**Phase Transfer Appendix – Key Changes to the 2023/24 process and methodology**

* In 2023/24 the methodology for identifying schools for the purposes of consultation will change from catchment schools to the closest mainstream school to the child’s primary home address. This will apply to both children with an existing EHCP and those undergoing an EHC needs assessment.
* In addition to the closest mainstream school, the Local Authority will also consult the school of parental preference and, where applicable, special schools.
* This should result in fewer numbers of consultations for some schools, particularly schools where “dual catchment” has historically applied.
* Parallel planning will take place for pupils undergoing an EHC needs assessment with the School’s Admissions team prior to an EHCP being finalised. Schools should be aware that children will be allocated an onward school by the Admissions Team where the child’s EHCP is finalised following National Offer day.
* The EHCP Team Managers will work closely with the Inclusion and SEND Teams who oversee Element 3 funding for mainstream schools to support early analysis and planning for the possible support, resources and funding that may be required for onward settings.
* The EHCP Team Managers will also review overall numbers to identify schools that the data indicates will have larger numbers of consultations and possible intake of EHCP pupils compared to other local schools.
* As part of this, the LA will also review the possible intake numbers as a % of the school’s overall PAN recognising that only looking at total numbers will not provide a whole picture.
* Where schools may have higher numbers of consultations, the LA will have early dialogue to reduce the administrative impact of written responses – for example, by meeting with schools to discuss pupils and record outcomes, rather than via exchange purely in writing.
* The LA will seek to work in collaboration with groups of schools in a local area to facilitate a shared approach to intake of pupils where this is beneficial and does not compromise duties relating to parental preference or impacts on home to school transport.
* Where children are allocated places in special schools, the Local Authority will advise mainstream schools under consultation as early as possible so that those consultations can be “stood down”. Please note, the Local Authority can only advise mainstream schools of this once the parent has confirmed their acceptance of the place.
* Where a special school has been offered but turned down by a parent in favour of mainstream education, the Local Authority must meet the requirements to secure this in line with relevant acts of legislation.