



**MERTHYR TYDFIL**  
County Borough Council

Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol  
**MERTHYR TUDFUL**

# **ADMISSION POLICY**

## **2016/17**

# PART ONE

## ADMISSION POLICY

### A. 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 authority.

In the case of church voluntary aided 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 2016 will need to indicate, on the official application form, their preferred school. No-one has an automatic right to attend a school but all of the official applications, submitted before the closing date will be considered. **An application form will be sent to all relevant parents/carers in the week commencing 1<sup>st</sup> September, 2015, which will need to be returned to, Pupil Services Team, Schools Department, Unit 5, Triangle Business Park, Pentrebach. Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 4TQ in order to match parents'/carers' preferences with the availability of places at the school of their choice. The form should be returned by:**

Admission cohort	Form returned by
Secondary School Year 7	25 <sup>th</sup> October 2015
Primary School Reception Class (age 4 before 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2016)	22 <sup>nd</sup> November 2015
Primary School Nursery Class (age 3 before 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2016)	22 <sup>nd</sup> November 2015
Primary School Pre nursery class <b>Spring Term 2017 admission</b> (3 <sup>rd</sup> birthday falls between 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2016 and 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2016)	27 <sup>th</sup> May 2016
Primary School Pre nursery class <b>Summer Term 2017 admission</b> (3 <sup>rd</sup> birthday falls between 1 <sup>st</sup> January 2017 and 7 <sup>th</sup> April 2017)	21 <sup>st</sup> October 2016

Parents/carers need to apply for a place:

- For admission to a pre nursery class;
- For admission to a nursery class/school;
- 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 church voluntary aided school.

The 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 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 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 each 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 and Disability Act 2001.

## **B. ADMISSION LIMIT**

1. 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.
2. 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 admission oversubscription criteria will be applied.

3. The size of infant classes is restricted by law to 30 or fewer pupils. If the relevant admission number has been reached, the 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:-
- 'looked after children' admitted outside the normal admissions round;
  - pupils for whom education at a school of a particular religious character is desired and who are admitted to such a school outside the normal admissions round and;
  - 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 its admission number but has already organised its classes.
  - Children with siblings (brothers and sisters) living in the same household attending the school. 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 do not allow exceptions to the class size limits in these circumstances.
4. Most 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 1<sup>st</sup> September);
  - reception for children (aged 4 by 1<sup>st</sup> 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:

Where nursery pupils enter a reception class on first admission to a school they will count towards the recognised standard number/admission limit.

Age 3/4-5 in infant and primary schools;

Age 7/8 in junior schools;

Age 11/12 in secondary schools.

## **C ORGANISATION OF SCHOOLS**

**All schools in the authority are co-educational**

### **1. Nursery Education**

The authority offers a part-time nursery place (12.5 hours per week) to every child from the start of the term following the child's third birthday.

The number of places available at a nursery school is calculated using the "*Measuring the capacity of schools in Wales*" Welsh Government guidance.

Where space allows, schools operate a nursery class (for pupils aged 3 by 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016) and a pre nursery group (for pupils who become three years of age during the Autumn 2016 term and the Spring 2017 term). Pre nursery pupils are eligible for a part time nursery place in the term following their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday.

### **Pre-nursery Admissions**

#### **Important Information**

Pupils 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, a formal application **must** be made for transfer to the nursery class (upon transfer from Pre-nursery). **There may be occasions when, due to oversubscription, it will not be possible for this transfer to take place.**

Pre-nursery places are provided strictly 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.

#### **Key dates for applying**

<b>Admission cohort</b>	<b>Form returned by</b>
Primary School Pre nursery class <b>Spring Term 2017 admission</b> (3 <sup>rd</sup> birthday falls between 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2016 and 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2016)	27 <sup>th</sup> May 2016
Primary School Pre nursery class <b>Summer Term 2017 admission</b> (3 <sup>rd</sup> birthday falls between 1 <sup>st</sup> January 2017 and 7 <sup>th</sup> April 2017)	21 <sup>st</sup> October 2016

### **Nursery Admissions**

#### **Important Information**

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.**

#### **Key dates for applying**

<b>Admission cohort</b>	<b>Form returned by</b>
Primary School Nursery Class (age 3 before 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2016)	22 <sup>nd</sup> November 2015

### 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. Primary Education**

Every child is required by law to receive full-time education from the beginning of the school term after his/her fifth birthday. 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 Pupil Services Team, Schools Department. Children between the ages of 3/4-11 years are recognised as pupils receiving primary education. In Merthyr Tydfil primary education is provided either in a nursery school or in a primary school with pupils aged 3/4-11 years of age.

## **3. 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. Such children do not transfer automatically.

## **4. Admission to Primary Schools**

Pupils who attain the age of five during the school year may be admitted to infant departments at the commencement of the school year in September.

Parents/carers should notify the headteacher of their local primary school well in advance that they have a child approaching school age. If parents/carers are unsure which school normally serves their locality they should contact the Schools Department, Pupil Services Team for advice (01685 724620).

If parents/carers wish their child to attend a primary school which **does not** serve their locality they should contact the Schools Department, Pupil Services Team for advice (01685 724620). Applications for such admissions should be made as early as possible and as stipulated with the published arrangements.

## **5. Changing Schools: Primary Education**

Changing schools during primary education is a serious step for a child. Such a decision may be unavoidable, e.g. as a consequence of the family moving home, and in such circumstances parents/carers will need to contact the local school or, Schools Department, Pupil Services Team for assistance (01685 724620). 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 Schools Department, Pupil Services Team for advice before making the application. If there is a suitable vacancy, a child will be admitted to the school. 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.

## **6. 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. If a child was born between 1st September 2004 and 31st August 2005 she/he will automatically transfer to the local secondary school in September 2016. 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 authority. If parents/carers wish their child to attend a secondary school which does not serve their locality, they should contact Pupil Services Team, Schools Department for advice (01685 724620). Applications for such admissions should be made as early as possible and as stipulated in the published arrangements.

## **7. Changing Secondary Schools**

Changing schools during secondary education 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 or Schools Department, Pupil Services Team for assistance (01685 724620). 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, Schools Department, Pupil Services Team for advice before making the application.

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 who's parents/carers have already applied for a place at the school for them, then the child should be admitted to the school. It should be noted that curriculum option choices may vary from school to school.

## **8. Welsh Language Policy**

In accordance with the Education Act 1996 – Section 354, it is the local authority's policy that every child should have the opportunity to learn and use the Welsh language. Provision is made for this in the following way:

- Welsh as a second language in English medium schools:
  1. Welsh is taught to all pupils at Key Stage 1. 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.
  2. Welsh is further developed at Key Stage 2 with a greater emphasis on reading and writing skills.
  3. Since September 1999, Welsh has also been taught to all pupils at Key Stages 3

and 4.

- Provision for Welsh-Medium Education:
  1. Education is available at Welsh-medium primary schools to all pupils whose parents select Welsh medium education:
    - Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Santes Tudful
    - Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Rhyd-y-Grug
  2. Although the main medium of instruction is Welsh, appropriate standards in English are maintained.
  3. Pupils attending Welsh-medium primary schools will be able to continue their education in Welsh medium secondary schools outside the County Borough. The local authority has a successful partnership with Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Headteachers of Welsh-medium schools, in consultation with the local authority, have to apply the admissions criteria set out previously to determine priority for admissions.

Pupils living outside a school's designated catchment area, who are admitted to a nursery class, will not have an 'automatic' right to continued education within that school. Whilst every effort will be made to accommodate such pupils, a formal application must be made for transfer into the infant department at the appropriate time.

## **E. ADMISSION TO VOLUNTARY AIDED SCHOOLS**

Within the County Borough of Merthyr Tydfil there are four voluntary aided schools which are financed accordingly by the local authority, but which are organised and run by the Roman Catholic Diocesan Education Authority in partnership with the local authority.

The admission arrangements for these schools have been formulated with the agreement of the local authority and requests for admission are the responsibility of the relevant governing body. Applications should be made to the clerk to the Governing Body.

In the case of an unsuccessful application for admission, the governing body will write to the parents giving reasons for their decisions. This letter will also inform parents of their right to appeal and the procedures that should be followed.

## **ADMISSIONS POLICY – ST. ALOYSIUS R.C. PRIMARY SCHOOL**

The Admission Policy of the Governors of St Aloysius RC Primary School is as follows:

The ethos of our school is Catholic. Our school was founded by the Catholic Church to primarily provide education for children of Catholic families residing in the Parish of St Aloysius, Gurnos, Merthyr Tydfil. The school is conducted by its Governing Body 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 in our school to respect our ethos and its importance to the school community. This does not affect the right of parents who are not of the faith of this school to apply for and be



considered for a place here.

The school's Admission Number for the school year 2016/17 is 22.

If the number of applications exceeds the admission number, the Governors will apply the following oversubscription criteria for admission to the school, provided that Governors are made aware of that application before decisions on admissions are made.

### **Oversubscription Criteria**

1. Children who are in the care of the Local Authority (LAC) and children who were previously looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted ( or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order).
2. Baptised Catholic children residing in the catchment area of the school. (The catchment area of the school is the Parish of St. Aloysius, Gurnos, Merthyr).
3. Baptised Catholic children residing outside the catchment area of the school, who state a preference to attend St. Aloysius R.C. Primary School.
4. Children of Catholic parents residing in the catchment area of the school.
5. Children of Catholic parents residing outside the catchment area of the school, who state a preference to attend St. Aloysius R.C. Primary School.
6. Children with siblings who will be on the school roll when the pupil applying will be admitted. (See Note 1).
7. Non Catholic children whose parents are seeking a Christian education for their children.

#### **Note 1**

The definition of a sibling is:

A brother or sister sharing the same parents;

Half brother or half sister, where two children share one common parent;

Step brother or step sister, where two children are related by a parent's marriage;

The children must be living permanently in the same household.

If there is over subscription within a category, the Governors will give priority to children living closest to the school determined by the shortest walking distance from the applicant's home address to the main entrance of the school. Distances are calculated by the local authority's "mapping schools" electronic system.

### **Multiple Births**

If when applying the oversubscription criteria, the last child to be admitted is one of a multiple birth, e.g. twin or triplet, then the Governing Body will also admit the other sibling(s).

### **Waiting Lists**

Waiting lists for admission will remain open until the end of the academic year and will then

be discarded. The waiting list will be kept by the Governing Body.

Inclusion of a child's name on the waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available.

## **Admission Procedure**

The deadline for applications for admission is the same as that for Local Authority schools. This is published in the annual "Guide to Policy and School Admission Arrangements". Copies are available in all Merthyr schools or on line at [www.merthyr.gov.uk](http://www.merthyr.gov.uk)

Application should be made to the Governing Body via the Clerk to the Governors of St. Aloysius R.C. Primary School, Cedar Way, Gurnos, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 9PA (Tel: 01685 721741) who will provide a form of application for admission.

N.B. In the case of a child starting school as an infant for the first time, application for admission should, ideally, be made in the preceding Autumn term in order to assist the governors and headteacher plan their pre-school induction programme. Late applications will be considered provided a suitable reason for submission after the closing date is given. Applications from Looked After Children will be accepted when such applications are received.

## **Appeals Procedure**

Parents who wish to appeal against the decision of the Governors to refuse their child a place in the school may do so in writing to the Chair of Governors. Appeals will be heard by an independent panel. The Governing Body and the Local Authority may make joint arrangements for appeals.

## **Nursery Admission**

St. Aloysius R.C. Primary School's Nursery class is non-denominational but priority in application for places will be given to:

- i) Children who are in the care of the Local Authority (LAC) and children who were previously looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted ( or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order).
- ii) Children who have siblings already on roll in the school.(see Note1)
- iii) Children who have attended St. Aloysius Pre-School Flying Start or Pre- Nursery Group.
- iv) Children residing in the catchment area of St Aloysius R.C. Primary School.

### **Note 1**

The definition of a sibling is:

A brother or sister sharing the same parents;

Half brother or half sister, where two children share one common parent;

Step brother or step sister, where two children are related by a parent's marriage

The children must be living permanently in the same household.

The Nursery is funded for 15 full time or 30 part time places. Governors may admit more than this number provided the class size limit is not exceeded.

Attendance at St Aloysius Nursery class **will not** guarantee a place in the school's reception class. An application form must be submitted to the Governing Body at the appropriate time.

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

## **ADMISSIONS POLICY – ST. ILLTYD'S R.C. PRIMARY SCHOOL**

### **Admission Policy – Nursery**

St Illtyd's nursery class is non-denominational but the following over-subscription criteria will apply:

1. Children who have brothers and sisters already on roll in the school
2. Children residing within the catchment area for the school.

Entry to the nursery will be in chronological, date of birth, order.

A nursery place does not automatically qualify a child for a place in the Reception Class in the main school. All children have to re-apply for a place in Reception.

### **Admission Policy – Main School**

The Governing Body of St Illtyd's R.C. Primary School apply the following over-subscription criteria for admission to the school. Where the number of applicants for admission exceeds the number of places available, places will be awarded to applicants in the under mentioned categories in the following order of priority:

1. Baptised Catholic children within the catchment area of the school.
2. Baptised Catholic children residing outside the catchment area of the school whose parents state a preference to attend St. Illtyd's R.C. Primary School.
3. The children of Catholic parent(s) residing within the catchment area of the school.
4. The children of Catholic parents residing outside the catchment area of the school who state a preference for their children to attend St. Illtyd's R.C. Primary School.
5. Siblings of the above.
6. Non-catholic children whose parents are seeking a Christian education for their children.
7. Non-catholic children for social, educational or compassionate reasons.

The school admission number is 20. Governors will admit up to 20 children a year into the Reception Class. Children will be admitted in September if they have passed their fourth birthday on or before the preceding 31st August.

### **Admission Procedure**

Application should be made to the Governing Body via the School Secretary, St. Illtyd's R.C. Primary School, Rocky Road, Dowlais, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 3BT (Tel: 01685 351811) who will provide application forms.

N.B. In the case of a child starting school for the first time, application for admission should,

ideally be made in the preceding Autumn term. Late applications will, of course, be considered.

### **Appeals Procedure**

On occasions the Governing Body Admissions Committee may deem that a parent's application for a child to attend St. Illtyd's R.C. Primary School does not fulfil the over subscription criteria set down in the school's Admission Policy. Should your child be unsuccessful in applying for a place at St. Illtyd's you will be advised of the reasons and offered right of appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel.

### **ADMISSIONS POLICY – ST. MARY'S R.C. PRIMARY SCHOOL**

St. Mary's is a one-form entry R.C. Primary School. Its admission number is 26. The Governing Body may normally admit 26 pupils to its reception class in September each year.

Admission is for Roman Catholic children between the ages of 3 and 11 years. The request for admission from non-catholic parents because of the religious teachings and the Christian ethos of the school is considered, if there are vacancies.

The number to be admitted and the Criteria for Admission normally begins – usually about the beginning of the Summer term – and all admissions are to be determined by the governors and based on the following criteria:

1. Children baptised in the Catholic Church living in the Parish of St. Mary's.
2. Children baptised in the Catholic Church living in Parishes adjoining the Parish of St. Mary's
3. Baptised brothers and sisters of pupils already in the school.
4. Children of parents who have become converts and have been accepted into the Church, and the children are waiting to be received into the Church.
5. The children of non-catholic parents who wish their children to be educated in a Catholic school.
6. Application on compassionate grounds, each to be considered on its own merit, and at the discretion of the governors.

### **Disabled Pupils**

Applications for admission to the school from disabled pupils would be considered on equal terms with other applicants and would not be treated less favourably.

The school has carried out building alterations to improve access for pupils with mobility issues.

The above Admissions Policy relates to the academic year commencing 1st September 2016 and is correct in relation to that year when produced. However, it should not be assumed that there will be no change in this policy or some matter particularised:

- i) before the start of, or during the school year 2016/2017, or
- ii) in relation to subsequent years.

## **Admission Procedure**

Application should be made to the Governing Body via the headteacher of St. Mary's R.C. Primary School, Caedraw Road, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 4BJ (Tel: 01685 722227) who will provide a form of application for admission.

N.B. In the case of a child starting school as an infant for the first time, application for admission should, ideally, be made in the preceding Autumn term. Late applications will of course, be considered.

## **Appeals Procedure**

On occasions the Governing Body Admissions Committee may deem that a parent's application for a child to attend St. Mary's R.C. Primary School does not fulfil the criteria set down in the school's Admissions Policy. Should your child be unsuccessful in applying for a place at St. Mary's R.C. Primary School you will be advised of the reasons and offered a right of appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel.

The Governing Body will make arrangements to enable the parent of a child to appeal against any decision made by the Governing Body refusing the pupil admission to the school. The Governing Body and the Local Authority may make joint arrangements for appeals.

## **Admission to the Nursery Class**

St Mary's has a 24 place, part time nursery. These places are non-denominational.

The governors will give priority to:

- i) Children residing in the catchment area of St. Mary's R.C. Primary School.
- ii) Children who have brothers or sisters already on roll in the school.

Entry to the nursery will be in chronological, date of birth, order.

A nursery place does not automatically qualify a child for a place in Reception Class in the main school.

All children must apply to the Governing Body for admission to St. Mary's R.C. Primary School.

## **ADMISSIONS POLICY – BISHOP HEDLEY R.C. HIGH SCHOOL**

The Governing Body will admit pupils to the school in accordance with parental choice subject to the order of priority listed below:

1. Designated Primary Schools: All Saints (Ebbw Vale), St. Aloysius (Gurnos), St Illtyd's (Dowlais), St. Joseph's (Tredegar), St. Margaret's (Aberdare), St Mary's (Brynmawr), St Mary's (Merthyr).
2. Catholic children residing in the catchment area of the school. (The catchment area of the School is the Parishes of Aberdare, Hirwaun, Glynneath, Merthyr Vale / Treharris, Merthyr, Dowlais, Gurnos, Rhymney, Tredegar, Ebbw Vale and

- Brynmawr.)
3. Catholic children residing outside the catchment area of the school.
  4. Catholic children from other Catholic Primary or Secondary Schools.
  5. Children of Catholic parents residing in the catchment area of the school.
  6. The children of Roman Catholic parents residing outside the catchment area of the school.
  7. Brothers and sisters of 2, 3, 4 and 5 above.
  8. The Governors will consider applications for:
    - a) Non-Catholic children whose parents are seeking a Christian education for their children.
    - b) Non-Catholic children for social reasons.

### Entry Procedure

1. Parents must complete an application form obtainable from Bishop Hedley High School or from the headteacher of their primary school.
2. This form must be returned to Bishop Hedley High School by the first Friday in March for those pupils seeking September admission.
3. Parents will be notified within one month of any decision refusing admission.
4. Parents wishing to appeal against any refusal to admit must inform the Clerk to the Governors, who will arrange for an Independent Appeals Panel to consider the appeal.
5. Parents will be informed of the decision at the panel.

N.B. The Admissions Policy and Entry Procedure will be subject to review from time to time.

## **F. ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR PUPILS WITH ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS**

Pupils with additional learning needs may need 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 would be determined by the multi-agency 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 additional learning needs but without statements**

Admission arrangements for children with additional learning needs but without statements are treated on the same basis as other applicants. Applications in respect of such children are considered on the basis of the local authority's admission criteria.

### **Pupils with statements of additional learning needs**

If a child has a statement of additional learning needs maintained by the local authority, the local authority will be responsible for advising on special educational provision to be made by the school, and for considering the school's suitability when either finalising the statement or following an annual review.

All schools are appropriately resourced to meet additional learning needs through their own budgets. Some schools are further resourced with integral units addressing certain additional learning needs.

If the parent/carer of a child with a statement wishes to appeal against the school named in the statement, or that no school has been named, an appeal can be made to the SEN TW (SEN Tribunal for Wales), Unit 32, Ddole Road, Enterprise Park, Llandrindod Wells, Powys, LD1 6PF, Tel: 01597829800, E-mail: [tribunalenquiries@wales.qsi.gov.uk](mailto:tribunalenquiries@wales.qsi.gov.uk).

## **G. ARRANGEMENTS WITH NEIGHBOURING LOCAL AUTHORITIES**

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

## **H. APPLYING FOR A PLACE**

An application for a place at a particular school **must** be made on the official forms to the local authority or direct to the governing body of a voluntary aided school. The published criteria in respect of "*What Happens When Too Many Children Apply for Places?*" will place all applicants in order of priority for admissions. The local authority decides on admissions during the term before a child is due to start school. Parents/carers should apply by **25<sup>th</sup> October 2015** for admission to secondary school in September 2016 and by **22<sup>nd</sup> November 2015** for admission to nursery/primary school in September 2016. 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.

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 or the Schools Department.

## **I. TIMING OF ADMISSIONS PROCESS**

Applications for admission to secondary school (Year 7) are to be submitted to Schools Department by no later than 25<sup>th</sup> October 2015 and parents/carers will be informed by 13<sup>th</sup> December 2015.

Applications for admission to nursery/primary are to be submitted to the Schools Department by no later than 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2015 and parent/carers will be informed by the 7<sup>th</sup> March 2016.

Any secondary application that is rejected will be offered an appeal which will need to be made by 10<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

Any primary application that is rejected will be offered an appeal which will need to be made by 21<sup>st</sup> March 2016.

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

**Late applications** will be accepted provided a suitable reason for submission after the closing date is given. However, applications in respect of 'looked after' children or children with statements of SEN, naming a specific school, will be accepted when such applications are received.

## **J. WHAT HAPPENS WHEN TOO MANY CHILDREN APPLY FOR PLACES?**

If the number of preferences received 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 i.e. above the school's admission number, the local authority will apply the following criteria in order to determine the allocation of available places:

### **1. Looked After Children**

The highest priority will be given by the local authority to children who are 'Looked After', or were previously 'Looked After' at the time of the child's admission to the school.

- schools designated as having a religious character must give higher priority to looked after children of the faith of the school over children of that faith. They should also give higher priority to relevant looked after children not of that faith than to other children not of the faith;
- schools which have provision for selection by ability must give higher priority to looked after children who have been selected by ability over other children who have been selected by ability. Looked after children who have not been allocated a place on the basis of ability must be given priority over other children who have not been allocated a place on that basis;
- schools which make provision for selection by banding must give priority to relevant looked after children within each band over another child who is eligible for a school within that band

'Looked after children' 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.

## 2. Residence and siblings

Proof of residence, 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.

- Children resident in the designated catchment area of the school who 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 2016.
- Children resident in the designated catchment area of the school who do not have an older sibling attending the school. *(For admission purposes a sibling is a child who is the brother/sister, half-brother/sister (children who share one common parent), step brother/step sister where two children are related by virtue of their parents being married, co-habiting or in a civil partnership. This definition also includes adopted or fostered children living at the same address).*
- Children who reside outside the designated catchment area of the school who have an older sibling attending from the same address, at the date of application, who will continue to attend that school in September 2016.
- Children who reside outside the designated catchment area who do not have an older sibling attending the school.
- Children with siblings living in the same household attending the school in September 2016.

## 3. Medical Need

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

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

## 5. 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.

## 6. Tie Breaker

Where places remain after all children in the above categories have been allocated a

place, or where there is a need to differentiate between children in these categories, places will be allocated on the basis of distance between home and school (as identified by the authority's 'mapping schools' electronic system in relation to the shortest available walking route between the school gate and the child's front door) children living closest being given the highest priority.

Please contact the Pupil Services Team for advice (01685) 724620.

## **K. 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 the school is full and, if that is the case, whether the parents/carers plea is so strong that the child should still be offered a place. Before parents/carers appeal, they are advised to fully consider the school/local authority's admission criteria. It should be noted that only pupils of statutory school age have a right of appeal.

The local authority has a statutory power to direct the governing body of a maintained school for which it is **not** the admissions authority to admit any child where the child has been refused admission to each school which is a reasonable distance from the child's home. It is not necessary for the local authority to use this power for community and voluntary controlled schools as such schools do not have the power to refuse admissions.

Since the introduction of the regulations regarding infant class sizes, admission authorities may refuse to admit a child to a school where admission would oblige the school to take measures such as employing an extra teacher or building an extra classroom in order to comply with the new limits. In an appeal against admission, the Appeal Panel will only be able to uphold an appeal if the decision was not one which a reasonable admission authority would make in circumstances of the case or the child would have been offered a place if the admission policy had been properly implemented.

## **L. MID TERM ADMISSIONS**

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 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 has e.g. bullying or struggling with work.

Whatever the problem, simply changing schools may not be the answer.

2. **Curriculum/Exams** – Although there is a National Curriculum that every child is expected to follow, schools may teach parts of the curriculum in different stages and at different times of the year. If your child changes school, they may miss out on important work and exam results may suffer as a consequence. This is particularly relevant in Years 10 or 11. However, applications should not be refused because a child has followed a different curriculum in a previous school.
3. **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!**

There are a number of individuals within and outside of school, who parents/carers can talk to about a transfer:

Headteacher

Head of Year

Education Inclusion Officer

Inclusion Officer

Behaviour Support Teacher

LACES Service

**If parents/carers have considered all these issues and still want their child to transfer schools they will need to request an 'Application for Admission to School Form' from the Schools Department, Pupil Services Team, Unit 5, Triangle Business Park, Pentrebach, Merthyr Tydfil CF48 4TQ (Tel. 01685/724620)**

Upon receiving a request for admission/transfer, a parent/carer will be given an application form at the first point of contact. Once the 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.

## **M. SIXTH FORM ADMISSIONS**

This provision is now accessed via The College Merthyr Tydfil. 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.

## **N. WAITING LISTS**

For the more popular schools, which may become oversubscribed, the local authority maintains a waiting list. Following the allocation of places during the normal admissions round, any pupil that is refused admission to an oversubscribed school will remain on the list, which will be maintained until 30<sup>th</sup> September. Thereafter, parent/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 oversubscription criteria, not by the length of time that a child has been on the waiting list.

**Admission Numbers in maintained schools**

<b>School Name</b>	<b>Capacity</b>	<b>Admission Number</b>
Abercanaid Community School	210	30
Bedlinog Primary School	120	17
Caedraw Primary School	210	30
Cyfarthfa Park Primary School	329	47
Dowlais Primary School	210	30
Edwardsville Primary School	311	44
Gellifaelog Primary School	240	30
Goetre Primary School	349	49
Gwaunfarren Primary School	264	37
Heolgerrig Primary School	210	30
Pantysgallog Primary School	237	33
Trelewis Primary School	210	30
Troedyrhiw Primary	253	40
Twynyrodyn Community School	315	45
Ynysowen Community Primary School	270	38
Ysgol Gynradd Coed y Dderwen	210	30
Ysgol Rhyd y Grug	210	30
Ysgol Santes Tudful	390	55
Ysgol y Graig Primary	210	30
Afon Taf High School	875	175
Cyfarthfa High School	1,176	235
Pen- y- dre High School	737	147