

# **BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **REPORT TO CABINET**

**3 OCTOBER 2017**

### **REPORT BY THE INTERIM DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND FAMILY SUPPORT**

#### **SCHOOL ADMISSION POLICY AND ARRANGEMENTS 2019 - 2020**

##### **1. Purpose of report**

- 1.1 To seek Cabinet approval to consult on the local authority's school admission arrangements as required by Welsh Government's School Admissions Code July 2013.

##### **2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/other corporate priorities**

- 2.1 The admission of pupils is a statutory responsibility which supports the raising of educational standards and the wellbeing of children, young people and their local communities. In particular, it contributes to the following corporate priority:

- Supporting a successful economy

##### **3. Background**

- 3.1 Welsh Government's School Admissions Code 2013 (the Code) requires admission authorities to act in accordance with the Code. The Code includes practical guidance and imposes requirements on local authorities and admission authorities, regarding the discharge of duties in respect of school admissions.
- 3.2 The local authority has a statutory duty to consult with the governing bodies of schools who have delegated admission powers, all neighbouring local authorities, the admission authorities for all other maintained schools in the county borough and the governing bodies of all other schools (ie community and voluntary controlled schools which do not have delegated admission powers) in Bridgend County Borough.
- 3.3 The local authority is required to publish both an admission policy and guidance on the admission arrangements for its schools. This information is contained within the Council's information guide "A Guide to Bridgend Council's Policy and Admission Arrangements for Schools".

##### **4. Current situation/proposal**

- 4.1 Welsh Government issued a revised School Admissions Code in July 2013. The Council must act in accordance with the code, as determined by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.
- 4.2 Admission arrangements for the 2019-2020 academic year must be consulted on for each maintained school between 1 September 2017 and 1 March 2018, and set by 15 April 2018.

- 4.3 Admission forums are responsible for monitoring compliance with the Schools Admission Code under the Education (Admission Forums) (Wales) Regulations 2003.
- 4.4 The Bridgend Admission Forum met on 7 September 2017 to review and amend the draft School Admissions Policy and arrangements for 2019-2020 (see Appendix 1).
- 4.5 The forum has agreed that the proposed consultation period for the 2019-2020 admission policy be 9 October 2017 to 31 December 2017. This is to allow sufficient time for Bridgend's Admission Forum to finalise any proposed amendments to the draft policy following receipt of any consultation responses and to provide advice on the proposed admission policy for Cabinet's consideration prior to approval.

#### **Significant changes to the 2019-2020 policy**

##### **4.6 Maes yr Haul and Trelales Primary Schools - proposed removal of transitional arrangements**

- 4.7 In September 2013, as part of the Cabinet decision to change the catchment areas for both Maes yr Haul and Trelales Primary Schools, it was agreed that a transition arrangement be put in place for those families with older siblings already attending Maes yr Haul Primary School. For families living in the affected area and with older children at the school, the transitional arrangement afforded equal status to those parents living outside the revised catchment area as those within it. In practical terms, this meant that should the school be oversubscribed, parents living in the affected area (due to the amended catchment boundary) would not be disadvantaged and their application for a place at Maes yr Haul Primary School will be treated as if they are resident within the catchment area. It was agreed that this transitional arrangement would be initially for a period of five years and would be reviewed annually thereafter.
- 4.8 There was no specific mechanism agreed for this review process other than the monitoring of admissions by the Education and Family Support Directorate and based on the advice received from the Bridgend Admission Forum.
- 4.9 There have been no applications which have relied on the sibling based transitional arrangement, as both schools have remained able to accommodate all children requesting a place for admission.

##### **4.10 Pencoed Primary School - proposed removal of transitional arrangements**

- 4.11 Following the decision to close Heol y Cyw Primary School and amalgamate the school with Pencoed Primary School, it was agreed that the Heol y Cyw site should remain open. Therefore, if parents elected for their child to attend Pencoed Primary School they would have the choice, subject to there being capacity, for their child to be educated at either site.
- 4.12 As it is currently proposed to open the new Pencoed Primary School to replace both the current Pencoed Primary/Heol y Cyw sites in 2018, it is proposed that references to admission to the Heol y Cyw site be removed from the admission policy for 2019-2020 due to new school opening in 2018.

##### **4.13 Linc Cymru development (Trem-Y-Castell)**

- 4.14 Cabinet agreed in November 2012 that the new Linc Cymru development in the north-east of Brackla would be permanently assigned to the catchment area of Coychurch Primary School, with effect from September 2014. This was proposed as, with the prospect of 100 additional houses in the estate, there was no possibility of adding any additional accommodation on the former Coety Primary School site and a short-term solution was required to provide extra accommodation on the Coychurch Primary School site instead. Therefore, Cabinet agreed the provision of a double demountable classroom at Coychurch Primary School and agreed the amendment to the catchment boundary to include the Linc Cymru development within the catchment of Coychurch Primary School.
- 4.15 It was further agreed that the situation would be reviewed after a period of five years. As admission policies are set two years prior to the academic year to which they apply, it is necessary to review this arrangement now, for the 2019-2020 policy.
- 4.16 There was no specific mechanism agreed for this review process. Therefore, the Education and Family Support Directorate has monitored admissions from the Linc Cymru development.
- 4.17 As a result of monitoring admissions to Coety Primary School, it is clear that any proposed reversion of the Linc Cymru estate back to the catchment of Coety Primary School would place additional pressure on the available number of places at the school. As a two-form entry school, Coety has 60 available places for each year group of statutory school age. At the time of offering places for nursery education for the 2017-2018 academic year (ie 22 May 2017), 65 in-catchment applications for full-time nursery places had been received by the local authority, identifying the significant emerging pressure on places at the school. Although not all of these applications could be evidenced as being in catchment, there is still considerable pressure in Coety Primary School with currently 61 full-time nursery pupils and 63 reception pupils now being on-roll for the 2017-2018 academic year.
- 4.18 Therefore, local authority officers and the Bridgend Admission Forum have concluded that no further amendments to this catchment can be proposed given the likely continuing pressure for school places. Furthermore, it is considered necessary that the double demountable classroom at Coychurch Primary School be considered as a permanent solution to meet the pressure for pupil places from the Coychurch Primary School catchment area, which includes the Linc Cymru Development.

## **5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules**

- 5.1 There is no effect upon the policy framework or procedure rules.

## **6. Equality Impact Assessment**

- 6.1 It is a statutory duty that admission authorities are mindful of their duties with regards to Equalities Legislation. As a result, the proposed School Admission Policy and Arrangements 2019 – 2020 adhere to these requirements.

## **7. Financial implications**

- 7.1 There are no financial implications regarding this report.

## **8. Recommendation**

8.1 Cabinet is recommended to approve that:

- a consultation for the 2019-2020 Schools Admission Policy and Arrangements takes place between 9 October 2017 and 31 December 2017 (see Appendix 1);

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### **Attachments**

Appendix A: Draft School Admissions Policy and Arrangements 2019-2020

### **Background documents**

Welsh Government School Admissions Code - Document No:005/2013

## Appendix 1



**DRAFT**

**School  
Admissions Policy  
and arrangements  
2019-2020**

### 1. THE ADMISSION AUTHORITY

The entry of children to schools is controlled and administered by an 'Admission Authority'. In the case of community schools, this is the local authority (LA), that is, Bridgend County Borough Council. In accordance with the Education (Relevant Areas for Consultation on Admission Arrangements) Regulations 1999, the relevant area for the Admission Authority is the geographical area of the county borough of Bridgend. Where the LA is the admission authority, the school's governing body is under a duty to implement the LA's decision on applications, and to act in accordance with the LA's admission arrangements.

**The LA continuously reviews and reserves the right to amend its admissions procedures for statutory and non-statutory education.**

In the case of voluntary aided schools, the admission authority is the governing body of the individual school. Further information about admission to voluntary aided schools is set out in Section 24.

### 2. PARENTAL PREFERENCE

The LA has a statutory duty to have regard to the general principle that pupils are to be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents, so far as that would be compatible with the provision of efficient education and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure (S.9 Education Act 1996).

Within the County Borough of Bridgend, each school has an area it serves (its catchment), however, the LA must allow all parents/carers the opportunity to express a positive preference for the school they would wish their child to attend. In the vast majority of cases, parents are quite happy to choose their catchment school, but it is legally necessary for that school to be selected by parents/carers and named on a form entitled 'Admission to School'.

The LA has a duty to meet the preferences for admission expressed by parents ahead of those who have expressed no preference. Consequently, parents must ensure they return the 'Admission to School' form expressing their preference by the stated deadline, and not automatically assume that a place will be available for their child at a particular school, even though that may be their catchment school.

The 'Admission to School' form will be sent by the LA to those parents whose child, in September 2019, will be:

- starting school for the first time (this does not include those starting in a nursery class/school); or
- moving from an infant school to a junior or primary school, (this does not apply to those moving from an infant dept. to a junior dept. within the same primary school); or
- moving from a junior or primary school to a secondary school.

For local authority admissions, the preferred school may be a community school of either language (Welsh or English) or a voluntary-controlled school. If a parent wishes to apply for a place at a voluntary-aided school they should approach that school directly for an admission application form.

The admission form also allows parents to list more than one school in priority order. Admission applications forms can be found on the Council's website:

<http://www.bridgend.gov.uk/services/schools/school-admissions.aspx>

If parents/carers have any queries in relation to the admission process they may contact the Learner Support Team:

E-mail: pupilservices@bridgend.gov.uk  
 Tel No: 01656 642637  
 Address: Learner Support, Education and Family Support Directorate, Bridgend County Borough Council, Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend CF31 4WB

A full version of this document is also published on the Bridgend County Borough Council website (see link above).

### 3. TIMETABLE FOR ADMISSIONS TO SCHOOLS – SEPTEMBER 2019-2020

The expected timetable to process applications for admissions to primary and secondary schools for September 2019 is as follows:

#### **Pupils transferring from junior/primary school (Year 6) to comprehensive school in September 2019**

Action	Date
Application forms sent to parents/carers/schools	Monday 22 October 2018
Deadline date for LA receipt of completed application forms	Friday 11 January 2019
Notification to parents/carers of acceptance/refusal of places	Friday 1 March 2019
Notification of any appeals	From April 2019

#### **Admission to Reception Class and Foundation Phase (Year 2) pupils transferring to (Year 3) in the junior school in September 2019**

Action	Date
Application forms sent to parents/carers/schools	Monday 26 November 2018
Deadline date for LA receipt of completed	Friday

<b>application forms</b>	<b>15 February 2019</b>
<b>Notification to parents/carers of acceptance/refusal of places</b>	<b>Tuesday 16 April 2019</b>
<b>Notification of any appeals</b>	<b>From May 2019</b>

The timetable for nursery admissions is not governed by the Admission Code for School Admissions (2013) and is set out in Section 12.

### **Late applications**

Only applications received by the published closing date for receipt of applications will be considered in the allocation of places. Applications received after the deadline date will be considered as late applications. Late applications will be processed after applications which were received by the closing date and therefore, late applicants may find that their preferred school is already full, even if the school is their catchment school.

## **4. WHERE THE DUTY TO COMPLY WITH PARENTAL PREFERENCE DOES NOT APPLY**

The duty of the LA and school governors to comply with parental preference does not apply where:

- to admit the child would prejudice the provision of efficient education or efficient use of resources;
- the child has been permanently excluded from two or more schools. The requirement to comply with parental preference is dis-applied for a period of two years following the second exclusion. This does not apply to children who were below compulsory school age when they were excluded or to pupils who were reinstated after exclusion; or to admit would be incompatible with the statutory duty to meet infant class size limits of 30 (see Section 7).

## **5. CAPACITY**

Welsh Government uses a capacity calculation methodology for all schools. This aims to provide a robust and consistent method of assessing the capacity of all schools and is based on existing accommodation and usage. The capacity calculation allows the LA to calculate a Published Admissions Number (PAN) for every school. The PAN is derived by dividing the overall capacity by the number of year groups (excluding nursery) at a school. Guidance received from the Welsh Government (Circular No. 021/2011) states that "As the admission number reflects the school's ability to accommodate pupils, it should only be exceeded in exceptional circumstances".

## **6. ADMISSION LEVEL**

All maintained schools must admit pupils up to their published admissions number in the relevant age group. The relevant age group for admission to schools within Bridgend are:

Infant/Primary Schools	Age 4/5	(Reception)
Junior Schools	Age 7/8	(Year 3)
Secondary Schools	Age 11/12	(Year 7)

## **7. INFANT CLASS SIZE REGULATIONS**

In order to improve educational standards in schools, it is government policy (Infant Class Sizes Wales Regulations 2013) to limit the number of children in Reception, Years 1 and 2 to a maximum of 30 pupils. Admission authorities can only refuse admission on the basis of infant class size prejudice if the published admission number has already been reached.

However, there are a number of limited exceptions where the LA can exceed the maximum of 30 pupils (eg children whose statements of special educational needs (SEN)) specify that they should be educated at the school concerned, and who are admitted to the school outside a normal admission round and children who are 'looked after' by the LA or who have ceased to be looked after (previously looked after children).

## **8. PROOF OF ADDRESS AND FALSE INFORMATION**

When considering whether a child lives in a school's catchment area, it is the permanent address of the parent or legal guardian that the LA considers to satisfy the admissions criteria, irrespective of a family's domestic arrangements. That is to say, the address of another relative or childminder etc. must not be given. The LA must be notified immediately of any change of permanent address. Further details about catchment areas serving schools, can be obtained by contacting the Learner Support Team on 01656 642637.

Where a parent gives fraudulent or intentionally misleading information to obtain the advantage of a particular school placement for their child, which they would not otherwise be entitled to, the LA reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place. Where a place is withdrawn, the application will then be considered afresh, and a right of appeal offered if a place is refused. Where there is doubt about the permanent address of a pupil living within the school's catchment area, the LA reserves the right to seek further verification from the applicant (such evidence may include a utility bill or council tax statement). All data is processed in compliance with the Data Protection Act.

Where parents/carers are applying for a catchment school on the basis of a house move, written evidence must be provided from a solicitor that identifies that such a sale has been completed and contracts have been exchanged. Where parents/carers are applying on the basis of the rental of a property within the catchment area, written evidence of a tenancy agreement will be required.

## **9. EQUALITIES**

The Council's admission arrangements seek to achieve full compliance with all relevant legislation and guidance, with regard to equal opportunities and human rights (Equality Act 2010, the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Welsh Language Act 1993).

The Council wants our services to be accessible to the whole community and will challenge discrimination in our communities, whether it is based on a person's transgender status, race, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity marriage or civil partnership.

Bridgend County Borough Council's Corporate Equality Scheme sets out how the Council will comply with its Public Sector Equality Duty in the exercise of its functions, having due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act;



- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not.

## **10. CHILDREN OF UK SERVICE PERSONNEL AND OTHER CROWN SERVANTS (including diplomats)**

Children of UK service personnel and other crown servants will be treated as in catchment if their application form is accompanied by an official Ministry of Defence (MOD) or Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) letter declaring a return date and confirmation of the new address. Children of UK service personnel and other crown servants (including diplomats) may be given excepted status for infant class size purposes when admitted to a school outside of the normal admissions round.

## **11. CHILDREN WITH A STATEMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN)**

Children with a statement of SEN will be admitted to the school named on their statement and will not be considered as part of the oversubscription criteria.

## **12. NURSERY EDUCATION**

The Welsh Government requires LAs to secure a free, part-time, Early Years education place for eligible three-year-olds from the term following their third birthday. The place can either be at an LA-maintained school or within the non-maintained sector, with a registered early year's provider. Where parents opt for a place with a registered early year's provider, they will only be eligible to receive funding for a part-time place regardless of whether the place offered is full or part-time. The grant payment in this respect will be made directly to the provider.

Application forms for admission to full-time nursery schools/classes will be available on 7 January 2019 and must be returned to the LA by the 25 March 2019. Parents/carers will be notified of the outcome of their full-time nursery applications on 20 May 2019 and part-time nursery application in November 2019.

The LA is committed to the principle of providing local schools for local children and will make every effort to ensure that parents are able to secure a place for their child(ren) at their catchment school, where parents/carers have expressed a positive preference for that school. The LA will only normally admit up to the school's published admission number when allocating full-time nursery places. Where the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, the LA will apply the following criteria in order of priority to allocate the places available:

Places at LA maintained schools are part-time for three year olds (nursery year one) and full-time for four year-olds (nursery year two).

### **Over subscription criteria for full-time nursery places:**

1. Children who are 'looked-after' and previously 'looked after' children.
2. Children who will be three years of age on or before 31 August 2019 and who normally reside within the community school's catchment area will be considered first. These children will attain their fourth birthday during the academic year

(nursery year two) and will be eligible for a full-time nursery place in September 2019.

Where a school is over-subscribed the LA will allocate the places in the following order of priority:

- a) Children with siblings attending the school in the academic year 2019-2020. A sibling is classified as a half or full brother/sister; a step brother/sister, an adopted brother/sister; or a child living in the same household. When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child (eg a twin or triplet), the LA will also admit the other sibling(s).
  - b) Proximity to school, as measured by the nearest available safe walking route (from home to the main school gate). The Council uses GIS software to measure all distances.
3. Children not currently resident within the defined catchment area whose parents have satisfied the LA, by the published closing date for receipt of Admission to Schools preference forms, that the child will be resident within the defined catchment area by the commencement of the school term to which the application relates. Evidence of permanent residence of the child must be supplied (see section 8).

Where a school is over-subscribed the LA will allocate the places in the following order of priority:

- a) Children with siblings attending the school in the academic year 2019-2020. A sibling is classified as a half or full brother/sister; a step brother/sister, an adopted brother/sister; or a child living in the same household. When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child (eg a twin or triplet), the LA will also admit the other sibling(s).
  - b) Proximity to school, as measured by the nearest available safe walking route (from home to the main school gate). The Council uses GIS software to accurately measure all distances.
4. Children recommended for placement for medical, psychological, or social reasons (eg young carers). To satisfy the medical and psychological criteria, parents must provide supporting evidence from a registered health professional. The evidence must set out in detail why the named school is the most suitable school and what difficulties would arise if the child had to attend another school.
5. Children living outside the community school's catchment area will be considered for any remaining places in the order of priority set out below:
- a) Children with siblings attending the school in the academic year 2019-2020. A sibling is classified as a half or full brother/sister; a step brother/sister, an adopted brother/sister; or a child living in the same household. When allocating places if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child (eg a twin or triplet), the LA will also admit the other sibling(s).
  - b) Proximity to school, as measured by the nearest available safe walking route (from home to the main school gate). The Council uses GIS software to measure all distances.

**Parents/carers should note that pupils who are admitted to a nursery class of an infant or primary school will not have an automatic right to continued education at the same school when moving to a reception class.** All parents/carers of children attending a nursery class, whether residing within the catchment area or outside it, will be required at the appropriate time, to complete an Admission to School form indicating their preference for a school (See Section 2).

**Over subscription criteria for part-time nursery places:**

1. Children who are 'looked-after' and previously 'looked after' children.
2. Children who will be three years of age on or before 31 December 2019 and who normally reside within the community school's catchment area. These children will be eligible for a part-time place in January 2020 (nursery year one).

Where a school is over-subscribed the LA will allocate the places in the following order of priority:

- a) Children with siblings attending the school in the academic year 2019-2020. A sibling is classified as a half or full brother/sister; a step brother / sister, an adopted brother/sister; or a child living in the same household. When allocating places if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child (eg a twin or triplet), the LA will also admit the other sibling(s).
  - b) Proximity to school, as measured by the nearest available safe walking route (from home to the main school gate). The Council uses GIS software to measure all distances.
3. Children not currently resident within the defined catchment area whose parents have satisfied the LA, by the published closing date for receipt of Admission to Schools preference forms, that the child will be resident within the defined catchment area by the commencement of the school term to which the application relates. Evidence of permanent residence of the child must be supplied (see section 8).

Where a school is over-subscribed the LA will allocate the places in the following order of priority:

- a) Children with siblings attending the school in the academic year 2019-2020. A sibling is classified as a half or full brother/sister; a step brother/sister, an adopted brother/sister; or a child living in the same household. When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child (eg a twin or triplet), the LA will also admit the other sibling(s).
  - b) Proximity to school, as measured by the nearest available safe walking route (from home to the main school gate). The Council uses GIS software to accurately measure all distances.
4. Children recommended for placement for medical, psychological, or social reasons eg young carers. To satisfy the medical and psychological criterions, parents must

provide supporting evidence from a registered health professional. The evidence must set out in detail why the named school is the most suitable school and what difficulties would arise if the child had to attend another school.

5. Children living outside the community school's catchment area will be considered for any remaining places in the order of priority set out below:
  - a) Children with siblings attending the school in the academic year 2019-2020. A sibling is classified as a half or full brother/sister; a step brother/sister, an adopted brother/sister; or a child living in the same household. When allocating places if the last place is offered to a multiple-birth child (eg a twin or triplet), the LA will also admit the other sibling(s).
  - b) Proximity to school, as measured by the nearest available safe walking route (from home to the main school gate). The Council uses GIS software to measure all distances.

**Parents/carers should note that there is no right of appeal in the case of nursery admissions.**

**Parents/carers should note the following special arrangements:**

1. The Council agreed in November 2012 that the new Linc Cymru development in the north-east of Brackla (known as Trem-Y-Castell), would be assigned to the catchment area of Coychurch Primary School, with effect from September 2014. It was further agreed that the situation would be in place for a period of five years and be reviewed in 2019. For this, the 2019-2020 admission period, it has been determined to continue this arrangement. Children from this area will be entitled to receive free school transport, subject in accordance with the School Transport Policy in force at the time.

If parents/carers have any doubt in which catchment area they reside, they are advised to contact the Learner Support Team on 01656 642637.

### **13. PRIMARY EDUCATION**

Every child is required by law to receive full-time education from the beginning of the school term after his/her fifth birthday. In Bridgend, however, all children are normally admitted to reception classes in the September following their fourth birthday.

Again the LA is committed to the principle of providing local schools for local children and will make every effort to ensure that children are able to secure a place at their catchment school, where parents/carers have expressed a positive preference for that school. However, where the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, the LA will apply the following criteria in order of priority to allocate the places available.

**Over subscription criteria:**

1. Children who are 'looked-after' and previously 'looked after' children
2. Children who normally reside within the community school's catchment area.

Where a school is over-subscribed the LA will allocate the places in the following order of priority:

- a) Children with siblings attending the school in the academic year 2019-2020. A sibling is classified as a half or full brother/sister; a step brother/sister, an adopted brother/sister; or a child living in the same household. When allocating places if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child (eg a twin or triplet), the LA will also admit the other sibling(s).
  - b) Proximity to school, as measured by the nearest available safe walking route (from home to the main school gate). The Council uses GIS software to measure all distances.
3. Children not currently resident within the defined catchment area whose parents have satisfied the LA, by the published closing date for receipt of Admission to Schools preference forms, that the child will be resident within the defined catchment area by the commencement of the school term to which the application relates. Evidence of permanent residence of the child must be supplied (see section 8).

Where a school is over-subscribed the LA will allocate the places in the following order of priority:

- a) Children with siblings attending the school in the academic year 2019-2020. A sibling is classified as a half or full brother/sister; a step brother/sister, an adopted brother/sister; or a child living in the same household. When allocating places if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child (eg a twin or triplet), the LA will also admit the other sibling(s).
  - b) Proximity to school, as measured by the nearest available safe walking route (from home to the main school gate). The Council uses GIS software to measure all distances.
4. Children recommended for placement for medical, psychological, or social reasons eg young carers. To satisfy the medical and psychological criteria, parents must provide supporting evidence from a registered health professional. The evidence must set out in detail why the named school is the most suitable school and what difficulties would arise if the child had to attend another school.
5. Children living outside the community school's catchment area will be considered for any remaining places in the order of priority set out below:
- a) Children with siblings attending the school in the academic year 2019-20. A sibling is classified as a half or full brother/sister; a step brother/sister, an adopted brother/sister; or a child living in the same household. When allocating places if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child (eg a twin or triplet), the LA will also admit the other sibling(s).
  - b) Proximity to school, as measured by the nearest available safe walking route (from home to the nearest main school gate). The Council uses GIS software to measure all distances.

**Parents/carers should note the following special arrangements:-**

1. The Council agreed in November 2012 that the new Linc Cymru development in the north-east of Brackla (known as Trem-Y-Castell), would be assigned to the catchment area of Coychurch Primary School, with effect from September 2014. It was further agreed that the situation would be in place for a period of five years and be reviewed in 2019. For this, the 2019-2020 admission period, it has been determined to continue this arrangement. Children from this area will be entitled to receive free school transport, subject in accordance with the School Transport Policy in force at the time.

If parents/carers have any doubt in which catchment area they reside, they are advised to contact Learner Support Services on 01656 642637.

#### **14. TRANSFER TO A JUNIOR SCHOOL OR TO A JUNIOR DEPARTMENT WITHIN A PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Children enter, or transfer to junior school or to a junior department in a primary school, on the first day of the autumn term following their seventh birthday.

Where an area is served by separate infant and junior or primary schools, parents of children in an infant school will need to complete the Admission to Schools Form in order to ensure their request for a place for their child is considered at the time of transfer from the infant school to the respective junior or primary school.

In primary schools, the infant and junior sections are simply departments of the same school and children progress through the school from the infants to juniors without having to transfer elsewhere. Parents are therefore **not** required to complete a form, since the children are already regarded as registered pupils in the primary school.

#### **15. SECONDARY EDUCATION**

Children normally transfer from primary school to secondary school at the beginning of the academic year following their eleventh birthday. Being a registered pupil at a feeder junior or primary school does not qualify for automatic admission to the associated secondary school. Where the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, the LA will apply the following criteria in order of priority to allocate the places available:

##### **Over subscription criteria:**

1. Children who are 'looked-after' and previously 'looked after' children.
2. Pupils who normally reside within the community school's catchment area.

Where a school is over-subscribed and all applications are within the catchment area, the LA will allocate the places in the following order of priority:

- a) Children with siblings attending the school in the academic year 2019-2020. A sibling is classified as a half or full brother/sister; a step brother/sister, an adopted brother/sister; or a child living in the same household. When allocating places if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child (eg a twin or triplet), the LA will also admit the other sibling(s).
- b) Proximity to school, as measured by the nearest available safe walking route (from home to the main school gate). The Council uses GIS software to measure all distances.

3. Children not currently resident within the defined catchment area whose parents have satisfied the LA, by the published closing date for receipt of Admission to Schools preference forms, that the child will be resident within the defined catchment area by the commencement of the school term to which the application relates. Evidence of permanent residence of the child must be supplied (see section 8).

Where a school is over-subscribed the LA will allocate the places in the following order of priority:

- a) Children with siblings attending the school in the academic year 2019-2020. A sibling is classified as a half or full brother/sister; a step brother / sister, an adopted brother/sister; or a child living in the same household. When allocating places if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child (eg a twin or triplet), the LA will also admit the other sibling(s).
  - b) Proximity to school, as measured by the nearest available safe walking route (from home to the main school gate). The Council uses GIS software to measure all distances.
4. Children recommended for placement for medical, psychological, or social reasons eg young carers. To satisfy the medical and psychological criteria, parents must provide supporting evidence from a registered health professional. The evidence must set out in detail why the named school is the most suitable school and what difficulties would arise if the child had to attend another school.
  5. Children living outside the community school's catchment area will be considered for any remaining places in the order of priority set out below:
    - a) Children with siblings attending the school in the academic year 2019-20. A sibling is classified as a half or full brother/sister; a step brother/sister, an adopted brother/sister; or a child living in the same household. When allocating places if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child (eg a twin or triplet), the LA will also admit the other sibling(s).
    - b) Proximity to school measured by the nearest available safe walking route (from home to the nearest main school gate). The Council uses GIS software to measure all distances.

**Parents/carers should note the following special arrangement:**

1. The Council agreed a change in the catchment areas of both Porthcawl and Cynffig Comprehensive Schools, with effect from September 2015. The change results in all of North and South Cornelly falling within the catchment area of Cynffig Comprehensive School. Parents of pupils with an older sibling already attending either of the schools affected by these changes will be able to use their parental choice to request a school place for the younger siblings to attend the same school as the older sibling. For five years following the implementation of these changes, these younger siblings will be treated as living in the 'original' catchment area. This arrangement will cease as from September 2020. Free school transport will continue to be offered as per the existing Home-to-School Transport Policy in force. Under the current policy pupils who attend a school other than their own catchment

school (where there is space available for them in their catchment school) are not entitled to free school transport. Therefore, a school place may be offered (subject to the school not being oversubscribed) on the proviso that the parent would be responsible for transport costs and arrangements of the younger sibling(s).

If parents/carers have any doubt in which catchment area they reside they are advised to contact Learner Support Services on 01656 642637.

## **16. POST-16 ADMISSIONS**

The admission of pupils who wish to progress their post-16 education at a community school's sixth form is, at present, determined by individual schools. This is also the case for pupils wishing to study at post-16 at a further education (FE) institution. Therefore, any applications in this category should be made directly to the school/FE college. Individual schools/FE colleges are responsible for issuing policies on sixth form admissions in respect of entry criteria. The local authority has a policy of open access to schools' sixth forms.

## **17. OUTCOME OF APPLICATION**

Please note that there is no right of appeal for non-statutory education (eg nursery education). Parents/carers will be notified of the outcome of their application in writing. If the application is refused, the letter will set out the reasons for the decision and will advise parents/carers on the appeal process.

## **18. MID-YEAR ADMISSIONS/TRANSFERS**

Parents/carers, who move into the county borough of Bridgend during the academic year, will be required to complete an 'In-Year Transfer' form requesting admission to school. Similarly, if parents move within the County Borough they may wish to seek admission to their catchment area school. An 'In-Year Transfer' form would need to be completed. If you are not moving house you should consider the implications of this transfer request (refer to guidance on 'In-Year Transfer Form'). Copies of the form are available from on the Council's website via the link below, or directly from the Learner Support Team (01656 642637).

<http://www.bridgend.gov.uk/services/schools/school-transfers-in-year-school-transfer-requests.aspx>

Parents/carers may also wish to apply for a place at a different school for other reasons. If you are not moving house, you should talk to the headteacher about the reasons for a change of school. There is a significant amount of research which shows that changing schools is disruptive and can have a negative impact on a pupil's attainment. There are many reasons for this. Hence, it is important that careful consideration is given, particularly in the case of pupils in Years 10 and 11 who would have made their GCSE choices, to any change of school.

**In cases involving school transfer requests that do not require a house move, or where there is no need for an immediate move, the LA would normally arrange for the child to start the school at the beginning of the following term, to minimise disruption to their own and other children's education.**



Further advice on transferring a child to another school is available from Learner Support Services (01656 642637).

## **19. WAITING LISTS**

The LA does maintain waiting lists for oversubscribed schools. Following the allocation of places during the normal admissions round, children will remain on the waiting list until 30 September 2019. Where applications are received outside the normal admissions round, children will remain on the waiting list for a period of one month.

If additional places do become available, they will be allocated on the basis of the published oversubscription criteria (see relevant section above) and **NOT** the length of time a pupil has been on the waiting list.

## **20. ADMISSION OUTSIDE THE NORMAL AGE GROUP**

Occasionally the parents/carers of gifted or talented children will seek a school place for their child outside their normal age. The LA will consider each case individually and make its decision in consultation with the school and parent/carer.

Other circumstances where a school place will need to be considered outside of a child's normal age range may include where a child has experienced problems or missed part of a year due to ill health.

Where the LA considers that an out-of-year group application is appropriate but that application is refused due to no places being available at the school, the parent/carer will be offered a right of appeal. However, there is no right of appeal if a place has been offered, but not in the desired year group (ie where the place offered is in the correct chronological year group for the child's age).

## **21. REGISTERING AN APPEAL**

In the vast majority of cases, children are offered places in line with their parent's preference of school. If however, a child is unable to gain admission, parents may accept a place offered at an alternative school whilst pursuing a place at their preferred school. If parents feel that they have circumstances which they believe justify further consideration, they may choose to appeal to an independent panel. This panel will consider the grounds put forward by parents for the appeal and determine whether the merits of their case outweigh the arguments presented by the LA. Before they appeal, parents are advised to consider the LA's admission policy.

Parents/carers may lodge a formal appeal against the LA but this must be received within 14 days (10 working days) of being notified of the decision not to admit a child to their preferred school. Parents should submit their appeal in writing, stating their reasons for appeal, to: Learner Support, Education and Family Support Directorate, Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB. The LA will refer the appeal to an independent appeal panel. The clerk to the panel will arrange a time and place for the hearing. The panel will give parents an opportunity of appearing before them and making their representations (oral and/or written).

Parents/carers are advised that:

1. they may elect not to attend the appeal meeting and, instead, allow the appeal to be considered on a written statement;
2. the appeal will be decided on the information available if, having failed to give a reasonable explanation, they do not appear;
3. if they cannot attend on the date, and it is not reasonably practicable to offer an adjourned hearing, the appeal will have to be decided on whatever information is available; and
4. they will be given at least 14 days (10 working days) written notice of the meeting of the appeal panel, unless they agree to a shorter period. The parent/carer should confirm this in writing to the clerk to the panel.

Parents/carers can be accompanied by a friend or adviser or an interpreter, however, LA councillors are not permitted to attend. Parents are requested to inform the clerk to the independent appeal panel of any representation at least seven days before the hearing. Parents are also advised that agencies such as SNAP Tel. No. 08451203730 and ACE Tel. No. 03000115142 are available to provide assistance when making appeals.

## **22. REPEAT APPEALS**

Parents/carers generally do not have a right to a second appeal in respect of the same school and the same academic year except where:

- there were faults in the first appeal process and there is a significant possibility that the outcome might have been affected by the faults (this may be on the recommendation of the Public Services Ombudsman); or
- a fresh application is accepted because there has been a significant and material change in the circumstances of the parent or child and that application has also been turned down. Common examples of where a fresh application is considered are where a family has moved address or there are new medical reasons.

Parents/carers who appeal unsuccessfully can re-apply for a place at the same school in respect of a later academic year. If they are again unsuccessful they do have the right of appeal.

## **23. WELSH EDUCATION**

In accordance with statutory requirements, the LA's policy is that every child should have the opportunity to learn and use the Welsh language. Provision is made for this in the following ways:

1. The teaching of Welsh as a second language in English-medium schools.
  - a) At Foundation Phase, Welsh is taught to all pupils. The emphasis is on using the language with purpose and in meaningful situations. In addition, the incidental use of the language during the school day is encouraged.
  - b) At key stage 2, the language is further developed orally, with greater emphasis on reading and writing skills.
  - c) At key stage 3, Welsh is taught to all pupils and at key stage 4, it is now compulsory. Opportunities are provided in all schools for pupils to continue their studies for both the 16+ and 'A' level examinations.
2. Provision for Welsh-medium education.

- a) Welsh-medium education is available at the four Welsh-medium primary schools to all pupils whose parents select that medium of education.
- b) Parents/carers residing in the east of the county borough may wish for their children to attend the Welsh Unit at Dolau Primary School. Bridgend County Borough Council will be responsible for any transport costs for eligible pupils, but only if such pupils reside closer to Dolau than to Ysgol Bro Ogwr.
- c) At Foundation Phase, all subjects are taught and all activities are run through the medium of Welsh.
- d) English is introduced as a subject in key stage 2. Although all the other subjects are taught through the medium of Welsh, standards in English are equally safeguarded.
- e) The arrangement between the education authorities of Bridgend and Rhondda Cynon Taf, will allow pupils currently attending Ysgol Gyfun Llanhari to continue their education at the school.

Entry to Welsh-medium schools is controlled by the application of the same admission criteria expressed within the relevant section of this policy.

## **24. ADMISSION TO VOLUNTARY-AIDED SCHOOLS**

Within the county borough of Bridgend, there are five voluntary-aided schools which are financed largely by the local authority. The governing body of each voluntary-aided school is the admission authority with responsibility for all admission arrangements.

The five voluntary aided schools within the county borough are as follows:

1. St. Mary's Primary Catholic School, Bridgend
2. St. Mary's & St. Patrick's Primary Catholic School, Maesteg
3. St. Roberts Primary Catholic School, Aberkenfig
4. Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School
5. Archdeacon John Lewis Church in Wales Primary School

Parents/carers who wish to seek admissions to these schools are advised to contact the relevant school for further information.

## **25. ADMISSION TO VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED SCHOOL**

The one voluntary controlled school in Bridgend County Borough is Penyfai Church in Wales Primary School, which is financed by the LA. The admission criteria are consistent with that of the LA and with the Trust Deed of the school. Appeal arrangements are managed by the LA and consistent with the provision of the Trust Deed.

## **26. ARRANGEMENTS WITH OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITIES**

Bridgend County Borough has made the following arrangements with Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council, where surplus admission places are available.

1. Pupils from Abercerdin Primary School may attend Tonyrefail Comprehensive School with Bridgend County Borough Council being responsible for transport costs.
2. Pupils from Dolau Primary, Brynna Primary and Llanharan Primary School may attend Pencoed Comprehensive with Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council being responsible for transport costs.

3. Pupils from Bridgend County Borough may attend the Welsh Unit at Dolau Primary with Bridgend County Borough Council being responsible for any transport costs for eligible pupils, but only if such pupils reside closer to Dolau than to Ysgol Bro Ogwr.

Bridgend County Borough Council has no arrangements for the provision of education at schools not maintained by a local authority.

## **27. SPECIAL SCHOOLS**

Bridgend County Borough Council is the responsible authority for determining the special educational provision required by individual children and young people with a statement of special educational needs.

This may involve mainstream or special school provision, and in exceptional cases, placement in schools outside Bridgend County Borough.

The Special Educational Needs Tribunal for Wales, under certain circumstances also has the authority to decide where a child with a statement is to be educated.

Bridgend County Borough's two special schools are regional centres with pupils admitted from neighbouring local authorities.