

Admission Forum Annual Report 2022/23

Admission Authority: Bridgend

Secretary to the Forum: Miss E Giles

Contact details: Email/Tel: Emma.Giles@bridgend.gov.uk

Membership and attendance of the Forum

Name	Position	Time served as Forum Member as at 1 September 2022*	Membership by category (see table below)
1. Mr R Davies	Chair Group Manager (Business Support) Bridgend County Borough Council Education and Family Support Directorate	8 years (Re-elected 2019)	LA
2. Mr J Tarran	Vice Chair Headteacher Archdeacon John Lewis Church in Wales Primary School	9 years (Re-elected 2018)	S/VA
3. Mrs D Davies	Secretary Principal Officer - Business Strategy and Performance Bridgend County Borough Council Education and Family Support Directorate	5 years	LA
4. Cllr J-P Blundell	Cabinet Member for Education	0 (new member from 1 September 2022)	LA
5. Ms R Garner	ALN (additional learning needs) Lead Early Years, Cognition and Learning, and CMMI (complex medical and motor impairment) Bridgend County Borough Council Education and Family Support Directorate	1 year	LA/SEN/ALN

6.	Ms Beth Davies	Childcare Manager Bridgend County Borough Council Education and Family Support Directorate	1 year	LA
7.	Mr A Slade	Headteacher Porthcawl Comprehensive School	5 years (Membership ceased 31 December 2022)	S/CV
8.	Mr R Pawar	Headteacher Bryntirion Comprehensive School	0 (Appointed 1 February 2023)	S/CV
9.	Mrs K John	Headteacher Brackla Primary School	5 years (Re-elected 2021)	S/CV
10.	Mrs C Coulthard	Headteacher Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Calon y Cymoedd	0 (new member from 1 September 2022)	S/CV
11.	Mr A Howells	Headteacher Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School	0 (Appointed 1 February 2023)	S/VA
12.	Ms A Robertson	Director of Schools Archdiocese of Cardiff	0 (new member from 1 September 2022)	RC
13.	Ms R Morteo	Acting Diocesan Education Lead for the Llandaff Diocese	0 (new member from 1 September 2022)	CIW
14.	Ms R Owens	Parent governor Heronsbridge School	0 (Appointed 1 April 2023)	PG
15.	Ms C Bloomfield	Parent Governor Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen	0 (Appointed 1 April 2023)	PG

16.	Mr W Bond	Community governor Heronsbridge School	14 years (12 years under membership category LA; 2 year under membership category L/COM 2021) (Re-elected September 2020) (Membership ceased 9 January 2023)	L/COM
17.	Mr S Sweeney	Community governor Tremains Primary School	0 (Appointed 1 April 2023)	L/COM
18.	Mrs M Treharne	Education Engagement Co-ordinator Bridgend County Borough Council	0 (new member from 1 September 2022)	Additional member (non- voting member)
19.	Ms C Christy	School Admissions Officer Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	0 (new member from 1 September 2022)	Additional member (non-voting member)

***If served more than 4 years also include date of re-election.**

Acronyms for Core Members		
Members Nominated by	Core Membership	Acronym
LA - any member or officer of the authority	1 to 5	LA, LA/SEN/ALN, LA/LAC
Church in Wales Diocesan representatives	1 to 3	CIW
Roman Catholic Diocesan representatives	1 to 3	RC
Schools - community and voluntary controlled	1 to 3	S/CV
Schools – foundation	1 to 3	S/F
Schools - voluntary aided	1 to 3	S/VA
Parent governor representatives	1 to 3	PG
Representatives of the local community	Up to 3	L/COM

Meeting dates and attendance (Please note that nothing in the Education (Admission Forums (Wales) Regulations 2003¹ precludes some or all members taking part virtually). Regulation 9 of the 2003 Regulations provides that core members can regulate their own procedure subject to any provision in those regulations)

	Date	Number of Forum Members in attendance - by category
First meeting	27 September 2022	11 5 x LA; 1 x S/VA; 2 x S/CV; 1 x L/COM, 1 x RC, 1 x CIW
Second meeting	10 January 2023	11 5 x LA; 1 x S/VA; 2 x S/CV; 1 x L/COM, 1 x RC, 1 x CIW
Third meeting	Not applicable	

¹ [The Education \(Admission Forums\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2003 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

Has your authority established a joint forum with an adjoining local authority? If yes, can you provide details of the authority concerned and how successful this has been.

Not applicable.

Please confirm whether admission authorities within the forum area have completed the consultation and determination of admission arrangements process within the timescales required by the Education (Determination of Admission Arrangements) (Wales) Regulations 2006² [including consultation on the arrangements³ by 1 March in the determination year and determination of the final arrangements by 15 April of that year].

If any admission authority has not met the timescales, please give details here.

How many consultation documents have you seen from admission authorities (not including other local authorities)?

Admission arrangements must be consulted upon for the 'determination year', beginning two years before the school year in which the arrangements will apply. Therefore, in the 2022-2023 school year, arrangements were being determined for the 2024-2025 school year.

All admission authorities within Bridgend completed the consultation and determination of admission arrangements for 2024-2025 within the timescale stipulated in the Regulations.

Consultation documents received by the local authority from admission authorities outside of Bridgend that are not local authorities – Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council and Vale of Glamorgan Council.

² [The Education \(Determination of Admission Arrangements\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2006 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

³ This includes consultation on sixth form arrangements for schools with sixth forms which should be carried out at the same time.

What admission arrangements have been put in place to serve the interests of vulnerable children?

Have they proved successful?

What other arrangements have you identified to support these children?

The following information relates to the local authority's admission arrangements in respect of those schools for which it is the admission authority.

The local authority's centralised admission process allows greater control and monitoring of the admissions of vulnerable children.

For admissions rounds and in-year admissions/transfers processed during the 2022-2023 school year, looked after children or previously looked after children were prioritised for admission to the school of corporate parent/parent/carer choice. Officers in Pupil Services worked closely with the Education Engagement Team to ensure such pupils were able to access appropriate provision.

All children with a statement of special educational needs (SEN) or a local authority-maintained individual development plan (IDP) were admitted to the placement named on the final statement. All applications in respect of children with additional learning needs but without a statement of SEN or a local authority-maintained IDP were considered in the same way as all other applications, based on the procedures and admission criteria set out in the 2022-2023 School Admissions Policy.

The local authority did not refuse to admit a child on the basis of their behaviour. (This encompasses children considered to be potentially disruptive, exhibiting challenging behaviours or potentially requiring assessment for special educational needs.) The Mainstream Fair Access Panel considered referrals of vulnerable and hard-to place pupils.

The purpose of the Mainstream Fair Access Panel is to consider the most complex individual cases for admission to mainstream places, ensuring that pupils are placed fairly, in schools that can meet their needs, with negative impacts on the effectiveness of education provision both for the learner and the provider being minimised.

The consideration of an individual case by the Mainstream Fair Access Panel may result in reference to the Additional Learning Needs Panel and/or the Access to Education Panel. These panels have a wider remit in respect of vulnerable and hard to place children, most particularly those that may need to be considered for specialist education provisions.

The local authority's oversubscription criteria, applicable in admissions rounds, set out the relative priority of applications in respect of children with medical or psychological conditions, or particular social circumstances (such as young carers). Applications were prioritised under the criterion where the required evidence from a registered health professional was provided (the reasons why the preferred school was considered to be the most suitable school and the difficulties that would arise if the child had to attend another school) and accepted. For in-year admission/transfer applications in respect of such children where there was no capacity in the year group of the requested school, the same evidence requirements and considerations were applied to make a final determination on whether a place would be offered at the requested school.

No applications in any admissions round were received in respect of children who met the oversubscription criterion relating to children of a serving member of UK service personnel or Crown Servant. No in-year admission/transfer applications were received relating to children of a serving member of UK service personnel or Crown Servant.

From April 2022, families began to arrive in Wales from Ukraine under the national scheme arrangements. Welsh Government advised local authorities that the school admissions legislation in Wales, reflected in the statutory School Admissions Code 2013, and on which admission authorities policies are based, applied fully to admission applications in respect of arriving children. Therefore, such applications would have no exceptional status and admission authorities should process and make decisions on the applications as they would for all other applications for school places. (This same position applies in respect of children arriving in Wales under the two established refugee schemes for families from Syria and Afghanistan, and also the scheme for families from Hong Kong.) The decisions made by the local authority on applications for school admission, and home-to-school transport eligibility, for children arriving from Ukraine reflected this position.

Following an admission decision, communications with the parent/carer and the school regarding starting arrangements reflected the advice issued by the Chief Medical Officer in respect of health screening under the national pathway established for the families arriving in Wales.

In the period to 31 August 2023, the local authority received eleven in-year school admission applications in respect of Ukrainian children.

Of these, seven were in respect of primary-aged learners (including nursery), and four were in respect of secondary-aged learners.

- For the seven applications in respect of primary-aged learners, six were accepted and the learners were admitted to the

requested schools. The remaining one application was in respect of Part-time Nursery that had to be refused due to there being no places available in the relevant year group at the requested school. An alternative school was offered which the parent refused and made alternative arrangements.

- For the four applications in respect of secondary aged learners, all four were accepted and the learners were admitted to the requested schools.

Two additional families with school-age children from Afghanistan were re-settled in Bridgend during the 2022-2023 school year. Places were offered for the children at the requested schools.

No additional families with school-age children from Syria were re-settled in Bridgend during the 2022-2023 school year.

The local authority's admission decisions on all applications in respect of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children took full account of the Welsh Government Circular No: 003/2008 (Moving Forward – Gypsy Traveller Education) and sections 3.25 and 3.26 of the statutory School Admissions Code for Wales, 2013.

How well have the agreed in-year admission procedures worked?

How many children have been admitted to each school under the procedures?

Have you identified an increase in numbers for in-year admissions, if so, what action has been identified to address the issue?

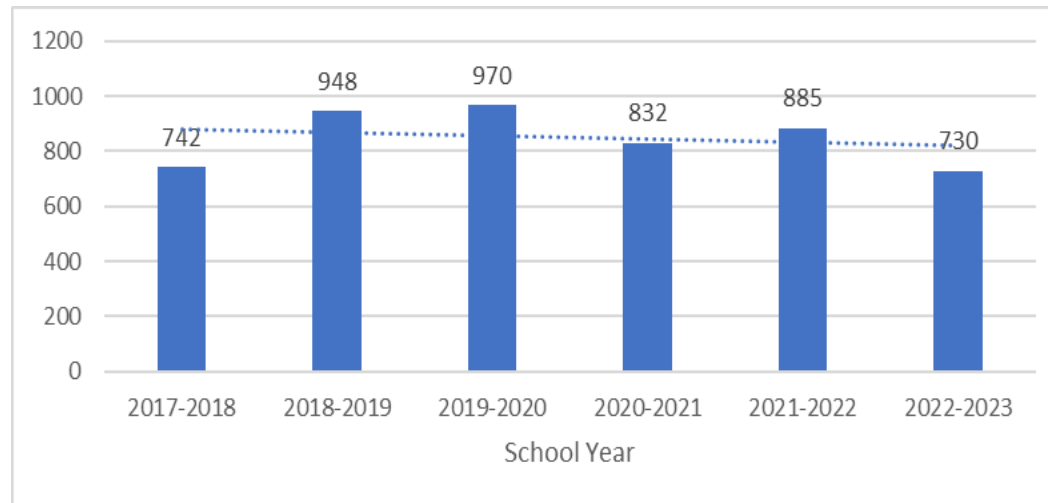
The following information relates to in-year admission/transfer applications made to the local authority in respect of those schools for which it is the admission authority.

In accordance with the local authority's published School Admissions Policy, all in-year admission/transfer requests received during the 2022-2023 school year were considered in strict order of date received and against the requested school's published admissions number and the current class structures and numbers. Account was taken of the specific circumstances of the child and family, if appropriate. If a place was available in the relevant year group at the requested school, the place was offered. If no place was available in the relevant year group at the requested school, the application was refused and the local authority advised the applicant/s of the next nearest school with an available place in the relevant year group and the right of appeal (for applications in respect of statutory-age education).

Mainstream in-year admission/transfer applications in respect of primary-aged children, including nursery

- The number of applications received by the local authority for primary aged-children (including nursery) is detailed in Figure 1. There was a decrease in the number of applications received in 2022-2023 compared to 2021-2022. For the previous five years from 2017-2022, there was a marginally increasing trend in the number of applications received, with the number of applications received in 2022-2023 being more in line with those for 2017-2018.

Figure 1

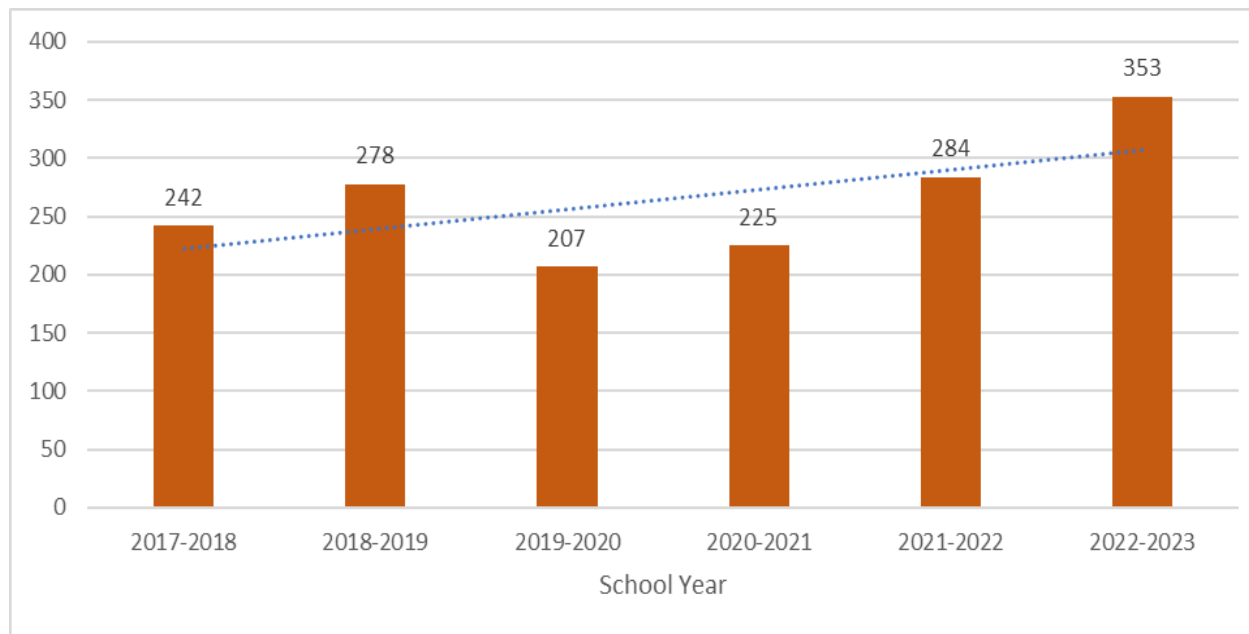


- Of the 730 applications received in 2022-2023:
 - 50 (6.9%) were withdrawn before progression to a decision by the local authority. In the majority of these cases, this was due to the application having been submitted too early, per policy, given the requested admission date, the application had been submitted in error, or the application was withdrawn as the child had been admitted to a specialist provision.
 - 568 (77.8%) were accepted for admission to the requested school.
 - 73 (10%) were refused for the requested schools, due to oversubscription of places in the requested year groups.
 - 39 (5.3%) were refused because admission would result in an infant class size breach.
 - For the 112 applications that had to be refused, an alternative school was offered in respect of 82. For the remainder, an alternative school was not offered as either the learner was already attending the nearest alternative school, or the parent/carer had advised that no alternative school would be considered.
- In 2022-2023, the local authority reported a surplus capacity of places in primary schools, for Reception through to Year 6, of 14.63%.

Mainstream in-year admission/transfer applications in respect of secondary-aged pupils, Years 7 to 11

- The number of applications received by the local authority for secondary-aged pupils (Year 7 to Year 11) is detailed in Figure 2. There was an increase in the number of applications received in 2023-2023 compared to 2021-2022. For the six years from 2017-2023, there was a marginally increasing trend in the number of applications received.

Figure 2



- Of the 353 applications received in 2022-2023:
 - 15 (4.3%) were withdrawn before progression to a decision by the local authority. In the majority of these cases, this was due to the application being withdrawn as the child had been admitted to a specialist provision.
 - 295 (83.6%) were accepted for admission to the requested school.
 - 36 (10.2%) were refused for the requested schools, due to oversubscription of places in the requested year groups.
 - 2 (0.6%) were referred to the Mainstream Fair Access Panel, and subsequently the Access to Education Panel for consideration of specialist provisions.
 - For the 36 applications that had to be refused, an alternative school was offered in respect of 17. For the remainder, an alternative school was not offered as either the learner was already attending the nearest alternative school, or the parent/carer had advised that no alternative school would be considered.
- In 2022-2023, the local authority reported a surplus capacity of places in secondary schools, for Year 7 through to Year 13, of 17%.

Please provide a short summary of the key admission issues identified for the area and how the forum has addressed them?

The following information relates to the local authority's admission arrangements in respect of those schools for which it is the admission authority.

- **Standardisation of admission rounds.**

The forum noted the standardisation of all admission rounds being open for broadly 14 weeks, apart from the Part-Time Nursery Admission round, which would continue to be open for broadly 8 months. It was noted that there had been changes to the wordings in certain sections of the School Admissions Policy 2024-2025 to reflect the increase in the number of schools for which a parent/can express a preference at the time of application to three, for the Part-time Nursery, Full-time Nursey and Reception admission rounds.

- **The number of available Part-time Nursery places in schools.**

The forum noted that variation year-on-year is inevitable given the factors that determine the number of such places and that this is explained each year in the School Admissions Policy. The forum noted that if there are no Part-time Nursery places available at a school, but the Full-time Nursery number is low, the local authority consults with the school on whether it is appropriate to convert some of the unfilled Full-time Nursery places to Part-time Nursery places, for that year. The forum did not request any further action.

- **Oversubscription for Year 7 places for September 2023 at Bryntirion Comprehensive School.**

The forum noted that places at Bryntirion Comprehensive School had, once again, been oversubscribed, evidencing the ongoing pressure on places in this geographical area. Information on the actions either in progress or under consideration in relation to increasing capacity was in the public domain and the forum did not request any further action.

- **Applications for first preference Welsh-medium schools with second preference English-medium schools .**

The forum noted that 50% of the applications where the first preference school was a Welsh- medium school, the second preference, where recorded, was not a Welsh-medium school. For Part-time and Full-time Nursery applications, there was a reduction in the trend, although the figure was still over 50%. The forum noted that parental preference applies, and parents/carers often request that the expressed second preference, English-medium school, is processed, rather than give consideration to any other Welsh-medium schools with available places.

- **Admission appeal hearings.**

The forum received comprehensive information on the number of admission appeals, The number of appeals had increased over the previous five years, both for admission rounds and in-year admissions, due to an increase in the number of oversubscribed schools. The forum did not request any further actions.

The forum noted that the COVID-19 emergency legislation that permitted ‘virtual’ appeal hearings, had ceased to apply from 30 September 2022. It was of concern that appeals hearings would need to revert to face-to-face, as there was a view that many panel members may not wish to participate in face-to-face hearings any longer. Panel members are volunteers. Not having to travel and being able to participate from home had been beneficial. The forum also wished to acknowledge that there had been benefits for parents/carers in presenting their cases from the comfort of their own homes. The forum noted that the Welsh Government had undertaken a survey with admission authorities and the overwhelming feedback was that virtual appeals had been effective, convenient and the ability to continue to hold appeals panels virtually would be very beneficial. The forum welcomed the Welsh Government’s intention to progress legislation to allow virtual appeals in the future.

The forum noted that information had been added into section 17.3 of the draft School Admissions Policy for 2024-2025, from the School Admission Appeals Code, relating to persons prohibited from accompanying an appellant at an appeal hearing. The change was being proposed in consequence of occasions having arisen in the past year where parents had planned for prohibited persons to present to the panel on their behalf. The forum did not request any further actions.

- **School admissions for children arriving in Bridgend from Ukraine**

The forum received comprehensive information on the numbers of applications received and outcomes. The forum did not request any further actions.

- **Advance in-year admission or transfer applications**

The forum noted the proposed change to section 16.5 of the School Admission Policy 2024-2025 to introduce an ability for the local authority to process an in-year application out of strict date and time order this may be judged to be warranted by the specific circumstances of a case. The forum did not request any further actions.

- **School admission policies of the voluntary-aided (VA) schools**

The forum noted that some of the policies were extremely concise. It was suggested that the VA schools give consideration to adopting sections of the local authority policy each year, to ensure their policies are comprehensive. The diocese confirmed that they had reviewed the VA school admissions policy that were provided to the forum, and that support, and advice had been given in relation to the governing body reserving the right to admit over their admission number in respect of applications from those of Catholic faith. The necessary amendments were made, and the forum did not request any further action.

- **Admission arrangements with neighbouring authorities**

The forum noted the proposal to improve clarity on the admission arrangements with neighbouring authorities.

**Is there co-ordinated admission activity in your local authority?
If so which admission authorities in your local authority area are participating?
Has it been successful/beneficial?**

There are no co-ordinated admission arrangements in Bridgend.

School Admissions and Appeals

1. Schools for which the local authority is the admission authority

1.1 Primary (Reception) admission round for September 2022 – applications received and appeals arising

Name of School	Admission number	Number of 1 st preference	Number of successful	Number of appeals	Number of successful	Total number of parental
Abercerdin Primary School	30	28	28	0	-	28
Afon y Felin Primary School	19	24	19	0	-	19
Betws Primary School	30	18	18	0	-	18
Blaengarw Primary School	24	16	16	0	-	16
Brackla Primary School	45	43	43	0	-	43 (1 st) 2 (2 nd)
Bryncethin Primary School	34 (temp. 35)	29	29	0	-	29
Brynmenyn Primary School	60	43	43	0	-	43 (1 st) 2 (2 nd)
Bryntirion Infants School	40	23	23	0	-	23

Caerau Primary School	45 (temp. 60)	27	27	0	-	27
Cefn Cribwr Primary School	20	17	17	0	-	17
Cefn Glas Infants School	66	51	51	0	-	51
Coety Primary School	60	71	59	2	0	59 (1 st) 1 (3 rd)
Corneli Primary School	46	26	26	0	-	26 (1 st) 1 (2 nd)
Coychurch Primary School	19	21	19	1	0	19
Croesty Primary School	30	30	30	0	-	30
Cwmfelin Primary School	30	30	30	0	-	30
Ffaldau Primary School	30	18	18	0	-	18
Garth Primary School	30	28	28	0	-	28
Litchard Primary School	60	67	60	1	0	60
Llangynwyd Primary School	11 (temp.14)	9	9	0	-	9
Maes yr Haul Primary School	75	51	51	0	-	51
Mynydd Cynffig Primary School	60	52	52	0	-	52
Nantyllyon Primary School	40	22	22	0	-	22
Nantymoel Primary School	30	19	19	0	-	19
Newton Primary School	34	17	17	0	-	17

Nottage Primary School	60	32	32	0	-	32 (1 st) 1 (2 nd)
Ogmore Vale Primary School	53	28	28	0	-	28
Oldcastle Primary School	60	41	41	0	-	41 (1 st) 1 (3 rd)
Pencoed Primary School	72	74	72	0	-	72
Penybont Primary School	45	49	43	0	-	43 (1 st) 1 (2 nd)
Pen y Fai Church in Wales Primary School	30	33	29	0	-	29 (1 st) 1 (2 nd)
Pîl Primary School	30	30	30	0	-	30
Plasnewydd Primary School	45	20	20	0	-	20
Porthcawl Primary School	25 (temp.28)	21	21	0	-	21
Tondu Primary School	42	22	22	0	-	22 (1 st) 1 (2 nd)
Trelales Primary School	30	22	22	0	-	22
Tremains Primary School	65	59	59	0	-	59 (1 st) 1 (2 nd)
Tynyrheol Primary School	10	5	5	0	-	5
West Park Primary School	55	59	55	1	0	55
Ysgol Cynwyd Sant	45	41	41	0	-	41
Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Ogwr	54	51	51	0	-	51 (1 st) 2 (3 rd)
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Calon y Cymoedd	30	22	22	0	-	22

Ysgol y Ferch o'r Sgêr	33	19	19	0	-	19
Totals	1752 (temp.)	1408	1366	5	0	1366 (1st) 10 (2nd)

The total number of preferences met does not equal the number of applications received, as some applicants who were not offered the first preference school had not expressed a second or third preference and did not subsequently request admission to any other school for which the local authority is the admission authority.

1.2 Junior school (Year 3) admission round for September 2022 – applications received and appeals arising

Name of school	Admission number	Number of 1 st preference applications for the school (on-time and late)	Number of successful 1 st preference applications	Number of appeals	Number of successful appeals	Total number of parental preferences that were met for the school
Llangewydd Junior School	90	76	76	0	-	76 (all 1 st)

1.3 Secondary school (Year 7) admission round for September 2022 – applications received and appeals arising

Name of school	Admission number	Number of 1 st preference applications for the school (on-time and late)	Number of successful 1 st preference applications	Number of appeals	Number of successful appeals	Total number of parental preferences that were met for the school
Brynteg School	333	315	315	0	-	315 (1 st) 4 (2 nd)
Bryntirion Comprehensive School	210	247	210	1	0	210
Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen	276	252	252	0	-	252 (1 st) 2 (2 nd)
Cynffig Comprehensive School	180	154	154	0	-	154
Maesteg School	228	205	205	0	-	205
Pencoed Comprehensive School	214	178	178	0	-	178 (1 st) 3 (2 nd)
Porthcawl Comprehensive School	246	198	198	0	-	198 (1 st) 1 (2 nd)
Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd	165	148	148	0	-	148
Totals	1852	1697	1660	1	0	1660 (1st) 10 (2nd)

It is known that, as in previous years, a proportion of the parents/carers who applied for a place for their child at Bryntirion Comprehensive School also applied to Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School.

2. Schools for which the local authority is not the admission authority

2.1 Primary (reception) admission round for September 2022 – applications received and appeals arising

Name of school	Admission number	Number of applications for the school (on-time and late)	Number of successful applications	Number of appeals	Number of successful appeals	Total number of parental preferences that were met for the school
Archdeacon John Lewis Church in Wales Primary School	30	16	16	0	-	16
St Marys Catholic Primary School	30	30	30	0	-	30
St Marys and St Patricks Catholic Primary School	25	21	21	0	-	21
St Roberts Roman Catholic Primary School	22	19	19	0	-	19
TOTALS	107	86	86	0	-	86

2.2 Secondary school (Year 7) admission round for September 2022 – applications received and appeals arising

Name of school	Admission number	Number of applications for the school (on-time and late)	Number of successful applications	Number of appeals	Number of successful appeals	Total number of parental preferences that were met for the school
Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School	131	183	135	16	8	135

It is known that, as in previous years, a proportion of the parents/carers who applied for a place for their child at the school also applied to the local authority for a place at Bryntirion Comprehensive School.

What methods have the Forum used to promulgate any advice or decisions it has reached?

Advice or decisions were shared with relevant stakeholders through the local authority's normal communication mechanisms.

Minutes of Bridgend Admission Forum meetings are published on the local authority's website.

Date Forum's advice published on Admission Authority's Website:

The minutes of the forum meetings are published to the School Admissions Forum page of the Bridgend County Borough Council website, following their approval.

Please also provide the relevant link:

<https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/residents/schools-and-education/school-admissions/the-bridgend-admission-forum/>

Signature: *Emma Giles*

(Secretary to the Forum)

Date: 23/11/2023

Please return the completed report by 30 November 2023