

**Subject:** COVID-19 Variation Guidance

**From:** Bob Garrard, Schools Admissions Adviser

**Date:** 12/01/2021

**For:** To all Headteachers and Chairs of Governors

**Reference:** ADM 1/20-21

**‘COVID-19 variations:  
Effects and implications for admission arrangements for 2022  
A note by DfE’**

You may have received this document from the DfE. It is also enclosed with this briefing paper. The key sections are notes 4 & 5. They may have led to some confusion, so the diocesan advice would be as follows:

The general diocesan advice to all schools that applied for the variation is to retain it for the 2022/23 admissions arrangements, as these are likely to be impacted by current restrictions. Once the variation has been granted, it becomes part of the determined policy of the school. It remains so until such a time as the governors may wish to change/remove it. Please note that to do so would require consultation. Schools may wish to retain the variation in the longer term, as it would cover any further restrictions to the availability of public worship in subsequent years.

The 3 possible scenarios are outlined below:

1. If you had determined your policy for 2022/23 prior to receiving the variation but have not yet published it or sent it to the LA, I see no reason why governors cannot re-determine their policy to include the variation so long as this is done before 28<sup>th</sup> February.
2. If you happen to be consulting this year but did not apply for the variation or received it after you began the consultation process, you would be able to include it in your finally determined policy if you so wished.
3. If you had determined your policy for 2022/23 prior to receiving the variation, and published it as well as sending it to the LA, then you would need to apply for a variation if you required one. I will check with LAs to see if this could be avoided, as they will not have yet published their composite admissions arrangements.

For the sake of clarity, I would remind you that you only need to consult once every seven years or if you are proposing a significant change to your policy (unless it is a change required by law, in which case consultation is not required).

If you have any concerns about any of the above, please contact me either by email to [rgarrard@stalbans.anglican.org](mailto:rgarrard@stalbans.anglican.org) or by phone on 07895 176572.

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