

EDUCATION SERVICE

ADMISSION FORUM

HELD ON: Wednesday 29th January 2025 at 3.30pm via TEAMS

1	<p><u>Attendees / Apologies for Absence</u></p> <p>1.1 Attendees:- Kelly Tucker Kelly Slade Anne Robertson Rose Seabourne Learne Harris Charlotte Dickens A Maloney Rhiannon Burgham Nia Parker Siobhan Carroll G Jones Nia Downes Alan Vernon-Jones Jemma Bridges Nicole Rees Kevin Jones Keri Powell Emma Treadgold</p> <p>1.2 Apologies were received and accepted from; Steve Tong – Education Service Kathryn Worwood – Education Service Hayley Morgan – Education Service Clare Werrett – Education Service</p>
2.	<p>Appointments- Chair and Vice Chair</p> <p>2.1 A request was distributed in October for members to join the panel. However, no responses were received. We do not currently comply with the recommendations from WG as we do not have the quorum required. Kelly Slade was Chair for the meeting.</p> <p>AR commented that in other authorities the senior officer chairs these meetings. KS is happy to Chair the meetings; however, this position needs to be re-elected at each meeting and other members need to have the opportunity to chair the meeting.</p>
3.	<p><u>Appointments- Secondary Head and Primary Head</u></p> <p>3.1. There were no volunteers to take up these positions, so we were unable to appoint.</p>

4.	<p><u>Notes of the 24th October 2024 Forum meeting</u></p> <p>4.1 The notes of the meeting were previously circulated to Forum members and the wider group inviting comments.</p>
5.	<p><u>Matters Arising</u></p> <p>5.1 There were no matters arising.</p>
6.	<p><u>September 2024 update</u></p> <p>6.1 For the autumn term 24/25 to date there have been 234 in-year transfer applications received, 134 primary and 100 secondary.</p> <p>6.2 The Managed Move Panel continues to take place on a fortnightly basis with all Secondary schools within Torfaen. The panel is held with either Head Teachers or representatives from the schools who can make a delegated decision at the meeting. The purpose of the panel is to discuss the hard-to-place pupils, and for schools to discuss pupils who they feel would benefit from a Managed Move. The introduction of a MM panel was discussed at the Primary Head Teachers meeting as they can see the benefits of this process, however, no progress has been made on this as yet, further discussions will be held.</p>
7.	<p><u>September 2025 update</u></p> <p>7.1 Admissions to secondary school for September 2025 opened on the 25th of September 2024 and closed on the 13th November 2024. The admissions team received 895 applications in total. The decision date is the 3rd March 2025.</p> <p>7.2 Admissions to primary school for September 2025 opened on the 6th November 2024 and closed on the 9th January 2025. The admissions team has received 746 applications in total. The decision date is the 16th April 2025.</p> <p>KJ questioned if the Local Authority (LA) had a plan with regards to the low numbers and forecast going forward? KS confirmed that the numbers noted above do not include applications which have been received by the five Faith schools in Torfaen.</p> <p>7.3 The on-time round of Nursery 2025 applications has concluded. The decision date for the April rising 3 placements was the 24th January. There were 528 applications received within the on-time round for September 2025. No refusals were made for a September placement, however, we have made 13 refusals for an April rising 3 placement.</p>
8.	<p><u>To consider proposed admission arrangements for 2026/27</u></p> <p>8.1 Welsh Government School Admissions Code is currently being reviewed, this is due to be published this academic year.</p> <p>8.2 The Local Authority consulted on its admission arrangements for</p>

	<p>26/27 between the 2nd of December 2024 and the 20th January 2025.</p> <p>The confirmed admission dates for the 2026/2027 admission rounds are as follows –</p> <p><u>Primary:- 2026</u> Open date Thursday 13th November 2025 Closing date Thursday 15th January 2026 (5pm) Offer date Thursday 16th April 2026 (statutory offer date)</p> <p><u>Secondary:- 2026</u> Open date Friday 19th September 2025 Closing date Friday 31st October 2025 (5pm) Offer date Monday 2nd March 2026 (statutory offer date)</p> <p>KJ commented that the closing date for secondary falls over the half term. KS confirmed that this query had been raised with the All Wales Admissions Officer group (in which Welsh Government attend). It was confirmed that as these dates were proposed as part of the co-ordinated admissions process, they are now in legislation from 2027.</p> <p><u>Nursery:- 2026</u> Open date Monday 9th June 2025 Closing date Friday 18th July 2025 Offer date Monday 15th September 2025 (Sept 2026 4-year-olds & January 2026 rising 3's) Offer date for April rising 3's is Friday 30th January 2026</p> <p>8.3 As advised at the last meeting there were changes to the policy to amend the wording for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children of Armed forces/UK personnel. • Managed moves and the Fair Access Policy <p>The were proposed changes to the admission number for;</p> <p>Maendy Primary School from 33 to 60 West Monmouth School from 258 to 250 Ysgol Gymraeg Gwynllwy from 196 to 197</p> <p>AM- queried if the increase in the admission number for Maendy Primary had been approved? KS confirmed that the consultation to increase the admission number for Maendy primary was carried out in 2020 as part of the new build consultation. The plan was approved at that point.</p> <p>Following consultation, the final policy will be shared with the executive member for Education on the 4th March in readiness for publication by the 15th April 2025.</p>
9.	<u>To review the local authority's information booklet for September 2026</u>

	<p>9.1 The booklet for 25/26 has been reviewed and there are proposed changes for the 26/27 booklet. Part of these form the changes to the school admissions policy alongside updates from other departments. The changes will be made in readiness for the booklet to be published for June 25. The booklet has been distributed to those who contribute to it for any updates. The deadline for the response to any amendments is the 31st January 2025.</p> <p>9.2 Communication is ongoing in relation to promoting the Welsh language to the wider community, this is being undertaken by a working group led by the Welsh Medium school cluster and is recognised through the Council's WESP (Welsh Education Strategic Plan) and the work involved in developing it. It was noted that communication links are being strengthened, open events are being held, strategies are in place. A new sub-group has been created to specifically look at data and how we can track those learners from nursery through to secondary school.</p>																				
<p>10.</p>	<p><u>Harmonisation of Term Dates</u></p> <p>10.1 The proposed Term dates for the 2026/27 academic year have been sent to Welsh Government. The dates remain proposed at the moment pending harmonisation across authorities.</p> <p>2026/27 academic year</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="350 1024 1346 1214"> <thead> <tr> <th>Term</th><th>Start</th><th>Half Term Starts</th><th>Half Term Ends</th><th>Term Ends</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Autumn</td><td>1/9/26</td><td>26/10/26</td><td>30/10/26</td><td>18/12/26</td></tr> <tr> <td>Spring</td><td>4/1/27</td><td>15/2/27</td><td>19/2/27</td><td>25/3/27</td></tr> <tr> <td>Summer</td><td>12/4/27</td><td>31/5/27</td><td>4/6/27</td><td>21/7/27</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>Easter Sunday – Sunday 28th March 2027</i> <i>May Day – Monday 3rd May 2027</i></p> <p>Dates for 2027/28 and 28/29 and 2030/31 are currently being considered by SEWC Directors and will be subject to local consultation in due course.</p>	Term	Start	Half Term Starts	Half Term Ends	Term Ends	Autumn	1/9/26	26/10/26	30/10/26	18/12/26	Spring	4/1/27	15/2/27	19/2/27	25/3/27	Summer	12/4/27	31/5/27	4/6/27	21/7/27
Term	Start	Half Term Starts	Half Term Ends	Term Ends																	
Autumn	1/9/26	26/10/26	30/10/26	18/12/26																	
Spring	4/1/27	15/2/27	19/2/27	25/3/27																	
Summer	12/4/27	31/5/27	4/6/27	21/7/27																	
<p>11.</p>	<p><u>To consider co-ordinated arrangements for all schools covered by Torfaen for 2027/28</u></p> <p>11.1 The WG have consulted on the co-ordination of admission arrangements for all schools within the LA. Following this the School Admissions Team consulted with all Faith schools within the LA and neighbouring authorities on a co-ordinated admissions scheme to be in place for the 27/28 academic year. Following the consultation and taking into account the responses received the LA will be adopting the administrative function and processing all applications for Voluntary Aided primary schools within Torfaen. The Voluntary Aided secondary school in Torfaen will continue to administer and process their own</p>																				

	admissions. WG will be informed of the adopted scheme by the 28 th February 2025.
12.	<p><u>Annual Report</u></p> <p>12.1 The annual report for 23/24 was submitted on the 29th November 2024 to WG.</p>
13.	<p><u>Sustainable Communities for Learning</u></p> <p>13.1 Update provided by ST:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crownbridge Extension - This opened to pupils in January. • Maendy New build - The new school will be completed summer, 2025. The new Childcare and Flying Start building will be completed by January 2026 along with the external works. • Ysgol Bryn Onnen - Design work is to recommence in the next few months, pending agreement of a programme with the builder.
14.	<p><u>Capacity and Admission Number</u></p> <p>14.1 The admission number to Maendy Primary School for the 26/27 admissions round will increase from 33 to 60 with a total capacity of 420. West Monmouth School will decrease from 258 to 250 Ysgol Gymraeg Gwynllyw will increase from 196 to 197</p>
15.	<p><u>AOB</u></p> <p>15.1 KJ queried if the Inspire to Achieve programme was coming to an end, and if so, would there be a replacement? Further noting, that it would be a real concern for schools if the service goes. KS confirmed that she was not sure of the answer to this question, however, it will be forwarded to the Senior Management Team for further clarification.</p> <p>CD mentioned that the Family Information Service website has been updated for the non-maintained settings. A link is to be included in the parent/career booklet.</p>
16.	<p><u>Date of Next Meeting</u></p> <p>16.1 The next meeting is proposed for 22nd October 2025. Meeting to be held via Microsoft teams and a Team invite will be sent in due course. Agenda and any papers to be distributed in due course.</p> <p>16.2 KS thanked the Forum members for their attendance.</p>

Kelly Slade
Admission and Transfer Manager
January 2025