

Bridgend County Borough Council
Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr



Starting School 2018 – 2019

A Guide to Bridgend Council's Admission
Arrangements for Schools

www.bridgend.gov.uk

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Mr Lindsay Iorwerth Harvey
Interim Director of Education
and Family Support



Councillor DR.C E Smith
Cabinet Member for Education
and Regeneration

Foreword

Dear Parent/Carer,

All local authorities have an obligation to provide an opportunity for parents/carers to express a preference when choosing a school for their children. This is one of the most important decisions you will take on behalf of your child. This information document has been prepared to assist you with your decisions.

As a parent/carers, you have a right to expect your child to receive a good education, but also important is your interest in your child's work at school which will provide encouragement for the school and complement the efforts of teachers. I encourage you to take part in your school's parents' association which will give an opportunity for you to have a closer involvement with the school.

You may be interested to know that there are parent representatives on the governing body of each school and that these are elected by the parents themselves, normally every four years. Each year, you will receive a written report of the work undertaken by the governing body of the school and a meeting will be held for the purpose of giving parents an opportunity to discuss this annual report with the governors.

I hope that your child will settle easily into their new school and that they will derive many benefits from the opportunities offered.

I trust that this booklet will prove to be informative and useful and that it will promote a greater understanding between yourselves and the education service as a whole.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L Iorwerth'.

Lindsay Iorwerth Harvey (Mr)
Interim Director of Education and Family Support

We want the county of Bridgend to be a good place in which to be a child or young person, or to bring up a family. Through our schools and children's services, we want to help all children and young people to:

- thrive and make the best use of their talents
- live healthy and safe lives
- be confident and caring individuals
- know and receive their rights
-

Parents/Carers are a child's first and enduring teacher. They play a crucial role in helping their children to learn. This role should continue and extend when a child begins school. Our schools offer a great range of quality learning experiences and opportunities, but to make the most of these opportunities and help children and young people to reach their potential, it is important that parents form a productive and supportive partnership with school staff, starting with ensuring that their child attends school

Regular communication between home and school is an essential part of the partnership, which helps children and young people succeed. Equally, we are committed to supporting all schools to address the Welsh Government's three priorities of:

- literacy;
- numeracy; and
- reducing the impact of poverty on educational attainment.

Our aim is for every local school to be a good school, but we recognise that parents have the right to express a preference that their child attends any school listed in the middle of this booklet, subject to the admission arrangements specified.

The booklet aims to provide parents with general information about Bridgend's primary, secondary and special schools, and more specifically, details about the admission and appeals arrangements governing those schools.

We have also included some additional information that may help parents in selecting a school. In some parts of Bridgend county, for a range of reasons, there is pressure on school places. This means that, in those areas, parents may not always be successful in getting a place at a preferred school, especially if they do not live in the school catchment area.

As a Council, we think it is important for us to conduct our business in ways which are:

- **Fair** – taking into account everyone's needs and situation
- **Ambitious** – always trying to improve what we do

- **Customer-focused** – remembering that we are here to serve the local community
- **Efficient** – delivering services that are value for money

If you require further information or would like to provide feedback on this booklet or the admission process as a whole, we would be pleased to hear from you.

e-mail pupilservices@bridgend.gov.uk

A. School Term Dates

Term	Term Begins	Mid-term Holiday		Term Ends	Days
		Begins	Ends		
Autumn Term 2018	Monday 3 September 2018	Monday 29 October 2018	Friday 2 November 2018	Friday 21 December 2018	75
Spring Term 2019	Monday 7 January 2019	Monday 25 February 2019	Friday 1 March 2019	Friday 12 April 2019	65
Summer Term 2019	Monday 29 April 2019	Monday 27 May 2019	Friday 31 May 2019	Monday 22 July 2019	55

B. Schools Map

To view the school locations map, please click on the link below.

http://www1.bridgend.gov.uk/media/184922/School_Locations.pdf

C. Admission to Voluntary Aided Schools

Within the Bridgend County Borough, there are five voluntary aided schools which are financed largely by the Local Authority but which are organised and run by the respective governing bodies.

The governing body of each voluntary aided school is the admission authority with responsibility for all admission arrangements.

Parents/carers who wish to seek admissions to these schools are advised to contact the relevant school for further information.

The five voluntary aided schools within the county borough are detailed below.

D. St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Bridgend - Admission Arrangements

This policy refers to admissions in 2018/2019 at St. Mary's Catholic Primary School, which is a Catholic School founded by the Church to provide education for Catholic children. The Governing Body has sole responsibility for admissions to this school.

The Education Act, 1980 Section 6, gives parents the right to express **a preference with regard to which school their children attend**. Admission to the school will be made in accordance with parental choice **subject to the order of priority listed below**.

The school tries to allow all who express a desire for a Christian education to come to this school.

All applicants are required to sign a statement to indicate positive support for the aims and ethos of the school as expressed in its Mission Statement.

The criteria for admissions are, in order of priority:

1. Baptised looked after Catholic children.
2. Baptised Catholic children.
3. Looked after children who are baptised in another Christian denomination.
4. Children who are baptised in another Christian denomination.
5. whose parents/carers wish them to be educated in a Christian School and who support the Catholic ethos of the School.

In considering applications relating to these categories, a priority order may have to be established by reference to:

- a) the age of any sibling in the receiving school; the youngest sibling commanding the highest degree of priority.
 - b) the proximity of the pupil's home to the receiving school as measured by the shortest practicable walking distance. The governors will use the GIS software system to measure all distances.
- In the above category, 'Looked After Children' will be given top priority.
 - Applications from children with special needs or additional learning needs will be considered within the context of each of the criteria and in accordance with the Governing Body's Special Needs Policy.

Parents/Carers seeking a Christian education for children under criteria 2 should expect to provide documentary support from their current priest/minister of religion. If any child should not be admitted to the school, a parent/carer may appeal in writing to:

**The Clerk to the Governors
St Mary's Catholic Primary School
Llangewydd Road, Bridgend, CF31 4JW**

E. **St Mary's and St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Maesteg - Admission Policy**

*"The school was founded by and is part of the Catholic Church. The school is to be conducted as a Catholic School in accordance with the canon law and teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, and in accordance with the **TRUST DEED OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF CARDIFF** and in particular:*

- (a) religious education is to be in accordance with the teachings, doctrines, discipline and general and particular norms of the Catholic Church;*
- (b) religious worship is to be in accordance with the rites, practices, disciplines and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church;*

and at all times the school is to serve as a witness to the Catholic faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ." (Instrument of Government, 2012)

As a Voluntary Aided School, the Governing Body is responsible for admissions to **St Mary's and St Patrick's Catholic Primary School** and tries to allow all who express a desire for a Christian education to come to this school.

The current Published Admissions Number for the School is 25.

All applications for admission to **St Mary's and St Patrick's Catholic Primary School**, including those currently in the school's Nursery Class, must be via an application form available from the school. This form must be submitted for consideration by the published closing date which can be obtained from the school, found on the application form or from the Local Authority composite prospectus.

Being a pupil of the Nursery at **St Mary's and St Patrick's Catholic Primary School** does not guarantee a place in, or give priority for admission to, the School's Reception Class.

Children can commence Reception Class from the September of the school year in which they reach age 5. However, admission can be delayed until (but no longer than) the term after the child's 5th birthday.

Over-subscription criteria

If there are more applications for admission than there are places, then the following over-subscription criteria will be used:

1. Baptised Catholic Looked After Children.
2. Baptised Catholic Children.

3. Non-Catholic Looked After Children.
4. Siblings of baptised Catholic children who will be attending the school at the time of admission (siblings in the lower years commanding greater priority).
5. Children who are baptised or recognised members of other Christian denominations and whose parents/guardians wish them to be educated in a Christian School.
6. Children who will have siblings at the school at the time of admission (siblings in lower years commanding greater priority.)
7. All other applicants.

A sibling is classified as a half or full brother/sister, an adopted brother/sister, or a child living in the same household. When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child (e.g. a twin or triplet) the Governing Body will also admit the other siblings.

If circumstances arise where it is possible to admit some but not all children in any of the above categories, preference will be given to children whose homes are within the shortest walking distance as measured by the current Local Authority approved GIS system.

Applications wishing to be considered for priority in Categories 1, 2 and 5, will need to provide a copy of baptismal certificate or letter confirming membership from their own minister as appropriate.

All applications received by the application deadline will be considered together and letters containing an offer or refusal of a place will be sent out on the Common Offer Date. Late applications will be considered after those that have met the deadline.

The application deadline and Common Offer dates can be confirmed by contacting the School or referring to the Local Authority's composite prospectus.

Successful applicants will be expected to confirm acceptance of an offer of admission by the deadline indicated in the offer letter. Failure to do so may result in the offer being withdrawn and the Child's place allocated to another applicant.

Unsuccessful applicants will be placed on a waiting list until 31st August. Any additional places will be allocated in line with the Over-Subscription Criteria as above.

In-year applications for admission will be admitted when there are places. Where more in-year applications are received than there are places, all the applications will be considered against the above oversubscription criteria.

Anyone wishing to appeal a decision of the Governing Body's Admissions Committee (note, there is no appeal regarding Nursery Admissions) should complete the Appeals Form attached to the notification letter. The completed form **must** be returned within 14 days (10 working days) of notification of refusal to:

**The Clerk to the Governing Body
St Mary's & St Patrick's Catholic Primary School
Monica Street
Maesteg
CF34 0AY**

All appeals will be heard by an Independent Appeals Panel and conducted in accordance with *The School Admission Appeals Code*.

F. St Robert's Catholic Primary School, Aberkenfig - Admission Policy

This policy refers to admissions in 2018/2019 at St Robert's Catholic Primary School, Aberkenfig, Bridgend.

St Robert's is a Catholic School founded by the Church to provide education for Catholic children. The Governing Body has sole responsibility for admissions to this school.

Under the Education Act 1980 Section 6 gives parents the right to express a **preference as to which school their children attend**. Admission to the school will be made in accordance with parental choice **subject to the order of priority listed below**.

The school tries to allow all who express a desire for a Christian education to come to this school.

All applicants are required to sign a statement to indicate positive support for the aims and ethos of the school as expressed in its Mission Statement.

The criteria for admissions are in order of priority:

1. Baptised Catholic children.
2. Children who are baptised in other Christian denominations and whose parents/guardians wish them to be educated in a Christian School and who support the Catholic ethos in the school.

In considering applications relating to these categories, a priority order may have to be established by reference to:

- a) the age of sibling in the receiving school; the youngest sibling commanding the highest degree of priority.
 - b) the proximity of the pupil's home to the receiving school as measured by the shortest practicable walking distance.
- In each category, Looked After Children will be given top priority.
 - Applications from children with special needs or additional learning needs will be considered within the context of each of the criteria and in accordance with the Governing Body's Special Needs Policy.

Parents/guardians seeking a Christian education for children under criteria 2 should expect to provide documentary support from their current priest/minister of religion.

If any child should not be admitted to the school, a parent/guardian may appeal in writing to:

**The Clerk to the Governors
St Robert's Catholic Primary School
Dan y Lan, Aberkenfig, Bridgend, CF32 9AB**

G. Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School - Admission Policy

General:

Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School is an English medium, mixed, voluntary aided secondary school. It serves the parishes of Our Lady's and St Patrick's (Maesteg), St Robert's (Aberkenfig), St Mary's (Bridgend), Our Lady Star of the Sea (Porthcawl) and St Joseph of Arimathea (Pyle).

The Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998, section 86, gives parents the right to express a preference as to which school their children attend.

Over-subscription Criteria and Order of Priority

Where the number of applicants for admission exceeds the Admission Number of **131** places available, places will be allocated to applicants in the under mentioned categories in the following order of priority:

1. Looked After Baptised Catholic Children
2. Baptised Catholic children.
3. Other Looked After Children

4. Siblings of Baptised Catholic Children who will be attending Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School at the time of admission.
5. Children who are attending a Catholic primary school at the time of application and for whom the parents/guardians continue to seek a specifically Christian education.
6. Children who are attending a Church in Wales primary school at the time of application and for whom the parents/guardians continue to seek a specifically Christian education.
7. Siblings of other children who will be attending Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School at the time of admission.
8. Other children for whom parents/guardians seek a specifically Christian education.

Notes

1. Evidence of baptism must be submitted with the application form in all cases.
2. In this context, “siblings” would share a common mother or father, adopted mother or father, or form part of an established family unit. When allocating places if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child (e.g. a twin or triplet), the School will also admit the other sibling(s).

In circumstances where, for reasons of capacity, it is not possible to admit all the children within a particular category, preference will be given those whose homes are closest to the school as determined by the shortest practicable walking route; this is determined using the current BCBC approved GIS system.

Application

Application forms and, where appropriate, supporting documentation, must be returned to the School no later than **Friday 12th January 2018**. For children attending one of the above Catholic primary schools, the form can be handed into the school. For other applications, the form should be sent directly to the Admissions Panel at Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School.

Applications received by this date will be considered together and places allocated. Letters confirming the outcome of your application will be sent on Thursday 1st March 2018.

Important date - for Year 6 pupils

Thursday 19th October 2017: School Open Evening for prospective parents and their children.

Admissions Policy

The Governing Body of the School is responsible for determining and administering the Policy relating to the admission of pupils to the School. It is guided in that responsibility by the requirements of the law, by the advice of the Diocesan trustees and its duty to the School and the Catholic community.

In accordance with the provisions of the Government of Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2005, the Governing Body has delegated responsibility for determining admissions to its 'Admissions Panel', a sub-committee of the Board of Governors. The Admissions Panel will consider all applications made in accordance with the criteria set out on page 2 of this document, without reference to the race, gender, ability, disability, social background or aptitude of the child.

Having consulted with the LA and others in accordance with the requirements of the law, the Governing Body has set its planned admission number at **131** pupils for the school year commencing September 2017. Places in other year groups are also limited to 131.

Parents/carers wishing to apply for a place for their child for the **start of the academic year 2018-19** must complete the attached application form in full, and return it to the school no later than the published Closing Date for applications. Please note that ALL applications **must** be submitted on this form and all applications will be considered at the same time.

Letters will be dispatched on the published Common Offer Date, informing you of the decision of the Admissions Panel in respect of your application. Where the application is unsuccessful, the reason(s) will be stated clearly in the letter, and you will be provided with information as to how to appeal the decision. Applicants who are not accepted will be placed on the school's Waiting List. Applicants will remain on the Waiting List until the end of the academic year. In the event that places become available, the applicants on the Waiting List will be reviewed against the Oversubscription Criteria and offers made to fill available places.

Applications for **transfer to the school from another secondary school** during the academic year should be made using the specific Schools Transfer Application Form. The Governing Body Admissions Panel will consider each application. If the number requesting transfer exceeds available places, the Oversubscription Criteria will be used to determine successful applicants. Where the particular year group is full, applicants will be placed on the school's Waiting List. Applicants will remain on the Waiting List until the end of the academic year. In the event that places become available, the applications on the Waiting List will be reviewed against the Oversubscription Criteria and offers made to fill the available places.

Parents have a **right of appeal** against a refusal by the Governing Body to admit their child. If they wish to do so, they should put their appeal in writing to the Clerk to the Governors at the School within 14 days (10 working days) from the notification date. Appeals will be arranged, with an independent panel and conducted in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code.

For all successful applications, the data contained in the application form will be stored on the school management information system and used for purposes outlined in the 'fair processes order'. Every effort is made to secure the accuracy and security of personal data held by the School. Under the Data Protection Act, individuals have the **right of access to personal information** held about them, and also the right for any errors to be corrected.

Please send application form (and supporting documentation) to:

The Governors' Admissions Panel
Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School
Oak Tree Way
Brackla
Bridgend
CF31 2DN

Relevant dates referred to in the foregoing can be found via the School's website or from the local authority website.

School's website: <http://moodle.bridgend.gov.uk/archbishopmcgrath>

Local Authority website:

<http://www.bridgend.gov.uk/web/groups/public/documents/services/004296.hcsp>

H. Archdeacon John Lewis Church in Wales Primary School - Admission Policy

a. The Admissions Authority

The Governing Body of The Archdeacon John Lewis Voluntary Aided Church in Wales Primary School is the Admissions Authority for the school. While it has responsibility for its policy and procedures, the Governing Body must consult annually with other Admissions Authorities within a three mile radius of the school. This statement and rules are made under the provisions of the education acts, specifically the Welsh Government Code of Practice on School Admissions and Admissions Appeals and in accordance with the Trust Deed and Instrument of Government of the school.

b. Parental Preference

Parents/Carers who wish their child/children to attend this school must contact the school to obtain the relevant application forms. Parental preference does not apply where:

- to admit the child would prejudice the provision of efficient education or use of resources;
- the child has been permanently excluded from two or more schools. The requirement to comply with parental preference is dis-applied for a period of two years following the second exclusion. This does not apply to pupils below statutory school age when they were excluded nor does it apply to pupils who were reinstated after exclusion;
- to admit would be incompatible with the statutory duty to meet infant class size limits of 30.

c. Admission to Nursery

The school's published admissions number is 30. The admissions number is based on the physical capacity of the school to accommodate pupils and, therefore, should not be exceeded in normal circumstances.

Subject to not exceeding statutory numbers, part time nursery places are made available to children the term following their 3rd birthday. Full time Nursery places are available for children in the September of the academic year in which they will be 4.

Admission forms are available from the school and parents who have requested a Nursery place will be contacted the term prior to the child's admission. As with all schools, entry into reception class from Nursery is not automatic. Parents need not reapply for a place in reception class as the school's standard 'Admissions Form', completed on entry to Nursery, will be used. If the application is refused a letter will set out the reasons for the decision and advise Parents/Carers on the appeals process.

d. Infant Class Size Regulations

In order to improve educational standards in schools, it is government policy to limit the number of pupils in infant classes to a maximum of 30 pupils per class. Schools may only refuse admission on the basis of infant class size when this number has been reached.

e. Religious Education and Collective Worship

Religious Education and Collective Worship form a central focus of the experiences pupils receive in our school. Religious Education and Collective Worship is in

accordance with the denominational teaching and practice of the Church in Wales. More information regarding this can be found in the school's prospectus.

f. Equality of Opportunity

The Governing Body seeks at all times to achieve full compliance with the relevant legislation and guidance with regard to equal opportunities, human rights and the Welsh Language Act.

g. Statutory School Age

Children of statutory school age must attend full time education from the term after their 5th birthday

h. Criteria for Determining Admissions

The school is open to any child of statutory school age whose parents wish them to be educated in a school with distinctive Christian character and in accordance with the teachings of the Church in Wales. Should there be more applications than there are places available, the Governing Body will award places to applicants according to their ability to satisfy the following admissions criteria in order of priority.

The school makes every effort to comply with section 106 of the Education Act 2005 to give priority to Looked after Children (LAC):

1. Looked After Children of practising Anglican families;
2. Children of practising Anglican families;
3. All other Looked After Children
4. Children of all other faiths who worship regularly;
5. Children who already have a sibling in the school;
6. Children resident within the County Borough of Bridgend whose parents choose to have their child/children educated in a Church in Wales Primary School. Priority will be given to those living nearest the school using the GIS software system to measure distances.

Definitions

- *Regular – at least twice a month. A clergy reference will also be required.*
- *Siblings – A sibling is classed as half or full brother/sister; adopted brother /sister; a child living in the same household.*
- *Living nearest the school – permanent address of parent or legal guardian. Proof of address will be required.*

i. Oversubscription

All unsuccessful applicants have the right of appeal to an independent Admission Appeal Panel. Letters of appeal should be sent to the Clerk to the Governors at the school within 10 school days.

Parents whose child/children have been unsuccessful in securing a place may ask the school to keep their application on file. If additional places become available these will be allocated using the school's admissions criteria and not on the length of time the name has been on the list.

j. Transfers Mid Term/Year

Parents who move into the County Borough of Bridgend during the academic year will be required to complete the school's 'Admission Form' requesting admission to school. If parents move within the County Borough of Bridgend and wish to seek admission to this school a 'School Transfer Form' will need to be completed too.

Parents/Carers may also wish to apply for a place in this school for reasons other than moving house. In these cases, they will be encouraged to speak to the headteacher to explain the reasons for the change of school and a 'School Transfer Form' and school 'Admissions Form' will need to be completed.

k. Admission Outside the Normal Age Group

The Governing Body would not normally expect to admit a child out of his/her normal chronological age group. However, occasionally Parents/Carers may seek a school place for their child outside their normal year group. The Governing Body will consider each case individually and make its decision in consultation with the school, Parents/Carers and any other agencies involved.

This Policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body on an annual basis in consultation with other relevant admissions authorities.

If any child should not be admitted to the school, a parent/carer may appeal in writing to:

**The Clerk to the Governors
Archdeacon John Lewis Church in Wales Primary School
Brackla Way, Brackla, Bridgend, CF31 2JS**

Parents/carers who wish to seek admissions to these schools are advised to contact the relevant school for further information.

I Timetable for Admissions to Voluntary Aided Schools-September 2018-19

The expected timetable to process applications for admissions to voluntary aided primary and secondary schools for September 2018 is as follows:

Timetable for (Y6) pupils transferring from Primary School to Comprehensive School in September 2018

<u>Action</u>	<u>Date</u>
Application forms sent to Schools/Parents	Monday 23 rd October 2017
Completed application forms must be returned for consideration	Friday 12 th January 2018
Admission panel notifies parents of outcome	Thursday 1st March 2018
Notification of any appeals	From April 2018

Timetable for admission to reception class – September 2018

<u>Action</u>	<u>Date</u>
Application forms sent to Parents/Schools	Monday 27 th November 2017
Completed application forms must be returned for consideration	Friday 16 th February 2018
Admission panel notifies parents of outcome	Monday 16 th April 2018
Notification of any appeals	From May 2018

J. Examinations

Secondary aged pupils, if considered suitable by the headteacher, are entered for the examinations of the Welsh Joint Education Committee and/or other examining boards. The timetables for the examinations are arranged by the Welsh Joint Education Committee and other examining boards. Headteachers are notified of these, and the subsequent examination results, directly by those boards.

K. School Attendance

It is a duty of all parents/carers to ensure their child/children attend school regularly. Regular attendance at school is vital for all children if they are to gain the best outcomes from their statutory education.

The Authority seeks parental co-operation to ensure their child/children attends school on a regular basis.

Parents/carers should not normally take children on holidays in term time. However, the regulations do allow schools the discretion to grant up to 10 days authorised absence for family holidays. Parents/carers have to apply for the 'leave' in advance and each request is considered individually, taking account of:

- the age of the child;
- the time of the year;
- the child's stage of education and progress; and
- the child's overall pattern of attendance.

The following examples illustrate the impact of a family holiday on a child's overall attendance:

- a primary aged pupil who is authorised to take 10 days holiday during the course of a whole academic year can only then obtain a maximum attendance of 94.7%;
- a secondary aged pupil who is authorised to take 10 days holiday during the period September – May (the Government's absence survey time period) can only attain a maximum attendance of 93.8%.

L. Role of the Education Welfare Service

Promoting regular attendance is a joint approach with the school and the Education Welfare Officer (EWO). The EWO works closely with parents, pupils and other agencies to ensure regular school attendance. EWO's will encourage parental involvement in school and assist families in the alleviation of social problems which can affect a child's educational progress. That said the EWO works within a legal framework which relates to the duty of parents/carers to ensure their child/children received efficient full time education suitable to their age, aptitude and ability. In fulfilling this role individual Education Welfare Officers (EWOs) meet regularly with Head Teachers or other designated staff to identify pupils whose attendance is a cause of concern. All referrals are followed up with the family to ascertain whether there are underlying causes preventing regular attendance. Where intervention and support fail to secure regular attendance, the service will use the courts in an attempt to enforce school attendance.

Education Welfare Officers work as part of the early help service. There are three multi-disciplinary teams co-located with safeguarding colleagues in the North, West and East of the County Borough. Each school has a nominated Education Welfare Officer. The Early Help teams can offer a range of co-ordinated family interventions,

based on the individual support needs of each family. For families requiring additional support for issues affecting attendance, families can request a referral from the school, Education Welfare Officer, or can self-refer by emailing earlyhelp@bridgend.gov.uk

The 'Early Help' teams consist of a Lead Education Welfare Officer and a team of 6 Education Welfare Officers who, between them, offer a service to all schools within the County Borough. For more information please contact 01656 643643.

M. Home to School/College Transport Policy

1. Introduction

This policy has been produced by Bridgend County Borough Council to comply with the requirements of the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 to make available information about its policy and the arrangements it puts in place to transport learners from home to school and from home to college.

It is the intention of Bridgend County Borough Council to provide a reliable system of transportation that will seek to carry learners safely, punctually and in reasonable comfort.

In all cases, the efficient use of resources will dictate the mode of transport provided (subject to any special needs requirements). Transport may be provided by means of contracted school transport services or existing public transport services such as bus, minibus, train, taxi, etc.

2. Provision of free transport

There is a statutory duty placed upon the local authority (LA) to provide learners with free transport to the nearest suitable school if they reside beyond 'walking distance' to that school. In Bridgend the term nearest suitable school applies to the local catchment area school and this can be an English medium, Welsh medium, voluntary aided or maintained special schools.

However, where, as a result of parental preference, pupils attend a school other than their catchment area school, it must be understood that parents accept full responsibility for transport costs and arrangements.

The Welsh Government has defined the statutory 'walking distance' as two miles for primary aged learners and three miles for learners of compulsory school age receiving secondary education.

Bridgend County Borough Council has, from September 2016 chosen to change its policy in line with the Welsh Government's statutory distances of two miles for primary age pupils and three miles for pupils in secondary schools of statutory

school age. Distances will be measured by the nearest safe, available, walking route from home to school. The LA uses a dedicated geographical information system (GIS) to measure these distances and ensure accuracy.

The changes are as follows:

- Primary School pupils will be provided with free transport if they attend their catchment school and live 2 miles or more from the school;
- Secondary School pupils (including post-16 pupils) will be provided with free transport if they attend their catchment school and live 3 miles or more from the school. - 2 - • Post 16 pupils living 3 miles or more from Bridgend College will also receive free transport, via public transport service pass.

When the policy came into effect in September 2016. Pupils who are below the new threshold for free transport and were already in receipt of free transport prior to September 2016 maintained the free transport until they transitioned to the next stage of education or leave the school. Pupils who started either primary or secondary school after September 2016 who are below the new threshold for free transport already but have a sibling in that school in receipt of free transport, would also receive free transport until they transition/leave that school.

Pupils who are not eligible for free school transport may be able to purchase a seat on a school bus (if surplus seats are available) and the cost of this seat will increase to £1.90 per day (£361 per annum) and will be reviewed annually.

Home to school transport will be arranged to coincide with the start and end of the normal school day and shall be provided during the school term time. No transport is provided for breakfast clubs, after school clubs or summer schools.

Where the LA has arranged for a learner to attend an out of county residential school, transport will only be provided at the start and end of each half term. Transport, except for learners with Special Educational Needs (SEN), will normally be provided from pick-up points at approved bus stops on the nearest public transport route to the learner's home.

3. Nursery aged Learners

There is no statutory obligation on LA's to provide transport for nursery-aged learners. However, Bridgend has chosen to use its discretionary power to provide free transport for nursery aged learners subject to the Council's distance qualifying criterion of 1.5 miles. Therefore, nursery aged learner would travel on the same contracted vehicle as those learners of statutory school age. Where they attend on a full time basis (Nursery Two) they travel to school at the beginning of the school day and home at the end of the afternoon session. However, where schools offer places

on a part-time basis to 3 year old learners (Nursery One) it is the responsibility of parents to either collect their child at the end of the morning session or ensure their child is transported to school for the afternoon session, depending on the mode of attendance.

4. Looked after children

The same age and distance criteria apply to children 'looked after' by the LA as to children who are not looked after. However, if the LA determines that a looked after child should attend a school other than their catchment area school then transport to and from that school will be provided.

5. Special arrangements - hazardous routes

A route is considered to be available if it is safe (as far as reasonably practicable) for a learner without a disability or learning difficulty to walk the route alone or with an accompanying adult if the learners age and levels of understanding requires this.

In determining the comparative safety of a walking route, the LA conducts assessments of the risks that children might encounter along the route between home and school.

All assessments will follow the Learner Travel Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance June 2014. As routes are reviewed, provision may be withdrawn where for example, identified hazards have been mitigated against. This will then be classed as an identified and available safe walking route. Parents will be given at least one term advance notice of the withdrawal of transport and any withdrawal will normally be implemented to coincide with the start of an academic year.

6. Transport to Welsh medium schools

Learners attending the nearest Welsh medium school receive free transport in accordance with the LA's agreed policy on walking distance and safe routes (see the paragraphs - **Provision of free transport and special arrangements - hazardous routes**

7. Transport to voluntary aided schools

Learners attending the nearest voluntary aided school of the parent's denomination receive free transport in accordance with the LA's agreed policy on walking distance and safe routes see paragraphs - **Provision of free transport and special arrangements - hazardous routes**

8. Learners with Special Educational Needs/Disabilities

Free transport is provided for all learners who attend special schools, pupil referral units and learning resources bases that are not located within their catchment school in accordance with the LA's agreed policy on walking distances.

Learners with Special Educational Needs who attend mainstream schools, and who do not otherwise qualify for free transport, may qualify for free transport if their application is accompanied by appropriate evidence which is confirmed by the LA's Inclusion Service.

Learners with disabilities (as defined by the Equality Act 2010) may be entitled to assistance with transport from home to an appropriate school/college even though the LA's agreed criteria on safe walking distances are not met. Such provision is subject to approval by the LA's Inclusion Service. Any such referrals must be supported by appropriate evidence.

The mode of transport provided will be dictated by the needs of the learner.

9. Cross border arrangements

Transport may be provided to eligible learners attending schools in neighboring local authorities, where such attendance is consistent with the LA's admission policy e.g Tonyrefail Comprehensive School for learners living in Evanstown and Dolau Primary (Welsh unit) for learners living in Pencoed.

10. Over-subscribed schools

If a learner cannot be admitted to his/her catchment school and, as a result, has to attend another school beyond the walking distance from their home, then transport will only be provided to the next nearest suitable school. This may not be in accordance with the preferred school of the parent/carer and in such circumstances the parent/carer will be responsible for transport costs and arrangements.

11. Transport on medical grounds

Transport to and from school may be provided for short periods on the recommendation of an appropriate Health/Medical Officer and will be subject to confirmation by the LA. Where agreed this provision will be subject to regular review.

12. Special arrangements – payments to parents/carers

The Council may agree in special circumstances to a parent/carer transporting their child to and from school and then receiving reimbursement of petrol expenses. Such cases are considered individually.

13. Special arrangements – applications for use of LA discretion

Parents/carers are advised that if they consider there are special circumstances, they may make an application to the Council to consider exercising its discretion to assist with the provision of transport for learners who are not otherwise eligible for free transport.

Every application is considered on its merits. The Council does not maintain a list of circumstances which support the provision of discretionary transport; however, to assist parents/carers, the following are examples of such circumstances:

- where a learner has had to change address, to move to a different area of the county borough to escape a domestic violence situation;
- short term emergency situations which necessitate a learner having to move to a different area of the Borough;
- where a learner has a medical condition which requires transport to be made available in the short term (eg broken leg).

Parents should contact Learner Support Services (Tel. 01656 642637) for further advice on how to make an application.

14. Paying places scheme

From time to time it is possible that the numbers to be carried by the LA will be below the capacity of the vehicle being used. In such cases the LA will make the spare capacity available to children who live below the limit listed in paragraph 2. Paying places are allocated on an annual basis and it must be understood that the provision of this facility does not represent an obligation on the LA and, being entirely dependent on the capacity of the vehicle used, may result in withdrawal of the facility at relatively short notice.

The LA also reserves the right to withdraw a paying place in cases where the parent/carer refuses to pay the charge and furthermore the LA will take into account a parent's/carer's previous payment record when considering a new application. Where a parent/carer has refused/failed to pay in previous years this may result in the new application being refused.

Parents/carers are advised to contact the Transport Co-ordinating Unit. (Tel. No. 01656 642653) regarding the availability of paying places.

15. Transferring to another school – transport arrangements

Learners whose families move to an address outside the catchment area of the school attended will not continue to be provided with free school transport if that

move takes place during primary education, or in years seven, eight or nine of secondary education.

Applications made on behalf of pupils who move in years 10, 11, 12 or 13, will be considered individually, and if approved, a bus pass would normally be provided.

16. Monitoring and complaints procedure

All vehicles will be available for random checks by the traffic commissioners or other appropriate body, when required. Any complaints received by the LA from parents concerning services or vehicles will be immediately investigated. In the event of the complaint being upheld, the necessary and appropriate steps will be taken in accordance with the contract as a matter of priority. Parents/carers should contact the Transport Co-ordinating Unit. (Tel no 01656 642653)
e-mail: schooltransport@bridgend.gov.uk

The LA will, on unspecified days, undertake random checks on contracts, to ensure that the contracts are being complied with

17. Transport from home to college

All learners aged 16 years, 17 years or 18 years on September 1st and who are attending their first course of full-time study at a further education college in that academic year, will be entitled to free transport subject to them:-

- living beyond the three mile distance criterion;
- attending the nearest college to their home that provides the course.

The usual mode of transport for college students is by bus/train.

18. Travel Behaviour Code: Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008

As part of the above Measure the Welsh Government has introduced “The Travel Behaviour Code” to promote safe travel for all children and young people, by setting out the standards of behaviour required by learners when travelling between home and school.

The Code, which has been issued to all learners, encourages schools and local authorities to work proactively with learners, their parents and the community to promote positive behaviour. The Code also allows the LA to temporarily withdraw transport in circumstances where a learner has misbehaved while travelling to school/college.

The LA will follow the procedures outlined the Code if it considering withdrawing transport.

The discretionary elements of the Council's policy are subject to review and may be discontinued. Any proposed changes will be subject to consultation with learners and parents and, if agreed, will usually apply from the start of a school year and will have regard to the Learner Travel Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance – June 2014.

N. Provision for Pupils with Additional Learning Needs

The Policy

It is the LA's policy to educate pupils with additional learning needs with others of their own age in their local community wherever practicable. There will, however, be occasions where the specialised provision required to meet certain exceptional needs has to be made in special designated facilities, possibly outside the local community, and in some exceptional circumstances outside the local authority. Each case will be considered individually.

- I. Within the context of its policy, the LA is committed to the following general principles for pupils with additional learning needs.
- II. The provision of quality educational opportunities for all children and young people, and a recognition of their entitlement to equal access to a broad, balanced and relevant education irrespective of their gender, race or special need.
- III. The provision of advice, guidance, support and appropriate training for governors, headteachers and staff in relation to their duties and responsibilities for pupils with special educational needs.
- IV. An acknowledgement that a pupil may, at any time, have educational needs which will require special educational provision.
- V. The delivery of a flexible continuum of special educational provision designed to meet the additional learning needs of individual pupils. Within this continuum of special provision it is acknowledged that the majority of pupils with additional learning needs will have those needs met in their school from the school's resources. However, it is also recognised that there are pupils whose additional learning needs require additional or different provision.
- VI. As with all other admission arrangements the LA is classified as the admission authority for special education provision.
- VII. The maintenance of a range of central services including Specialist Teachers and Educational Psychologists within the Inclusion Services to assist with the assessment, monitoring and evaluation of special provision.

- VIII. A commitment to the principle of inclusion which takes into consideration the efficient use of resources.
- IX. The additional needs of children, including those of pre-school age, will be identified and assessed, and appropriate provision made as early as possible. This will then be monitored and evaluated regularly.
- X. Parents/carers will be encouraged to participate in the process of identification, assessment and intervention of their child's additional learning needs. Decisions about how and where a pupil's additional needs might be met will involve parents and take into account the pupil's own views. The process will involve giving guidance about statutory rights, and ways in which parents can work in partnership with their child's school.
- XI. The importance of effective liaison with other agencies, both statutory and voluntary, is recognised in determining the nature of the pupil's additional learning needs, and the provision necessary to respond to those needs.
- XII. The provision of medical, nursing and paramedical advice, guidance and support is regarded as primarily the responsibility of the local health services.
- XIII. A recognition of the duty on the LA in its strategic planning role to monitor and review regularly the provision of special education.

Special designated facilities

Through discussions and the assessment of children by the appropriate outside agencies it may be considered that specialised provision would be the best way of meeting the needs of the child. The following provision is currently available:

- Learning Resource Centre at Primary and Secondary level for pupils with:
 - Hearing Impairment
 - Visual Impairment (Primary Only)
 - Motor Impairment, complex and medical needs (Secondary Only)
 - Communication Difficulties Autistic Spectrum Disorders and Communication Difficulties
 - Moderate Learning Difficulties
- For children and young people with more complex needs smaller, specialist teaching environments are provided through specialist schools:
 - **Heronbridge Special School** catering for children and young people with severe or profound multiple learning difficulties and for children and young

people with severe Autistic Spectrum Disorder whose needs cannot be met in any other mainstream or specialist provision.

- **Ysgol Bryn Castell Special School** caters for children and young people with Behavioural, Social and Emotional difficulties whose needs cannot be met in any other mainstream or specialist provision.

Parental advice

If parents consider that their child may have additional learning needs, they should first discuss the matter with the headteacher of their child's school. Any further information about the provision available in the LA can be obtained from the:

Inclusion Service, Bryncethin Campus, Abergarw Road, Brynmenyn, Bridgend CF32 9NZ.

Tel. No. 01656 815230.

O. Child Protection

In Bridgend, all schools and support agencies will have, as their priority, the protection and wellbeing of all children. All schools have a designated teacher (and deputy) with responsibilities for dealing with child protection issues and providing advice and support to other staff.

Child abuse includes physical violence, emotional cruelty, neglect and sexual abuse. It can involve deliberate harm to a child or the failure of a parent to safeguard the child. It can also happen when a child is not given appropriate supervision, care and attention.

Schools have a statutory requirement to report concerns when they have knowledge that a child is or has been suffering significant harm. Parents will be notified if a referral is made to the Social Services department and parental consent requested when appropriate.

The LA provides advice and support to schools and has its own dedicated Child Protection Team, based at Civic Offices, on 01656 815270.

P. School Governors

Every school has a governing body that plays a key role in improving standards. Governors have a responsibility for school improvement, school policies, the conduct of the school and to make sure the school provides a good quality education for all its pupils. They also look after the school's finances and the appointment and dismissal of staff. Governors are not involved in the day to day running of the

school, which is the Headteacher's responsibility. The Headteacher would normally deal with general queries and matters concerning pupils and staff.

Governing bodies are made up of local people who are ready to give their time on a voluntary basis because of their interest in the school. They will include parents, Local Authority appointed governors, teachers, the Headteacher and other members of the local community.

Each year the governing body provides a written report to parents on what has been happening at the school during the previous year and to share the governing body's plans for promoting high standards of educational achievement. If enough parents make a request to meet with governors regarding an issue affecting the whole school, then all parents will be invited to this meeting. Parents can request to meet with governors up to three times in a school year, providing certain criteria are met.

All parents of children attending the school are eligible to put their names forward for a parent governor position when a vacancy arises; parents are also able to vote in parent governor elections when they occur. The school will make you aware of these procedures at the appropriate time. Parent governors are elected to represent the interests of parents and pupils. They are not able to help solve specific problems that individual parents or pupils may encounter; the school will have procedures in place to deal with these.

For more information about governing bodies, or details on how to become a governor, please contact the Council's Governor Support Service by emailing pupilservices@bridgend.gov.uk or call 01656 642637.

You will also find further information on the Governors Wales website www.governorswales.org.uk

Q. Grants to Pupils

There are a number of grants available to pupils and these are listed below.

1. Welsh Government – school clothing grant

The Welsh Government introduced an all Wales school uniform grant scheme at the start of the 2005/06 school year to assist families on low income with the purchase of school uniform for their children. The grant will be administered by the local authority.

The scheme provides a grant of £105.00 to each pupil entering Year 7 of secondary school in Wales who are eligible for free school meals. The grant is also available to pupils attending a special school, special needs resource base and pupil referral units in Wales who will be aged 11 at the start of the academic school year and who are eligible for free school meals. Accordingly, children of families in receipt of the following benefits will be eligible:

- Income Support (IS); or
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance (IBJSA); or
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999; or
- Child Tax Credit (with no Working Tax Credit) with an annual income of less than £16,190
- Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Working Tax Credit 'run-on-the payment someone may receive for a further four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.
- (Income related) Employment Support Allowance (ESA(IR)).
- Universal Credit

2. Discretionary grants to pupils – distinctive school clothing

It is the policy of Bridgend County Borough Council to make available a Distinctive School Clothing Grant to all eligible pupils attending a secondary school in years 7-11. The grant is intended to go towards the cost of distinctive school clothing.

As the grant is discretionary it is for each secondary school to determine the amount of grant and method of payment. Parents are advised to contact the respective secondary school for further information. The current recommended level of the LA grant exceeds that of the Welsh Government and parents are advised that only the higher grant will be paid.

For those families in receipt of the benefits referred to in (1) the Distinctive School Clothing Grant is an automatic entitlement.

Application forms are available from the Council's Financial Assessments & Benefits Team (FABT) or each school, in the Spring Term, prior to the start of the academic year in September. The FABT would like forms returned ahead of the last week of Spring Term to allow them time to notify Secondary schools of which pupils are eligible and prevent delays in clothing grants being dealt with and issued. It must not be noted that the Distinctive School Clothing Grant is **NOT** available for those pupils attending Infant, Junior or Primary Schools.

Any parent requiring further information in relation to the Clothing Grants available is advised to contact the Council's Financial Assessments & Benefits Team (FABT) on 01656-643396. E-mail FSM@bridgend.gov.uk.

3. Education maintenance allowances (EMA)

Since September 2004, the Welsh Government has made available an Education Maintenance Allowance, which is payable to pupils and students who remain in full time education after the age of 16. For the 2016-17 academic year, all 16-18 year olds are eligible to apply.

The scheme is NOT administered by the LA and parents are advised to contact their local school for further information. Information can also be found on the Welsh Government website at www.learning.wales.gov.uk

4. Free school meals

Children and young people attending school on a full time basis may be entitled to receive free school meals (FSM).

Your child may be eligible for FSM if you are in receipt of any of the following benefits/support payments:

- Income Support
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit, (with no Working Tax Credit) with an annual income of less than £16,190
- Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- 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.

Initial applications can be made at any time during the school year. Application forms are available from the Council's Financial Assessments & Benefits Team (FABT), Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB or each school. Tel No: 01656 643396.

E-mail FSM@bridgend.gov.uk.

Children starting school for the first time **must** complete an application for FSM, even if they have a sibling at the same school or another school who is already getting FSM. Awards will not automatically be made where siblings are in receipt of FSM

R. Catering Services

Catering Services provide school meals in all Nursery, 47 Primary Schools, 6 Secondary Schools and 2 Special Schools throughout Bridgend County Borough.

Catering Services believe there are no healthy or unhealthy foods, only healthy or unhealthy diets. Our menus contribute to a child's healthy balanced diet, with plenty of variety in all forms of food and as Authority Caterers, we are continually working towards providing a healthier service. By providing tasty and nutritious meals we hope to encourage pupils to improve, secure and maintain a healthy diet for the future. Catering Services menus comply with the Welsh Government's 'Healthy Eating in Schools (Nutritional Standards and Requirements) (Wales) Regulations 2013.

Primary School Meals consist of a balanced two-course meal and cold drink for just £2.20 per day (September 2017). The menu is run on a three week rotational cycle to ensure all pupils receive a varied, balanced diet.

Catering Services operates a hot meal menu and Salad options. Nursery pupils are served the single hot menu.

Our commitment to healthy eating is reflected in the products we use, with the majority containing reduced saturated fat, sugar and salt. Good practice ensures all foods are oven baked or steamed except chips which are served only once a week. Fresh fruit, vegetables, wholemeal bread and yoghurt are available daily. To accompany the school lunch each child can choose between chilled milk or water.

Secondary School Meals are a cash cafeteria service named 'Trackers'. There are three service zones or 'tracks'; **Trackers Salad/Milk Bar** – serving healthy foods, e.g. salad & pasta pots, yoghurts and milk. **Trackers Main Meals** – serving a choice of traditional meals with a daily vegetarian option, e.g. Roast pork, Lasagne or Shepherd's Pie. **Trackers Lite Bites** – a swift service offering hot filled baguettes, rolls and tortillas, sandwiches and fresh fruit. In most secondary schools pupils have access to vending machines for pupils on the move.

If your child/children has a medical diet requirement, please contact the Catering Services office and our well-trained staff will try to ensure that your requirements are met.

For weekly menus and more information on Bridgend School Meals, please log on to our pages on the BCBC website.

Contact details for Catering Services:

Tel: 01656 815963 or e-mail: catering@bridgend.gov.uk

Write to: **Catering Services, Bryncethin Depot, Blackmill Road, Bryncethin, Bridgend, CF32 9YN**

S. Employment of Children

Bridgend County Borough Council has produced revised Byelaws in respect of the employment of children (the definition of a child in this context is a young person of statutory school age).

The National Assembly for Wales confirmed the new Byelaws on 26th June 2007 and they came into force on 26th July 2007. The Byelaws regulate the types of employment permitted for children, the maximum number of hours a child may work and stipulate the types of employment that are prohibited. The Byelaws are available in full on the Council's website: www.bridgend.gov.uk.

Parents should be aware that the onus to obtain a work permit for a child rests with the employer. Within one week of employing a child, the employer must send to the Authority written notification stating:

- his/her own name and address;
- the name, address and date of birth of the child;
- the hours and days on which the child is to be employed, the occupation in which the child is to be employed, including details of the task involved.
- a statement of the child's fitness to work, and of approval for the child to be employed, completed by the child's parent;
- details of the school at which the child is a registered pupil; and approval from the headteacher;
- a statement to the effect that an appropriate risk assessment has been carried out by the employer; and
- two recent passport type photos of the child, signed on the rear by both the child and the employer.

If the Authority is satisfied that the proposed employment is lawful, and child's health, welfare or ability to take full advantage of his/her education would not be jeopardised it will issue:

- The employer with an employment permit.
- The child an identification photo card which will contain the child's name and photograph and date of issue.

Further details in relation to child employment can be obtained from Learner Support Services on 01656 642637.

T. School Milk

Free school milk is available in schools for:

- I. children under five in maintained schools and nurseries provided the child attends the school for at least two hours duration in any one day;
- II. all pupils in primary education from the academic year in which the child attains 5 years if age up until the end of Key Stage 1; and
- III. pupils in primary and special schools where any appropriate medical officer has certified that the pupil's health requires that he/she should be provided with milk at school.