

Fair Banding

The idea behind fair banding is to generate a 'balanced' intake. Children are tested and placed into a number of ability bands (between 5 and 9) and are admitted into the relevant band at the school.

Banding can be introduced through the annual consultation process – there is no need for statutory proposals. The code describes it as 'good practice, provided the arrangements are fair, objective and not used as a means of unlawfully admitting a disproportionate number of high ability children.'

It can operate in one, two or more schools or across a LA area. Admission authorities can now adopt banding which produces an intake that is representative of

- a) the full range of ability of applicants to the school(s) or;
- b) the range of ability for children in the local area; or
- c) the national ability range.

Like other criteria, banding is only applied if a school is oversubscribed. Banding is normally overlaid with other oversubscription criteria such as catchment/sibling/denomination so that each 'band' is managed as a discrete intake.

If places become available in some bands they should be allocated to applicants placed in the next nearest bands. (i.e. one from the band above, the next from the band below etc)

Pre-existing banding which favours high ability children disproportionately (which was in place in 1997/8) can continue but an annual notice has to be published advising parents of the rights to object to the adjudicator.

Banding can be combined with selection of up to 10% by aptitude.

Where a number of schools in an area use banding they should use a common test. Many use the QCA Y5 optional tests administered in primary schools.

The LA has no plans to introduce fair banding.

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