Fair Admissions Campaign map: in-depth briefing

Tuesday 3rd December 2013

Key findings in more detail

For further information, please see the 'Overall averages' tab of the map:
http://fairadmissions.org.uk/map/

Religious selection:

- The map represents the first time any data has ever been published on the degree of religious selection by different types of faith school. 19% of secondary schools are faith-based. 16% religiously select to some degree, with 72% of all places at faith secondaries – equivalent to 13% of places at all secondaries – being subject to religious admissions criteria. We estimate that 17% of places at primaries are similarly religiously selected, or 1.2 million primary and secondary places across England.
- This means that 16% of children at state schools are subject to religious selection criteria. This compares with 5% of secondary-age children in grammar schools, 5% in single-sex schools and 7% in independent schools.
- 99.8% of places at Catholic secondaries are subject to religious selection in admissions criteria. For Church of England schools the figure is 49.7% but for those CofE schools fully in control of their own admissions policies with no legal or regulatory limitations it is 68%.
- Anglican dioceses vary widely in how religiously selective their secondaries are. The most selective is Liverpool (84%) and the least is Leicester (3%). The Diocese of London, despite its recent commitments to inclusivity, has 68% of places subject to religious selection – well above average and therefore still with some way to go.

Socio-economic selection:

- Comprehensive secondary schools with no religious character admit 5% more pupils eligible for free school meals than live in their local areas. Comprehensive Church of England secondaries admit 15% fewer; Roman Catholic secondaries 28% fewer; Jewish secondaries 63% fewer; and Muslim secondaries 29% fewer.
- A clear correlation is found between the degree of religious selection and how socio-economically exclusive schools are. Comprehensive schools with no religious character typically admit 5% more pupils eligible for free school meals than would be expected given their areas. Religious comprehensives that do not select by religion typically admit 1% fewer, but those whose admissions criteria allow religious selection for all places typically admit 30% fewer.
- The correlation between religious and socio-economic selection holds even if we focus on comprehensive CofE schools alone: those that don't select admit 1% fewer than would be expected, while those that fully select admit 35% fewer.
- The most segregated local authority as a result of religious selection is Hammersmith and Fulham. While 15% of pupils nationally are eligible for free school meals, the segregation

between the religiously selective schools and other schools is almost double that (27 percentage points).

- Only 16% of schools select by religion but they are vastly overrepresented in the 100 worst offenders on free school meal eligibility and English as an additional language. They make up 46 of the worst 100 schools on FSM eligibility and 50 of the worst 100 on EAL. (If grammar schools, University Technical Colleges and Studio schools are excluded, religiously selective schools account for 73 of the worst 100 on FSM eligibility and 59 of the worst 100 on EAL.)

Methodology

More details on the methodology and details of the sources used can be found on the 'FAQs' tab of the map: http://fairadmissions.org.uk/map/

School profile data comes from Edubase and the annual school census (most recently January 2013). Information on admissions criteria comes from the 2013-14 admissions directories produced by local authorities. We will update this to 2014-15 in due course.

Local area free school meals data comes from the most recently published data (2010) available on Neighbourhood Statistics, whereas local area English as an additional language data comes from the 2011 Census available on nomis. Adjustments have been made to account for the differences in age of the various datasets and, in the case of EAL, the fact that pupils are more likely to be recorded as speaking EAL by their school than on the Census.

For each school, a local profile is constructed taking into account the age of the pupils at the school and the difference in free school meal eligibility between primary and secondary schools. We do this by first of all taking appropriately aged pupils from the Middle Super Output Area in which the school is situated (an MSOA consists of 5,000-15,000 people). If there are fewer pupils in the MSOA than are at the school, we then gradually grow the local profile by adding to this pupils from other MSOAs in combinations of the same ward, first half of postcode (known as an outcode) and lower local authority (i.e. London borough, unitary authority, metropolitan or non-metropolitan district, as they were prior to the 2009 reforms) until our local profile has at least as many pupils as are at the school.

In our previous work we have simply looked at the pupils living in the MSOA and not factored in the wider area, and didn't weight by school size in averages. We think that our new approach is more accurate, but it does not significantly affect findings we have published up to now.

In the 'scores' for FSM and EAL, schools are recorded as falling in the lowest or highest 1%, 2%, 3%, 4%, 5%, 10%, 20%, 30%, 40% 50%. In each case this means that the school's place in the rankings lies between the figure given and the next lower figure: i.e., 'Best 30%' indicates a school ranked between 20% and 30% from the most inclusive of the list by proportion of FSM or EAL pupils compared to the local area, while 'Worst 3%' means a school ranked between 2% and 3% from the least inclusive end of the list by proportion of FSM or EAL pupils compared to the local area.

Further questions and responses to criticism

Answers to further questions and responses to possible criticism of our methods can be found on the 'FAQs' tab of the map: http://fairadmissions.org.uk/map/

http://www.fairadmissions.org.uk/