

Meeting of:	CABINET
Date of Meeting:	10 DECEMBER 2024
Report Title:	CO-ORDINATED SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2027-2028
Report Owner / Corporate Director:	CORPORATE DIRECTOR – EDUCATION, EARLY YEARS AND YOUNG PEOPLE
Responsible Officer:	EMMA GILES SENIOR PUPIL SERVICES OFFICER
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	There is no effect upon the policy framework or procedure rules.
Executive Summary:	<p>The Education (Co-ordination of School Admission Arrangements and Miscellaneous Amendments) (Wales) Regulations 2024, requires local authorities to formulate and publish a scheme to co-ordinate admission arrangements for all maintained schools, (except school sixth-form places, maintained special schools and maintained nursery schools, but including boarding schools) within their area.</p> <p>The applicable legislation requires that co-ordinated school admission arrangements for 2027-2028 are determined by 1 January 2025.</p>

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet approval for the Co-ordinated School Admissions Arrangements 2027-2028 (see **Appendix A**).

2. Background

- 2.1 Welsh Government's Education (Co-ordination of School Admission Arrangements and Miscellaneous Amendments) (Wales) Regulations 2024, requires local authorities to formulate and publish a scheme to co-ordinate admission arrangements for all maintained schools, (except school sixth-form places, maintained special schools and maintained Nursery schools, but including boarding schools) within their area.

- 2.2 As part of the statutory process, the local authority has a duty to consult with stakeholders as identified in the Education (Co-ordination of School Admission Arrangements and Miscellaneous Amendments) (Wales) Regulations 2024. This includes the governing bodies of all schools in Bridgend (including voluntary controlled schools) who are their own admission authority and the Bridgend Admission Forum.
- 2.3 The local authority is required to publish annually the following:
- the co-ordinated school admissions arrangements; and
 - an admissions policy and guidance on the admission arrangements for its schools.
- 2.4 These are published on the local authority's website.
- 2.5 The co-ordinated school admissions arrangements includes details of how the scheme is to be administered, the participants in the scheme, a timetable of actions and the published admission number (PAN) for each school in Bridgend to which the arrangements apply is also required to be published.
- 2.6 The PAN for a school is the number of pupils that can be admitted to any year group for statutory-age pupils.

3. Current situation/proposal

- 3.1 The consultation on the 2027-2028 arrangements took place with all parties between 28 October 2024 and 15 November 2024 (refer to paragraph 2.2).
- 3.2. One response to the consultation was received, regarding a minor point of clarity in relation to section 3 of the Co-ordinated School Admissions Arrangements 2027-2028. A minor amendment was made to ensure grammatical correctness.

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

- 4.1. An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening has identified that there would be no negative impact on those with one or more of the protected characteristics, on socio-economic disadvantage or the use of the Welsh Language. It is therefore not necessary to carry out a full EIA on this policy or proposal.
- 4.2 It is a statutory duty that admission authorities are mindful of their duties with regards to equalities legislation. The Co-ordinated School Admissions Arrangements 2027-2028 adheres to these requirements.
- 4.3 A Welsh Language Impact Assessment has been carried out (see **Appendix B**). The outcome of the assessment is that the local authority's proposed Co-ordinated School Admissions Arrangements 2027-2028 should have a neutral impact on opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, opportunities to promote the Welsh language, the local authority's compliance with the statutory Welsh Language Standards and treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives

5.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 assessment has been completed. A summary of the implications from the assessment relating to the five ways of working is as follows:

Long-term

The co-ordinated school admission arrangements will support the school admissions policy, to set out how the local authority will balance the discharge of its statutory duty in relation to parental preference, the need to safeguard the delivery of effective education and the safety of pupils, and the need to support pupils in particular circumstances (for example, learners with specific vulnerabilities), in circumstances where the applications for places at a school exceed the number of available places.

Prevention

The Co-ordinated School Admission Arrangements allow stakeholders to raise issues or make comments on proposals, for consideration of appropriate actions.

Integration

The Co-ordinated School Admission Arrangements support the allocation of school places and therefore the provision of education in the communities in which pupils live.

Collaboration

The local authority has worked in conjunction with key stakeholders to develop the proposed Co-ordinated School Admission Arrangements, for maintained community and voluntary-aided schools.

Involvement

In accordance with the specified requirements of the Education (Co-ordination of School Admission Arrangements and Miscellaneous Amendments) (Wales) Regulations 2024, local authorities are required to formulate and publish a scheme to co-ordinate admission arrangements for all maintained schools, (except school sixth-form places, maintained special schools and maintained Nursery schools, but including boarding schools) within their area. The local authority will consult each year on the proposed Co-ordinated School Admission Arrangements for the relevant year these arrangements apply to.

5.2 A summary of the implications from the assessment relating to the Council's new seven well-being objectives, is as follows:

1 A County Borough where we protect our most vulnerable

The local authority's Co-ordinated School Admissions Arrangements 2027-2028 adheres to the statutory requirements to ensure that admissions for vulnerable

learners are processed as detailed in the Welsh Government's School Admissions Code 2013. Applications received in respect of vulnerable learners will continue to be processed as per Section 8 of the School Admissions Policy to ensure fair access to mainstream school places for individual children within the specific groups, in accordance with the defined terms of reference. The Co-ordinated School Admissions Arrangements 2027-2028 will not impact on the admission policy for community maintained and voluntary-aided schools.

2 A County Borough with fair work, skilled, high-quality jobs and thriving towns

Access to good education and ensuring children have equal opportunities to realise their potential are critical to helping young people acquire the knowledge and skills they need for work. The Co-ordinated School Admissions Arrangements 2027-2028 in conjunction with the School Admissions Policy 2027-2028 will ensure that statutory requirements are met, to provide an admissions system that is accessible to all, encompassing the principles of fairness, consistency and openness across all aspects of schools admissions. It plays a crucial role in delivering equality of opportunity. The Co-ordinated School Admissions Arrangements 2027-2028 is a separate scheme that works to support a simplified process of school admissions, and to provide parents with the need to submit a single application and to receive a single offer of a school place for their child. This scheme will support the regulatory duty of the admission authority.

3 A County Borough with thriving valleys communities

Access to good education, raising standards of achievement and ensuring children have equal opportunities to realise their potential, wherever they may reside, are critical to helping young people acquire the knowledge and skills they need for work. The Co-ordinated School Admissions Arrangements 2027-2028 in conjunction with the School Admissions Policy 2027-2028 will ensure the statutory requirements are met to provide an admissions system that is accessible to all, encompassing the principles of fairness, consistency and openness across all aspects of schools admissions. It plays a crucial role in delivering equality of opportunity. The Co-ordinated School Admissions Arrangements 2027-2028 is a separate scheme that works to support a simplified process of school admissions, and to provide parents with the need to submit a single application and to receive a single offer of a school place for their child. This scheme will support the regulatory duty of the admission authority.

4 A County Borough where we help people meet their potential

The Co-ordinated School Admissions Arrangements 2027-2028 ensures that children and young people have access to good education and equal opportunities to realise their potential.

5 A County Borough that is responding to the climate and nature emergency

The Co-ordinated School Admissions Arrangements 2027-2028 will be accessible to all residents online at <https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/residents/schools-and-education/school-admissions/apply-for-admission-to-school/> thus reducing the local authority's carbon footprint.

6 A County Borough where people feel valued, heard and part of their community

The Co-ordinated School Admissions Arrangements 2027-2028 has regard to the general principle that pupils are to be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents/carers, 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).

7 A County Borough where we support people to live healthy and happy lives

The local authority's Co-ordinated School Admissions Arrangements 2027-2028 allows children and young people by providing access to schools and education where they can learn to thrive and make the best use of their talents, live healthy and safe lives, be confident and caring individuals and know and receive their rights.

6. Climate Change Implications

- 6.1 The local authority, as the admission authority has a strategic role in considering the impact of net zero carbon and how to deliver this important national initiative.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

- 7.1 The Education (Admission of Looked-After Children) (Wales) Regulations 2009 places a duty on the admission authority to admit children looked after by the local authority, where an application is made by the corporate parent on their behalf. The School Admissions Policy 2027-2028 will continue to ensure that the local authority, adheres to this statutory requirement. The Co-ordinated School Admissions Arrangements 2027-2028 is a separate scheme that intends to simplify the process of school admissions and to provide parents with a single offer of a school place for their child. This scheme will support the regulatory duty of the admission authority to adhere to the legislation referenced above.

8. Financial implications

- 8.1 There are no financial implications regarding this report.

9. Recommendation

- 9.1 Cabinet is recommended to approve the Co-ordinated School Admissions Arrangements 2027-2028 (as in **Appendix A**).

Background documents:

None