Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol
MERTHYR TUDFUL
MERTHYR TYDFIL
County Borough Council



SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR PARENTS 2027-2028

This booklet has been designed to give parents/carers general information about Merthyr Tydfil's nursery, primary, secondary, and special schools and, more specifically, details about the admissions and appeals arrangements governing those schools. This document is published in accordance with the Education Act 1996 and the School Standards and Framework Act 1998

The information relates to the school year 2027/2028 and, although correct at September 2026, does not preclude changes to the relevant arrangements before the start of, or during, the 2027/2028 school year or subsequent years.

The booklet is intended to be informative and helpful to parents/carers who have a right to express a preference for their child to attend any school.

Customer Contact Centre:

Tel: (01685) 725000

email: school.admissions@merthyr.gov.uk
website: www.merthyr.gov.uk

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Foreword

Welcome to Merthyr Tydfil's school admissions booklet.

Whether your child is starting school for the first time, moving on to secondary education, or joining our community from elsewhere, this is an exciting and important milestone for your family. We are delighted that you are considering one of our schools and hope this booklet helps you make an informed decision about the next stage of your child's educational journey.

Merthyr Tydfil is a place with high aspirations for its children and young people. We are proud of our schools, our dedicated staff, and the strong partnerships that exist between families, schools and the wider community. Together, we share a common ambition: ***every learner thriving, every school strong, every community engaged.*** This commitment underpins everything we do and reflects our determination to ensure that every child and young person is supported to achieve their full potential.

Our schools provide welcoming, inclusive and nurturing environments where learners are encouraged to develop the knowledge, skills and confidence they need to succeed in life. Dedicated staff work tirelessly to inspire young people, raise aspirations and create opportunities that enable all learners to flourish both academically and personally.

As you consider your options, I encourage you to take the time to learn more about each school's individual character and strengths. School websites, prospectuses and open events can provide valuable insight into school life and help you determine which environment will best support your child's needs. You may also wish to consider whether English-medium, Welsh-medium or faith-based education is the right choice for your family. Welsh-medium education offers a unique opportunity for children to develop valuable bilingual skills that can enrich their lives and widen future opportunities.

Education is most successful when schools and families work together. Parents and carers play a vital role in supporting learning, fostering ambition and helping children make the most of every opportunity available to them. We greatly value this partnership and look forward to working alongside you throughout your child's educational journey.

On behalf of Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, I would like to wish your child every success and happiness as they begin the next stage of their educational journey. Whatever school you choose, we are committed to ensuring that every learner is supported to achieve their best, develop their talents and aspirations, and benefit from a rich and rewarding educational experience. We look forward to working in partnership with you and your child's school to help them realise their full potential and enjoy a bright future.



RYAN MORGAN
Director of Education/
Cyfarwyddwr Addysg



Councillor Brent Carter
Leader of MTCBC

SCHOOL TERM AND HOLIDAY DATES ACADEMIC YEAR 2026-2027

ase note that these timetables are subject to any changes that may arise as a result of government policy decisions. Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council does not accept liability for any losses incurred in respect of altered holiday arrangements following such changes.

TERM	TERM BEGINS	HALF TERM STARTS	HALFT TERM ENDS	TERM ENDS	NO OF SCHOOL DAYS
AUTUMN 2026	Tuesday 1st September	Monday 26th October	Friday 30th October	Friday 18th December	74
SPRING 2027	Monday 4th January	Monday 8th February	Friday 12th February	Friday 19th March	50
SUMMER 2027	Monday 5th April	Monday 31st May	Friday 4th June	Tuesday 20th July	71
TOTAL					195

All schools will be closed on **Monday 3 May 2027** for the May Day Bank Holiday.

Significant dates:	Christmas	Friday 25 December 2026
	Easter	Good Friday 26 March 2027
		Easter Monday 29 March 2027
	May Bank Holidays	Monday 3 May 2027
		Monday 31 May 2027

ACADEMIC YEAR 2027-2028

TERM	TERM BEGINS	HALF TERM STARTS	HALFT TERM ENDS	TERM ENDS	NO OF SCHOOL DAYS
AUTUMN 2027	Wednesday 1st September	Monday 25th October	Friday 29th October	Friday 17th December	73
SPRING 2028	Tuesday 4th January	Monday 21st February	Friday 25th February	Friday 7th April	64
SUMMER 2028	Monday 24th April	Monday 29th May	Friday 2nd June	Thursday 20th July	58
TOTAL					195

All schools will be closed on **Monday 1 May 2028** for the May Day Bank Holiday.

Significant dates:	Christmas	Saturday 25 December 2027
	Easter	Good Friday 14 April 2028
		Easter Monday 17 April 2028
	May Bank Holidays	Monday 1 May 2028
		Monday 29 May 2028

When to apply for a school place?
Admission Timetables for Academic Year 2027-2028

Admission Cohort	Age of Pupil	On-line Opens	On-line Closes	Decision letters Issued
Secondary School Year 7	12th birthday falls between 1st September 2027 and 31st August 2028	23rd June 2026	31st October 2026	1st March 2027
Primary School - Reception Class (i.e. Age 4 before 1st Sept 2027)	5th birthday falls between 1st September 2027 and 31st August 2028	23rd June 2026	31st December 2026	16th April 2027

Appeal Timetable Reception and Year 7 only		
Admission Cohort	**Closing Date for Receipt of Appeals**	**Appeals Heard**
Primary School – Reception Class	30th April 2027	Within 30 school days of the appeal being received in writing
Secondary School – Year 7	16th March 2027	Within 30 school days of the appeal being received in writing

Should an appeal application be unsuccessful, you will be offered a hearing by an independent appeal panel.

Appeals 2025-26

During the Academic Year 2025-26, the Local Authority received no appeals from parents /carers

Pre-Nursery/ Nursery Timetable for Academic Year 2027-2028

Admission Cohort	Age of Pupil	APPLICATIONS TO BE RETURNED BY	DECISION NOTIFICATIONS ISSUED	START DATE
Primary School Nursery Class – September 2027 (i.e. Age 3 before 1st September 2027)	4th birthday falls between: 1st September 2027 and 31st August 2028	30th November 2026	12th December 2026	September 2027
Pre-Nursery January 2026	3rd birthday falls between: 1st September and 31st December 2027	28th February 2027	27th March 2027	January 2028
Pre-Nursery April 2026	3rd birthday falls between: 1st January and 31st March 2028	31st May 2027	3rd July 2027	April 2028

ALL FORMS MUST BE RETURNED TO THE SCHOOLS ADMISSION TEAM AT
School.Admissions@merthyr.gov.uk

A. ADMISSIONS TO MERTHYR TYDFIL SCHOOLS

CHOOSING A SCHOOL

The entry of children to schools is controlled and administered by an 'Admissions Authority'. In the case of community schools, the admissions authority is Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council also known as the Local Authority (LA)

In the case of voluntary aided (faith) schools, the admissions authority is the governing body of the individual school.

Within the County Borough, each school has its own designated catchment area. Most parents/carers send their child to the 'local' school, but some parents/carers exercise their right to state a preference for a different school. In all cases parents/carers of pupils who are due to change schools in September 2027 will need to indicate, on the official admission application, their preferred school. No-one has an automatic right to attend a school but all official applications, submitted before the closing date, will be considered.

On-line admissions Apply for a school place | Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council will be open for **all relevant parents/carers in the week commencing 23rd June 2026. Hard copy applications will be available upon request and will need to be returned to, School Admissions Team, Learning Department, Civic Centre, Castle Street, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 8AN. The admission timetable is as follows:**

Admission cohort	Closing Date
Secondary School Year 7	31st October 2026
Primary School Reception Class (age 4 before 1st September 2027)	31st December 2026
Primary School Nursery Class (age 3 before 1st September 2027)	30th November 2026
Primary School Pre-Nursery Class **Spring Term – January 2028** (3rd birthday falls between 1st September 2025 and 31st December 2027)	28th February 2027
Primary School Pre-Nursery Class **Summer Term – April 2028** (3rd birthday falls between 1st January 2026 and 31st March 2027)	31st May 2027

Parents/carers need to apply for a place:

- For admission to pre-nursery / nursery class. Please note that entry at pre-nursery and nursery are separate entries, but we will use the one application form for both entries unless a parent advises us otherwise;
- For admission to a reception class;
- For transfer from primary school to secondary school; and
- At any time they wish to transfer their child from one school to another.

Parents/carers may further express their right of preference for a Welsh-medium school, or a voluntary aided school.

The local authority and school governors **must** comply with any preference expressed, provided there is room within the school. However, the decision to admit pupils must have regard for:

- the overall provision of efficient education and efficient use of resources;
- the 1998 Education Act, which allows an admission authority to refuse to comply with parental/carer preference for a period of two years following a second or subsequent permanent exclusion.
- requests on behalf of pupils living outside the 'catchment' area, which must be considered in the knowledge of the future demand for places from within the school's local area;
- class size limits guidance, which limits the number of pupils in each class in primary schools to 30.

A pupil who attends a school outside his/her local designated catchment area and subsequently makes an application to attend the local area school will not have an automatic right of admission to that school. The decision regarding admission will depend upon the admission number of the school and the number of pupils in the particular year group i.e. whether there is room.

The catchment areas for schools providing primary education are normally grouped together to form a linked catchment area for each maintained secondary school. Pupils who reside outside a secondary school's catchment area must seek admission via the published arrangements. Admission/attendance of pupils at a feeder primary school does not provide automatic entry to the preferred secondary school.

All schools within the Authority aim to provide their pupils with an educational opportunity best suited to the needs of the individual child. Some pupils will have learning needs requiring special educational provision and, in some instances, parents/carers will receive specialist support and guidance regarding the choice of school for their child. All parents/carers are encouraged to discuss possible areas of concern with their local headteacher, who also has access to specialist advice. The Authority's policy takes into account the provision of the Additional Learning Needs (Wales) Act, and the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Code.

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council will process the information you provide in accordance with the Data Protection Legislation, including the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Any personal information will be held in confidence with only the necessary people able to see or use it. The people who may receive the information you provide include: the current school (if any), the school to which the pupil is to be admitted to, ALN, Inclusion, Social Services, Children Looked After and any organisation, including other Council Departments, legitimately investigating allegations of fraud, other criminal offences or child protection. Please note that your information may also be crosschecked and verified against information held by other Council Departments. Information may also be used in an anonymous form for statistical purposes.

ADMISSION LIMIT

Every school has an admission number which is determined according to the physical size of the school in accordance with the Welsh Government's 'Measuring the Capacity of Schools in Wales' calculation. The admission number represents the number of pupils which should be admitted to the school's normal year of entry (i.e., reception in primary schools and Year 7 in secondary schools) if sufficient applications for admission are received. The admission number should not normally be exceeded. In all but the most

exceptional circumstances, the admission number would be applied to year groups other than the normal year of entry. In the list of schools on pages 24-26 the admission limit is indicated.

A child will normally be offered admission to a school of the parents'/carers' preference unless the admission number has been reached. Where applications exceed places, the admissions oversubscription criteria (set out on page 14) will be applied.

The size of Foundation Phase Classes is restricted by law to 30 or fewer pupils. If the relevant admission number has been reached, the local authority will not admit a child to a year group where to do so would conflict with the class size legislation. However, certain types of children ('excepted pupils') can be discounted for the purposes of ascertaining whether or not the limit of 30 is exceeded. These now include:-

- 'children looked after' and 'previously children looked after' admitted outside the normal admissions round;
- reception pupils who are admitted out of the normal admissions round after the first day of the school year where the school has not reached it's admission number but has already organised its classes and;
- where there is only one place available and children of multiple births (twins, triplets) have next priority, to conform with infant class size legislation, parents will be given a choice of place at time of application.

The regulations can allow exceptions to the class size limits in these circumstances.

All primary schools in the County Borough also provide nursery education. However, there is **no automatic entry to:**

- nursery class from a pre-nursery group (for pupils aged 3 by 1st September);
- reception class for children (aged 4 by 1st September) who have attended a nursery class at a school

Applications for places will be required and oversubscription criteria will be applied if necessary.

The normal ages for admission in Merthyr Tydfil County Borough are:
Age 3-4 in nursery class,
Age 4-5 in primary schools,
Age 11-12 in secondary schools.

ORGANISATION OF SCHOOLS

All schools in the authority are mixed gender

1. Nursery Education

It has been the local authority's long-standing position that every child should have access to a free **part-time** nursery education from the start of the term following the child's third birthday. In practice, children start attending nursery education in school at the age of 3 or 4 years, depending on class number limitations and local demand.

- All pre-nursery places will be part time and will be for a minimum of 2.5 hours per day.
- All nursery places will be full time and will be 5 hours per day.

Please note:

- Nursery age pupils do not qualify for free home to school transport
- For pre-nursery pupils (part time places), the allocation of morning and afternoon sessions is the responsibility of the Headteacher of the school. **A child's start date at Nursery may be delayed if they are not fully toilet trained. This can be discussed with the school once a place has been allocated to the child.**
- While schools play a vital role in supporting children's overall development, toilet training is an essential personal milestone that is best guided by parents or caregivers at home.
- Establishing these skills before starting school helps ensure a smooth and comfortable transition for both the child and the learning environment. In some cases, children who are not yet toilet trained may experience a delay in starting school, so it is important to ensure they have reached this stage before admission.
- In very few cases, where children may have emerging needs, a disability or a medical condition and are not toilet trained by the time of school admission, a bespoke transition arrangement may be considered. Further information can be found within the MTCBC toileting guidance.
- Support for parents / carers on bladder & bowel health and toilet training skills is available via the following websites.
  - o Resources for bladder and bowel problems in children
  - o How to potty train - NHS

Pre-nursery Admissions (Rising 3's)

Children who turn 3 between 1st September and 31st March (Rising 3's) are eligible to apply for a pre-nursery place to commence the term after their third birthday i.e. in the Spring and Summer Terms each year. Pre-nursery places are provided subject to availability and cannot be guaranteed at any school. Once the nursery accommodation is deemed to be full, no further pre-nursery pupils may be admitted.

Those children who are admitted to a **pre-nursery class will not have an automatic right to continue education at that school**. Whilst every effort will be made to accommodate these pupils to transfer into the Nursery class the following September, **there may be occasions when, due to oversubscription, it will not be possible for this transfer to take place**.

There is no right of appeal for pre-nursery and nursery places.

Key dates for applications can be found on page 3 of this booklet

As far as possible, the local authority will ensure that provision is available within the family's first preference school. However, where schools are unable to meet the demand, a place in an alternative school(s) will be offered.

Registered Education Providers (REPs) in Non-Maintained Settings

The local authority can provide Early Years grant funding for children to access a part-time nursery education place at one of the three Registered Education Providers (REPs) in Merthyr Tydfil as an alternative to attending nursery education in a school.

These settings are currently registered as Early Years Education Providers in Merthyr Tydfil and their details are:-

- Cylch Meithrin (Welsh Medium), based at Carmel Chapel, Twyncarmel.
- Little Rascals Pre-School, based at the Integrated Childrens Centre, Pentrebach.
- Blossom Early Years, Heolgerrig Road, Heolgerrig, CF48 1RP.

Under the Childcare Offer for Wales, parents are able to claim **up to 30 hours a week of early education and childcare** for 3- and 4 year old children, for up to **48 weeks of the year**.

Welsh Government 30-hour Education/Childcare Offer | merthyr.gov.uk | Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council

In Merthyr Tydfil, the Offer provides a **maximum of 30 hours of combined nursery education and additional funded childcare**. All eligible parents are offered **a minimum of 12.5 hours of Early Years Education and 17.5 hours of childcare**. This also applies to those who choose to use the Offer within a different Local Authority.

Parents are **not required** to access their nursery education entitlement in order to use the childcare element of the Offer. However, their total entitlement will still include these education hours whether they choose to access them or not.

All Merthyr Tydfil resident children are eligible for a **Pre Nursery or Nursery place** starting the term following their third birthday. The type of place—part time or full time—depends on their date of birth:

- Children eligible to start Nursery in **September (Autumn term)** will receive a **full time place**.
- Children eligible to start in **January (Spring term) or April (Summer term)** will receive a part time place.

For children receiving a **part time Nursery place**, the 30 hour offer is made up of **12.5 hours of early education** and **17.5 hours of childcare**.

Children who receive a **full time Nursery place** can **only apply for the Childcare Offer during school holidays**, as they are not eligible for funded childcare during term time. They can continue to access funded holiday childcare until the end of the summer holidays following their fourth birthday. This applies even if parents choose not to take up the Nursery education place or if the child attends school in another Local Authority.

If you require any further information on Early Years Education Providers, the **Early Years Team** can be contacted on 01685 727387 / 727374.

The local authority will not fund places in non-maintained settings in other county boroughs.

Nursery Admissions (Rising 4's)

Pupils who are admitted to a **nursery class will not have an automatic right to continue education at that school**. Whilst every effort will be made to accommodate these pupils, a formal application **must** be made for transfer to the reception class (upon transfer from nursery). **There may be occasions when, due to oversubscription, it will not be possible for this transfer to take place**.

The key dates for applications can be found on page 3 of this booklet

Criteria for Pupil Entry to a nursery class/school

For details of the over subscription criteria for pupil entry please refer to "*What happens when too many children apply for places?*"

2. Admission to Reception Class

Parents/carers of children attending a nursery class in a school, or a feeder nursery school, have to apply

for a place in the main school when the child reaches the age for admission to primary school. **Children attending a nursery class do not transfer automatically to the school.**

The key dates for applications can be found on page 3 of this booklet. On-line Admissions will be open during the autumn term and it is important that you do not miss out on a place due to a late application.

3. Admission to Primary Schools

In Merthyr Tydfil, children between the ages of 3/4-11 years are recognised as pupils receiving primary education.

Attendance at school between the age of three to the date of the child's fifth birthday is optional and parents have the right to defer their child's entry to school until the term following their fifth birthday.

All children are entitled to start school at the beginning of the school year (September) in which they become five. Children will be able to attend school when they are aged three or four and parents should discuss this provision with the staff at School Admissions Team.

Every child is required by law to receive a full-time education from the beginning of the school term after his/her fifth birthday.

If parents/carers choose to defer their child's start date until the term after they turn five, the parent should notify the local authority in writing by 22nd December 2026. This can be done by emailing school.admissions@merthyr.gov.uk, or by sending a letter to School Admissions, Learning Department, Civic Centre, Castle Street, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 8AN.

4. Admission to Secondary Schools

Children will transfer from primary school to secondary school at the beginning of the school year following their eleventh birthday. All such transfers must be made by means of a completed application form. For children born between 1st September 2015 and 31st August 2016 he/she will transfer to the local secondary school provision in September 2027. Headteachers of primary schools will be able to inform parents/carers of the secondary school which their children should normally attend and advise parents/carers of the transport arrangements adopted by the local authority. If parents/carers wish their child to attend a secondary school which does not serve their locality, they should contact the School Admissions Team for advice (01685 725000). Applications for such admissions should be made as early as possible and as stipulated in "Applying for a Place" (page 13). The relevant criteria is listed in "What Happens When Too Many Children Apply for Places?" (page 14).

5. Changing Schools

Changing schools at any point is a serious step for a child. Such a decision may be unavoidable, e.g. as a consequence of the family moving home, and parents in such circumstances will need to contact the local school as well as the School Admissions Team for assistance (01685 725000). If parents/carers would like their child to transfer from one school to another they should first discuss the position with the present headteacher. If, following this discussion, parents/carers still wish to transfer their child to a new school they should contact the School Admissions Team for advice before making the application.

Please also refer to Section B (page 27) for information relating to home to school transport.

If the relevant year group in the receiving school has not reached the school's published admissions limit

(including, where appropriate, the recognised number of reserve places) for children whose parents/carers have already applied for a place at the school for them, then the child should be admitted to the school.

Primary Transfers - Classes may include more than one age group, in which case the Headteacher will have the task of locating the child in the most appropriate class. The Government has limited the number of children able to attend primary classes to a maximum of 30 pupils, in reception, Year 1 and Year 2 classes. This could result in no suitable vacancy being available.

Secondary Transfers - Parent/Carers should note that the availability of option choices and the curriculum being followed may vary from school to school, and this can present as a concern when moving schools, especially during years 10/11. It should not be assumed that the same option choices will be available in another school.

WAITING LISTS

For those schools which may become oversubscribed, the local authority maintains a waiting list. Following the allocation of places during the normal admission round, any pupil that is refused admission to an over-subscribed school will remain on this list, which will be maintained until 30th September (in line with the recommendation in the Schools Admissions Code). Thereafter, parents/carers will be expected to make a fresh application for admission to their preferred school. Admissions in respect of pupils on waiting lists are determined by application of the over-subscription criteria, not by the length of time that a child has been on the waiting list.

WELSH LANGUAGE POLICY

In accordance with the Welsh Education Strategic Plan, it is the local authority's policy that every child should have the opportunity to learn and use the Welsh language.

There are two Welsh-medium primary schools in Merthyr Tydfil, and one Welsh medium nursery school provision:-

- Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Santes Tudful
- Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Rhyd-y-Grug
- Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Santes Tudful Safle'r Gurnos

Education is available at Welsh-medium primary schools to all pupils whose parents select Welsh medium education. Although the main medium of instruction is Welsh, high standards in English are maintained.

Pupils attending Welsh-medium primary schools will be able to continue their education in a Welsh medium secondary school, this will take place outside of the County Borough of Merthyr Tydfil. The local authority has a successful partnership with Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Welsh as a second language in English medium schools

Welsh is taught to all pupils from Foundation Phase. Emphasis is placed on the development of oral skills within a meaningful context. The incidental use of the language during the school day is encouraged.

Welsh is further developed at Key Stage 2 with a greater emphasis on reading and writing skills. Since September 1999, Welsh has also been taught to all pupils at Key Stages 3 and 4.

Our Welsh Medium schools both have an immersion class within their school to support pupils who wish to transfer from an English speaking school to a Welsh speaking school. This class is available to pupils up to the age of 11 and pupils will be supported to fast track their Welsh language skills in order to fully integrate into a Welsh school.

As such, it may not be too late to switch to Welsh Medium.

Please contact the relevant Welsh Medium School of your choice for details.

There are also 5 Cylch Meithrins available in Merthyr Tydfil for parents who wish for their pre-school child to attend a Welsh language pre-school provision:
Cylch Meithrin Aberfan
Cylch Meithrin Gurnos
Cylch Meithrin Pentrebach
Cylch Meithrin Treharris
Cylch Meithrin Twyncarmel

For further information, please contact the Family Information Service on 01685 725000 or fis@merthyr.gov.uk

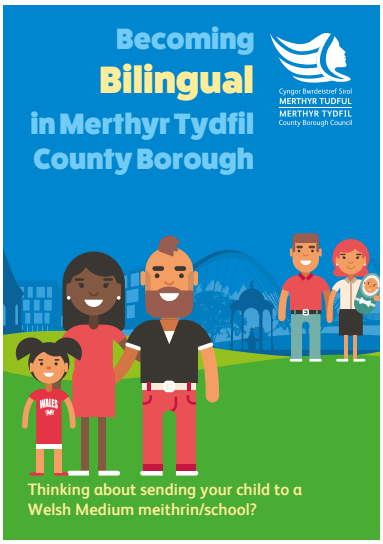
Welsh as a second language in English medium schools

Welsh is taught to all pupils from Foundation Phase. Emphasis is placed on the development of oral skills within a meaningful context. The incidental use of the language during the school day is encouraged.

Welsh is further developed at Key Stage 2 with a greater emphasis on reading and writing skills. Since September 1999, Welsh has also been taught to all pupils at Key Stages 3 and 4.

To find out more about the benefits of a Welsh Medium Education, please refer to the Becoming Bilingual Booklet, which can be found on the Council's website www.merthyr.gov.uk.

Becoming Bilingual Booklet



ADMISSION TO WELSH MEDIUM SCHOOLS

Have you thought of sending your child to Welsh Medium Education?

The benefits to Welsh Medium Education are huge and this includes:

- Being able to speak two languages
- Having the opportunity to gain employment in Welsh once finished education

Welsh-medium education has a very simple aim - to enable children to become fully fluent in both English and Welsh while teaching all the other subjects across the curriculum.

Full support is given from the school to parents on helping their children with Welsh medium education. Parents do not have to be Welsh speaking to send their children to a Welsh medium school.

It's never too late to access Welsh medium education. It is available to all learners in Merthyr Tydfil and can be an option for a mid-term transfer. There is a dedicated teacher for Welsh immersion who visits the home school of the pupil to provide intensive Welsh sessions so that learners can access the curriculum with their peers within a short period of time.

Speaking Welsh at home is not essential – all kinds of families can take advantage of Welsh medium education. Families from all kinds of ethnic and religious backgrounds and families from other parts of Wales, the UK, or the world, can access the immersion provision and provide an opportunity for their child to learn another language and embrace all the benefits of bilingualism.

There is support available for parents and carers such as apps, websites, videos and access to Welsh classes. There are also lots of bilingual events in the local and wider community which provide opportunities to hear and use Welsh in a social context.

After submission of your application, the School Admissions team will seek further information from the current school. The school transfer can take up to 15 school days to be completed, from the date of receipt of the information from the current school.

Paper applications, and further advice, are available either by calling (01685) 725000, or by emailing School.Admissions@merthyr.gov.uk

ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR PUPILS WITH ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS

Pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) may require access to specialist provision, such as a Learning Resource Base (LRB). Admission to a LRB is determined via a multi-agency panel and is regularly reviewed to ensure it remains the most appropriate provision for the child.

Where a child has attended an Early Years LRB, there is no automatic entitlement to attend a Key Stage 2 LRB. This placement would be determined by an Additional Learning Needs Placement Panel.

If a child has made sufficient progress to return to mainstream education, an application for admission would need to be made to their catchment area school. Parent/carers would retain the right to express a preference. In such case, any application for admission would be treated in exactly the same way as any other application for mainstream education and would therefore be subject to the published admissions process.

Pupils with an Individual Development Plan (IDP) maintained by the school

Admission arrangements for children with ALN who have an IDP maintained by the school are treated on the same basis as other applicants. Applications are considered on the basis of the local authority's admission criteria.

Pupils with an Individual Development Plan maintained by the Local Authority

If a child has an Individual Development Plan maintained by the local authority, the ALN team within the local authority will be responsible for advising on the additional learning provision required and on discussions related to placement. However, unless a child requires placement in specialist provision, admissions arrangements are treated on the same basis as other applicants.

ARRANGEMENTS WITH NEIGHBOURING LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Parents may apply for their child to attend any school, in any mainstream local authority, subject to that school/local authority's admission criteria and providing that school has sufficient places. Enquiries should be made to the admission authority of that local authority in the first instance.

APPLYING FOR A SCHOOL PLACE

Applying for a place in a school must be made officially via the On-Line portal to the local authority or direct to the governing body of a voluntary aided school. The published criteria "What Happens When Too Many Children Apply for Places?" listed on page 14 will place all applicants in order of priority for admissions. The local authority offers admission places during the term before a child is due to start school. For details on admission deadlines, please see page 3.

The authority will inform parents/carers whether or not it is possible for a child to attend the preferred school. Parents/carers should not hesitate to discuss their request with the Headteacher who will, if appropriate, arrange for parents/carers to visit the school. You must apply on-line for Secondary and Reception at www.merthyr.gov.uk/apply-for-a-school-place.

Each school produces a prospectus which contains pertinent information including details of its aims and educational beliefs, organisation, curriculum opportunities, and any extra curricular activities. A school's prospectus is available from the headteacher of the school, or via the school web site.

TIMING OF ADMISSIONS PROCESS

For details on admission and appeal deadlines, please see page 3.

Late applications

Applications received after the relevant deadline will be accepted. However, priority will be given to those applications received before the deadline. Applications in respect of 'children looked after' or children with statements of SEN, naming a specific school, will be accepted when such applications are received.

PLEASE NOTE – As of 30th June 2027, we will not be accepting applications for a school transfer for the rest of the current academic year. The application form will reopen on Monday 16th August 2027.

School transfer applications made using any of our other application forms will be void and you will need to make an application using the correct form once the form becomes available on 16th August 2027.

Please be aware of this if you are thinking of transferring your child to another school and require a September start. The application will need to be received by the authority before the 30th June 2027.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN TOO MANY CHILDREN APPLY FOR PLACES?

If the number of preferences for a school is below the school's admission number, all applications for admission to the school will be granted. Places cannot be reserved for 'in catchment' children unless they are children of reception age whose parents have applied for their entry to school to be deferred until a later date in the same school year.

If there are more applicants than places available, the local authority will apply the following oversubscription criteria in order to determine the allocation of available places:

Priority Category 1: 'Children Looked After' (children in public care) and previous 'Children Looked After'.

Priority Category 2: Children whose home is inside the school's catchment area and have an older sibling attending the school from the same address, at the date of application, who will continue to attend that school in September 2027.

Priority Category 3: Children whose home is inside the school's catchment area who do not have an older sibling attending the school.

Priority Category 4: Children whose home is outside the school's catchment area and have an older sibling attending from the same address, at the date of application, who will continue to attend that school in September 2027.

Priority Category 5: Children whose home is outside the school's catchment area who do not have an older sibling attending the school.

For the avoidance of all doubt the reference to 'home' in the oversubscription categories above and the 'tie breaker' below refers to the actual location of the residential dwelling in which the child lives.

- Children will be classified as siblings if:-
  a) They are full or half brother or sister
  b) They are an adopted or fostered brother or sister
  c) They are children living full-time/permanently in the same household i.e. stepbrother/stepsister

PLEASE NOTE THAT COUSINS, NIECES OR NEPHEWS ARE NOT COUNTED AS SIBLINGS

Childcare/childminding arrangements or a parent's place of work cannot be taken into account when applying admissions criteria.

For further information, please email us at school.admissions@merthyr.gov.uk, or call the Customer Contact Centre (01685) 725000 and ask for the School Admissions Team.

Tie breaker

Children will be admitted up to the Admission Number in order of priority as outlined above. Children residing within MTCBC will be given priority for admissions over out of county pupils. If, within any one of the priority categories listed, all the applicants cannot be offered a place, preference will be given to children living nearest to the school. Distance will be measured by the authority using the shortest safe walking route between the home address and the nearest open school gate. For the avoidance of doubt, in areas where no safe walking route has been identified by the authority, the shortest driving route between the home address and the nearest open school gate will be used. The distance will be measured by using the authority's 'mapping schools' electronic system only, in order to ensure equality of opportunity to all applications. Measurements calculated by any other system will not be considered. The home address in instances where parents have shared responsibility for children, will be the address to which Child Benefit is paid.

'Children Looked After' will also be admitted to a chosen school outside of the normal admissions round. The admission cannot be refused unless doing so would seriously prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources.

Appeals

Appeals Process

Parents/Carers will be notified, in writing, of the outcome of their application including the means of appealing against the decision. Where there is recourse to appeal, this can be done in Welsh or English.
On the application parents/carers are required to enter a first, second and third preference of school. If, having applied the admissions criteria, it has not been possible to admit the child(ren) to their first preference school, arrangements will be made for admission to the second preference. If parents/carers are unhappy with this outcome, they may lodge an appeal against the School Admissions decision.*

Where parents/carers have not stated a second or third preference, for compulsory school age applications, they will be contacted and asked whether, they wish to:

1) Make a second preference of their own choosing.
2) Accept an alternative school which can be offered by the Local Authority (LA).
3) Appeal against the decision not to admit the child(ren) to the first preference school. * Not applicable for applications for entry to nursery schools or classes, or pre-nursery provision.

Appeals Procedure

Parents/Carers wishing to appeal against the outcome of their application for the admission of their child(ren) to a school (other than a Voluntary Aided Church school) must;

1. Provide the Local Authority with a written letter of appeal within 10 working days of the admission decision.
2. Include the following information in the letter

a. Name and date of birth of your child.
b. Name of the preference school to which a place has been refused.
c. The grounds on which your appeal is being made.

3. Forward the letter of appeal to; The Director of Education, Civic Centre, Castle Street, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 8AN or e-mail school.admissions@merthyr.gov.uk



The LA's school admissions officer will arrange for any appeals to be heard by an independent panel. Appeals will be heard within 30 school days of the closing date for the receipt of appeals.

Parents/Carers will be given at least 14 days, from the date of posting i.e. 10 working days, written notice of the date on which the appeal will be heard. A shorter timescale may be operated with the agreement of both parties.

Parents/Carers may attend the hearing and make representation to the panel (written and/or verbal). Parents/Carers will be given the option to speak Welsh at the meeting. In such circumstances where the meeting cannot wholly be conducted in Welsh, simultaneous translation services will be provided.

If parents/carers choose to attend the hearing, they may be accompanied or represented by a friend, adviser, interpreter or signer who will be present in a supportive capacity only, unless the parents/carers elects that the friend/representative speaks on their behalf. If parents/carers intend to be accompanied they should inform the LA in advance.

Should parents/carers choose to be represented by a solicitor, the LA must be notified in writing at least 7 days before the date of the hearing (address as above).

Parents/Carers must not be accompanied by a member of the County Borough Council, a Local Authority Officer or local politician as this may lead to a conflict of interest.

Parents/Carers may choose not to attend the hearing, the outcome will then be decided on the content of the original letter (and any additional written supportive information) forwarded by the parents/carers. Parents/Carers will be notified of the outcome of the appeal, in writing, within 5 working days of the conclusion of the appeal hearing.

Acceptance of a second preference offer does not prevent parents/carers lodging an appeal against the decision not to admit the child(ren) to the first preference school.

Please note it is the parent/carers responsibility to prove that an appeal request has been sent and therefore we strongly advise that all appeal requests are sent via recorded delivery or a tracked e- mail for evidence purposes.

Nursery Aged Children (age under 5).
There is no recourse to appeal the refusal to admit to pre-nursery or nursery aged children (on either a full-time or part-time basis) to a school.

Basis of Appeal

1) All permissible appeals will be considered in light of the LA's admissions criteria to determine whether the correct process has been followed in applying this criteria.
2) If it is found that the school is full, consideration will then be given to the strength of the parent's/carer's case to determine whether the child(ren) should still be admitted to that school.
3) In respect of an appeal against admissions to reception classes, year 1 or year 2, that are affected by the infant class size legislation limit of 30, the panel must only look at whether the admissions criteria were applied correctly.

Appeals to Voluntary Aided (Church) Schools

Appeals against decisions in respect of admission(s) to Saint Carlo Acutis 3-16 Catholic School must be made directly to the governing body of the school. This may be done by addressing the letter of appeal to the Clerk to the governing body and forwarding it to the school.

CATCHMENT AREAS

A school catchment area is a geographically defined area of addresses which is used to ensure that all schools receive an appropriate number of pupils from within the community. Catchment areas are used;

- to give parents an indication of their local school.
- to help schools identify the communities they serve.
- to prioritise admission of local children to schools when there are more applications than places available.
- as a planning tool to enable the council to forecast demand for education in an area and to plan to meet that demand.
- to assist with the organisation of school transport.

The authority manages the admission intake to schools using oversubscription criteria which ranks catchment area children as a high priority in the event that there are more applicants than spaces available. From time to time a review of catchment areas is necessary to ensure they still reflect the needs of the schools they serve whilst recognising that parental preference is also important. This will ensure, as far as possible, that pupils living in an area will be able to secure a place at their local school. Changes are also designed to provide a closer geographical relationship with schools receive an appropriate number of pupils from within the community.
If parents/carers are unsure which school normally serves their locality, they should visit our catchment area page on the website Check school catchment areas | Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council or contact the Customer Contact Centre (01685) 725000 and ask for the School Admissions Team for advice.

VERIFICATION OF INFORMATION

Home address
Verification of address, for example a Council Tax Statement, recent utility bill, exchange of contracts, should be attached to the application form. This must be the child's permanent home address. Any place approved on the basis of residence will be withdrawn if the pupil is no longer permanently resident at the address at the beginning of the school term to which the application relates.

Parental Responsibility
Only persons holding parental responsibility for the named child on an admission application, can make an application and will be required to make a declaration as part of the application process. Typically, it is expected that the person applying resides at the same address as the child, and is referred to as the 'parent' for admission purposes. Where parental responsibility is equally shared, the council will ask the child's parents to determine which parent should submit the application. If parents cannot agree and neither party has obtained a court order stating who should be making the application, then the LA will accept an application from the parent in receipt of the Child Benefit for the named child on the application and proof of this will be required. Parents should resolve their differences privately and not expect the LA to intervene in disputes between parents.

Medical Need
Children recommended for placement for medical, psychological or special educational reasons (these must be confirmed by the local authority's professional advisers).

Multiple Births
If, when applying the oversubscription criteria, the last child to be admitted is one of a multiple birth e.g.

twins, triplets, then the Authority will also consider admitting the other sibling(s), but will have due regard to infant class size legislation.

UK Service Personnel
Children of UK Service Personnel will be treated as in catchment if their application for admission form is accompanied by an official Ministry of Defence (MOD) or Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) letter declaring a definite return and confirmation of the new address.

WHAT HAPPENS IF A CHILD IS REFUSED A PLACE?

All maintained schools (including schools with a designated religious character), that have enough places available must offer a place to every child who has applied. In the vast majority of cases children are offered places at their parents/carers first choice of school. If a child is unable to gain admission to a preferred school, parents/carers will need to decide whether they are willing to accept a place offered at an alternative school or whether they wish to continue with their first application. If parents/carers choose the latter course they may appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel. The Independent Appeal Panel will judge whether there is a case for a child to be offered a place. Before parents/carers appeal, they are advised to fully consider the school/LA's admission criteria. It should be noted that only pupils of statutory school age have a right of appeal.

PLEASE NOTE: there is no right of appeal for nursery places.

Since the introduction of the regulations regarding infant class sizes, admission authorities may refuse to admit a child to a school where that admission would force the school to take additional measures in order to comply with the new limits. These may include employing an extra teacher, or undergoing significant building work.

Acceptance of a second or third choice of school offer does not prevent parents/carers lodging an appeal against the decision not to admit the child(ren) to the first choice school.

Appealing a Decision
If you are refused a place for your child(ren) at your preferred choice of school, you will be notified by e-mail or post (applicable to Reception and Transfer to Secondary School – Year7). We will only refuse a place at a school if the number of places exceeds the admission number. Parents/carers may choose to appeal to an independent panel if they believe there is justification for further consideration. Parents/carers may submit 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 the reasons for appeal, to: Director of Education, Learning Department, Civic Centre, Castle Street, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 8AN. The LA will then refer the appeal to the Independent Appeal Panel.

Parent/Carers are advised that:-

- they may attend the hearing and make representation to the panel, either in writing or verbally, should they wish to do so.
- they may elect not to attend the appeal meeting and, instead, allow the appeal to be considered on a written statement being submitted
- they can be accompanied by a friend, adviser or an interpreter. However, LA Councillors are not permitted to attend. Parents/carers are requested to inform the Clerk to the Independent Appeal Panel of any representations at least seven days before the hearing.

In an appeal against admission, the Appeal Panel will only be able to uphold an appeal if it is deemed that the admission authority had not properly implemented the admission policy.

MID TERM ADMISSIONS / SCHOOL TRANSFERS

There may be circumstances where a parent/carer considers that a transfer to a different school, outside of the normal admissions round, to be appropriate. Such a decision should not be taken lightly. Parents/carers should think carefully before making such a request. A change of school may not be the solution and may even worsen the situation. There is evidence to suggest that the attainment levels of children who move schools, particularly in Years 10 or 11, can be lower than those who remain at the same school throughout their secondary education. In deciding whether to apply for a transfer, it would be worth considering a number of very important factors:

1. **Current School** – Have the problems that the child is facing with their current school been discussed with the Headteacher? In many cases, schools can put measures in place to deal with any problems that a child is encountering e.g. bullying or struggling with work. Whatever the problem, simply changing schools may not be the answer.

2. **Curriculum** – The Curriculum for Wales Framework is set out nationally and includes curriculum requirements set out in legislation, as well as guidance. Schools will use the Framework and guidance to develop their own school level curriculum. Curriculum for Wales is not an 'off the shelf' programme for delivery. As a result, there may be a difference to the topics and activities that schools teach.

3. **Exams** – During Year 10 and Year 11, learners will be asked to consider different learning pathways. This maybe different across schools. If your child changes school, they may miss out on important work and exam results may suffer as a consequence. However, applications should not be refused because a child has followed a different curriculum in a previous school.

4. **Transport** – If a child moves to a school outside of their designated catchment area, the local authority will **not** provide free transport to that school. Journeys to a new school may well involve additional buses, extra costs and travelling time.

If parents/carers are still uncertain about moving their child – talk it through!

After considering all of these issues, and parents/carers still want their child to transfer schools, they will need to make an application to the School Admissions Team. Parents/carers can complete an application online at Mid Term Admissions or Transfers | Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council or by emailing school.admissions@merthyr.gov.uk

Once the completed form is received, the application will be considered without delay and a formal decision either to offer, or refuse a place, will be notified to the applicant within 15 school days.

If parents/carers are applying for admission/transfer to a voluntary aided school, an appropriate application form should be requested from the governing body of the school concerned.

Our Welsh Medium schools both have an immersion class within their school to support pupils who wish to transfer from an English speaking school to a Welsh speaking school. This class is available to pupils up to the age of 11 and pupils will be supported to fast track their Welsh language skills in order to fully integrate into a Welsh school.

As such, it may not be too late to switch to Welsh Medium.

Please contact the relevant Welsh Medium School of your choice for details.

The Local Authority does not encourage transfers between schools, and a change of school mid-term can seriously disrupt the continuity of a child's education. If parents feel that a problem at school is so serious as to necessitate a change they are urged to take all reasonable steps to resolve the issue with the school first and then to seek advice from the Admissions Team if necessary before applying for a transfer. In cases involving school transfer requests that do not involve a house move the Local Authority reserves the right to arrange for the child to start the new school at the beginning of the next half term to minimise disruption to their own and other children's education.

Applicants should not assume that they will automatically be allocated a place at a local school. There is no guarantee of a place at any school, even if it is catchment, and the school is already full in the relevant year group, the application could be refused. Pupils must continue to attend, where possible, their home school until a suitable alternative place can be found.

ADMISSION TO VOLUNTARY AIDED SCHOOLS

Admissions Policy Saint Carlo Acutis 3-16 School

Saint Carlo Acutis 3-16 Catholic school is a voluntary aided school in the Archdiocese of Cardiff. The Governing Body has sole responsibility for admissions to the school and will act in accordance with all relevant provisions of the Welsh Government's 2013 Codes on School Admissions and School Admission Appeals, and with the law on school admissions as it applies to maintained schools.

Saint Carlo Acutis 3-16 Catholic school has a Catholic ethos. The school is governed as part of the Catholic church in accordance with its Trust Deed and Instrument of Government and seeks at all times to be a witness to Jesus Christ. We ask all parents applying for a place here to respect this ethos and its importance to the school community. This does not affect the right of parents of other faiths, or of no faith background, to apply for and be considered for a place, as the school welcomes and encourages applications from all families.

The admission number for the school is **195**, split across the four separate sites as follows:

Year 7	120
Reception	75 (split across three classes)

Where there are more than 120 applications for year 7, and 75 in Reception, places will be allocated in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed below.

Oversubscription Criteria

Primary

Where there are more applications for places than the number of places available, places will be offered according to the following order of priority.

1. Catholic looked after and previously looked after children.
2. Catholic children who are resident in the parish of Merthyr Tydfil.
3. Other Catholic children.
4. Other looked after and previously looked after children.

5. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church.
6. Children of other Christian denominations whose membership is evidenced by a minister of religion.
7. Children of other faiths whose membership is evidenced by a religious leader.
8. Any other children.

Within each of the categories listed above the attendance of a brother or sister at the school at the time of admission will increase the priority of an application within each category so that the application will be placed at the top of the category in which the application is made

Secondary

Where there are more applications for places than the number of places available, places will be offered according to the following order of priority.

1. Catholic looked after and previously looked after children.
2. Catholic children who attend a feeder Catholic primary school, namely, St Margaret's, Aberdare St Mary's, Brynmawr All Saints, Ebbw Vale St Joseph's, Tredegar
3. Other Catholic children.
4. Other looked after and previously looked after children.
5. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church.
6. Children of other Christian denominations whose membership is evidenced by a minister of religion.
7. Children of other faiths whose membership is evidenced by a religious leader.
8. Any other children.

Within each of the categories listed above, the attendance of a brother or sister at the school at the time of admission will increase the priority of an application within each category so that the application will be placed at the top of the category in which the application is made

Application Procedures and Timetable

To apply for a place at this school in the normal admission round , you must complete an application through the Merthyr Tydfil Local Authority's online application platform. The deadline dates for applications are available on the Merthyr Tydfil Council website. You are also requested to complete the Supplementary Information Form attached to this policy if you wish to apply under oversubscription criteria 1 to 3 or 5 to 7. The Supplementary Information Form should be returned to Nicola James at **n.james@bcacs.merthyr.sch.uk, or handed in to the school office by 31 October 2026.**

Tie Break

Priority will be given to children living closest to the school determined by the shortest available walking route. Distances are calculated using the local authority's GIS computer programme or such other programme as may be used by the local authority from time to time, which will measure the distance from the home address to the nearest official school entrance. In the event of distances being the same for two or more children where this would determine the last place to be allocated, random allocation will be carried out and supervised by a person independent of the school. All the names will be entered into a hat and the required number of names will be drawn out.

[1] This is for admission to the school for Nursery, Reception or Year 7 at the start of the school year in September and not for applications made in-year.

Proximity
If the governors are unable to admit all applicants who fall into the lowest criterion a tie-breaker will be applied. Distances are calculated by the local authority's "mapping schools" system.

The Geographical Information System (GIS) will be used to calculate home to school distances in miles, while the shortest walking route will be calculated using Ordnance Survey (OS) customised route data from an applicant's home to the nearest open school gate.

Siblings
For admission purposes a sibling is a child who is the brother / sister, half-brother / sister (children who share one common parent), step brother / sister where two children are related by marriage. This definition also includes adopted or fostered children living at the same address. Priority will be by reference to the youngest sibling in the school at the time of admission, the youngest sibling commanding the highest degree of priority.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child (e.g. a twin or triplet), the governors will also admit the other sibling(s).

Residence
Evidence of permanent residence of the child at the time of application must be supplied. Permanent residence is considered to be the child's along with the parent / guardian's main place of residence. If the child is resident with friends or relatives (for reasons other than guardianship) the friend or relative's address will not be considered.

Shared parental responsibility
Where parents have shared responsibility for a child, and the child lives with both parents for parts of the week, the home address will be determined as the property where the child lives for the majority of the school week (i.e. 3 out of 5 days) at the time of application.

Looked after children / Previously looked after children
The definition of a Looked after Child is a child who is looked after by the Local Authority in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989. Children who are in the care of the Local Authority (looked after children) or provided with accommodation by them e.g. foster parents (section 106 of the Education Act 2005).

A child who has been in the care of the Local Authority as defined above for at least 24 hours will be regarded as a previously looked after child.

Additional Learning Needs (ALN)
Children in receipt of an IDP (Individual Development Plan) which names the school will be admitted.

Late applications and applications outside the normal admissions round
Late applications will be looked at after the applications received by the closing date have been considered. If the number of offers has reached the admission number in the first round, then all late applications will be considered and placed on the waiting list.

Applications outside the normal admission round, including in-year transfer requests, will be considered by the Admissions Committee. A formal decision either to offer or to refuse a place will be notified to the applicants within 15 school days or 28 calendar days, whichever is the sooner.

Waiting list
Children not offered a place will be placed on a waiting list. The order of priority on the waiting list is the same as the list of criteria for over-subscription.

No account is taken of the length of time on the waiting list.

If offers of a place are refused then the place will be offered to the first child on the waiting list at that point in time. The order of the waiting list will vary as late applications are received, refused and placed on the waiting list in the order of the oversubscription criteria.
The waiting list will be maintained until 30 September.

Right of appeal
When a child is refused a place at a school the governing body will write to the parent giving full details of why the application was refused. Parents have a right to appeal this decision. Parents wishing to appeal the decision must return the appeal form within 14 days of the receipt of the decision letter.

The appeal will be heard by an independent appeal panel.

How to apply
Any parent may apply for their child to be admitted to the school. Application is to be made via Merthyr Tydfil Local Authority's online application platform.

You are also requested to complete the Supplementary Information Form attached to this policy if you wish to apply under oversubscription criteria 1 to 3 or 5 to 7. The Supplementary Information Form should be returned to Nicola James at **n.james@bcacs.merthyr.sch.uk, or handed in to the school office by 31 October 2026**. Every application will be considered by the admissions committee of the governing body.

Nursery admission
The total number of nursery places available is 63 full-time or 132 part-time split across 4 classes.

Nursery classes are non-denominational but priority in application for places will be given to:
- Children who are looked after by a local authority or who were previously looked after by a local authority.
- Children who have siblings already on roll at the School.
- Children who have attended the School's pre-Nursery Group.
- Children residing in the catchment area.
- Other children.

Attendance at nursery class **will not** guarantee a place in the School's Reception class, where a separate application form must be submitted at the appropriate time.

There is no right of appeal in relation to admission to the Nursery Class.

SIXTH FORM ADMISSIONS (The College, Merthyr Tydfil)

There are no longer sixth form admissions to secondary schools within the authority. This provision will now be accessed via the integrated tertiary learning facility, The College Merthyr Tydfil. Admission queries can be sent via email to questions.college@merthyr.ac.uk.

Information is also available via www.merthyr.ac.uk/mtc

Pupils from Merthyr Tydfil who are taught through the medium of Welsh attend Ysgol Rhydywaun in Rhondda Cynon Taf, which has a sixth form provision.

FOOD AND DRINK IN SCHOOLS

All schools in Merthyr Tydfil follow the Healthy Eating Initiative set out by Welsh Government. This provides the strategic direction and actions required to improve the nutritional standards of food and drink served in schools across Wales.

For further information regarding Healthy Eating, please email myschoollunch@merthyr.gov.uk or visit the following website www.merthyr.gov.uk/resident/schools-and-learning/school-dinners-and-breakfast-clubs/

School Meals
A catering service is provided in all Primary and Secondary Schools. All Food and Drink provisions are prepared, cooked and served by highly trained staff, using high quality products and ingredients that comply with all food safety legislation. Our menus comply with FSA and Welsh Government Food Standards and are written by a qualified Public Health Nutritionist. The service is tailored to meet the needs of the pupils and the school.

Specific dietary requirements for breakfast and lunch can be catered for, providing that the following is completed:

- The completion of the form in the link below must be submitted alongside the uploading of documentation from a medical professional supporting allergy / intolerance

https://www.merthyr.gov.uk/do-it-online/request-or-apply/special-dietary-requirements-form/?lang=en-GB&

- For all religious / ethnic choice diets (including vegetarian diets), a request must be submitted by completing the following link:

https://www.merthyr.gov.uk/do-it-online/request-or-apply/special-dietary-requirements-form/?lang=en-GB&

It is imperative that this form is completed if your child has a special dietary requirement so that we can provide an appropriate menu, and this should be completed before the pupil commences school in order to avoid delays in providing food provisions. A menu will then be provided to the school kitchen and parent.

No diversion from the mainstream menu will be offered unless the above has been completed.

For further information, please contact the Merthyr Tydfil Customer Contact Centre (01685) 725000 and ask for the School Catering Team, or email myschoollunch@merthyr.gov.uk

All parents are encouraged to pre-book their children's meal(s) in advance via ParentPay since they have been registered at the start of the school term in September. Your child will then choose their meal option each day in school at registration.

Universal Primary Free School Meals (UPFSM)

Universal Primary Free School Meals (UPFSM) will now be offered to **all pupils from full-time nursery up to and including Year 6.**

Although universal entitlement to free school meals is being rolled out to all pupils in Primary schools, **the Welsh Government still require eligible families to apply for 'free school meal'** status. Applying for 'free school meal' status will provide you with the School Essentials Grant **which can be used on school uniform, PE equipment and IT for your child.**

As well as receiving the School Essentials Grant for each eligible child, your child's school and the Council will also receive additional money, which can be spent on supporting pupils learning in school.

If you receive any of the qualifying benefits listed in the 'Free School Meals' section below, please apply for Free School Meal status / Schools Essentials Grant online at the following
https://www.merthyr.gov.uk/resident/benefits-and-grants/apply-for-free-school-mealsschools-essential-grant-clothing-grant/

If you have any older children in primary school who already receive a free school meal, they will continue to do so and no further action is needed for these children.

If you have any further queries regarding Universal Primary Free School Meals, please email UPFSM@merthyr.gov.uk or call 01685 725000 and ask for the School Catering Department.

PROVISION OF FREE SCHOOL MEALS AND SCHOOL CLOTHING / EQUIPMENT

1. Free School Meals

Separate to the roll out of Universal Primary Free School Meals, all parents/carers who claim the qualifying benefits listed below should apply to the Council for a Free School Meal / School Essentials grant for their child.

If eligible, your child's school will automatically be told that he/she can be given a meal.

If you receive any of the benefits outlined below and have not previously applied for free school meals for your child, please apply for the entitlement to Free School Meals / School Essentials Grant.

Qualifying benefits include:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (but not Working Tax Credit) and annual income does not exceed £16,190 (as assessed by Tax Credits)
- Working Tax Credit run-on – the payment someone may receive for a further four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit (not in work)
- Universal Credit (in work) where the award is based on annual earnings from employment or self-employment and that has been determined as less than £7,400

In addition to qualifying for free school meals, the application means that your child will automatically be able to seek financial support towards the cost of a uniform, PE kit and IT equipment. (See section on 'Awards to Pupils' below)

Many children across Merthyr Tydfil may be entitled to free school meals and uniform grants but are not receiving them because they have not applied to the Council.

You can apply by collecting a Free School Meal / Schools Essential Grant application from your child's school, or the Benefit section at the Civic Centre, or online at the following link: https://www.merthyr.gov.uk/resident/benefits-and-grants/apply-for-free-school-mealsschools-essential-grant-clothing-grant/

2. Awards to Pupils

(i) School Uniform Grants / School Essentials Grant

Welsh Government provides a School Essentials Grant to assist families on a low income with the purchase of school uniform and other equipment for their children. The grant is available to eligible (eligibility is dependent on Welsh Government terms and conditions, which can vary year on year) compulsory school age pupils in primary schools, secondary schools, special schools, special needs resource bases, and pupil referral units, who have an existing entitlement to free school meals. Pupils with a 'protected' entitlement to free school meals are not eligible for the School Essentials Grant. All Children Looked After of compulsory school age are entitled to the grant.

CHILDREN OF UK SERVICE PERSONNEL

Admission authorities must not refuse a place to the child of currently serving service personnel because the family is not yet living in the area. 'In year' movement should be treated the same as in advance of the school year. Whilst the parent/s remain in the armed forces the provisions of the Code that apply to children of UK Service personnel should apply. These are as follows;

'Children of UK Service personnel and other Crown Servants (including diplomats)
Families of UK Service personnel and other Crown Servants are subject to frequent movement within the UK and from abroad, often at relatively short notice. School places must be allocated to children and their families in advance of the approaching school year if accompanied by an official Ministry of Defence (MOD) or Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) letter declaring a return date. Children of UK Service Personnel may be given excepted status for infant class size purposes when admitted to a school outside the normal admission round.

B. SCHOOL TRANSPORT POLICY

The authority has a statutory duty to provide pupils with free transport to the nearest available school if they reside beyond 'walking distance' to that school. The law relating to 'walking distance' is defined as two miles for primary age and three miles for secondary age, measured by the nearest available safe walking route. Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council currently provides transport as follows:

- for primary age pupils residing over 2 miles from their nearest or designated catchment area primary school and;
- for secondary age pupils residing over 3 miles from their nearest or designated catchment area secondary school.

The latest information can be found on the authority's website; or by contacting the Customer Contact Centre (01685) 725000 and ask for School Transport.

The distance criteria applies to all schools including Voluntary Aided and Welsh-medium schools. Where pupils attend a school other than the nearest or designated catchment area school, as a result of parental choice, it must be understood that school transport is not provided by the local authority and parents must accept full responsibility for transport costs and arrangements. If a child qualifies for free transport, a place will be provided on a contract vehicle serving the particular area.

C. LIST OF SCHOOLS

All schools within the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council are mixed gender.
All schools within the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough are day schools.
All schools teach through the medium of English, except the two Welsh Medium Primary Schools.

The Local Authority constantly reviews the Planning of School Places, which could result in a change to the Admission Number. Subsequently the schools recorded Admission Number may be amended

AGE RANGE
PRIMARY SCHOOL **AGES 3 - 11**
SECONDARY SCHOOLS **AGES 11 - 16**
VOLUNTARY AIDED SCHOOL **AGES 3 - 16**

School	Address	Head Teacher, Contact Details,	Admission Number	No. of Reception Applications – Sept 2026
PRIMARY				
Abercanaid Primary School	The Park, Abercanaid, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 1SZ	Mrs. J. Edwards ☎ (01685) 351820	23	15
Bedlinog Community Primary School	Hylton Terrace, Bedlinog, Treharris,	Mr. S. Prosser ☎ (01685) 351823	12	11
Caedraw Primary School	Caedraw Road, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 8HA	Miss. D. Williams ☎ (01685) 351801	28	23
Cyfarthfa Park Primary School	Cyfarthfa Park, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 8RE	Mr. S. Bevan ☎ (01685) 351807	56	45
Dowlais Primary School	High Street, Caeharris, Dowlais, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 3HB	Mrs. J. Estebanez ☎ (01685) 351808	22	22
Edwardsville Primary School	Cardiff Road, Edwardsville, Treharris, CF46 5NE	Mrs. E. Edmunds ☎ (01685) 351824	41	45
Gellifaelog Primary School	Penydarren, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 9TJ	Mr. J. Voros ☎ (01685) 351812	27	28
Goetre Primary School	Rowan Way, Gurnos Estate, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 9PB	Mr. D. Beech ☎ (01685) 351814	60	43

School	Address	Head Teacher, Contact Details,	Admission Number	No. of Reception Applications – Sept 2026
Gwaunfarren Primary School	Alexandra Avenue, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 9AF	Mr. A. Lewis ☎ (01685) 351810	37	24
Heolgerrig Primary School	Heolgerrig Road, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 1SB	Mrs. A. Morris ☎ (01685) 351803	29	27
Pantysgallog Primary School	Pant, Dowlais, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 2AD	Mr. D. Thomas ☎ (01685) 351813	51	50
Trelewis Primary School	Trelewis, Treharris, CF46 6AH	Mr. S. Prosser ☎ (01685) 351822	31	30
Troedyrhiw Community Primary School	Archer Street, Troedyrhiw, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 4JQ	Mrs. J. Roome ☎ (01685) 351819	31	25
Twynyrodyn Community Primary School	Gilfach Cynon, Twynyrodyn, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 0LW	Mrs. K. Watson ☎ (01685) 351804	37	21
Ynysowen Community Primary School	Aberfan Road, Aberfan, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 4QQ	Mrs. S. Roden ☎ (01685) 351821	41	27
Ysgol-y-Graig Primary	Cefn Coed, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 2LR	Ms. H Kaya ☎ (01685) 351806	30	20
Ysgol Gynradd Coed-Y-Dderwen	Gellideg Estate, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 1LG	Mrs. C. Lynch ☎ (01685) 351805	27	15
WELSH MEDIUM PRIMARY SCHOOLS				
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Rhyd-y-Grug	Aberfan, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 4NT	Ms. A. Bowen ☎ (01685) 351818	36	30
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Santes Tudful	Pantyffyn Road, Mountain Hare, Merthyr Tydfil CF47 0HU	Mrs. L. Jones ☎ (01685) 351815	57	33
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Santes Tudful – Safle'r Gurnos	Cedar Way, Gurnos Estate, Merthyr Tydfil,		15	9

School	Address	Head Teacher, Contact Details,	Admission Number	No. of Reception / Year 7 Applications – Sept 2026
VOLUNTARY AIDED PRIMARY 3-16 RC SCHOOL				
Saint Carlo Acutis 3-16 Catholic School	Gwaunfarren Road, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 9AN	Mrs. S. Hopkins Executive Headteacher ☎ (01685) 351860	195	120 Y7 75 Reception
SECONDARY				
Afon Taf High School	Yew Street, Troedyrhiw, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 4ED	Mr. S. James ☎ (01685) 351830	195	181
Cyfarthfa High School	Cae Mari Dwn, Queen's Road, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 0LS	Mr. B. Davies ☎ (01685) 725222	178	157
Pen-y-Dre High School	Gurnos Estate, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 9BY	Mr. K. Maher ☎ (01685) 351845	225	219
SPECIAL SCHOOL				
Greenfield Special School	Duffryn Road, Pentrebach, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 4BJ	Mrs. R. Stevens-Davies ☎ (01443) 690468	N/A	N/A
Ty Dysgu Pupil Referral Unit	Market Street, Dowlais, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 3HW	Mrs. S. Pardoe ☎ (01685) 724645	N/A	N/A

D. ASSOCIATED PRIMARY / SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Please note that being a registered pupil at an associated primary school does not guarantee or entitle your child to a place at a particular secondary school.

AFON TAF HIGH SCHOOL

Abercanaid Community School
Bedlinog Community Primary School
Edwardsville Primary School
Troedyrhiw Community Primary School
Trelewis Primary School
Ynysowen Community Primary School

CYFARTHFA HIGH SCHOOL

Caedraw Primary School
Cyfarthfa Park Primary School
Heolgerrig Community School
Twynyrodyn Community School
Ysgol Gynradd Coed Y Dderwen

PEN-Y-DRE HIGH SCHOOL

Dowlais Primary School
Gellifaelog Primary School
Goetre Primary School
Gwaunfarren Primary School
Pantysgallog Primary School
Ysgol-y-Graig Primary

YSGOL GYFUN RHYDYWAUN

The following schools are linked to Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun, Rhodfa Lawrence, Penywaun, Hirwaun, CF44 9ES:

Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Rhyd-Y-Grug
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Santes Tudful