

Proposed School Admissions Policy 2024-2025 - Welsh Language Impact Assessment

Stage 1 – Information Gathering	
NOTE: As you complete this tool you will be asked for evidence to support your views . Please see Welsh Language Impact Assessment Guidance for more information on data sources.	
Proposal Name:	School Admissions Policy 2024-2025
Department	Education and Family Support
Service Director	Mr Lindsay Harvey – Corporate Director
Officer Completing the WLIA	Dawn Davies, Principal Officer – Business Strategy and Performance
Email	Dawn.Davies@bridgend.gov.uk
Phone	01656 642694
Brief Description	The proposed school admission arrangements for the 2024-2025 school year for those schools in Bridgend for which the local authority is the admission authority (that is, all community schools maintained by the local authority with the exception of the voluntary-aided schools).
Date	18/01/2023
Please outline who this proposal affects? (Service Users, Employees, Wider Community)	Learners and their families/carers. Schools. The wider community.

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What are the aims of the policy, and how do these relate to the Welsh Language?	<p>The admission of learners to those schools, for which the local authority is the admission authority, in accordance with all relevant legislation and in a manner that is fair and timely.</p> <p>The local authority is the admission authority for all Welsh-medium schools in Bridgend.</p>
Who will benefit / Could the policy affect Welsh language groups? If so, list them here.	<p>All learners for whom education is sought at a school for which the local authority is the admission authority. Therefore, this includes all learners for whom education through the medium of Welsh is preferred.</p> <p>Schools for which the local authority is the admission authority.</p> <p>The wider community.</p>
Current linguistic profile of the geographical area(s) concerned	<p>The ONS recently published the data for the national Census 2021 (Census date 21 March 2021). The 10-year Census provides the most complete information about the Welsh language skills of the population.</p>

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	<p>The Census data identifies the following:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="3">Welsh Language Skills of the population (%)</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>Bridgend County Borough</th> <th>Wales</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Can speak Welsh</td> <td>9%</td> <td>17.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Can understand spoken Welsh</td> <td>12.4%</td> <td>21.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Can read Welsh</td> <td>10%</td> <td>16.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Can write Welsh</td> <td>7.8%</td> <td>14.8%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>With regards to combinations of Welsh language skills (for example, can speak Welsh but cannot read or write Welsh), 15.2% of the population of Bridgend identified as having some combination of skills, compared to 24.4% for the whole of Wales.</p> <p>The data shows that there is a gap in the Welsh language skills of the population of Bridgend when compared to the whole of Wales.</p>	Welsh Language Skills of the population (%)				Bridgend County Borough	Wales	Can speak Welsh	9%	17.3%	Can understand spoken Welsh	12.4%	21.3%	Can read Welsh	10%	16.8%	Can write Welsh	7.8%	14.8%
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<p>Other relevant data or research</p>	<p>None.</p>																		

Stage 2 – Impact Assessment

In this section you need to consider the impact, the evidence and any action you are taking for improvement. This is to ensure that the opportunities for people who choose to live their lives and access services through the medium of Welsh are not inferior to what is afforded to those choosing to do so in English, in accordance with the requirement of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

Please note there is a separate impact assessment for Equality and Socio-Economic duty that must also be completed for policy proposals. Remember that effects that are positive for some groups could be detrimental to others - even among Welsh language groups. Consider the effects on different groups. For example, a proposal may be beneficial to Welsh learners, but not to Welsh speakers.

Will the proposed action affect any or all of the following?

	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts?	Describe why it will have a positive/negative or neutral impact on the Welsh language.	What evidence do you have to support this view?	What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p>Opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language</p> <p>eg staff, residents and visitors The rights of Welsh speakers and learners to use Welsh when dealing with the council and for staff to use Welsh at Work</p>	Neutral	Every year, the proposed policy is published in Welsh. For the required consultation process there is opportunity for any responses to the consultation to be received and considered in Welsh. There is no change to this process for the proposed policy for 2024-2025.	<p>Proposed policy document and communications with consultees.</p> <p>Feedback received on the proposed policy for 2020-2021 was received in Welsh.</p>	None.

Stage 2 – Impact Assessment

Will the proposed action affect any or all of the following?

	Does the proposal have any positive, negative or neutral impacts?	Describe why it will have a positive/negative or neutral impact on the Welsh language.	What evidence do you have to support this view?	What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p>Numbers and / or percentages of Welsh speakers</p> <p>eg Welsh Medium Education / Study Opportunities. Links with the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 Strategy / BCBC Five Year Welsh</p>	Negative	School admissions in Wales are governed by specific legislation and a statutory code, which aim to ensure that admissions to school are fair and timely. As is the case every year, the proposed policy for 2024-2025 covers the arrangements for admission of learners to those schools in Bridgend, for which the local authority is the admission authority - this includes all Welsh-medium schools in Bridgend. The arrangements described in the proposed policy accord with the legislative requirements. The arrangements support and	<p>Annual capacity calculations for Caerau Primary School.</p> <p>Pupil projections for Caerau Primary school up to 2029, completed in 2021, predict an ongoing demand for places at Caerau Primary School, which will be unmet if the PAN is not increased.</p> <p>The operational practice of working to a PAN for Caerau Primary School of 60 was first introduced in 2018-2019. In respect of the subsequent Reception admission rounds - for September 2019, 8.9% of the applications made in respect of children living</p>	None.

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		<p>enable parents/carers to express their school preferences, whether those be for English-medium or Welsh - medium schools.</p> <p>Published admission numbers (PAN) for each school form an intrinsic and important part of school admission arrangements. If the PAN for any particular year group increases, this means that there is the opportunity to increase the number of pupils into that year group and school. For this admission year (2024-2025) the local authority is proposing to formally increase the PAN from 45 to 60 for Caerau Primary School, an English-medium school. The proposed increase formalises the operational practice of the local authority to admit up to 60 pupils per statutory age</p>	<p>in the catchment area of Caerau Primary School, were for places at Ysgol Cynwyd Sant and by September 2022, this had increased to 17.1%. Although this evidences that working to an increased admission number for Caerau Primary School has not had a negative impact on admission requests for Ysgol Cynwyd Sant, there is still potential for parents/carers considering a Welsh-medium education to not apply for a place due to the greater availability of English-medium places at Caerau Primary School.</p>	
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		<p>year group that was first introduced in the 2018-2019 school year. This was due to the increased demand for places at the school and a recommendation from an admission appeal panel that the local authority should review its admission number for the school based on the accommodation available at the school and the level of demand for places. Pupil projections evidence a level of demand for places at Caerau Primary School such that formalisation of the admission number at 60 is appropriate to meet demand for English-medium places.</p> <p>However, in increasing the availability of English-medium places in the catchment area without a corresponding increase in the number of Welsh-medium places available</p>		
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		<p>to parents within a reasonable distance, it is not unreasonable to assume that parents considering a Welsh-medium education for their child at one of the local authority's Welsh-language primary schools (the nearest being Ysgol Cynwyd Sant), may see the creation of additional places at Caerau Primary School as an opportunity to consider educating their child closer to home in an English-medium school. Therefore, despite this not being the intention, there is a risk that the proposal may result in parents/carers not considering a Welsh-medium education for their children and choosing an English-medium education instead.</p>		
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<p>Opportunities to promote the Welsh language</p> <p>eg status, use of Welsh language services, use of Welsh in everyday life in work and in the community Actively encourage and promote the use of our services in Welsh to see an increase in demand over time.</p>	<p>Negative</p>	<p>Statements above are applicable.</p>	<p>Statements above are applicable.</p>	<p>None.</p>
<p>Compliance with the Council's Statutory Welsh Language Standards</p> <p>eg increasing or reducing the Council's ability to deliver services through the Medium of Welsh. Consider the rights of Welsh speakers to use Welsh when dealing with the Council and for staff to use Welsh at Work</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>The School Admissions Policy is made available in Welsh every year, both at the consultation stage and the determination stage. There is, and will be, no difference for the proposed policy for 2024-2025. School admission application forms are made available in Welsh every year, and this will be no different for 2024-2025.</p>	<p>Policy documents. Admission application forms. The local authority's website and 'My Account' where parents/carers can apply for a school place online, are bilingual.</p>	<p>None.</p>

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<p>Treating the Welsh language, no less favourably than the English language</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>As in every year, the arrangements set out in the proposed policy for 2024-2025 continue to reflect and support the fundamental right of parents/carers to express their preferences for schools, in accordance with admissions legislation in Wales.</p> <p>The proposed policy for 2024-2025 continues to set out the actions that the local authority will take if places at any school are oversubscribed. There are no changes to the dedicated oversubscription criteria applicable to Welsh-medium schools. These criteria are no less favourable than those for oversubscribed English-medium schools. The policy reflects that there are no catchment areas for Welsh-medium schools in Bridgend. However, this does not</p>	<p>For the Reception admission rounds, the percentage of the total applications received for which the expressed first preference school was a Welsh-medium school increased each from September 2019 as follows:</p> <p>September 2019 – 9.0% September 2020 – 9.1% September 2021 – 9.2% September 2022 – 9.3%</p>	<p>The local authority is currently working with the Welsh Education Forum (WEF) and through the work of developing the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP), to identify the benefits in the development of Welsh-medium school catchment areas.</p>
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		present a disadvantage for any parent/carer applying for a Welsh-medium school, as proximity to the school is used as the alternative oversubscription criteria.		
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Stage 3 - Strengthening the proposal

Having listed actions in section 2 which may mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts – please record below which ones you will imbed into the policy proposal and who will be responsible for them.

Also consider is the proposal necessary? Would it be possible to meet demand without any new developments? Could other existing provision be used? Where should the development be?

What are you going to do?	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible?
The local authority will continue to promote Welsh-medium education via the WEF and through the delivery of the approved WESP	Timescales agreed in the WESP.	The local authority and partners.
Continue to offer discretionary free home-to-school transport for pupils residing over the statutory distance of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • two miles for primary school pupils • three miles for secondary school pupils and • over 1.5 miles for nursery pupils to their nearest Welsh-medium school, even if that school is not geographically the nearest school to their home.	Ongoing.	The local authority.

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<p>Progress a strong School Modernisation Programme with a significant increase in the number and availability of Welsh-medium nursery and primary school places across Bridgend.</p>	<p>In line with the delivery of the Band B 21st century Schools Modernisation Programme outlined in the approved WESP.</p>	
<p>If ways of reducing the impact have been identified but are not possible to implement, please explain why. Give sufficient detail of data or research that has led to your reasoning.</p>		
<p>What was identified?</p>	<p>Why is it not possible?</p>	
<p>A corresponding increase in the PAN at the nearest Welsh-medium school to Caerau (that is, Ysgol Cynwyd Sant.)</p>	<p>There is no accommodation that could be brought into beneficial use as teaching space to allow an increase in the PAN at this time.</p>	

Stage 4 – Review

For all policy proposals, whether it is a Significant Key Decision or not, you are required to forward this assessment to Welsh Language services – WLS@bridgend.gov.uk and the Consultation and Engagement team – consultation@bridgend.gov.uk in the first instance for some initial guidance and feedback.

It is important to keep a record of this process so that we can demonstrate how we have considered and built-in sustainable Welsh language considerations wherever possible. Please ensure you update the relevant sections below in collaboration with the relevant departments.

Welsh Language Services Comments	Date Considered	Brief description of any amendments made following Welsh Language Services feedback

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Consultation Comments	Date Considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consultation

Stage 5 – Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing

How and who will you monitor the impact and effectiveness of the proposal?

Ongoing data analysis and reporting in respect of school admissions. An annual report is required by legislation and all admission policies are sent to Welsh Government by 15 April in the determination year.

Stage 6 – Summary of Impacts for the Proposal

Provide below a summary of the impact assessment, to include some of the main positive and negative impacts along with an overview of actions taken since the impact assessment to better contribute to more positive impacts.

Opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language – neutral impact.
Numbers and / or percentages of Welsh speakers – negative impact.
Opportunities to promote the Welsh language – negative impact.
The Council's compliance with the statutory Welsh Language Standards – neutral impact.
Treating the Welsh language, no less favourably than the English language – neutral impact.

No additional actions have been taken to better contribute to more positive impacts since the consultation on the proposed arrangements (which was undertaken in accordance with the Education (Determination of Admission Arrangements) (Wales) Regulations 2006 and the statutory School Admissions Code 2013).

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Stage 7 – Sign off			
Name of Officer completing WLIA	Dawn Davies	Service Director name:	Lindsay Harvey
Position	Principal Officer, Business Strategy and Performance	I recommend that the proposal: (Highlight decision)	Is implemented with no amendments
			Is implemented taking into account the mitigating actions outlined
			Is rejected due to disproportionate negative impacts on the Welsh language
Signature	Dawn Davies	Service Director Signature	Lindsay Harvey
Date	18/01/2023	Date	18/01/2023