policies need to be clear, succinct and easy to assimilate so far as the major target audience is concerned. Would like to see a clear statement regarding the minimum criteria for entry into the 6th form.

Would be happy to come in to the council to help with simplifying the documentation. You need some focus groups to help clarify documents BEFORE you send them to a wider consultation group.

Would like to increase the Bollington Cross CE PAN from 25 to 28

You seem to be very professional about this subject.

# Appendix 1: Demographic breakdowns

A number of demographic questions were asked at the end of the survey to ensure there was a wide range of views from across different characteristics. All the questions were optional and therefore will not add up to the total number of responses received.

**Table 5: Number of survey respondents by representation. Respondents could select all that apply.**

Category	Count	Percent
A local resident	48	54%
Parent / guardian of a child aged under 18	34	38%
On behalf of a school / sixth form / as a teacher	< 5	4%
An elected town or parish councillor in Cheshire East	< 5	3%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 6: Number of survey respondents by gender**

Category	Count	Percent
Female	49	59%
Male	31	37%
Prefer not to say	< 5	4%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 7: Number of survey respondents by age group**

Category	Count	Percent
16-24	-	-
25-34	< 5	5%
35-44	9	11%
45-54	23	27%
55-64	13	15%
65-74	14	17%
75-84	13	15%
85 and over	< 5	1%
Prefer not to say	7	8%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 8: Number of survey respondents by limited activity due to health problem / disability**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes, a lot	5	6%
Yes, a little	14	17%
Not at all	58	69%
Prefer not to say	7	8%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>100%</b>