



TORFAEN COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE ADMISSION OF PUPILS TO
COUNTY BOROUGH AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED
SCHOOLS
SEPTEMBER 2020



Introduction

The School Admissions Code (2013) gives parents the right to express a preference for their child to be admitted to any school maintained from public funds. The Authority's admission policy sits within the parameters of the School Admissions Code of Practice and School Admissions Appeals Code of Practice July 2013

The Local Authority is required to consult on its admission arrangements on an annual basis.

To comment on this consultation please write to Kathryn Worwood, Admissions Manager, Civic Centre, Pontypool, NP4 6YB or email kath.worwood@torfaen.gov.uk
Please ensure all comments are returned no later than **5pm on 1st March 2019**

Consultation process

In accordance with the School Admissions Code of practice (2013) the Local Authority consults upon its admission arrangements on an annual basis, attempting where possible to mirror the admission round timescales of neighbouring admission authorities.

The coordinated admission arrangements will determine the date at which application forms are sent to parents as well as the publication of an agreed closing date. The Authority will ensure that this timeframe between distribution and closing date is no shorter than six weeks.

Consultation will take place between 1st September and 1st March beginning two years before the school year in which the arrangements will apply. The arrangements will then be confirmed by 15th April and published with 14 days of this date.

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NURSERY AND PRE SCHOOL PROVISION

Within Torfaen there is a range of settings available to Nursery aged children.

The Local Authority (LA) Nursery Units (known as maintained nurseries) are attached to Primary Schools. These also include three Welsh Medium units at Ysgol Gymraeg Cwmbran, Ysgol Bryn Onnen (Varteg, Pontypool) and Ysgol Panteg (Griffithstown).

There are also two Nursery Units at St. David's RC Primary School and Our Lady of the Angels RC Primary School which cater for Catholic children. Admissions into these schools are dealt with by the Governing Body of the relevant school.

Pupils with severe learning difficulties are catered for at Crownbridge Special Needs School which is situated on the site of Croesyceiliog Comprehensive School.

There are also non maintained early years settings registered to provide education for three and four year olds.

ADMISSIONS POLICY

Each Nursery Unit serves a specific catchment area.

Parents may apply for their child to attend any Authority maintained Nursery Unit, but where there are more children wishing to attend than there are available places, priority will be given to the children residing in the catchment area at the time of admission.

Alternatively parents can choose to place their child in a voluntary or private sector early years setting that is a registered education provider.

Children are able to be admitted to its Nursery Schools from the beginning of the term following a child's third birthday if places are available irrespective of when the school holidays fall:

Autumn Term 1st September – 31st December (Children born between these dates are eligible for a spring/January placement)

Spring Term 1st January – 31st March (Children born between these dates are eligible for a summer/April placement)

Summer Term 1st April – 31st August. March (Children born between these dates are eligible for a September placement)

Currently, places are allocated on a part-time basis (morning or afternoon sessions only) for five days per week. In certain limited circumstances, full-time placements can be offered to 4 year olds.

There is however no right of appeal against a decision to refuse a nursery placement and no transport is provided for Nursery aged children.

It is the Council's policy to meet parental preference where possible; however in some cases there may be more applications for a particular setting than there are places. In determining which child should be admitted to Nursery, the Council will apply the following oversubscription criteria in order of priority.

Full time priority (for four year olds only)

- Children who are looked after or have previously been looked after
- Children recommended on specific medical or social grounds by appropriate agencies and children identified as having ALN at the time that the application for admission is made
- Children who are on the Child Protection Register

Criteria for awarding nursery places:

- Full-time priority pupils residing in catchment in order of date of birth
- Part-time pupils residing in catchment in order of date of birth
- Full-time priority pupils residing out of catchment in order of date of birth
- Part-time pupils residing out of catchment in order of date of birth
- Late applicants

Whilst it is the Authority who determines the admission of a child and informs parents of the decision, it is the individual units who will officially notify parents as to the status of the placement ie mornings or afternoons with offer letters being distributed by the end of November of each year.

Please note that your child's start date at Nursery may be delayed if they are not fully toilet trained. This can be discussed with the Nursery once a place has been allocated to your child.

Attending a Nursery class does not guarantee admission nor give any advantage to the child's application for Reception. Parents must make a separate application for admission to Reception at the appropriate time.

RECEPTION AND SECONDARY ADMISISIONS 2020

The admission of children to schools is controlled and administered by an 'Admissions Authority'. In the case of county borough and voluntary controlled schools, this is recognised as Torfaen County Borough Council (Local Authority (LA)). In the case of voluntary aided schools (church schools), and foundation schools the admissions authority is the governing body of the relevant individual school.

Parents and or Carers need to express a preference for the school they would wish their child(ren) to attend. In the vast majority of cases, parents and or carers are quite happy to

choose their local school but it is legally necessary for that school to be named on an application form, completed on line or paper copy, and signed by the person with parental responsibility.

With regard to **Reception admissions** most parents will receive a letter detailing how to apply, either on line by entering the child's Unique Identification Number or by completing a paper copy, 6 weeks prior to the admission deadline date. The letters are sent either directly to the child's home address (If the child is not currently attending an LA Nursery base) or via pupil post containing the pupils UID number to enable the application to be made on line (where applicable) although all parents can apply on line.

In respect of **Secondary admissions** all parents will receive a letter 6 weeks before the closing date via pupil post containing the pupils UID (Unique Identification Number) to allow parents to apply on line.

The Authority will require parents to submit documentary evidence where necessary to validate data submitted on an application form e.g. Birth certificate , NHS Medical card, Passport, Recent Council Tax or Utility Bill.(2019/20)

When considering applications for admission, the Authority must admit pupils up to a schools Admission Number (AN). The Admission Number being the number of pupils which must be admitted into the relevant age group.

Where the number of applications exceeds the number of places available however, the following **over subscription criteria** would be used to determine which applicants would be offered places:-

- **Priority 1:** Where a school is named in a statement of Educational Needs, the Council has a duty to admit the child to the named setting before the oversubscription criteria is applied against applications being received.
- **Priority 2 :** Children who are looked after by the Authority or have been previously looked after
- **Priority 3:** Children on medical grounds which are supported by a medical consultant's report, obtained by the parents, specifying the medical advantage of the child attending the preferred school compared with the normal catchment school.

NB: Reports from family doctors are not accepted for this purpose.

- **Priority 4 :** Children residing in the catchment area of their preferred school with relevant siblings at the school at the date of admission
- **Priority 5 :** Children residing in the catchment area of their preferred school without any siblings at the school at the date of admission
- **Priority 6 :** Children residing outside of the catchment area of their preferred school with relevant siblings at the school at the date of admission
- **Priority 7 :** Children residing out of catchment area of their chosen school without any siblings at the school at the date of admission

NB: Brothers and sisters, whether full, half, step or foster will be considered relevant where living together at the same address. This only applies when an older child will definitely be registered at the school when the younger one will be eligible to attend.

- Where there is more than one such case, priority will be assessed on the basis of those children closest in age to the elder brothers or sisters already at the school at the date of admission;
- After taking account of the above categories, priority will be based on closeness to the school. The distance is measured from the point where the child's home meets the highway, to the nearest available entrance to the school and is measured by nearest council recognised available walking route. Measurement will be undertaken by using a Digital Information Mapping System using the same rules as apply for eligibility for school transport

The Authority will endeavour to comply with a parents preferred choice of school taking into account its own admissions policy and any statutory requirements. Where the number of applications exceeds the number of places available however, it may be necessary to refuse admission.

In these circumstances, parents have a **statutory right of appeal** and will be provided (in writing) with the reasons for refusal and details of how to appeal. Appeals are arranged by the Authority's Democratic Services Department and heard by an Independent Appeal Panel. Appeals will be held in accordance with the timescales set out in the Welsh Governments Appeals Code of Practice 2013. A placement at an alternative school will not be effected should you wish to pursue the appeal. At the appeal you can be accompanied by a friend or advisor and any written evidence should be applied before the hearing.

Further information about appeals can be obtained from Democratic Services, Civic Centre, Pontypool, NP4 6YB.

EDUCATION THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF WELSH

Nursery and Pre School provision

There are three Welsh Medium Nursery units at Ysgol Gymraeg Cwmbran, Ysgol Bryn Onnen (Varteg Pontypool) and Ysgol Panteg (Griffithstown).

Reception and Secondary Admissions

For parents wishing their child to be educated through the medium of Welsh, there are three Welsh Medium **Primary** Schools in Torfaen, details as follows:

Ysgol Bryn Onnen situated in Varteg, Pontypool serving the North of the borough,

Ysgol Gymraeg Cwmbran serving the Cwmbran area

Ysgol Panteg situated in Griffithstown serving mid Torfaen.

Secondary Welsh medium provision is provided at Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw situated in Pontypool.

The admission arrangements and policies for Welsh Medium provision are the same as those in respect of English medium schools

Pupils attending a Welsh Medium School will be provided with transport in accordance with the Authority's transport policy.

ADMISSION TO VOLUNTARY AIDED (VA) SCHOOL (FAITH BASED SCHOOLS)

There are 5 VA 'faith' primary schools in Torfaen, details as follows:

St. Davids RC Primary School, Cwmbran

Our lady of the Angels RC Primary School, Cwmbran

Padre Pio RC Primary School

Henllys Church in Wales Primary School

Ponthir Church in Wales Primary School

St. Albans RC High School is the regional Roman Catholic Secondary provision for Torfaen

Admission arrangements for these schools are dealt directly by the relevant schools governing body and parents are requested to apply directly to the school of your choice

GENERAL ADMISISONS INFORMATION

- For pupils with additional learning needs, admission to school is influenced by parents' preference to school in a way broadly similar to other pupils. However, individual circumstances relating to pupils and schools may need to be taken into account. Ultimately, the placement process is governed by procedures identified in the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice. This process might give special priority for admission of a pupil to a particular school. It might be a reason for refusing a parents' stated preference.
- All pupils requiring mainstream school place must make an application through the school admissions process, even if the child has a statement of SEN. Where a school is named in a pupil's statement, they will automatically be admitted to the named school. If no particular school is named it is considered that the needs of the pupil can be accommodated in any mainstream school and thus no specific priority is

afforded and the application will be assessed in accordance with the agreed oversubscription criteria.

- All admissions into any school are dealt with in accordance with the admissions policy of either the LA or the relevant Governing body and at no stage are pupils 'selected' or are interviews held to determine admission.
- Whilst residing within the catchment area of the preferred school forms an element of the oversubscription criteria it does not guarantee a placement on this basis.
- Where the Authority is unable to offer a child a place in their catchment school, free transport would be provided (if requested) to the nearest school with an available place (not choice of school) , subject to the distance criteria laid down in the Authority's transport policy.
- All applications received by the closing date would be considered together and if necessary, the over-subscription criteria will be applied.
- Any applications received after the closing date or remain incomplete would be dealt with in accordance with Torfaen's oversubscription criteria and the late application process.

Address Validations

- Parents / Carers are required to submit their Council Tax reference number on their child's admission application form. The Local Authority will use this information to validate that the address submitted on the application form coincides with the information held on the Local Authority's Council Tax database.
- If the information provided by the parent/ carer does not coincide with the council tax database, a further check will be undertaken using the electoral register. If this does not verify the address, the Local Authority will contact the parent/ carer.
- Parents / Carers who are in the process of moving property, which may impact upon the information held on the Local Authority's Council Tax database, will be required to notify the Local Authority at the time of application of the proposed move and submit evidence to validate their new address. Suitable evidence would be a copy of the exchange of contracts (for purchases) or long term tenancy agreement (for rental arrangements), which must be received prior to the published closing date in order to be considered as an "in time" application. Failure to notify the Local Authority that applicants will be moving to a new address prior to the published closing date, will result in the application being determined as a "late application".
- Where the Local Authority accepts evidence to validate a property move and uses the new property for allocation purposes, any offer of a school place would be based on the applicant being resident at this property at the time of offer. Any offer of a school place could be withdrawn if it is found that the applicant is not resident.

Shared residency

- In the event that the residency of a child is shared between two parents, the address where the child concerned resides for the majority of the school week will be used for allocation purposes. This is the address that should be declared on the application.
- However, if the residency with both parents during the school week is equal, the address for where the child benefit is paid will be used for allocation purposes.

Multiple birth children

If when applying the over subscription criteria the last child to be admitted is one of a multiple birth then the LA will admit the other sibling(s). eg Twins, triplets etc.

Deferred entry into Primary School

The Local Authority will admit a child to a maintained primary/infant school at the start of the academic year in which he/she will turn 5 years old. However, the legal requirements confirm that parents are able to delay the admission of their child until the term following their 5th birthday. The Local Authority is obliged to ensure that any offer of a school place is held for parents who wish for their child's admission into Reception to be deferred until later in the academic year. A parent, however, is not able to defer entry beyond the term following the child's fifth birthday, nor beyond the school year for which the application was made.

Summer Term Births

In the case of a child born during the summer term, they too are not legally required to attend School until the term following their fifth birthday / the September after the normal year of entry for a Reception age child. However, in such circumstances the Local Authority will continue to ensure that children continue to follow their chronological year group and therefore the child would be admitted into year 1 and not Reception.

It is only in exceptional circumstances that the Local Authority will authorise the admission of a summer term birth into a year group that is outside the normal year of entry. In such circumstances, there will need to be a suitable evidence base (e.g. report from an Educational Psychologist) that suggests the chronological year group is not suitably able to meet the needs of the child concerned.

Waiting Lists

The Authority will keep a waiting list for the admission round until 30th September of the same academic year. A child's name will be placed on the waiting list even if parents choose another school or decide to take up their right of appeal.

If a place becomes available during that time places would be allocated to children on the waiting list on the basis of the Authority's over subscription criteria and not based on the date the application was added to the list.

Late Application Arrangements

Any applications that are received after the respective closing date (Primary 13th January 2020) (secondary 11th November 2019) or applications that remain incomplete as at the closing date will be dealt with under late the application arrangements.

A change of preference received by the Local Authority after the published closing date will result in the application being determined as late.

Late applications which are received after the respective closing date but before the respective offer date will be considered and parents informed in the month following the offer day.

Further late applications will then be collated on a monthly basis based upon the month in which they are received. Places are allocated in line with the criteria and parents will be informed of the outcome of their applications within the month after receipt. The arrangements for late applications will continue up until the last week of August. After this date, any admissions received are then processed as an in year transfer of schools.

Please note that applications determined as being late may increase the possibility of not achieving a place at the preferred school (s). This is because all applications submitted with the necessary evidence prior to the closing date will receive priority over those received after the closing date.

Children of UK service personnel and other Crown Servants (including diplomats).

Families of UK personnel and other Crown Servants are subject to frequent movement within the UK and from abroad, often at relatively short notice. School places should 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 or Commonwealth Office (FCO) letter declaring a return date and confirmation of the new address wherever possible.

Children housed via domestic violence agencies

Children temporarily housed under the protection of approved Domestic Violence agencies will be admitted as a priority to the catchment school if the application form is accompanied by an official letter from the relevant agency.

Gypsy and traveller children

The Council is obliged, by statute, to ensure that all children of compulsory school age receive education that is appropriate to their age, abilities and any special educational needs, and promotes high standards in the provision of education and the welfare of children. These obligations apply to all children whether or not they are permanent residents in the area. Therefore, applications made in respect of such families will be dealt with in conjunction with the Gwent Education Minority-ethnic Service (GEMS) with a view to placing these children as quickly as possible at the nearest available and appropriate school.

Managed Moves

This policy sets out the arrangements for Torfaen schools and should be read and implemented in conjunction with the Welsh Government circular, 'Effective Managed Moves – a fresh start at school for children and young people'.

A managed move is a carefully planned transfer of a pupil from one school into another in a way which is acceptable to all parties including the pupil.

Managed moves are an important tool in providing pupils with the opportunity of a fresh start in a new school. They can also reduce the need for permanent exclusions and minimise the negative outcomes associated with them.

At the core of any managed move must be the best interest of the child in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the seven core aims in the Welsh Government document 'Children & Young People: Rights to Action'.

The National Assembly for Wales Circular 47/2006 – Inclusion & Pupil Support referred to the use of managed moves as one of the early intervention strategies that can be considered to help pupils in the management of their behaviour and attendance at School.

Who would benefit from a Managed Move?

A managed move can be implemented for the following pupils:

- Pupils for whom there is a genuine belief that a fresh start would be beneficial for the pupil. It is essential to establish the core reasons for the problems being experienced and/or behaviours displayed by the pupil prior to consideration of a managed move.
- Pupils who find that attendance at their current school is negatively affecting their emotional well-being. This would need to be supported by medical evidence.
- Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties who have received a variety of supportive strategies in their school with limited success.
- Pupils who are at risk of permanent exclusion but who might succeed in a new placement.
- Pupils reinstated into a school by an independent appeal panel but where reintegration proves to be impractical.

Admission to Neighbouring LA Schools

Where parents wish to apply for their child to attend a school in the Newport area, you are required to apply via the relevant Newport City Council application form or by making an on-line application via the Newport City Council website. This should be returned to Newport City Council in accordance with the Council's agreed timescales. If you are a Torfaen resident and wish to apply to schools which are situated in Monmouthshire, Blaenau Gwent or Caerphilly you are required to apply to Torfaen, either on line or via paper copy and we will liaise with the relevant Authority.

Some reasons why we may refuse admission

Whilst parents have the right to express a preference for their child to be admitted to any school, there are reasons why that preference may have to be refused

- The Infant class size initiative which is committed to ensuring that classes do not exceed more than 30 pupils. The statutory class size limit of 30 relates to the Reception Year and Years 1 and 2
- The physical limitations of the school and the site buildings which may result in a class size of fewer than 30 pupils
- Any other factors which may prejudice the provision of efficient education and /or the efficient use of resources

Class size exceptions

Welsh Government regulations require Councils to limit class sizes to no more than 30 pupils. Whilst there is no legislation limiting Key Stage 2 classes to 30 or fewer this is the class size target for the Welsh Government. There are, however, exceptions to these regulations (called "excepted pupils") which may allow the 30 pupils per class limit to be exceeded. These pupils are as follows:

- Children whose statements of ALN specify that they should be educated at the school concerned, and who were admitted to the school outside a normal admission round
- Children who are looked after by local authorities (looked after children), or who have ceased to be looked after (previously looked after children) as a result of being adopted or being placed with a family or given a special guardian and are admitted to the school outside a normal admissions round.
- Children initially refused admission to a school, but subsequently offered a place outside a normal admission round by direction of an

admission appeal panel, or because the person responsible for making the original decision recognises that an error was made in implementing the school's admission arrangements.

- Children admitted outside the normal admission round who:
 - a) the maintaining local authority confirmed cannot gain a place at any other suitable school within a reasonable distance of their home because they have moved into the area outside a normal admission round, or
 - b) they desire a religious education, or an education through the medium of Welsh and the school in question is the only suitable school within a reasonable distance.
- Children who were admitted to the school outside the normal admission round after which the school has arranged its classes, and after the first day of the school year, the effect of which would mean that the school would have to take a relevant measure if such children were not excepted pupils.
- Children of armed forces personnel who are admitted outside the normal admission round.
- Children whose twin or other sibling from a multiple birth are admitted as non-excepted pupils, as the final pupil(s) allocated a place before the admission number is reached.
- Children who are registered pupils at special schools, but who receive part of their education at a mainstream school.
- Children with ALN who are normally educated in a special unit in a mainstream school, who receive part of their lessons in a non-special class.

KEY ADMISSION DATES 2020 /21

Nursery (January, April & September)

- Applications sent to parents week commencing Monday 26th August 2019
- Closing date for applications Friday 4th October 2019
- Offer of places –Friday 22nd November 2019 (September 2020 4 year olds and January 2019 rising 3')
- Offer of places - Friday 31st January 2020 (April rising 3's)

Primary

- Applications sent to parents Monday 18th November 2019 – On line application will go live on Monday 25th November 2019(9.00am)
- Closing date for applications Monday 13th January 2020 (12.00pm noon)
- Offer of places – Thursday 16th April 2020
- Primary appeals would be held during May/June 2020

Secondary

- Applications sent to parents Monday 23rd September 2019 via pupil post – On live application will go live on Monday 30th September 2019(9.00 am)
- Closing date for applications Monday 11th November 2019 (12pm noon)
- Offer of places – Monday 2nd March 2020
- Secondary appeals would be held during May/June 2020

Faith schools

- Closing date for Primary applications Monday 13th January 2020
- Closing date for Secondary applications is Monday 11th November 2019
- Offer of places for Primary – Thursday 16th April 2020
- Offer of places for Secondary - Monday 2nd March 2020

PROPOSED ADMISSION NUMBERS/SCHOOL CAPACITIES FOR 2020/21 ACADEMIC YEAR

Primary Schools (Capacities calculated during the Autumn/Spring Term 2018/19)

School	Current Capacity	Admission Number
Blaenavon Heritage VC Primary	450	64
Blenheim Road Community Primary	315	45
Coed Eva Primary School	420	60
Croesyceiliog Primary School	420	60
Cwmffrwdroer Primary	315	45
Garnteg Primary	420	60
George Street Primary	420	60
Greenmeadow Primary	279	39
Griffithstown Primary	420	60
Henllys C-in-W Primary	212	30
Llantarnam Community Primary	315	45
Llanyrafon Primary	407	58
Maendy Primary	231	33
Nant Celyn Primary	420	60
New Inn Primary	576	75
Our Lady of the Angels RC Primary (1)	210	23
Padre Pio RC Primary	210	30
Penygarn Community Primary	469	67
Ponthir VA Primary	113	16
Pontnewydd Primary	386	55
St David's RC Primary (1)	210	23
Woodlands Community Primary	319	45
Ysgol Bryn Onnen	210	30
Ysgol Gymraeg Cwmbran	360	47
Ysgol Panteg	420	60

Secondary Schools

School	Capacity	Admission Number	
		Y7 – 11	Y12 (3)
Abersychan	952	190	N/A
Croesyceiliog	1200	240	N/A
Cwmbran High	1300	260	N/A
St Alban's RC (2)	1017	120	N/A
West Monmouth	1265	253	N/A
Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw	1107	186	88

NOTES

(1) = The Governing Bodies of Our Lady of the Angels and St Davids RC Primary Schools are currently considering the reduction of their admission numbers to 23 (from 30) with effect from September 2020 to support the process of managing down numbers ahead of the new proposed 3-16 School opening in September 2022 (subject to the proposal going ahead).

(2) = In November 2018 the Governing Body of St Albans RC High School decided to reduce the admission number to 120 with effect from 2020 to support the process of managing down numbers ahead of the new proposed 3-16 School opening in September 2022 (subject to the proposal going ahead).

(3) = From September 2020 English Medium 6th form provision will be provided in the Torfaen Learning Zone and Croesyceiliog, Cwmbran High and St Albans RC High Schools will become 11-16 providers only.

Admission Number(AN)

The AN is the number of pupils who should be admitted to a relevant age group if sufficient applications for places are received. Pupils may not be refused a place until the AN is reached. The number is calculated by dividing the capacity by the number of year groups to be accommodated at the school. As the AN reflects the schools ability to accommodate pupils it should not be exceeded unless there are exceptional circumstances which support this action.(Welsh Government Circular No: 021/2011 “Measuring the capacity of schools in Wales”, issued October 2011).