



## **CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION CABINET BOARD**

*Immediately Following Scrutiny Committee on  
THURSDAY, 7 APRIL 2016*

**COMMITTEE ROOMS 1/2, PORT TALBOT CIVIC CENTRE**

### **PART 1**

1. To agree the Chairman for this Meeting
2. To receive any declarations of interests from Members
3. To receive the Minutes of the previous Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Board held on 9th March 2016 (*Pages 3 - 8*)
4. To receive the Forward Work Programme 2014/15 (*Pages 9 - 10*)

### **To receive the Report of the Head of Children and Young People Services**

5. When I am Ready Policy and Practice Guidance (*Pages 11 - 26*)
6. CSSIW Fostering Inspection Report - March 2016 (*Pages 27 - 46*)

### **To receive the Report of the Head of Transformation**

7. Inclusion Business Plans 16/17 (*Pages 47 - 72*)
8. Schools Admissions Policy 17/18 Results of Consultation (*Pages 73 - 146*)

**To receive the Report of the Director of Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning**

9. Scope for Long Term Sickness Projects in Schools  
(Pages 147 - 154)

**To receive the Report of the Head of Participation**

10. Education through Regional Working (ERW) Business Plan 2016-19 (Pages 155 - 158)
11. Any urgent items (whether public or exempt) at the discretion of the Chairman pursuant to Statutory Instrument 2001 No 2290 (as amended)

**S.Phillips**  
**Chief Executive**

**Civic Centre**  
**Port Talbot**

**Thursday, 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016**

**Cabinet Board Members:**

**Councillors:** P.A.Rees and P.D.Richards

**Notes:**

- (1) *If any Cabinet Board Member is unable to attend, any other Cabinet Member may substitute as a voting Member on the Committee. Members are asked to make these arrangements direct and then to advise the committee Section.*
- (2) *The views of the earlier Scrutiny Committee are to be taken into account in arriving at decisions (pre decision scrutiny process).*

## EXECUTIVE DECISION RECORD

### CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION CABINET BOARD

9 MARCH, 2016

#### **Cabinet Members:**

Councillors: P.A.Rees, P.D.Richards (Chairperson) and A.J.Taylor

#### **Officers in Attendance:**

C.Millis, N. Jarman and Mrs.J.Woodman-Ralph

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#### 1. **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSON**

Agreed that Cllr.P.D.Richards be appointed Chairperson for the meeting.

#### 2. **MEMBER'S DECLARATION**

The following Member made a declaration of interest at the commencement of the meeting:-

Councillor P.A.Rees	Report of the Director of Social Services, Health and Housing – Contract between Hillside and Cefn Season Comprehensive School as he is Chair of Governors at Cefn Saeson.
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#### 3. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION CABINET BOARD HELD ON 11 FEBRUARY 2016**

#### **Decision:**

Noted by the Committee.

4. **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2014/15**

**Decision:**

Noted by Committee

5. **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SERVICES 3RD QUARTER (2015-16) PERFORMANCE REPORT**

**Decision:**

That the report be noted.

6. **EDUCATION QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT DATA 2015-16 - QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE (1 APRIL 2015- 31 DECEMBER 2015)**

**Decision:**

That the report be noted.

7. **ACCESS TO MEETINGS**

**Decision:**

That pursuant to Regulation 4 (3) and (5) of Statutory Instrument 2001 No. 2290, the public be excluded for the following items of business which involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 12, 13 and 14 of Part 4 Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

8. **TIR MORFA CHILDCARE PROVISION**

The Head of Participation gave Members an overview of the Tir Morfa Childcare Provision as detailed in the private circulated report and Members noted there was a demand for this provision in the Sandfields area.

**Decisions:**

1. That approval be granted to suspend Rule 2.1 of the Contract Procedure Rules;
2. That approval be granted to extend the contract between the Council and Caralyn George t/a Georgie Porgie's for the provision of childcare services re: Flying Start Playgroup at Tir Morfa, Sandfields for a period of 12 months to 31 March 2017.

**Reason for Decisions:**

To enable the Flying Start Child Care provision to continue for a period of 12 months in Tir Morfa.

**Implementation of Decisions:**

The decisions will be implemented after the three day call in period.

9. **EARLY INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION RESERVED LOTS - CONTRACT EXTENSION**

**Decisions:**

1. That approval be granted for the Head of Participation to be given delegated authority to extend the agreement with Calan DVS and NSPCC for a period of 1 year until 31 March 2017 (taking into account any guidance and instructions issued by the Welsh Government).
2. That approval be granted to suspend Contract Procedure Rules 2 relating to the invitation of tenders in respect of the Domestic Violence and Thriving Families (Reserved Lots) and that the Council enter into agreements with Calan DVS and NSPCC to secure best value services in the areas of Domestic Violence and Thriving Families (Reserved Lots).

**Reason for Decisions:**

To enable the Local Authority to ensure best value for money, sustainability and continuity of service delivery.

**Implementation of Decisions:**

The decision be implemented after the three day call in period.

10. **CONTRACT BETWEEN HILLSIDE AND CEFN SEASON  
COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL**

Cllr. P. A. Rees re-affirmed his interest and withdrew from the meeting for this item and Cllr. A.J.Taylor substituted.

**Decisions:**

1. That approval be granted to commence the Consultation as detailed in the private circulated report.
2. That the results of the consultation process be brought back to Cabinet Board.

**Reason for Decisions:**

To build upon and develop the partnership between Hillside and Cefn Saeson School in line with the Estyn Report recommendations and achieve improved Management and oversight of the Hillside Education Staff and to further enhance Professional Development opportunities for Hillside Education staff. Also, to reflect and anticipate the findings of the Charlie Taylor Review.

**Implementation of Decisions:**

The decisions will be implemented after the three day call in period.

**Consultation:**

A period of consultation will be required with the Education Department at Hillside and Cefn Saeson.

11. **FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES - FAMILY ACTION SUPPORT TEAM  
CONTRACT EXTENSION FROM 1 APRIL 2016 - 31 MARCH 2017  
AND FAMILY ACTION SUPPORT TEAM SERVICE TENDER**

**Decisions:**

1. That approval be granted to extend the term of the present Service Level Agreement for a Family Action Support Service with Action for Children for a period of twelve calendar months from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017;
2. That Rule 2 of the Contract Procedure Rules be excluded for the purposes of this arrangement.

**Reasons for Decisions:**

1. To enable the Council to remodel its Family Action Support Service through an open and transparent procurement process in line with new EU Regulations;
2. To allow for an appropriate transition period for children and young people currently supported by Action for Children, should the contract award go to another provider following the retendering process;
3. To allow for a sufficient timeframe for the respective service providers to undertake the necessary legal requirements should TUPE apply.

**Implementation of Decisions:**

The decisions will be implemented after the three day call in period.

**CHAIRPERSON**

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**2015/2016 FORWARD WORK PLAN (DRAFT)**

**CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION CABINET BOARD**

Meeting Date and Time	Agenda Items	Type (Decision, Monitoring or Information)	Rotation (Topical, Annual, Biannual, Quarterly, Monthly)	Contact Officer/ Head of Service
28 <sup>th</sup> April 16	<b>Children’s</b>			
	The Quality Care Report 14/15	Information	Annual	Delyth Berni/AJ
	Statement of Purpose 16/17	Monitoring	Annual	Delyth Berni/AJ
	Foster Carers Finance Policy	Decision	Annual	Andrew Jarrett
	Hillside Placement Fees	Information	Annual	Mark Lazarus/NJ
	Hillside Managers Report (6 monthly)	Monitoring	6 monthly	Mark Lazarus/NJ
	Hillside (The Children’s Home (Wales) (6 monthly)	Monitoring	6 monthly	Mark Lazarus/NJ
	Contract between Hillside and Cefn Season Comprehensive School (after consultation)	Decision	Topical	Mark Lazarus/NJ
	Local Safeguarding Annual Report	Monitoring	Annual	Nick Jarman/ Caroline Dyer
	Western Bay Youth Offending Board Data Report (Quarter 2)	Monitoring	Quarterly	Nick Jarman/ Caroline Dyer
	Western Bay – Short Quality Screening (SQS) of Youth Offending work in Western Bay areas.	Monitoring	Topical	Nick Jarman/ Caroline Dyer
	<b>Education</b>			
	Play Sufficiency Assessment and Action Plan	Decision	Annual	C.Millis/Neil Thomas
	New Schools Financing Scheme	Decision	Topical	A.Thomas, Julie Merrifield, Nicola Blackmore

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## NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION CABINET BOARD

7<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2016

#### REPORT OF THE HEAD OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SERVICES - A. JARRETT

#### **MATTER FOR INFORMATION**

**WARDS AFFECTED: ALL**

#### **WHEN I AM READY POLICY AND PRACTICE GUIDANCE**

1. **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of the report is to provide Members with information on the implementation of the implementation of the When I Am Ready Scheme.

2. **Executive Summary**

When I Am Ready has been introduced by Welsh Government and comes into being on 4<sup>th</sup> April with the introduction of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. The When I Am Ready Guidance relates to Part 6 of the Act and sets out the Local Authorities legal responsibilities in respect of post 18 living arrangements for young people in foster care.

Local Authorities are required to set up a scheme in line with the requirements of the code.

When I Am Ready sets out new duties towards young people in foster care who wish to remain living with their carers after they are 18.

The key features are:

- Only young people living in foster care immediately prior to their 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday are eligible.
- The young person is not 'looked after' when they reach 18, but they become an 'excluded tenant' and the former foster carer becomes a landlord.
- It is different from a supported lodgings arrangement. When I Am Ready is based on the family relationships that young people already have with their carers.
- The young person should be in or working towards an education or training scheme
- A When I Am Ready can last until someone is 21 or be extended if they are in education.

### 3. **Background**

Neath Port Talbot currently has an extension to placement policy which sets out the arrangements for supporting young people to remain living with their foster carers when they become 18 year old. Under the current policy foster carers payments reduce to a supported lodging rate following the September after the young persons 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Under When I Am Ready, there is a requirement for payments to be made in line with the National Minimum payments for foster carers, and therefore there is financial implication to introducing the When I Am Ready Scheme (see below an appendix 2)

### 4. **Financial Impact**

Unlike the 'Staying Put' arrangements in England which set out the arrangements for Care Leavers post 18, no additional funding has been provided to Local Authorities in Wales to implement the When I Am Ready Scheme.

Each Local Authority is required to establish its own rates for When I Am Ready payments. There is an expectation that if the young person is not working, that they claim any benefits that they are entitled to, and that these benefits contribute towards the financial arrangements for the When I Am Ready Placement.

The Local Authority is required to make reasonable payments for the practical and emotional support that the When I Am Ready carer provides, and these payments should be no less than the National Minimum allowances for foster carers.

The cost of implementing When I Am Ready for the existing young people who are living with former foster carers post 18 in Neath Port Talbot will be a maximum additional £50,420 for the first year, and an additional £28,028 for the following year (see appendix 2 – financial implications). These costs will be met from existing budgets.

5. **Equality Impact Assessment**

After consideration this is not applicable.

6. **Workforce Impacts**

After consideration this is not applicable.

7. **Legal Impacts**

After consideration this is not applicable.

8. **Risk Management**

After consideration this is not applicable.

9. **Consultation**

Consultation has taken place with foster carers and young people. Further workshops are planned for the w/b 28<sup>th</sup> March.

10. **Recommendation**

After consideration this is not applicable.

11. **Reason for Proposed Decision**

After consideration this is not applicable.

12. **Implementation of Decision**

After consideration this is not applicable.

13. **Appendices**

Appendix 1	When I Am Ready Policy and Guidance/Financial arrangements
Appendix 2	Financial Implications

14. **List of Background Papers**

Not applicable

15. **Officer Contract**

Delyth Berni - Principal Officer, Children & Young People Services  
Tel: 01639 763319  
Email : d.berni@npt.gov.uk



**When I Am Ready  
Policy and Guidance**

**Planning The Transition To Adulthood  
For Care Leavers**

## **Purpose and Background**

Under part 6 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act Local Authorities have new duties towards young people in foster care who wish to continue to live with their foster carers after they are 18 years old.

This policy relates to the arrangements for young people after their 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday that have been looked after by Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council who wish to remain living with their former foster carers under When I Am Ready arrangements. On average young people in the UK remain living with their families until up to the age of 24. This is in contrast to the experience of many young care leavers, who, unlike their peers who have not been looked after, often find themselves living independently at or before their 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday. Young people who leave care prior to their 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday often experience lower educational and employment opportunities, poorer housing choices and homelessness. Although some may have learned the practical skills to live alone, often they will not have developed the emotional resilience they need to be fully independent. There is a need to narrow the gap between the outcomes for young people leaving care and those who remain living with their families. It is planned that the changes in arrangements which give young people the opportunity to remain in secure, caring families until the age of 21 will redress this balance and improve life opportunities and outcomes for young care leavers.

## **What is When I Am Ready?**

When I Am Ready arrangements relate to circumstances when a young person who is looked after by the Local Authority becomes 18 years old and remains living with their former foster carers.

When I Am Ready is different from a foster placement. The young person is no longer looked after, and the legislation and regulations that apply to a child in foster care are no longer applicable.

When I Am Ready is different to supported lodgings arrangements. Supported lodgings is primarily a housing support for vulnerable young people, When I Am Ready is based on the premise that there is a pre existing positive relationship between the carer and the young person, and that the young person will continue to reside as part of a family unit.

Prior to the implementation of When I Am Ready, young people could remain living with their foster carers under an 'extension to placement' agreement. The When I Am Ready arrangements introduce statutory responsibilities and places a duty on the Local Authority to support Category 1 (formerly known as eligible) young people to remain with their foster carer beyond the age of 18 when the young person has requested this and the foster carer is in agreement.

## **What Are The Aims And Outcomes Of When I Am Ready?**

The overall outcome of When I Am Ready is that a young person has the support and the time that they need to develop the skills to be able to have a successful transition to adulthood.



When I am Ready aims to provide stability and continuity for young people leaving care by affording them the opportunity to continue to live in a family setting where they can feel secure and continue to receive practical and emotional support.

When I Am Ready aims to increase the opportunities for young care leavers to access post 18 education, training and employment and decrease the number of young people who experience homelessness or unstable changes in their accommodation.

### **Who Is Eligible For When I Am Ready**

All young people who are looked after in a placement arranged by the Local Authority immediately prior to their 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday are eligible to be considered for When I Am Ready.

The young person will need to be considered a 'category 1' young person (SSWB Act 2014, previously defined as an 'eligible' young person under The Children Act 1989). The Foster carers must have been approved foster carers and have been caring for the young person immediately prior to their 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday.

There is an expectation that the young person is participating in full or part-time training, education or employment. Young people not engaged in education training or employment would not be excluded from When I Am Ready but there should be working towards this goal.

Both the young person and the foster carer must want the When I Am Ready arrangement, and the Local Authority must be satisfied that the arrangement is consistent with the young person's well-being.

There is no provision for young people to remain in a residential setting under When I Am Ready.

The aim of When I Am Ready arrangements is that they are intended to support young people making the transition to adulthood with the expectation that the young person will move onto independent living. Young people with care and support needs who are looked after can enter a When I Am Ready arrangement providing that this meets their needs. Some young people have complex needs which require on-going care and support which mean that moving onto independent living is not an appropriate long term plan. For these young people Children and Adult Services will need to plan the most appropriate long term arrangement. For some young people this may mean that it is appropriate for the carers to become Adult Placement carers. When I Am Ready should not be used as an interim arrangement pending other arrangements being established and appropriate and timely planning is essential prior to the young persons 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday.

### **The Legal Status Of When I Am Ready Arrangements**

Young people remaining with foster carers are no longer 'looked after' and the legal basis on which they live in the home changes. The young person becomes an 'excluded licensee' which means that they are technically 'lodging' in the home and the When I Am Ready carer is their landlord. As an excluded licensee the young person can be asked to leave the property by the When I Am Ready Carer.

The change in legal status and financial arrangements should not mean that there is a change in the way that the young person is considered to be part of the household and part of the family. It is important that the young person and the carer understands the nature of the new arrangement and that relationships and expectations are supported.

### **Setting Up A When I Am Ready Arrangement**

It is essential that there are discussions with the young person and their carers at an early stage. Planning should start prior to the young person's 16<sup>th</sup> Birthday when the Local Authority and the Young Person develops their Pathway Plan.

When a young person and their foster carers indicate that they wish to enter into a When I Am Ready arrangement this must be included in their Pathway Plan.

If a young person is in a residential placement they must receive information about When I am Ready and arrangements must be considered as part of their pathway planning. Although they will be unable to remain in the residential provision beyond their 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday, if they wish to move to a foster placement and it is felt achievable and in their best interest to do so the Local Authority can seek to identify a foster placement which can offer sufficient stability to become a When I Am Ready arrangement after they are 18.

Some young people may wish to enter into a When I Am ready arrangement when they are 18 but their current placement is unstable, they may not wish to remain with their current carers or the carers do not wish to enter the arrangement. In these circumstances the Local Authority should consider moving the young person to a foster placement which can offer sufficient stability to become a When I Am Ready arrangement after they are 18.

Foster carers and Young people must be provided with information and advice , which includes information about financial arrangements in order to consider whether they wish to enter into a When I Am Ready arrangement.

### **When I Am Ready Living Agreements**

A When I Am Ready Living Agreement meeting must take place prior to the young person in the six months prior to their 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday.

The meeting should involve the young person, their social worker and young persons advisor, the foster carers and their supervising social worker and any other relevant professional. The When I Am Ready living agreement should cover the range of issues which are included in the young persons Pathway Plan.

The Living Together Agreement should include:

- The outcomes that the young person hopes to achieve
- The details of the support that will be provided by the When I Am Ready Carer and others to help the young person to achieve their outcomes
- Arrangements to promote the young persons health an dwell-being including the role of the When I Am Ready carer in meeting any emotional health needs
- The young persons plans for Education training or employment
- Arrangements for when the young person wishes to stay away from the home or have friends or partners to visit or stay.

- Any issues relating to other members of the household including other children in the home and safeguarding arrangement
- Moving on plans.

(annex 1)

When a young person plans to go away to attend University College or to the Army the When I Am Ready arrangement should not cease and they should be able to return to the carers home during their vacations. The carer will be eligible to receive the When I Am Ready payments for the periods of time that the young person is residing in the home.

### **Monitoring The When I Am Ready Arrangement**

The young person's advisor will be responsible for coordinating services, keeping in touch with the young person and carers and monitoring the arrangements. The When I Am Ready arrangement should be reviewed along with the young person's Pathway Plan. The Independent reviewing officer will be responsible for reviewing the Pathway Plan and review of the Living Agreement should be coordinated to inform the review Pathway plan review.

### **Ending A When I Am Ready Arrangement**

A When I am Ready arrangement ends when the young person becomes 21. However when a young person is completing an agreed training or education programme and ending the When I Am Ready arrangement would have a significant impact on their success (for example if a young person is completing their final exams) then arrangements can be made to extend the When I Am Ready arrangement until completion and the young person can be supported to move on to suitable alternative accommodation.

The When I Am Ready arrangement can be ended by either the young person or the carer or by the Local Authority, who can determine that it will no longer support the arrangement if it is no longer appropriate to the young person's well-being.

Arrangements for ending the arrangement should be included in the Living Together Agreement, including a reasonable notice period for ending the arrangement.

If a young person leaves a When I Am Ready arrangement to move into independent living but then wishes to return to the carer this will no longer be a When I am Ready arrangement. The Local Authority still has a duty to the young person and may seek to support this under an alternative arrangement.

### **When I Am Ready Social Worker**

The Local Authority will identify a When I Am Ready social worker. The When I Am Ready worker will be able to offer advice and information to potential When I Am Ready Carers. They will offer support and guidance on the practical elements of When I Am Ready arrangements including information about allowances, and maximising the income of the young person and the carer. The When I'm Ready worker will be involved in setting up When I'm Ready arrangements.

### **Safeguarding**

The Pathway Plan and When I am Ready Living Agreement should ensure that all safeguarding issues are addressed and managed.

The young person will be considered to be an adult member of the household and as such will require a Disclosure and Barring Service (IDBS) check to be completed, and a risk assessment to be completed if the DBS check highlights any potential risk.

### **Foster Carers Status**

If the foster carers who enter into a When I am Ready arrangement have other younger children placed with them then the regulations that apply to Fostering are still applicable to the household.

Entering into a When I Am Ready arrangement will constitute a change in circumstance and there should be a review of the foster carers presented to the Fostering Panel for consideration, Fostering Panel will need to consider the impact of the When I Am Ready arrangement on the Foster carers approval status including the number of children that they are approved for.

When a foster carer has no other children placed and it is not intended that there should be further placements, then the Fostering Panel should consider de-registering the carer. Where the foster carers wishes to retain their foster carer approval status and there are no current children placed then the fostering service should take a view on the appropriateness and the length of time that the carer should remain registered.

The fostering service should continue to offer access to training to the When I'm Ready Carer regardless of whether they continue to retain their foster carer status.

### **Financial Arrangements**

When I Am Ready Carers are no longer eligible for Fostering Fees or Allowances for young people when they reach 18. Instead they will receive a When I Am Ready Allowance which should amount to the same as the National Minimum Allowances paid to foster carers.

The level of payment made will depend on the carers own circumstances, and on whether they are in receipt of benefits themselves.

The allowances paid to the carer will be for the practical and emotional package of support that the carer provides to the young person. Unlike fostering allowances it does not include payment for personal items, clothing, travel or holiday money.

There is an expectation that a young person contributes to their board and lodge.

Where a person is not in employment they will be supported to claim all of the benefits that they are entitled to. This means that they will be able to contribute to their board and lodging, as well as meeting their own personal expenses.

Where a foster carers are in receipt of benefits and these will be impacted on by the young person living in the home under When I Am Ready and claiming benefits in their own right then the Local Authority will consider the impact when making its financial arrangements.

Please see 'Financial Arrangements for When I Am Ready' for further information (appendix 2)

**When I Am Ready Arrangement and Independent Foster Carers**

When a When I Am Ready arrangement is proposed with an Independent foster carer the discussions will need to include the fostering agency. The When I Am Ready arrangement is not a fostering arrangement and therefore arrangements can be made separately to fostering agreements and contracts. Consideration will need to be given to any guidance within the commissioning framework.

The rates of When I Am Ready allowances will be set by the Local Authority. It is essential that fostering agencies and the supervising social worker for the Independent foster placement consider the principles behind When I Am Ready and participate in planning for individual children in order to ensure that arrangements meet the needs of the young person and the carer.

Please see 'Financial Arrangements for When I Am Ready' for further information (appendix 1)

**Practical Issues**

When I Am Ready carers should inform their landlord or their mortgage provider, and their insurance provider that they will continue to support a former foster child as a young adult under When I Am Ready arrangements. A failure to inform them may constitute a breach of the mortgage or tenancy requirements or the insurance cover being void.

When I Am Ready carers who transport young people should have the same level of insurance cover, MOT, Vehicle licensing as required for foster carers.

When I am Ready carers must be provided with information about liability insurance for situation should a young person make an allegation against them or a foster child in placement, or for when an allegation is made against a young person.

When I Am Ready Carers are seen as self employed for tax purposes.

Please see 'Information for Foster carers' for further information (appendix 3)

## **When I Am Ready Financial arrangements**

### **When I Am Ready Payments**

When I am Ready Carers are no longer eligible for fostering allowances and fees in respect of young people over the age of 18 who remain living with them. Instead they will receive a When I Am Ready allowance.

From the age of 18, a young person may be eligible to claim means tested benefits, including housing benefit, or they may be in receipt of an education bursary, full or part-time employment, or a maintenance allowance.

The allowances that are paid to the When I Am Ready carer should reflect a contribution paid to the carer from these sources of income.

The When I Am Ready allowance is intended to cover all reasonable costs of supporting the young person. The allowances paid to the carer are exclusively for the practical and emotional package of support that is being provided to the young person by the carer. Unlike a the fostering allowances that were previously paid to the carer, the payments will not include an element to be given to or spent on the young person such as for personal items, clothing, travel or holiday allowances. These items will be replaced by the young person's earnings or benefit entitlement after the age of 18.

### **How Much Will A Young Person Receive?**

A young person in a When I Am Ready arrangement maybe in full or part time employment. Where they are not there will be an expectation that they claim any benefits that they are entitled to.

Where a young person is unable to claim benefits, the Local Authority will provide a Weekly Maintenance Payment of £60.50 a week.

### **What Will Young People Be Expected To Pay For?**

Young people will be expected to pay for their own personal items, toiletries, mobile phone costs, clothing, and travel or holiday money.

Young people will be expected to make a minimum £15 per week contribution towards the cost of their board and lodging. This will be payable either from monies received from their employment, benefits or weekly maintenance allowance.

### **How Much Will The When I Am Ready Carer Receive?**

The Welsh Government Guidance recommends that the payments for When I Am Ready should 'amount to the same as the National Minimum Allowances paid to foster carers.'*(When I Am Ready. Guidance for Welsh Local Authorities 2016/16)*

Young people will be expected to make a minimum £15 per week contribution towards the cost of the arrangement. This will be payable either from monies received from their employment, benefits or weekly maintenance allowance.

The total payable to the When I Am Ready carer will be £204 per week.

**Housing Benefit**

Under a When I Am Ready Arrangement a young person is no longer 'looked after' or 'in care' and a carer is no longer a 'foster carer'. A young person becomes an 'excluded tenant' which means that they are lodging in the home, and the carer becomes a 'landlord'.

Where a young person is residing in a When I Am Ready arrangement, it is the expectation that the young person will apply for Housing Benefit, if eligible, and that the Local Authority will be responsible for paying only the top up in circumstances where the young person is not eligible for Housing Benefit.

When a young person is entitled to Housing Benefit, this will be paid directly to the Local Authority Children's Services Department, who will act as an 'Agent' on behalf of the 'landlord'. This arrangement will mean that carers receive one payment rather than elements of the payment from different departments in the Local Authority.

**When will Payment Cease?**

Payments cease when the When I Am Ready Arrangement ends or when the young person reaches 21. When a young person is participating in an education or training programme at the age of 21, and ending the When I Am Ready arrangement would have a negative impact on the outcome, consideration can be given to extending the arrangement until the completion and the young person can move onto appropriate alternative accommodation.

**What Happens When A Young Person Temporarily Leaves The When I Am Ready Arrangement?**

A young person in a When I Am Ready Arrangement may have periods of time when they live somewhere other than in the carers home. This would apply to young people who attend University or College or who enter the Armed Forces. The When I Am Ready Agreement should identify the arrangements that will be made in these circumstances. The When I Am Ready Allowances will be payable for the periods when the young person returns to the home.

**Breakdown Of Weekly Payments**

Housing Benefit element	£80
Young person's contribution for board & Lodge	£15
Payment for practical and emotional support	£109
<b>TOTAL WEEKLY PAYMENT</b>	<b>£204</b>

**When I Am Ready**  
**Financial Implications**

**Purpose and Aim**

To identify the financial and resource implications and additional costs associated with new statutory 'When I Am Ready' legislation.

**Objectives**

To set out the structure of payments being made under a When I Am Ready scheme.  
To recognise the costs already being incurred for the provision of 18 plus placements.  
To identify the benefits that young people are entitled to post 18 and how these can impact on the cost of the When I am Ready scheme.

**Current Costs & Extension To Placement Policy**

Currently the Payments under the extension to placement policy mean that foster carers receive the equivalent of the fostering allowances for the young person. This is currently £183 a week.

Under the current extension to placement policy the £183 is payable up to the September after the young person is 18 years old. The £183 includes £43.26 pocket money and clothing allowances which the carer is required to give to the young person, or is deducted at source from the allowance and paid directly to the young person.

Following the September after the young person's 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday the carers allowance reduces to the equivalent of Supported Lodgings payments of **£140** per week. Young people are expected to claim any benefits that they are entitled to including housing benefit. Currently housing benefit is paid directly to the carer, and is deducted from the £140. The allowances do not include an element for personal allowances, as young people would be expected to pay for this from any income they receive.

NPT currently supports 9 young people who continue to live with their former foster carers under the extension to placement policy.

The current cost per young person (if housing benefit is being claimed) is **£60** per week.

**Predicted Take Up Of The When I Am Ready Arrangements**

Due to the significant rise in the number of young people becoming looked after in 2012/2013 there was a corresponding rise in the number of 'category 1' young people in 2014. Category 1 young people were formerly known as 'eligible' young people. These were young people who were in care and being looked after at the age of 18.

Based on the number of young people admitted to care in this period, the figure for Category 1 care leavers peaked in 2015/16 and is predicted to remain high for the next 3 years.

There has been a significant rise in the numbers of eligible young people in 2014 is a reflection of the rise in the number of children looked after during 2012/2013. It is likely, based on the ages of children admitted to care during this period, which this figure will peak in 2016 and remain high over the next 3 years.



<b>Young People Turning 18 During Financial Year</b>	<b>LAC</b>
2015-2016	41
2016-2017	28
2017-2018	31
2018-2019	34

Of the 28 young people turning 18 in 206/17, it is currently anticipated that a Maximum of 11 of these may stay with their carers under When I'm Ready.

### **When I'm Ready Payments**

When I am Ready Carers are no longer eligible for fostering allowances and fees in respect of young people over the age of 18 who remain living with them. Instead they will receive a When I Am Ready allowance.

The Welsh Government Guidance recommends that the payments for When I Am Ready should 'amount to the same as the National Minimum Allowances paid to foster carers' (*When I Am Ready. Guidance for Welsh Local Authorities 2015/16*)

This would mean that the When I Am Ready payments for 2016/17 will be based on **£189** per young person.

### **What Benefits Can Young People Claim And How Do These Impact On The When I Am Ready Payments?**

The majority of young people who remain living with foster carers under the When I'm Ready scheme will be claiming housing benefit of approx. **£80** per week.

Childrens Services will act as an 'agent' for the When I Am Ready carer. Children's Services will pay the carer £189 per week, the £80 housing benefit will be paid directly to Children's services which will mean a more consistent and timely payment for cares. Young people will also be expected to either be working or to claim means tested benefits. They will be required to pay a contribution of **£15** to the When I Am Ready carer in addition to the £189.

### **Current Cost To Children's Services**

Under the current extension to placement policy, payments to former foster carers reduce to £140 a week from the September after the young person turned 18. Therefore, the cost to Children's services, when the housing benefit is taken into account is currently £60 per week. Under When I'm ready the cost with housing benefit deducted is £109 per week,

### **Future Cost To Children's Services**

The implementation of When I Am Ready to the Local Authority will bring an additional cost to the LA of **£49 per week per young person per week**.

The maximum projected additional cost to implement When I Am Ready for the young people turning 18 in 2016/17 is **£28,028**

During the first year of implementation there will be a need to offer the opportunity for the young people over the age of 18 and their carers to convert to the When I Am Ready Arrangements. If All 9 young people and carers convert this will be an additional first year cost of **£22, 932**. The maximum additional amount for the first year of implementation will be **£50, 420**.

**How Will The Costs Will Be Met?**

Unlike the English 'Staying Put' Scheme, there have been no additional financial resources provided to Local Authorities in Wales to implement the When I Am Ready Arrangements.

The increased costs of implementation will need to be met from within the existing budget.

## NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION CABINET BOARD

7<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2016

#### REPORT OF THE HEAD OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SERVICES - A. JARRETT

#### **MATTER FOR INFORMATION**

**WARDS AFFECTED: ALL**

#### **CSSIW FOSTERING INSPECTION REPORT - MARCH 2016**

1. **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of the report is to provide Members with a copy of the most recent CSSIW Inspection report for the Neath Port Talbot Fostering Service Inspection.

2. **Executive Summary**

Date of inspection – December 2015

Date of publication – March 2016

The inspection was the annual CSSIW inspection of the fostering service. It was a Focused inspection, concentrating on the quality of life experienced by young people living with foster carers.

The inspection noted the following areas of good practice:

- Good management structure and understanding of the service, supported by good quality performance management and planning
- Quality provision of training to staff and carers
- Foster carers support groups in place
- Out of hours service to carers and regular activities and support groups.

The Inspection report noted improvements that had been made since the last report.

These included:

- Improvements in the management structure,
- the development of carer profiles to improve matching processes, The development of audit tools to review the quality of work
- The appointment of a children's participation officer
- The development of tools to support young people to develop age related skills.
- Improvements to the timeliness of foster carers reviews being undertaken.

The Inspection did not highlight any areas where the service is not meeting the Fostering Regulations, and no compliance notices were issues.

The report noted areas of good practice which would further improve the service. These are listed in the action plan at appendix 2.

### 3. **Background**

The CSSW annual report is published on the CSSIW website. The good practice recommendations are available at appendix 2 and these have also been incorporated into the Fostering Service business plan.

### 4. **Financial Impact**

After consideration this is not applicable

### 5. **Equality Impact Assessment**

After consideration this is not applicable

### 6. **Workforce Impacts**

After consideration this is not applicable

### 7. **Legal Impacts**

After consideration this is not applicable

8. **Risk Management**

After consideration this is not applicable

9. **Consultation**

After consideration this is not applicable

10. **Recommendation**

After consideration this is not applicable

11. **Reason for Proposed Decision**

After consideration this is not applicable

12. **Implementation of Decision**

After consideration this is not applicable

13. **Appendices**

Appendix 1 CSSIW Fostering Inspection report 2016  
Appendix 2            Inspection Action Plan 2016

14. **List of Background Papers**

15. **Officer Contract**

Delyth Berni - Principal Officer, Children & Young People Services  
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Arolygiaeth Gofal a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol Cymru  
Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales

## Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales

Care Standards Act 2000

# Inspection Report

Neath Port Talbot CBC Fostering Service

Type of Inspection – Focused

Date(s) of inspection – Monday 7 December, Tuesday December 8, Thursday 10  
December 2015

Date of publication – Monday, 7 March 2016

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## Summary

### About the service

Neath Port Talbot County Borough's fostering service undertakes the recruitment and assessment of foster carers and provides fostering placements for children 0-18 years. Children may be placed with foster carers approved for mainstream or family and friends (kinship) fostering. The service includes a "Foster Plus" scheme which aims to provide foster placements to children with more complex needs and parent / baby placements.

The fostering service is based at Neath Civic Centre, Neath, and is jointly managed by Helen Jarvis and Joanne Goodwin. The responsible individual for the fostering service is Delyth Berni, Principal Officer, Children Services.

At the time of inspection the fostering service had 185 approved foster carers supporting 232 children. 97 children were in placements with other fostering providers (Information taken from the local authority's self assessment of service).

### What type of inspection was carried out?

A focused inspection was undertaken as part of the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW)'s routine schedule of inspections. The announced inspection looked primarily at the quality of life experienced by the young people living with agency foster carers.

The following methodology was used:-

- Examination of the annual data collection form (ADC) and self assessment of service statement (SASS) information
- Inspection planning meeting with the responsible individual and one team manager
- Discussion with a group of foster carers
- Discussions with the responsible individual
- Discussions with both team managers of the service, the deputy team manager and consultant social worker
- Discussions with staff in the service
- Discussions with staff of one area social work team
- Discussion with the participation and engagement officer
- Discussion with the chair of the fostering panel
- Discussion with the performance and quality assurance manager
- Attendance at an admissions & planning panel
- Examination of seven foster carers' files
- Examination of five children's files
- Examination of the LAC children's guides
- Examination of the annual quality of care review
- Examination of a range of additional service documentation, including children's guides, the team's business plan, service development strategies, quality assurance tools and training programmes.



### **What does the service do well?**

- The (principal officer / responsible individual) and team managers have an excellent understanding of the service, including its strengths and the areas requiring development. Their understanding has been acquired through good quality information gathering / analysis and ongoing close monitoring / evaluation of the service, and has been used to inform / target service development planning.
- The service works well with the department's training officer to ensure that good quality training is provided, to meet the needs of both new and experienced foster carers.
- Foster carer support groups meet regularly, within the county, and they benefit from additional support and advice from an active county foster carer association,
- The service provides out of hours "on call" support to foster carers during evenings and weekends alongside the out of hours social work team.
- The service run events and activities for the children of foster carers which enables them to meet together, for fun and support.
- Foster carers are provided with free leisure passes to enable the whole family to access activities.

### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

- The service now has two full time team managers (these were previously part time / job share posts) and an additional supervising social worker post. This has had a positive impact on previously identified capacity issues within the service.
- Action is being undertaken, to provide foster carers with the necessary knowledge, skills and support they require, to better meet the changing needs of children becoming looked after.
- The service is participating in work being undertaken by the local authority to move towards service user led outcome measures.
- Carer profiles have been drawn up to provide additional information for "matching" purposes.
- New audit tools have been developed, to ensure that practice accords with policies and procedures, in order to drive forward service improvements.
- Learning journals have been introduced for foster carers to demonstrate learning activity, including learning undertaken outside the formal training sessions.
- A children's participation and engagement officer has been employed, to increase children's involvement (including those who are looked after) in the local authority's decision-making processes.
- An "independence checklist" has been developed for foster carers to refer to (looking at every day life skills for children of different ages / stages of development throughout their childhood).
- A report template has been created for foster carers to provide a clear and consistent format for children's LAC reviews.
- Action has been taken to improve the timeliness of foster carer reviews.

### **What needs to be done to improve the service?**

The following good practice recommendations were made:-

Mechanisms (and where necessary additional support) to be put in place to enable more children to effectively put their views across within their LAC reviews and within the annual

foster carer review process.

- Annual reviews of foster carers should be presented to the fostering panel within a shorter timescale to ensure that the information being presented is still up to date and accurate.
- Further work is required to ensure that all foster carers access appropriate and regular training to enhance their professional development and enable them to better meet the needs of children becoming looked after.
- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) renewal checks should be consistently completed within timescale.
- Foster carers to be provided with further information about the independent advocacy service and how this could be accessed.
- Where it is recognised that children in placement have specific cultural needs, foster carers and supervising social workers would benefit from additional information being provided, to ensure that they can effectively support them.

## Quality Of Life

Overall, we (CSSIW) found that practice within the service was child centred and evidenced based, and therefore promoted the welfare and well-being of children placed with local authority foster carers.

The individual needs of children are recognised and, in general, catered for, though this is not the experience of all looked after children. We noted that a weekly multi-agency admission and planning panel was held to consider placement requests and we saw evidence in children's files and admission panel minutes of planned placement admissions / moves. During our observation of one panel meeting, the knowledge and experience of the different agency representatives was effectively used to consider the needs of the children, what was required from potential foster carers and whether additional services would be needed to support the child and / or placement. We noted that where admissions were agreed, further discussions regarding matching considerations then took place within the fostering service's team meeting the following day. In discussion, supervising social workers knew their carers well, and we saw that this information, together with foster carer profiles had been used to inform the matching process. Examples of well-matched placements were seen, which had resulted in very stable placements. Documentation viewed and discussions with foster carers evidenced that there had been a reduction in the number of "out of hours" emergency placements being made, and we were informed by foster carers that they had received better quality pre-placement information over recent months. Despite the matching process, however, it was evident on inspection that, in reality, placement choice was sometimes limited, particularly for children who had specific or more complex needs (e.g. language, cultural or behavioural). We noted that foster carers and supervising social workers had made significant efforts to meet language and cultural needs. However, it was evident that both foster carers and supervising social workers would benefit from additional information being provided, to enable them to effectively support these children. The lack of available placements and level of placement disruption, especially for older children and children whose behaviour was seen to be challenging, was recognised by the service, and we saw that consistent efforts were being made to recruit new foster carers, with regular monthly recruitment events and local / social media advertising undertaken. Consideration was also being given to additional recruitment and retention strategies, including a review of the support provided to foster carers, to better maintain placement stability and improve outcomes for children.

In general, children have a voice and are encouraged to express their views, though further work is required to ensure that the views of all children are consistently heard. We saw that children's guides were available for looked after children (two versions, to cover younger and older age groups), and were informed that looked after children had been involved in their development. The guides included useful responses to some of the questions children might ask when becoming looked after and provided brief details about independent advocacy and the children's complaints service. Additional information / support would need to be provided to most children, however, to enable them to access either service. We found, during our discussion with foster carers, however, that some carers were unclear how to access these services. We therefore advised the responsible individual and team managers that a reminder to foster carers

might be beneficial. We saw that children were encouraged to attend their LAC reviews and found some good examples within children's files of their views being listened to, and acted upon (e.g. in relation to contact with family members, where they wanted to live and future planning). We also noted comments made by children in sampled files - that they knew they could talk to their foster carers if they were "worried" or "unhappy". We noted, however, that the extent of children's participation in decision-making about their care was variable. We saw that, although arrangements were in place for children to contribute to foster carer's annual reviews, the degree to which they had participated was also variable. We were informed by the local authority's participation and engagement officer and the performance and quality assurance manager that action was being taken to involve children in the local authority's wider decision-making processes. For looked after children, this had included a recent consultation event in respect of the local authority's proposed "When I'm Ready" arrangements, and being part of the interviewing process for several senior appointments within the department. We also saw that looked after children and foster carers had been produced a dvd about their experiences of being fostered / fostering for a staff event aimed at promoting good social work practice with looked after children.

Children experience warmth, opportunities to develop attachments, and a sense of belonging. In discussion, foster carers demonstrated an understanding of the needs of the children they cared for, and spoke positively about their role in providing good outcomes for them. We were advised that training was readily available and saw that some carers had attended training sessions on "attachment", "helping children to build trust" and "life story work" to enhance their skills. Children's and foster carers' files provided evidence of stable placements and some very positive outcomes for children. Comments within LAC review minutes and foster carer annual review reports included "\_\_\_ is loved and cherished", "I feel safe", and "they (foster carers) provide a stable, secure and nurturing environment" We also found evidence in sampled files of foster carers establishing good relationships with birth family members, facilitating contact between children and significant people in their lives and helping children to develop a positive sense of their own identity (both in relation to their birth families and within their foster family). For some children, their sense of belonging was enhanced through the use of "delegated authority" arrangements which enabled their foster carers to make day to day decisions about their care (e.g. regarding consent for school day trips, haircuts), but this documentation was not seen in all sampled files. We noted that the local authority's arrangements for young people to remain with their foster carers after their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday ("When I'm Ready") were underway, though we were advised by foster carers that greater clarity was required, particularly in relation to financial matters.

Children are supported to follow interests, develop skills and to experience a sense of achievement. We saw that children's views were sought regarding their interests and activities they might enjoy and we saw that, in general, where they had expressed an interest in a particular activity (e.g. swimming, fishing, kickboxing, drama, netball), arrangements had been made and assistance given to enable them to attend. Sampled files evidenced that foster carers supported children's educational progress by encouraging children to complete homework, supporting their participation in the "letterbox" scheme (to improve reading and numeracy skills), attending parents' evenings and relevant meetings, maintaining regular communication with school staff and advocating for the children in their care, when specific and / or additional services were needed. We saw that age-banded "independence checklists" had been developed for

foster carers to assist them in their efforts to promote children's self-care and independence skills. In discussion with fostering team managers and staff, it was clear that they were motivated to achieve positive outcomes for looked after children, and we noted that, at a broader level, within Children & Young People's Services, children's achievements, (together with those of foster carers) had been celebrated at awards ceremonies within the previous twelve months.

## Quality Of Staffing

This inspection focussed on the experience of young people using the service and their quality of life at the setting. CSSIW did not consider it necessary to look at the quality of staffing on this occasion because:-

- The service benefitted from a stable staff team whose qualifications and experience were commensurate with their role and responsibilities
- Staff received regular supervision and appraisals
- Staff evidenced a strong commitment to progressing their professional development, and opportunities taken up during the previous twelve months had included training on “family dynamics”, “attachment” “risk analysis” and “safer caring for traumatized children”
- Staff knew their foster carers well, and used this knowledge to inform the matching process between children and carers
- Feedback from foster carers indicated high levels of satisfaction with the level of support received from supervising social workers.

However, this theme will be considered during future inspections.

## Quality Of Leadership and Management

This inspection focussed on the experience of young people using the service and their quality of life at the setting. CSSIW did not consider it necessary to look at the quality of leadership and management in depth on this occasion because:-

- Quality assurance mechanisms provided a series of “checks and balances” to maintain standards. An annual quality of care review had been undertaken, together with a service business plan for the current year
- Research data and good practice information was effectively used to inform the service’s outcome focused improvement agenda
- The managers of the fostering service were seen to be suitably qualified and experienced individuals
- A well-established fostering panel, chaired by an experienced individual was in place to effectively carry out panel business

However, we noted that, although annual reviews of foster carers were generally undertaken within timescale there was sometimes a significant time delay (e.g. two to five months on sampled files) between the review taking place and then being presented to panel,. We advised the responsible individual and managers, therefore, that annual reviews of foster carers should be presented to the fostering panel within a shorter timescale to ensure that the information being presented was still up to date and accurate.

We saw that DBS checks were undertaken prior to approval on foster carers and relevant household / family members, and sampled files generally evidenced that checks had been renewed. However, we noted that there was a gap on one file between the expiry date of the previous DBS certificate and the renewal date. We advised therefore that DBS checks should be consistently completed within the required timescale.

This theme will be considered during future inspections.

## Quality Of The Carers

This inspection focussed on the experience of young people using the service and their quality of life at the setting. CSSIW did not consider it necessary to look at the quality of foster carers on this occasion because:-

- Foster carers received regular supervision from their supervising social workers
- Foster carers were provided with an interesting and accessible training programme, which was relevant to their roles and responsibilities
- A number of foster carers had achieved National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) or Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) diplomas.

However, although documentation and discussions with staff and foster carers evidenced a strong emphasis on training, we noted that the number of training courses attended by individual carers varied considerably. Some carers were seen to consistently evidence high levels of attendance, but we saw from annual review documentation that other carers had not undertaken any training within the previous twelve months. Efforts to address this issue were seen to be ongoing, with evidence of good partnership working between the service and the department's training section. We saw, therefore, that bespoke training was offered to carers attending a range of support groups designed to meet their specific needs (e.g. male carers, carers working to help children move on, single carers and family and friends carers). Evening and weekend training sessions were also delivered. In recognition that learning could be broader than training course attendance, individual learning journals had recently been introduced so that foster carers could document this learning and include it in their training portfolio. We were also advised by foster carers that they really valued the proactive approach taken by the training officer (e.g. directing them to online learning opportunities and texting them when relevant television programmes were being shown).

This theme will be considered during future inspections.



## How we inspect and report on services

We conduct two types of inspection; baseline and focused. Both consider the experience of people using services.

- **Baseline inspections** assess whether the registration of a service is justified and whether the conditions of registration are appropriate. For most services, we carry out these inspections every three years. Exceptions are registered child minders, out of school care, sessional care, crèches and open access provision, which are every four years.

At these inspections we check whether the service has a clear, effective Statement of Purpose and whether the service delivers on the commitments set out in its Statement of Purpose. In assessing whether registration is justified inspectors check that the service can demonstrate a history of compliance with regulations.

- **Focused inspections** consider the experience of people using services and we will look at compliance with regulations when poor outcomes for people using services are identified. We carry out these inspections in between baseline inspections. Focused inspections will always consider the quality of life of people using services and may look at other areas.

Baseline and focused inspections may be scheduled or carried out in response to concerns.

Inspectors use a variety of methods to gather information during inspections. These may include;

- Talking with people who use services and their representatives
- Talking to staff and the manager
- Looking at documentation
- Observation of staff interactions with people and of the environment
- Comments made within questionnaires returned from people who use services, staff and health and social care professionals

We inspect and report our findings under 'Quality Themes'. Those relevant to each type of service are referred to within our inspection reports.

Further information about what we do can be found in our leaflet 'Improving Care and Social Services in Wales'. You can download this from our website, [Improving Care and Social Services in Wales](#) or ask us to send you a copy by telephoning your local CSSIW regional office.

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**Neath Port Talbot Fostering Service  
Inspection Report Action Plan  
Date of Publication- 7<sup>th</sup> March 2016**

**Compliance notices**

**No areas of non compliance within the Fostering Services (Wales) Regulations 2003**

**Good Practice Recommendations**

Page 43

Ref. No.	Recommendation	Source	Actions to be Taken	By Whom	Action Taken / Progress Update	Timescale
1	Mechanisms (and where necessary additional support) to be put into place to enable more children to effectively out their views across within their LAC reviews and within the annual foster carer review process	CSSIW Fostering Inspection 2016	Current consultation documents to be reviewed.  Outcome Focused measures to be implemented across the service.	Practice Improvement Group  CYPS	Reports/consultation documents presented to Practice Improvement Group. Reports to be reviewed to take into account the views of the IRO service.  Fostering Service to be trained in outcome focused measures  Care and support plans to be reviewed to include outcome focussed measures and the wishes of the young person.  Development of the children's website to incorporate mechanisms of seeking the views of young people	May 2016  July 2016  May 2016

2	Further work is required to ensure that all foster carers access appropriate and regular training to enhance their professional development and enable them to better meet the needs of children becoming looked after	CSSIW Fostering Inspection 2016	Annual review of the foster carers training programme  Learning and development plans to be implemented for all new applicants and for existing carers  Review of carers supervision and annual review forms to include an emphasis on training and development	JG/KG/ED  Fostering SW's  JG/KG/ED and fostering SW's	Annual  Plans to be implemented for all carers and reviewed on an annual basis  Revised preforms to be developed and implemented	March 2016 and ongoing  October 2016 and ongoing  Sept 2016
3	Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) renewal checks should be consistently completed within timescales	CSSIW Fostering Inspection 2016	Ensure routine compliance with reminder screen actions. Reminders to be discussed routinely in supervision.	KG/JG/ED	Reminder screens in place  Supervision Audits included as part of QA Framework and audit timetable	Complete  May 2016

4	Foster carers to be provided with further information about the Independent advocacy service and how this can be accessed	CSSIW Fostering Inspection 2016	Advocacy service to be invited CSSIW Fostering Inspection 2016ted to meet with fostering service staff and carers	KG/JG	<p>Information about advocacy is provided within the Children's Guide to fostering</p> <p>IRO service makes enquires about the use of advocacy at every young person's LAC review ad IRO service record the use of advocacy</p> <p>Commissioning team monitor the uptake of the advocacy service.</p>	In place/on going
5	Where it is recognised that children in placement have specific cultural needs, foster carers and social workers would benefit from additional information being provided to ensure that they can effectively support them	CSSIW Fostering Inspection 2016	Culturally needs to be routinely considered in matching and discussed in placement meetings and reviews	KG/JG/ IRO service	<p>Matching documents are in place and include reference to cultural needs and any additional support that is required</p> <p>Placement meetings are routinely held and should include reference to cultural needs</p> <p>The service benefits from a named training officer for foster carers and staff who is responsible to providing information/training/research as and when required.</p>	ongoing

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## NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### CYPE

Thursday, 7th April 2016

### Report of the Head of Transformation – Andrew Thomas

#### **Matter for Decision**

#### **Wards Affected:**

All wards

#### **Inclusion Business Plan 2016-17**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To obtain Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Board approval for the Inclusion Business Plan 2016-17.

#### **Executive Summary**

2. For members to consider priorities and actions of the Inclusion Business Plan:
  - To further align service areas within the Inclusion Service to ensure efficient and effective provision to support children and young people with additional learning needs.

- To develop an Autism Strategy for children and young people in partnership with other internal and external services.
- To establish a Continuum of Support for children and young people with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.
- To consider future workforce challenges and risks for this service area.

## **Background**

To set priorities and actions to ensure the Inclusion Service fulfils its statutory duties in meeting the needs of pupils with additional learning needs.

## **Financial Impact**

The Inclusion Business Plan addresses the need to secure sufficient financial and human resources to mitigate any risks associated with the inability to provide statutory services to children and young people with additional learning needs.

## **Equality Impact Assessment**

There is no equality impacts associated with this report. Individual equality impacts will be undertaken where necessary on the different aspects of the business plan.

## **Workforce Impacts**

The Inclusion Business Plan identifies the need to review working practice and workforce capacity within the Inclusion Service to address service demand including the need to fulfil statutory duties and build and sustain capacity.



## **Legal Impacts**

Consideration is given to implementation of legislation as set out in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales 2002, The Equality Act 2010 and the Education Act 1996.

## **Risk Management**

Identification and mitigation of risks associated with delivering the priorities are outlined in Principle 5 of the Business Plan.

## **Consultation**

There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

## **Recommendations**

That the Cabinet Board endorses the Inclusion Business Plan for 2016-17.

## **Reasons for Proposed Decision**

To ensure efficient and effective provision to support children and young people with additional learning needs by:

- Further aligning service areas
- Developing an Autism strategy
- Establishing a continuum of support for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties
- Considering future workforce challenges and risks for this service area

## **Implementation of Decision**

The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period.

## **Appendices**

The Inclusion Business Plan

### **List of Background Papers**

- The SEN Code of Practice for Wales 2002
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Review of Inclusion in Neath Port Talbot 2014

### **Officer Contact**

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## **Corporate Performance Management Framework**

### **Heads of Service “Business Plan” – Revised Guidance Note 2016-2017**

This revised guidance has been prepared to further develop and refine the business planning process which is an important part of the Council’s Corporate Performance Management Framework. Both the outcomes of the WAO’s Corporate Assessment (2014) and the WAO’s recent review of the Council’s Performance Management Arrangements (2015) have informed this revised guidance.

Page 51 Key Developments / Refinements:

1. Principle 1 - Delivery of Priorities in 2015-2016 – As the business planning process has matured there is now the opportunity to utilise the process for the self-evaluation of performance (both qualitative and quantitative).
2. Principle 2 - Priorities to be delivered in 2016-2017 – This principle contains a table which will demonstrate the link between priorities / actions / measures. A table including the mandatory corporate measures is also included in this section to increase the emphasis and action on corporate priorities, as well as service-specific priorities.
3. Principle 3 - Workforce Planning – The information required will support the development of Corporate Workforce Plan by the end of 2016-2017.

4. Principle 4 - Property Management – This principle requires you to think about any issues the delivery of your priorities during 2016/2017 will have on your accommodation needs. This principle contains a table which requires you to identify any required changes which will be used by Property Services to help programme plan their work during the year.

*Explanatory notes have been included in the guidance note for the above two principles but if you require any further help please contact Sheenagh Rees (Head of HR) and / or Simon Brennan (Head of Property and Regeneration)*

5. Principle 5 – Risk Management – This principle makes specific reference to the Council’s Corporate Risk Management Policy. This will enable the consistent approach to the quantification of risks and embed risk management in service business. During 2015-2016, heads of service have been involved in the identification of both Directorate and Corporate Risks. Speak to KJ – *are there risks that you would include here that are not already recorded on the Directorate / Corporate Risk Register*

**Principles**

<b>Section 1: Introduction</b>	
<b>Introduction</b>	<p>This Inclusion Service Business Plan covers the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017. The Inclusion Service incorporates the following service areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional Learning Needs Support Team</li> <li>• Educational Psychology Support Team</li> <li>• School Based Counselling Service</li> <li>• School and Family Support Team</li> <li>• Support for Learning Service</li> </ul> <p>The Inclusion Service is based in Port Talbot Civic Centre and is comprised of: The Support for Learning Team which consists of advisory and specialist teachers, specialist learning support assistants and therapists</p> <p>The Educational Psychology Service works with children and young people in early years and school based settings across NPT. The School Based Counselling Service provides a confidential counselling service to all pupils from Year 6.</p> <p>The Additional Learning Needs Support Team consists of the manager and named officer, caseworkers, family liaison officer and programme manager. This team undertake duties related to statutory assessment processes including issuing of statements of SEN, convening SEN panels, supporting families undergoing statutory assessments and ensuring that statutory timescales are adhered to.</p> <p>The School and Family Support Team consists of educational welfare officers, school governance, admissions and exclusions.</p>

	<p>The service works with pupils at School Action Plus and those pupils in receipt of a statement of SEN. The Service aims to improve outcomes for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) through promoting early identification and intervention, providing training and awareness raising to schools and families and by working in partnership with other internal and external agencies.</p>
<p><b>Section 2 : Priorities</b></p>	
<p><b>Principle 1 – Delivery of Priorities in 2015-2016</b></p>	
<p>Achievement of priorities during 2015-2016 (self-evaluation)</p> <p>For the period 2015-16 due to post of Co-ordinator for Inclusion being vacant there was no formal business plan in place. Priorities for this year therefore focused on activities identified in the Inclusion Review Action Plan and further priorities as identified by the appointed Co-ordinator, namely:</p> <p>Ensure the LA is fulfilling its statutory duties in meeting the needs of pupils with ALN by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Commissioning services for speech and language and occupation therapy through ABM Health Service.</li> <li>2. Review planned place provision for pupils with MLD</li> </ol>	<p>Progress against priorities (2015-16)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Statutory obligations ensuring speech and language provision is available for all relevant children have been fulfilled. Currently finalising commissioning arrangements for occupational therapy.</li> <li>2. Due for completion, delayed due to long term sickness of officer leading on this work within the Educational Psychology Service.</li> </ol>

3. Streamline LA panels and ensure consistent approach to decision making, training and paperwork
4. Reorganisation of the Education Other than at School Service (EOTAS)
5. Ensure clear continuum of support for behaviour management and provision for pupils with SEBD at each key stage to reduce exclusion and reliance on home education.
6. Prepare and deliver comprehensive training programme for ALN

3. Greater use of pupil level data to inform decisions. Analysis of referrals to panel to identify and target schools with greatest number of referrals and those who refer at end of key stage 2.
4. Consulting on additional planned assessment places providing greater flexibility of provision at Ysgol HendreFelin Special School and additional assessment places within new Secondary Education Nurture Centre (SENC) for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.
5. Development of continuum of support in collaboration with YHF Special School. Wellbeing and Behaviour Strategy Group established, audit of provision currently undertaken to include provision within and outside of the LA. Development of directory of provision in partnership with Health/Children's Services/Third Sector. Specialist Outreach Support model agreed in partnership with Special Schools to support learning Support Centres and mainstream schools.
6. Comprehensive training programme in place delivered by Inclusion Service in partnership with colleagues in Health.

**Principle 2 – Priorities to be delivered in 2016-2017**

Priorities to be achieved during 2016-2017

To further align service areas within the Inclusion Service to ensure efficient and effective provision of support to children and young people in a timely manner. To ensure less duplication, fewer unnecessary assessments and better information sharing.

To further develop, formalise and embed processes and lines of communication within and between Inclusion Service areas to enhance partnerships with children and young people, parents/carers, schools and other service areas, in order to achieve best possible provision and outcomes for children and young people through the following:

- Review of staffing within the ALNST to meet changing needs and challenges
- Establish Outreach Team aligned with existing Inclusion Services to build the capacity to support mainstream schools and ensure that the majority of children with ALN are educated within their local school.
- Establish Headteacher LSC group and working party to quality assure specialist provisions and share good practice.
- Review of allocation of Educational Psychology Service.
- Inclusion planning meetings for each cluster in order to plan collaboratively ensure efficient and effective use of resources and identify areas of strength and areas of development within each cluster.
- Twice yearly Inclusion Development day for all staff to plan, review and evaluate outcomes collaboratively, identify areas of strength and development and agree actions to support areas of development.
- To develop closer working with the School Improvement Service to ensure that Inclusion contributes effectively to all aspects of school improvement.

Appointment of Wellbeing and Behaviour Team (Senior Wellbeing Officer, 2x Wellbeing Officer, 2x Key worker 6.5 ESF Key worker posts) March 2016



To establish and embed a behaviour and wellbeing continuum of support for pupils with SEBD at each key stage of the graduated response to promote early identification and intervention, to reduce exclusions and reliance on the Home Education Service.

Develop an Autism Strategy for children and young people in partnership with other services and specialist educational settings to support pupils with ASD and their families to ensure high quality of provision, training of school based staff and timely intervention so that pupils needs are assessed and met appropriately.

Improve parent partnership

To provide training on areas of ALN to Headteachers, governors and aspiring leaders.

Establish Wellbeing and Behaviour Group to roll out a behaviour strategy and continuum of support for behaviour management to include:

- Gatekeeping process of support and challenge for schools requesting additional specialist provision and pupils with ALN needs at risk of exclusion
- Roll out bespoke programme of training to schools
- Direct outreach provision to schools

Review current working practice of ASD Advisory team to ensure a high quality service with clearly defined referral routes promoting early intervention and support for mainstream schools.

Increase Inclusion service capacity to work with and support parents/carers, reduce appeals to SENTW and increase parental confidence that children's needs can be met through identified strategies and provisions.

To ensure that school leaders are aware of their statutory obligations, understand how and when to access support and to outline in the school development plan objectives to build capacity and further develop workforce knowledge and expertise identified through the LA ALN self-evaluation process.

<p>Outline of priorities for 2017-18/ 2018-19</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve outcomes for pupils with Speech and Language difficulties</li> <li>• To review the needs of pupils with moderate learning difficulties within MLD LSCs</li> <li>• Welsh Government ALN Reform</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of working practice and workforce capacity within the Speech and Language Advisory Service and Educational Psychology Team in order to capacity build within schools to meet the needs and improve outcomes of pupils at school action and school action plus.</li> <li>• To further develop workforce knowledge and expertise of staff to continue to meet the increasingly complex needs of pupils.</li> <li>• Currently scheduled for 2018. Proposals will place greater demands on education and Inclusion workforce; it is likely that consideration will be required regarding increased staffing, resources and working practices.</li> </ul>
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**Priorities / Actions / Measures Table:**

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Actions to deliver the priorities</b>	<b>Officer (s) Responsible</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Evidence to indicate achievement e.g. Measures / Outcomes.</b>
<p><b>P1</b> To further align service areas within the Inclusion Service</p>	<p>Review of staffing within the service to meet changing needs and challenges. Succession management to ensure that operational and strategic intelligence is not lost.</p>	<p>Co-ordinator for Inclusion/Service Managers</p>	<p>Report to Personnel Committee 16<sup>th</sup> May 2016</p>	<p>Reviewed structure supports reduced duplication, improved communication and greater partnership working on a cluster basis. Enhanced school and parent partnership evidenced in satisfaction questionnaires, low record of complaints and appeals to SENTW. Improved performance indicators.</p>

	<p>Develop cluster ALN planning tool to facilitate collaborative planning with schools, ensure efficient use of resources and establish effective links across service areas.</p> <p>To establish twice yearly Inclusion Development days for all staff to plan, review and evaluate outcomes collaboratively, identify areas of strength and development and agree actions to support areas of development. Service managers to share report cards to identify common ground and facilitate collaborative working across the Inclusion Service.</p>	<p>Co-ordinator for Inclusion/Educational Psychology Service/Support for Learning/Education Welfare Service</p> <p>Co-ordinator for Inclusion/service area managers</p>	<p>Pilot planning tool summer 2016 with a view to roll out autumn term 2016</p> <p>Inclusion Development Day planned for June 2016.</p>	<p>Improved early identification and intervention – evidenced by referrals, consultation requests and requests for statutory assessments. Improved and consistent use of data across all service areas to ensure that schools receive appropriate support and challenge, to monitor outcomes for children and young people and identify future areas for development.</p> <p>The development of more robust systems for monitoring and reviewing and reporting on outcomes as evidenced in service areas report cards. To ensure that all staff are included in and contribute to the self-evaluation process and action any areas of development identified.</p>
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<p><b>P2</b> Establish Wellbeing and Behaviour team and Continuum of Support for children and young people with Social Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties.</p>	<p>Appoint Senior Wellbeing Manager to oversee newly established Wellbeing and Behaviour Team.</p> <p>Roll out and embed continuum of provision and support for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties across all schools.</p> <p>Establish Wellbeing and Behaviour Strategic Group to monitor, review and evaluate provision for pupils with SEBD.</p>	<p>Co-ordinator for Inclusion/Wellbeing and Behaviour Manager/Senior staff YHF Special School</p>	<p>April 2016</p> <p>Autumn 2016</p> <p>Advisory group established Feb 2016. Formalise group on appointment of Wellbeing and</p>	<p>Effective, consistent approach to behaviour management evidenced by:</p> <p>Learners' needs better met through improved capacity within schools to identify causes for internal and external behaviours and to respond effectively resulting in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved pupil outcomes</li> <li>• Reduced risk incidents and/or fixed term exclusions.</li> <li>• Reduction in frequency/severity of behaviours.</li> <li>• Reduction in expensive out of county placements.</li> </ul>
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	<p>Work in partnership with YHF Special School to establish flexible provisions for pupils with SEBD. Establish outreach service closely aligned to core services within Inclusion.</p> <p>Establishment of an Inclusion Panel to review entry/exit criteria for pupils accessing flexible places and monitor quality of requests for assessment places against the behaviour continuum.</p> <p>Develop bespoke training programme for school based staff.</p> <p>Create directory of provision for schools in partnership with other services.</p>		<p>Behaviour Manager.</p> <p>Work currently in progress Summer 2016</p> <p>Work currently in progress to be completed summer 2016</p>	<p>Number of pupils supported within their mainstream school.</p> <p>Greater number of pupils returning to mainstream schools following period of assessment.</p> <p>Evaluation of training, monitoring of impact by school and cluster, pupil and staff views.</p> <p>The establishment of appropriate pathways, provisions and alternative curriculum for the most vulnerable young people.</p>
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<p><b>P3</b> Develop a NPT Autism Strategy and enhanced support for children and young people with ASD, their parent/carers and schools.</p>	<p>Review working practice and workforce capacity within Inclusion Service to address service demand.</p> <p>Develop specialist outreach service in partnership with YHF Special School to support mainstream schools.</p> <p>Develop monitoring, reviewing and evaluation cycle to quality assure specialist provisions for pupils with ASD.</p> <p>Further develop training package for school staff and parent/carers of pupils with ASD.</p>	<p>Co-ordinator for Inclusion/Educational Psychology Service/Support for Learning</p>	<p>Autumn term 2016</p> <p>Spring 2017</p> <p>Summer 2017</p> <p>Spring 2017</p>	<p>Necessary financial and human resources ensured to build and sustain capacity in mainstream schools to support children with ASD.</p> <p>Assessment and recording procedures enhanced across learning support centres to monitor progress. To ensure that staff are appropriately trained and experienced in meeting the needs of pupils with ASD.</p> <p>Reduction on over-reliance on specialist provision in LSCs. Improved outcomes and opportunities for pupils with ASD including access and transition to mainstream where appropriate.</p> <p>Improved attendance and exclusion data. Improved outcomes against baseline data. Continuing improved communication with parents, increase parental confidence that their child's needs are being met, evidenced</p>

				by reduction in number of parents employing services of private providers and SENTW.
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**Mandatory Corporate Measures Table:**

<b>Mandatory Measures (2016-2017)</b>	<b>2014-2015 Performance (if available)</b>	<b>2015-2016 Performance (if available)</b>	<b>2016-2017 Performance Outlook</b>
<b>M1</b> % of expenditure within budget	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	100%
<b>M2</b> Amount of FFP savings at risk or undeliverable	Out of County budget	Out of county budget costs	<b>Out of county budget costs</b>
<b>M3</b> Average fte days lost due to sickness	8.46 days  2014/15 (April 1 <sup>st</sup> to March 31 <sup>st</sup> )	5.09 days  2015/16 (April 1 <sup>st</sup> to Dec 31 <sup>st</sup> )	Below council average 2014/15 of 9.4  2015/16 projected days lost =6.79 Projected reduction from 2014/15 = 1.67% Below projected council average 2015/16 of 9.07
<b>M4</b> % of staff EDR / PDR's completed by 31.03.17			100%

<b>M5</b> % of learning & development requirements met by 31.03.17	Not known		100%
<b>M6</b> % of service report cards produced by 31.03.17	N/A	<b>100%</b>	100%
<b>M7</b> % of services measuring customer satisfaction		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is not consistent across all service areas, to be addressed 2016-17.</li> </ul>	100%
<b>M8</b> % of services measuring staff engagement			
<b>M9</b> No of transactional services that are web enabled	Online admissions: Of 2975 pupils transitioning from nursery to primary and primary to	Awaiting data	



	secondary 1902 applied online.		
<b>M10</b> % take up of the above web enabled transactions	Online admissions: Reception places 62% Secondary places 67%	Awaiting data	

<b>Principle 2 - Priorities to be delivered in 2016-2017 (continued)</b>	
<b>Why are these priorities?</b>	<p>The priorities set for 2016-17 contribute to Council priorities (Single Integrated Plan / Becoming Excellent, Being Excellent/ Corporate Improvement Plan):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To raise educational standards and attainment for all young people</li> <li>• To improve outcomes in literacy and numeracy</li> <li>• Narrow the performance gap</li> <li>• Improve pupil attendance.</li> </ul> <p>These priorities also address recommendations within the Review of Inclusion within Neath Port Talbot and areas of development identified in NPT Self-Evaluation Spring 2016.</p>
<b>Principle 2 - Priorities to be delivered in 2016-2017 (continued)</b>	
<b>How are you going to secure the achievement of these priorities?</b>	<p>Audit of service areas to first identify needs and areas of development to consider workforce profile and capacity to deliver on priorities. Report to Personnel Committee May 2016, including resources identified from existing budget and possible additional resources required.</p> <p>Self-evaluation process undertaken across all service areas with key areas of development and service pressures identified with agreed actions.</p> <p>Further work currently in progress in partnership with internal and external services, including Children’s Services, Health Service, Youth Service and schools.</p>

<b>Principle 3 – Workforce Planning</b>	
<p><b>What are the key workforce challenges for this service?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Succession planning</li> </ul>	<p>Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sufficient capacity and capability to undertake full range of responsibilities associated with this area of work.</li> <li>• The risk of loss of significant experience over a short period of time i.e. redundancy/retirement.</li> <li>• Recruitment of sufficiently qualified and experienced staff</li> <li>• Ensuring robust systems in place to safeguard services in the event of long term sickness to secure seamless service delivery</li> <li>• The upskilling of a large workforce including teachers/SENCOs/Headteachers to meet the needs of children and young people with ALN.</li> <li>• Implications of the above considerations on financial, logistical and time capacity including issues such as absence of training budget.</li> </ul>

<b>Principle 3 - Workforce Planning (continued)</b>	
<p><b>What are the longer term workforce challenges for this service?</b> Welsh Government Additional Learning Needs Reform</p>	<p>Uncertainty with regards to WG reform framework – currently scheduled for 2018. Current proposals will place greater demands on education and Inclusion workforce; it is likely that consideration will be required regarding increased staffing.</p>
<p><b>What actions are we going to take to address these challenges?</b></p>	<p>In addition to the aforementioned actions the following priorities will also be addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued review of working practices.</li> <li>• Training and development plans – to incorporate training needs of education as a whole such as monitoring of data/skills audit/PDR etc.</li> <li>• Career planning – identified in personal development plans.</li> <li>• Succession planning – identifying at risk areas and formula for skills transfer to be established.</li> <li>• Skills planning – skill set for specialist areas of work to be identified and replicated appropriately e.g. tribunal expertise.</li> <li>• Management and leadership development –peer support management structure established.</li> <li>• Team building – twice yearly development days / monthly managers meeting / half-termly service area meetings.</li> <li>• Actions to address any identified health and well-being issues- stress risk assessment/ OH / regular one to one with managers.</li> </ul>

<b>Principle 4 – Property Management</b>	
<b>What are the property consequences of delivering the priorities you have outlined in your business plan?</b>	The Support for Learning located to Port Talbot Civic Centre February 2016 from Baglan Education Centre. All service areas managed by the Co-ordinator for Inclusion, namely School and Family Support, Support for Learning, Additional Learning Needs Support Team and the Educational Psychology Service and School Based Counselling Service are now based in PTCC.

**Property Table:**

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<b>Property Name</b>	<b>Required Change</b>	<b>Why?</b>	<b>Impact</b>

<b>Principle 5 – Risk Management</b>	<b>Prompts</b>
<b>How will any risks be managed / mitigated?</b>	This is about the identification and mitigation of risks associated with delivering your priorities. The Council’s Corporate Risk Management Policy provides the quantification method for scoring these risks ( <b>add link</b> ). Please present your risks in the table format provided below. This is the same format as both the Directorate and Corporate Risk Registers and will enable a consistent approach to the management of risks and will also embed risk management in service business.

**Risk Table:**

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<b>Ref</b>	<b>Risk Description</b>	<b>Likelihood Score</b>	<b>Impact Score</b>	<b>Total Score</b>	<b>Proximity</b>	<b>Mitigating Action</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Risk Owner</b>
<b>R1</b>	<b>Inability to provide statutory services to vulnerable individuals/groups according to their assessed entitlements – leading to potential expensive and time consuming tribunals</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>15H</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Early identification of potential risk to individual/group. Secure sufficient financial and human resources are made available to mitigate risk. Formalise commissioning arrangements with health Service.</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>	<b>Head of Transformation</b>
<b>R2</b>	<b>Initial short term increase in fixed term exclusions following reorganisation of EOTAS</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9M</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Establishment of Wellbeing and Behaviour Team to support change management.</b>	<b>Autumn 2016/ Spring 2017</b>	<b>Head of Transformation/ Co-ordinator for Inclusion</b>

						<b>Implementation of Behaviour Continuum. Consultation on increase in flexible assessment places.</b>		
<b>R3</b>	<b>Potential threat that financial pressures will prevent priorities within the Inclusion Business plan being actioned and/or sustained.</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>15H</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Highlight pressures at earliest possible stage, identifying possible solutions where possible.</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>	<b>Head of Transformation/ Co-ordinator for Inclusion</b>

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## NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION CABINET BOARD

7<sup>th</sup> April 2016

### REPORT OF HEAD OF TRANSFORMATION ANDREW THOMAS

#### **MATTER FOR DECISION**

#### **WARDS AFFECTED – ALL WARDS**

#### **ADMISSION TO COMMUNITY SCHOOLS: 2017/2018**

#### **Purpose of Report**

1. To obtain Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Board determination of the admission arrangements for community schools in relation to the 2017/2018 academic year.

#### **Executive Summary**

2. The Council is the admission authority for community schools in its area (the relevant area) and is required to determine by 15<sup>th</sup> April 2016 its admission arrangements in relation to the 2017/ 2018 academic year.
3. Proposed admission arrangements that detail the procedures to be followed when allocating school places have been consulted upon.
4. Consultation took place between December 2015 and February 2016. Consultees included head teachers & governing bodies of community and voluntary aided schools, neighbouring local authorities and the Admission Forum.
5. The responses received and officer comments are presented for Member consideration.

6. It is the officer recommendation that Members determine the proposed admission arrangements attached to this report.
7. These arrangements conform to the legislative requirements and the good practice guidelines set out in the Welsh Government's School Admissions Code, 2013.

### **Background**

8. The Council, as local authority for the relevant area, is responsible for determining the admission arrangements for community schools<sup>1</sup> and has a duty to consult annually on those arrangements.
9. In drawing up admission arrangements, the Council must ensure that the practices and the criteria used to decide on the allocation of school places:
  - are clear in the sense of being free from doubt and easily understood
  - are objective and based on demonstrable fact
  - are procedurally fair and are also equitable for all groups of children
  - provide parents or carers with easy access to helpful admission information
  - comply with all relevant legislation and have been determined in accordance with the statutory requirements and the provisions of this Code
10. At its meeting of 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2015, the Children, Young People and Education Board approved consultation on proposed admission arrangements for community schools.

### **Proposed admission arrangements for determination**

11. The proposed admission arrangements for Member determination are attached as appendix A.
12. These have been the subject of consultation and in response to comments received have been amended accordingly.
13. If approved, the arrangements will be effective in relation to admission to community schools for the 2017/2018 academic.

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<sup>1</sup> The Education (Determination of Admission Arrangements) (Wales) Regulations 2006

## Consultation

14. The Council, as local authority is required to consult each year on the admission arrangements for those schools which it is the admission authority.
15. Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council is the admission authority for community schools. Admission to voluntary aided (i.e. Faith) schools is the responsibility of the respective governing bodies.
16. The requirements of consultation are set out in the Welsh Government's School Admissions Code<sup>2</sup>.
17. In the case of this Council, consultation is required with:
  - the governing bodies of community schools
  - the governing bodies of voluntary aided (i.e. Faith) schools
  - all neighbouring local authorities.
18. In addition, the Council should also consult the Admission Forum for the relevant area.
19. In relation to the 2017/2018 academic year, those consultations are required to be undertaken no sooner than 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015 and completed by 1<sup>st</sup> March 2016.
20. Once consultation has been completed the Council must determine by 15<sup>th</sup> April 2016 its admission arrangements, either in their original form or with such modifications as seen fit.
21. Consultation took place between December 2015 and February 2016. Consultees included head teachers & governing bodies of community and voluntary aided schools within the County Borough (the relevant area) and neighbouring local authorities.
22. The Admission Forum has also been consulted and is in agreement with the proposed admission arrangements as amended.
23. Responses were received from: Cllr. Ellis, Pelenna Ward; the Head teacher, St Joseph's RC School and 6<sup>th</sup> Form Centre; the Chair of Governors, St Joseph's RC School and 6<sup>th</sup> Form Centre; and the Chair of Governors, Rhos Primary School.

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<sup>2</sup> School admissions code: Statutory Code document No. 005/2013

24. No comments were received from neighbouring local authorities.

### **Consideration of responses to the proposal**

25. A summary of the responses and officer comments are attached as appendix B as a consultation report. Also attached are the individual comments received for member consideration (appendix C).
26. Members are reminded that comments should be conscientiously considered in an open minded approach, alongside the case put forward for implementation of the proposal. In this respect there is an expectation that Members will have read and given due regard to the admission arrangements as consulted upon (appendix D) and the comments received together with officer comments.
27. Having considered the comments and amended the proposed admission arrangements as appropriate, it is the opinion of officers that the modified arrangement are fit for purpose and, as such, Member determination is recommended.

### **Financial Impact**

28. There is no financial impact directly associated with this proposal. The admission arrangements support the efficient and effective delivery of education across the County Borough.
29. Administration of the admission process is within the Council's staffing cost envelope and is a statutory function that falls to the Council.

### **Equality Impact Assessment**

31. An equality impact assessment has been carried out and found that there is no adverse effect on any protected group and the process has checks and monitoring in place.
32. The full equality impact assessment is attached to this report as appendix E.

### **Workforce Impact**

33. As a statutory function of the Council, the admission process is administered centrally. The current staffing complement associated

with this function will be maintained and there will be no change to the staffing arrangements consequent upon the implementation of the proposal.

### **Legal Impacts**

34. The Council, as an admission authority, has a statutory duty to act in accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Government's School Admissions Code, 2013.
35. In relation to the specific purpose of this report, there is a legal requirement that school admission arrangements must be determined by 15<sup>th</sup> April 2016.

### **Risk Management**

36. There are requirements placed on the Council, as an admission authority, intended to ensure the admission system works for the benefit of both schools and pupils. Admission authorities are required to consult on and determine their admission arrangements, and to offer places within timeframes and deadlines specified by legislation.
37. The proposed admission arrangements recommended for determination in this report conform to the legislative requirements and the good practice guidelines set out in the Welsh Government's School Admissions Code, 2013.

### **Recommendations**

38. Having given due regard to the equality impact assessment, it is recommended that, in line with School Admissions Code, 2013 and The Education (Determination of Admission Arrangements) (Wales) Regulations 2006, Members determine the admission arrangements for community schools in relation to the 2017/2018 academic year, as attached to this report.

### **Reasons for the Proposed Decision**

39. To enable the Council to meet statutory duties and good practice guidelines in respect of the admission of pupils to community schools.

## **Implementation of Decision**

40. The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period.

### **Appendix**

Appendix A: Proposed admission to community schools in Neath  
Port Talbot County Borough, 2017/2018

Appendix B: Consultation Responses

Appendix C: Individual responses

Appendix D: Consultation draft – admission arrangements

Appendix E: Equality Impact Assessment

### **List of Background Papers**

- a. Welsh Government: School Admissions Code (No. 005/2013).
- b. Welsh Government: Measuring the capacity of schools in Wales
- c. Education (Determination of Admission Arrangements) (Wales) Regulations 2006
- d. Education (Relevant Areas for Consultation on Admission Arrangements) Regulations 1999
- e. School Admissions (Common Offer Date) (Wales) regulations 2013
- f. The Education Act 2002 (Commencement No.8) (Wales) Order 2006

### **Officer Contact**

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## **Admission to Community Schools 2017/2018**

### **1. Introduction**

The Council is the admission authority for all community maintained schools in the County Borough. As admission authority, the Council determines the criteria that will be applied when allocating places at community schools. This document sets out the admission arrangements that will apply during 2017/18 for: nursery classes based at community primary schools; community primary schools; community secondary schools; and the Welsh-medium sixth form at a community secondary school.

For voluntary aided (i.e. Faith) schools, it is each school's governing body that determines the admission arrangements, details of which can be obtained from the respective governing body.

This policy document sets out the principles underpinning the admission arrangements for community schools together with the procedures and the timetables for admission during the 2017/18 school year (appendices 1,2,3 & 4). Further details to assist parents in applying for a school place choosing a school for their child will be set out in the 'Information for Parents Handbook 2017/2018' which will be available to parents in October 2016, prior to the application date. The handbook will contain important information about schools in the County Borough including their admission numbers, the catchment areas they serve together with catchment area maps and their partner school arrangements. In this respect, the 'Information for Parents Handbook 2017/2018 forms an integral part of the information available to parents on school admission.

### **2. Context**

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council aspires to deliver an inclusive education service that:

- celebrates diversity and respects everyone's right to education in their local

community;

- provides access to high quality learning experiences for every child and adult; and
- encourages and supports individuals to realise their ambitions, achieve their potential and become active and responsible members of society.

To meet the educational needs of children, the County Borough Council delivers a range of provision, including:

- **part-time nursery education, available** in all primary schools. Successful learning begins in the nursery where children have access to rich experiences in a secure environment;
- **primary schools**, (including Welsh medium and voluntary aided schools), provide a broad education based on practical experiences designed to meet individual needs, including national curriculum areas of study.
- **secondary schools**, (including Welsh medium and a Roman Catholic school), set high standards in examinations, sport and cultural activities, and personal and social education. Pupils in all schools have access to a wide range of curricular opportunities and the national curriculum;
- **special schools**, provide rich and stimulating learning experiences for pupils with severe and complex difficulties. All pupils attending these schools have a statement of special educational needs. Specialist support for primary and secondary pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties is available within the County Borough.
- **learning support centres**, based at a number of primary and secondary schools, provide specialist support in mainstream schools for pupils with statements of special educational needs.

The Council's admission arrangements ensure that admission procedures do not unfairly advantage or disadvantage any groups through the application of the Welsh Government School Admissions Code 005/2013.

### 3. Admission to nursery classes at community primary schools

The Council is the admission authority for all nursery classes in community primary schools.

Children can access a part-time nursery place from the start of the term following their third birthday. Application forms are available from (and, when completed, to be returned to) the Admissions Officer, School and Family Support Team, Port Talbot Civic Centre, Port Talbot SA13 1PJ.

Admission to a nursery class prior to the start of the term following the child's third birthday can only be agreed in consultation with the Admissions Officer.



Children who are in receipt of a statement of special educational needs which identifies mainstream nursery education within a community school will be guaranteed a place at that setting.

The Council will consider each individual application received. If the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, places will be allocated according to the oversubscription criteria below, listed in priority order.

– ***Oversubscription Criteria***

- a) Children looked after<sup>1</sup> or previously looked after by a local authority in Wales or England in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989.
- b) Children who live within the catchment area of the nursery class for which an application is made.
- c) Children who have an older sibling who will be on the register at the school at which the nursery class is based when they are admitted. A “sibling” is defined as a full sibling, a half sibling (i.e. one shared parent), a step sibling (i.e. the child of a person co-habiting with a parent), a fostered sibling or an adopted sibling. In each case, at the time of the application the sibling must reside at the same address as the child or young person. Any sibling connection must be clearly stated in the application. In the case of multiple births, if it is not possible to offer all children a place in the nursery class, the parents will be asked to decide which child should be offered a place first or the parents may wish to consider an alternative setting for all children.

If children are equally entitled to a place in the nursery in categories a) to c) above, priority will be given to the child living nearest. This is measured by the shortest walking/travel route between the home and the school. The Council uses a Geographical Information System to calculate the shortest distance.

In all cases evidence of permanent residence of the pupil at time of application must be supplied.

Once an offer of a school place has been made the Council will only withdraw that offer where the place offered has been on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application from a parent (for example, a false claim to residence in a catchment area) which effectively denied a place to a child with a stronger claim. A school place will not be withdrawn once a child or young person has started at the school, except where that place was fraudulently obtained. In deciding whether to withdraw the place, the length of time that the child had been at the

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<sup>1</sup> A looked after child refers to a child who is looked after by the local authority under Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 at the time an application to a school is made and who the local authority has confirmed will still be looked after at the time of admission to the school.

school will be taken into account. Where a place is withdrawn on the basis of misleading information, the application will be considered afresh, and a right of appeal offered if a place is refused.

The home address is considered to be the child's along with their parents' principal place of residence on the published date, i.e. where they are normally and regularly living. If a child is resident with friends or relatives (for reasons other than fostering arrangements) the friends or relatives address will not be considered in relation to application for admission to schools in Neath Port Talbot.

Where parents have shared responsibility for a child and the child lives with each parent for part of the school week then the home address will be determined as the address where the child lives for the majority of the school week, e.g. 3 out of 5 days. Parents will be required to provide documentary evidence to support the address they wish to be considered for allocation purposes.

No account will be taken of the particular primary school the child is likely to attend subsequently or to the length of time the school has been aware of the parental intention to apply for a place at the school.

Only applications received by the published closing date for receipt of application forms will be processed in the initial round of allocation of places. Application forms received after the closing date will be considered as late applications. These will be considered on a weekly basis once the initial allocation is complete and places will be allocated in accordance with availability. As nursery education is non-statutory provision parents have no statutory right of appeal. If they are unsuccessful in gaining a nursery place, wherever possible, children will be offered a place within two miles of the child's place of residence.

Attendance at a nursery class does not automatically entitle a child to a place at a reception class in the same school. A separate application will have to be submitted for admission to the reception class at the school the parent wishes their child to attend.

Although a separate policy provision, the Council recognises the inter-relationship between admission and home to school transport and advises parents to refer to the Council's Home to School Travel policy when applying for a place at a school for their child. The policy is available at [www.npt.gov.uk](http://www.npt.gov.uk)

#### **4. Admission to community primary and secondary schools (inc. 6<sup>th</sup> Form)**

The County Borough Council is the admission authority for all community maintained primary and secondary schools, (including Welsh-medium schools and sixth form provision).

All admissions to mainstream schools are approved by the Admissions Officer, School and Family Support Team. Children are admitted to reception classes in the September following their fourth birthday. Parents may defer entry until the term following their child's fifth birthday. Children transfer to secondary school in the September following their eleventh birthday.

Application forms are available from the School Admissions Section, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council which the parent should complete and return to the Admissions Officer, School and Family Support Team, Port Talbot Civic Centre, Port Talbot SA13 1PJ or parents can apply online at [www.npt.gov.uk](http://www.npt.gov.uk). The closing date for applications is 25<sup>th</sup> November 2016.

Parents of pupils due to transfer from one sector to another at the end of the academic year will be sent an admission application letter by the Council during the Autumn Term. Parents will be advised of their child's allocated secondary school place on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2017 and primary school place on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2017.

Attendance at a nursery class does not automatically entitle a child to a reception class place in the same school.

Children who are in receipt of a statement of special educational needs which identifies mainstream education within a community school will be guaranteed a place at that school.

– ***Oversubscription criteria***

Parents have the right to express a preference which will be considered individually and complied with wherever possible. Some schools have more requests for places than there are places available. Where a school is oversubscribed preferences will still be considered but the priorities set by the Council will be applied. In deciding which children to admit to a school the Council applies the criteria set out below in the order of priority shown - a) being the highest priority.

The Council will only admit up to a school's admission number and will not breach the Infant Class Size Regulations of 30 or less, save exceptional circumstances.

- a) Children and young people looked after<sup>2</sup> or previously looked after by a local authority in Wales or England in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989.
- b) Children and young people who live within the catchment area of the school

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<sup>2</sup> A looked after child refers to a child who is looked after by the local authority under Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 at the time an application to a school is made and who the local authority has confirmed will still be looked after at the time of admission to the school.

for which the application is made.

- c) Children and young people who have an older sibling who will be on register at the school when they are admitted. A “sibling” is defined as a full sibling, a half sibling (i.e. one shared parent), a step sibling (i.e. the child of a person co-habiting with a parent), a fostered sibling or an adopted sibling. In each case, at the time of the application the sibling must reside at the same address as the child or young person. Any sibling connection must be clearly stated in the application. In the case of multiple births, if it is not possible to offer all children a place in the school, parents will be asked to decide which child should be offered a place first or parents may wish to consider an alternative setting for all children.
- d) Children and young people attending a partner school (or in the case of admission to a primary school, the nursery class at the school for which an application is made), but who live outside the preferred school’s catchment area.

If children are equally entitled to a place in the school in categories - a) to d) above, then priority will be given to the child living nearest. This is measured by the shortest suitable walking/travel route between the home and the school. The Council uses a Geographical Information System to calculate the shortest distance.

Only applications received by the published closing date for receipt of application forms will be considered in the initial round of allocation of places. Application forms received after the closing date will be considered as late applications. These will be considered on a weekly basis once the initial allocation is complete and places will be allocated in accordance with availability.

In all cases evidence of permanent residence of the pupil at time of application must be supplied.

Once an offer of a school place has been made the Council will only withdraw that offer where the place offered has been on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application from a parent or young person (for example, a false claim to residence in a catchment area) which effectively denied a place to a child or young person with a stronger claim. A school place will not be withdrawn once a child or young person has started at the school except where that place was fraudulently obtained. In deciding whether to withdraw the place the length of time that the child had been at the school will be taken into account. Where a place is withdrawn on the basis of misleading information the application will be considered afresh and a right of appeal offered if a place is refused.

The home address is considered to be the child’s along with their parents’

principal place of residence on the published date, i.e. where they are normally and regularly living. If a child is resident with friends or relatives (for reasons other than fostering arrangements) the friends or relatives address will not be considered for allocation purposes.

Where parents have shared responsibility for a child and the child lives with both parents for part of the school week then the home address will be determined as the address where the child lives for the majority of the school week, e.g. 3 out of 5 days. Parents will be required to provide documentary evidence to support the address they wish to be considered for allocation purposes.

If parents are dissatisfied with the result of an application for a particular community school an appeal may be submitted for consideration by an Independent Admission Appeals Panel. In the case of secondary school admission appeals by 21<sup>st</sup> March 2017 and for primary school admission appeals by 4<sup>th</sup> May 2017. Any decision made by the Panel being binding on the Council. If the appeal is not successful a further application for a place at the same school will not be considered for the same academic year unless the Admissions Officer, School and Family Support Team, determines that there are significant and material changes to the circumstances.

The Council will keep a waiting list of unsuccessful applicants ranked in order of priority according to the Council's oversubscription criteria. As places become available these will be offered on the basis of the ranked order of priority. A waiting list will be maintained until 30<sup>th</sup> September in the school year in which the applicants applied.

Although a separate policy provision, the Council recognises the inter-relationship between admission and home to school transport and advises parents to refer to the Council's Home to School Travel policy when applying for a place at a school for their child. The policy is available at [www.npt.gov.uk](http://www.npt.gov.uk)

## **5. Admission to Sixth Form**

There are two sixth forms within the County Borough - a community school Welsh-medium sixth form at YG Ystalyfera for which the Council is the admission authority and a voluntary aided school sixth form at St Joseph's RC School & 6<sup>th</sup> Form Centre for which the school's governing body is the admission authority

Young people who are in receipt of a statement of special educational needs which identifies a particular sixth form provision will be guaranteed a place at that school.

### **– Oversubscription criteria (Welsh-medium 6<sup>th</sup> Form)**



Parents and pupils have the right to express a preference which will be considered individually and complied with wherever possible. In the event of the number of requests for places exceeding the number of places available, preferences will still be considered but the priorities set by the Council will be applied. In deciding which young people to admit to the sixth form, the Council applies the criteria set out below in the order of priority shown - a) being the highest priority. The Council will not normally exceed the sixth form's admission number.

- a) Young people looked after or previously looked after by a local authority in Wales or England in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989.
- b) Young people who have an older sibling who will be on register at the sixth form when they are admitted. A "sibling" is defined as a full sibling, a half sibling (i.e. one shared parent), a step sibling (i.e. the child of a person co-habiting with a parent), a fostered sibling or an adopted sibling. In each case, at the time of the application the sibling must reside at the same address as the child or young person. Any sibling connection must be clearly stated in the application. In the case of multiple births, if it is not possible to offer all young people a place in the sixth form, the parents will be asked to decide which young person should be offered a place first or parents may wish to consider an alternative setting for all young people.

If young people are equally entitled to a place in the sixth form in categories a) and b) above then priority will be given to the young person living nearest. This is measured by the shortest suitable walking/travel route between the home and the sixth form. The Council uses a Geographical Information System to calculate the shortest distance.

Only applications received by the published closing date for receipt of application forms will be considered in the initial round of allocation of places. Application forms received after the closing date will be considered as late applications. These will be considered on a weekly basis once the initial allocation is complete and places will be allocated in accordance with availability.

In all cases evidence of permanent residence of the pupil at time of application must be supplied if required.

Once an offer of a school place has been made the Council will only withdraw that offer where the place offered has been on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application from a parent or young person (for example, a false claim to residence in a catchment area) which effectively denied a place to a child with a stronger claim. A school place will not be withdrawn once a child or young person has started at the school except where that place was fraudulently obtained. In deciding whether to withdraw the place the length of time that the child had been

at the school will be taken into account. Where a place is withdrawn on the basis of misleading information the application will be considered afresh and a right of appeal offered if a place is refused.

The home address is considered to be the young person's along with their parent's principal place of residence (or the young person's alone if they are living independently) on the published date, i.e. where they are normally and regularly living. If a young person is resident with friends or relatives (for reasons other than fostering arrangements) the friends or relatives address will not be considered for allocation purposes.

Where parents have shared responsibility for a young person and the young person lives with both parents for part of the school week then the home address will be determined as the address where the young person lives for the majority of the school week, e.g. 3 out of 5 days. Parents and young people living independently will be required to provide documentary evidence to support the address they wish to be considered for allocation purposes.

If a parent or young person is dissatisfied with the result of an application for a particular sixth form an appeal may be submitted to the independent Admission Appeals Panel by 21<sup>st</sup> March 2017. Any decision made by the Panel being binding on the Council. If the appeal is not successful, further applications for a place at the same sixth form will not be considered for the same academic year unless the Admissions Officer, School and Family Support Team determines that there are significant and material changes the circumstances.

Although a separate policy provision, the Council recognises the inter-relationship between admission and home to school transport and advises parents to refer to the Council's Home to School Travel policy when applying for a place a school for their child. The policy is available at [www.npt.gov.uk](http://www.npt.gov.uk)

## **6. Admission during the academic year**

Requests for children and young people to transfer between schools at periods other than at the normal transfer age will be determined by applying the above arrangements. Application forms are available from the School Admissions Section, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council which the parent (or young person in the case of a sixth form application) should complete and return to the Admissions Officer, School and Family Support Team, Port Talbot Civic Centre, Port Talbot SA13 1PJ. Successful applicants will receive a leaving date from the school at which they are currently enrolled and a start date for the receiving school. Moving children and young people during the academic year is not encouraged and, unless otherwise stated, admission to the receiving school will be from the beginning of the following term.

Transfer into a school within the County Borough from another local authority, or a change of school necessitated by a change of address, will be authorised as soon as possible but within 15 school days or 28 calendar days whichever is the sooner.

Children and young people who transfer due to being in receipt of a statement of special educational needs will be admitted into the named school as soon as possible but within 15 working days.

## **7. Admission number and class sizes – community schools**

The admission number means the number of pupils that the Council can admit to a school. Each school has an admission number which is calculated using the Welsh Government's 'Measuring the capacity of schools in Wales' assessment. Admission to a school cannot be refused unless the admission number has been reached.

Legislation requires the class size for classes containing pupils the majority of whom will attain the age of 5, 6 and 7 during the course of the school year not to exceed 30 pupils save for 'excepted pupils' as specified by Regulation. The relevant age group is the group at which children and young people are normally admitted, i.e. reception for primary schools and Y7 for secondary schools.

## **8. Catchment areas and partner schools – community schools**

For the purpose of admission to community schools, the term catchment area is defined as the geographical area served by a school, as determined by the Council.

For the purpose of admission to community schools, the term 'partner' school is defined as a school that has a catchment area in common with another school of the same category, e.g. an English-medium community primary with an English-medium community secondary or a Welsh-medium community primary with a Welsh-medium community secondary (voluntary aided schools excepted). An indicative list as at 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016 is attached as appendix 5.

Copies of school catchment area maps may be obtained from the Admissions Officer, School and Family Support Team.

## **9. Admission Process overview - Community Schools**

All applications for admission into a community school (including sixth form) within the County Borough **must** be made on the appropriate form to the Council and **not** to the school. Parents can apply online at [www.npt.gov.uk](http://www.npt.gov.uk)



Head teachers do not have the authority to admit children to their school. Applications have to be made to the admission authority which, for community schools, is the Council.

All parents of children known to the Council and residing within the County Borough will be forwarded an admission application letter and accompanying admission arrangement notes during the Autumn Term prior to entry into school in September of the following academic year.

Parents should request an admission application form and, when completed, return it to the Admissions Officer or apply online, by the date given on the admission arrangements.

The outcome of all admission applications will be notified to parents in writing or by email as appropriate, with all outcomes sent from the central office on the date given on the admission arrangements.

Parents who are satisfied with the placement offered should confirm acceptance of the offer in writing to the Council or via the school admission website. Unfilled places will be allocated to children and young people whose parents have applied for admission ahead of those who have not formally accepted the initial offer of a place.

Parents who are not satisfied with the placement offered have a right of appeal.

Information regarding appeals will be within the contents of the letter received. Appeals will be heard by an Independent Appeal Panel constituted for the sole purpose of hearing appeals.

Requests for admission to the relevant age group submitted on or before the administrative closing date will be processed collectively. In this respect, no advantage shall be gained from the early submission of an admission request. Requests submitted after the closing date will be processed on a weekly basis.

Admissions will not be determined on the basis of selection criteria involving the sitting of tests, viewing of school reports, interviewing pupils, with or without parents for the purpose of assessing ability or aptitude.

Where requests for admission exceed the number of places available, places will be allocated by applying the Council's oversubscription criteria.

The Council will keep a waiting list of unsuccessful applicants ranked in order of priority according to the Council's oversubscription criteria. As places become available, these will be offered on the basis of the ranked order of priority. A waiting list will be maintained until 30<sup>th</sup> September in the school year in which

applications were received applied.

Children attending the nursery class will not have an automatic right of admission to full time education at the same school. Similarly, children transferring primary phase to secondary do not have an automatic right of admission to any school.

The Council will be under no duty to comply with preferences expressed otherwise than in accordance with its arrangements.

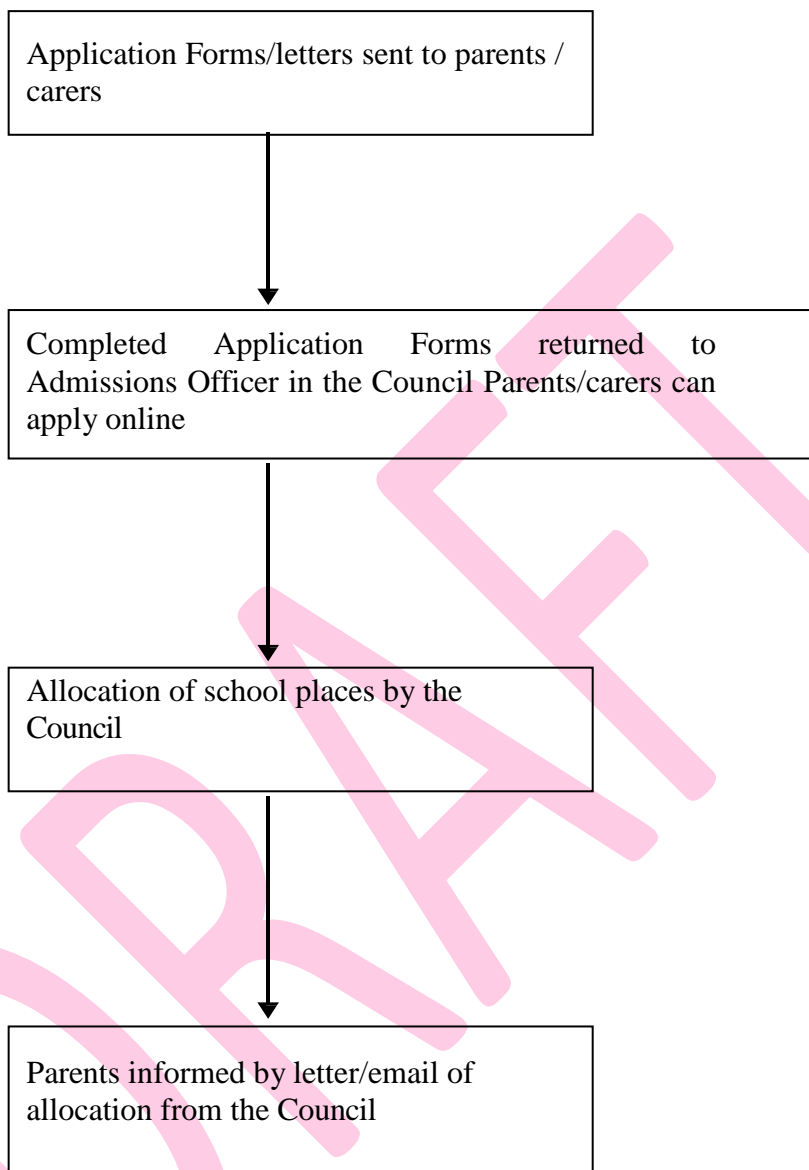
Separate admission arrangements apply to pupils for whom the Council holds a statement of special educational need. Pupils with a statement of educational needs must be admitted to the school named on their statement.

Looked after and previously looked after children must, after children with a statement of educational needs, be given first priority in the case of oversubscription.

#### **10. Admission to Voluntary Aided (i.e. Faith) Schools**

Although voluntary aided (i.e. Faith) schools are their own admission authority, through its on-line application system the Council assists the application process for St Joseph's RC School & 6<sup>th</sup> Form Centre.

## Admission Process



**Schedule of Events for**  
**Community Secondary School & Sixth Form Admission 2017/18**

**7<sup>th</sup> October, 2016**

Application forms / School Prospectus / Information for Parents Handbook distributed to parents. Parents of children entering a new school (Year 7) have a minimum of 6 weeks to apply to a school of their choice.

**Application forms to be returned to:**

Mrs H Lewis, Schools Admissions Officer, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council, Port Talbot Civic Centre, Port Talbot SA13 1PJ

**25<sup>th</sup> November 2016**

Closing date of submission of Admission Application Forms

Applications processed

**1<sup>st</sup> February 2017**

Children with statements of special educational needs have placements confirmed.

**1<sup>st</sup> March 2017**

Parents and schools informed of allocation of secondary places to mainstream pupils.

14 days for parents to lodge an appeal

**21<sup>st</sup> March 2017**

Appeals against refusal to admit

**Schedule of Events for  
Community Primary School Admission 2017/18**

**7<sup>th</sup> October, 2016**

Application forms / School Prospectus, Information for Parents Handbook distributed to parents. Parents of children entering a new school (Reception) have a minimum of 6 weeks to apply to a school of their choice.

*Application forms to be returned to:*

*Mrs H Lewis, Schools Admissions Officer, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council, Port Talbot Civic Centre, Port Talbot SA13 1PJ*

**25<sup>th</sup> November 2016**

Closing date of submission of Admission Application Forms  
Applications processed

**1<sup>st</sup> February 2017**

Children with statements of special educational needs have placements confirmed.

**17<sup>th</sup> April 2017**

Parents and schools informed of allocation of primary places to mainstream pupils.

14 days for parents to lodge an appeal

**4<sup>th</sup> May 2017**

Appeals against refusal to admit

**Schedule of Events for**  
**Admission to Community Primary School Nursery Class 2017/18**

**7<sup>th</sup> October, 2016**

**Application forms distributed to parents.**

*Application forms to be returned to:*

*Mrs H Lewis, Schools Admissions Officer, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council, Port Talbot Civic Centre, Port Talbot SA13 1PJ*

**14<sup>th</sup> April 2017**

Closing date of submission of Admission Application Forms  
Applications processed

**31<sup>st</sup> May 2017**

Parents and schools informed of allocation of nursery places.

**Partner Community Schools  
(Indicative list as at 010916)**

<b>PARTNER COMMUNITY SCHOOLS</b>	
<b>Secondary</b>	<b>Primary</b>
<b>CEFN SAESON</b>	Crynallt Primary, Gnoll Primary, Melin Primary, Tonnau Primary.
<b>CWMTAWE</b>	Alltwen Primary, Godre'rgraig Primary, Llangiwig Primary, Rhos Primary, Rhydyfro Primary, Tairgwaith Primary.
<b>YSGOL BAE BAGLAN</b>	Awel Y Mor Primary, Brynhyfryd Primary, Llansawel Primary, Ynysmaerdy Primary, Baglan Primary, Blaenbaglan Primary, Sandfields Primary, Tywyn Primary.
<b>CYMER AFAN</b>	Croeserw Primary, Cymer Afan Primary, Glyncorrwg Primary, Pen Afan Primary.
<b>DWR Y FELIN</b>	Abbey Primary, Blaenhonddan Primary, Coedffranc Primary, Crymlyn Primary, Waunceirch Primary.
<b>DYFFRYN</b>	Central Primary, Coed Hirwaun Primary, Cwmafan Primary, Eastern Primary, Groes Primary
<b>LLANGATWG</b>	Blaendulais Primary, Blaengwrach Primary, Catwg Primary, Cilffriw Primary, Creunant Primary, Cwmnedd Primary, Maesmarchog Primary, Ynysfach Primary.
<b>YSTALYFERA</b>	YGG Blaendulais, YGG Castell-Nedd, YGG Cwmllynfell, YGG Cwmnedd, YGG Gwaun Cae Gurwen, YGG Pontardawe, YGG Rhosafan, YGG Trebannws, YGG Tyle'r Ynn, YGG Y Wern

NB: Attendance at a partner school does not guarantee a place at the preferred school nor does it prevent parents applying to alternative schools of their choice.

This table does not include voluntary aided schools which are subject to separate admission arrangements.

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## CONSULTATION REPORT

Admission arrangements for community schools in relation to the 2017/2018 academic year.

### **Purpose of the consultation report**

1. This report is to inform Members of the outcome of consultation.

### **Consultation Process**

2. The consultation invited comments on proposed 2017/2018 admission arrangements for community schools within Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council. Views were invited from head teachers and governing bodies of community and voluntary aided schools, neighbouring local authorities and the Admissions Forum.
3. Responses were received from: Cllr. Ellis, Pelenna Ward; the Headteacher, St Joseph RC School and 6<sup>th</sup> Form Centre; the Chair of Governors, St Joseph RC School and 6<sup>th</sup> Form Centre; and the Chair of Governors, Rhos Primary School.
4. The Admissions Forum also responded to the consultation in support of the proposal.

### **Summary of responses to consultation**

5. The responses received are summarised as follows:
  - a. A clear definition of catchment area is requested.
  - b. A clear definition of designated partner / feeder school is requested and an explanation as to why the term 'feeder school' had been replaced by 'partner school' is requested.
  - c. Greater clarity in order to distinguish between the responsibilities of the Council as admission authority for community schools and the respective governing bodies as the admissions authority for voluntary aided (i.e. Faith) schools is requested.
  - d. Clarification as to whether St Joseph RC School and 6<sup>th</sup> Form Centre is the designated secondary school for pupils transferring

from St Joseph Primary school and all Catholic Faith schools within the Local Authority is requested.

- e. Clarification regarding the catchment area for St Joseph RC School and 6<sup>th</sup> Form Centre is requested.
- f. Clarification regarding the Infant Class Size Regulations is requested.
- g. A clear link between the Council's Home to School Travel policy and the Council's Admission Arrangements is requested.
- h. A challenge to the Council's stated aspiration on inclusion and diversity together with the right for everyone to be educated in their local community.
- i. A challenge to the equality of access to schools.
- j. A lack of information in the admission arrangements relating to voluntary aided schools.

## **Officer Comments**

6. In response to the above points, the following comments are offered:
- a. For the purpose of the admission of a pupil to a community school, the term catchment area is defined as the geographical area served by a school, as determined by the Council. The definition has been included in the proposed admission arrangements for community schools, 2017/2018. Catchment area maps are available from the Council's School Admissions Section.
  - b. For the purpose of the admission of a pupil to a community school, the term partner school is used in connection with a primary school and a secondary school. It is defined as a school that has a catchment area in common with another school of the same category, e.g. an English-medium community primary school and an English-medium community secondary school. In this regard it does not necessarily follow that nearest schools are partner schools.

This definition has been included in the proposed admission arrangements for community schools, 2017/2018.

The terms 'feeder' school and 'partner' school are interchangeable in relation to admission arrangements. 'Partner' school has been used more widely latterly in recognition of the partnership between schools rather than the hierarchy implied by the term 'feeder'. For consistency, the term 'partner' will be used throughout the Council's proposed admission arrangements 2017/18.

- c. The Council's admission arrangements for 2017/2018, applies only to community schools. The Council is not the admission authority for voluntary aided (i.e. Faith) schools; responsibility for which rests with the respective governing bodies. This distinction has been highlighted in the amended proposed admission arrangements.

Additional information has also been provided regarding Faith school admissions, in particular, reference is made to the Council's School Admission Section undertaking an administrative function on behalf of St Joseph RC School and 6<sup>th</sup> Form Centre. Applications for admission to Year 7 are initially processed by the Council.

- d. The designation of partner schools to St Joseph's RC School and 6<sup>th</sup> Form Centre is a matter for the governing bodies of the schools concerned as they are responsible for their own admission arrangements.

St Joseph's RC School and 6<sup>th</sup> Form Centre admission policy 2016/2017 states that its designated 'feeder' schools are St Joseph's Catholic Junior School, St Therese's Catholic Primary and St Joseph's Catholic Primary school.

The admission arrangements for community schools and voluntary aided (i.e. Faith) schools are published annually by the Council in its Information for Parents booklet.

- e. The designation of the catchment area for St Joseph's RC School and 6<sup>th</sup> Form Centre is a matter for the governing body of the school as it is responsible for its own admission arrangements.

It is the accepted understanding of officers that St Joseph's RC School and 6<sup>th</sup> Form Centre's catchment area covers the whole of the County Borough.

- f. With regard to Infant Class Size Regulation, the regulation applies to both community and voluntary aided schools. The Welsh Government School Admissions Code 005/2013 applies to all admission authorities. Each admission authority has a statutory

duty to act in accordance with the School Admission Code and the School Admission Appeals Code.

The Code states (3.7) that it is important to note the difference between class size legislation and admission numbers. Class size legislation should not be confused with the admission number for a school. If the admission number is lower or higher than 30, pupils must be admitted up to the admission number in the normal year of entry as this reflects the school's capacity to admit children in the relevant age group. The infant class size limit of 30 applies to the organisation of the classes not to the number of children to be admitted.

- g. The Council's Home to School Travel policy and the Council's Admission Arrangements are separate policy documents dealing with separate processes in relation to the assessment of pupil/parent requests and entitlements. Whereas an individual's entitlement to assistance with home to school travel is dependent in the first instance on a successful school admission outcome, the opposite is not the case. In this regard, the availability of school places is a separate consideration to their accessibility, save for the individual merits of exceptional cases.

However, the Council recognises that, in practice, there is an inter-relationship between the admission arrangements and the home to school travel policy as parents are likely to want to know whether or not they will be entitled to assistance with transport before they express a preference for a particular school. In this regard, the proposed admission arrangements reference the Council's Home to School Travel policy for parents' consideration.

- h. The Council stated position of inclusion and diversity is supported by the range of provision it delivers. As set out in the consultation draft, the Council provides:
- part-time nursery education, available in all primary schools. Successful learning begins in the nursery where children have access to rich experiences in a secure environment;
  - primary schools, (including Welsh medium and voluntary aided schools), provide a broad education based on practical experiences designed to meet individual needs, including national curriculum areas of study.
  - secondary schools, (including Welsh medium and a Roman Catholic school), set high standards in examinations, sport and cultural activities, and personal and social education. Pupils in

- all schools have access to a wide range of curricular opportunities and the national curriculum;
- special schools, provide rich and stimulating learning experiences for pupils with severe and complex difficulties. All pupils attending these schools have a statement of special educational needs. Specialist support for primary and secondary pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties is available within the County Borough.
  - learning support centres, based at a number of primary and secondary schools, provide specialist support in mainstream schools for pupils with statements of special educational needs.

In addition, the admission arrangements follow the Welsh Government School Admissions Code 2013, ensuring that admission procedures do not unfairly advantage or disadvantage any groups.

As regards providing education within the local community, the term 'local community' holds a range of potential meanings and can as readily be applied to social groupings and situations as well as physical locations. In this respect it need not necessarily refer to a specific geographical area, and even where that is the intention then it can describe a village, a town, a Ward or the County Borough as a whole.

- i. It is commented that there is inequality of access. A stated aim of the Council Strategic School Improvement Programme is that schools are accessible and that the right school is in the right place. This is not an exact science and will depend on balance and judgement as well as the consideration of the efficient use of resources supported by the relevant data. Within the boundaries of accepted arrangements for school access, officers contend that the range and location of schools is fair and reasonable.
- j. The Councils' admission arrangements are intentionally specific to community schools as voluntary aided schools are individually responsible for their admission arrangements. However, the Council's Information to Parents Handbook, which is produced to help parents through the admission arrangements process, provides important information on voluntary aided schools across the County Borough and includes the admission arrangements for each Faith school.

k. Additional officer comment

- Melin Infant and Melin Junior schools will amalgamate in September 2016 to become Melin Primary. As of this date there will no longer be infant and junior community schools within the County Borough and as such, references to community infant and junior schools have been removed from the Council's admission arrangements for community schools.
  
- In September 2017, an 'all-through' 3-18 Welsh-medium school over two campuses (north and south of the County Borough) will replace YG Ystalyfera and YGG Y Wern.

### Individual responses to consultation

#### Respondent A

The following are the observations from St Joseph's Catholic School & Sixth Form Centre. The sections in italics are taken from the draft policy and the sections that follow are the observations from St Joseph's.

Page 1

*NPTCBC aspires to deliver an inclusive education that celebrates diversity.*

There is not sufficient evidence to support this. Those who want to send their children to a Church secondary school and who live at a distance are marginalized by the local authority. NPTCBC persist in refusing to say that St Joseph's Catholic School & Sixth Form Centre is suitable for any student.

*...encourages and supports individuals to realise their ambitions...*

Yet there is no support whatsoever for individuals who have an ambition for a faith-based education.

*To meet the educational needs of children, the CBC delivers a range of provision including ... a Roman Catholic ...school and a Welsh medium school.*

This is clear evidence that Catholic schools exist to meet learners' needs however we still have a CBC that refuses to state explicitly that St Joseph's Catholic School & Sixth Form Centre is a suitable school for anyone.

*Steps are taken to ensure that admission procedures do not unfairly advantage or disadvantage any groups.*

This is not true because admissions procedures cannot be separated from access procedures. Thus admission to a Welsh medium school will be easier for applicants knowing that they will be provided with transport if they live more than three miles from school. Such ease of application is not afforded to those who apply to St Joseph's as they have an additional burden of working out how they might access their school. It is not sufficient for NPTCBC to state that its admissions policy and its transport policy are to be viewed separately: they are inextricably linked with each having a fundamental bearing on the other.

Page 4

*The CBC is the Admissions Authority for all maintained Community, Infant, Junior, Primary and Secondary Schools.*

This paragraph is not clear enough and, in view of the paragraph that follows, could give the mistaken impression that the CBC is the admissions authority for all

maintained schools. As such, it would seem sensible to add the following (or similar) phrase – **In the case of maintained schools that are voluntary aided (VA); the governing body of each is the admissions authority.**

Page 5

*Children and young people who live in the catchment are for the school applied for.*

Can we have clarification as to the catchment area for St Joseph's Catholic School & Sixth Form Centre?

Page 6

*Transport will only be provided for the designated school or the nearest suitable provision.*

Can NPTCBC confirm that St Joseph's Catholic School & Sixth Form Centre is the designated secondary school for pupils transferring from St Joseph's Primary School in Neath (and for all other pupils transferring from Catholic Primary school in the LA). If not, what school is?

*There is at present...*

Why put 'at present' here? It adds nothing and implies that there are other plans. Are there other plans? It would be more accurate to say that there are two maintained Sixth Forms with the authority. Y.G. Ystalyfera is a Welsh medium provision for which the County Council is the Admissions Authority; and St Joseph's Catholic School & Sixth Form for which the school's governing body is the Admissions Authority. We need to remember that Catholic schools are provided by the Diocese in partnership with the local authority.

*The sixth form has an Admissions Number...*

In view of the earlier observation, this should read:

**Each sixth form has an admissions number ...St Joseph's applies similar criteria (please see St Joseph's Admissions Policy).**

Page 7

*Transport to sixth forms is discretionary and non-statutory. It is currently available to all students who live over 3 miles from the school.*

In view of the earlier comment, this is not correct. Transport is currently available only to students attending YG Ystalyfera. Students attending St Joseph's sixth form must pay £100 per year for a bus pass. If there is an established route that allows them to access school, this is helpful but if there is no established route, there is no means of getting to their school.

Page 9

*Faith Schools are their own Admission Authority, through the governing body, and parents should approach the head teacher of their preferred school directly for details of the admission arrangements and the appropriate application form.*



As per an earlier correspondence, it would be more accurate to write *and in most cases parents should approach the head teacher*. And it would be sensible to add - **However, the LA assists the application process for St Joseph's Catholic School through its on- line application system.**

Page 10 (flowchart)

This seems out of date and doesn't reflect the on-line process.

Also, St Joseph's does not currently have a flowchart in its admissions policy. Would NPTCBC prefer that we did?

### **Some further observations**

It might be helpful if people can see that **all** maintained (community and VA) in NPTCBC are obliged to follow the WG requirements in relation to school admissions. It might be useful to highlight the fact that **all** schools follow local authority protocols in relation to admissions, including acceptance dates and procedures for difficult to place children.

It might be useful to be explicit that VA schools are provided **in partnership** with the CBC and are not an inconvenient addendum.

To help provide people with a better understanding of the role of faith in education, it might be useful to make reference to the Welsh Government's 'Faith in Education'.

## **Respondent B**

I would like to submit the following points as part of the Admission Policy consultation.

There is no explanation with regard to what is meant by designated / partner /feeder school.

For instance the designated / partner secondary school for pupils from Tonna, who attended Tonna primary, is Cefn Saeson, yet Cefn Season is not the nearest secondary school to Tonna.

The new policy needs to have an explanation as to what the LA means by these terms because they do not necessarily mean the nearest suitable school.

### **Definition of terms**

The Home to School Transport policy needs to be linked to the Admission Policy. They should support one another.

I trust you will ensure this is part of the responses to the consultation.

## **Respondent C**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft admissions policy. I would like to draw your attention to page 5, point (d) which refers to 'feeder' schools which I believe should be replaced by 'partner' schools. The term 'feeder' has been regarded as inappropriate for some considerable time.

Hope you don't mind me

pointing this out.

## **Respondent D**

*I have made a number of comments and queries on the policy out for consultation that are important not simply for the process but as they are linked to equality and access issues. Specifically under the Equality Act 2010 referred to on page 43 of the WG Schools Admission Code "E.3 An admission authority must not discriminate on the grounds of disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; or sexual orientation, against a person in the arrangements and decisions it makes as to who is offered admission as a pupil." The withdrawal of free transport for faith schools is an important matter for families and this is a key policy that sets out some of the criteria and decisions that will impact on equality of access. There are a number of definitions and terms that need rationalisation and explanation.*

*While this draft policy has gone out for consultation to schools and governors there is a case for transparency and a wider scrutiny that we see in neighbouring Local Authorities.*

## **Admissions to schools in Neath Port Talbot County Borough**

**2017/2018**

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council aspires to deliver an inclusive education service that:

- **celebrates diversity and respects everyone's right to education in their local community;**
- **provides access to high quality learning experiences for every child and adult; and**
- **encourages and supports individuals to realise their ambitions, achieve their potential and become active and responsible members of society.**

### *COMMENT 1*

*Diversity of educational experience would include Welsh & English language, faith-based education and specialist schools for children with needs that cannot be met by mainstream schools. Providing this diversity within the "local community" is not the practice and this should read the "County Borough."*

To meet the educational needs of children, the County Borough Council delivers a range of provision, including:

- **part-time nursery education, available in all infant and primary schools.**

Successful learning begins in the nursery where children have access to rich experiences in a secure environment;

- **primary schools**, including Welsh medium and denominational schools, provide a broad education based on practical experiences designed to meet individual needs, including national curriculum areas of study.
- **secondary schools**, including a Roman Catholic and a Welsh medium school, set high standards in examinations, sport and cultural activities, and personal and social education. Pupils in all schools have access to a wide range of curricular opportunities and the national curriculum;
- **special schools**, provide rich and stimulating learning experiences for pupils with severe and complex difficulties. All pupils attending these schools have a statement of special educational needs. Specialist support for primary and secondary pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties is available in pupil referral units within the authority.
- **learning support centres**, based at a number of primary and secondary schools, provide specialist support in mainstream schools for pupils with statements of special educational needs.

Steps are taken to ensure that admission procedures do not unfairly advantage or disadvantage any groups through the application of the Welsh Government School Admissions Code 005/2013.

## **ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2017/2018**

### **Allocation of Nursery Places**

The County Borough Council is the Admissions Authority for all maintained Nursery Classes in Community Schools.

Children can access a part-time nursery place from the start of the term following their third birthday. Application forms are available from the School Admissions Section, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council which the parent should complete and return to the Admissions Officer, School and Family Support Team, Port Talbot Civic Centre, Port Talbot SA13 1PJ. Admission to a nursery prior to the start of the term following the child's third birthday can only be agreed in consultation with the admissions officer.

Children who are in receipt of a statement of special education needs which identifies mainstream, nursery education within a community school will be guaranteed a place at that setting.

In this document the published date(s) relates to the date(s) as set out in the Schedule of Events in the relevant published Information for Parents Booklet.

The authority will consider each individual application received. If the number of

applications exceeds the number of places available, places will be allocated according to the following oversubscription criteria, which are listed in priority order.

#### Oversubscription Criteria

(a) Children looked after<sup>1</sup> or previously looked after by a local authority in Wales or

England in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989.

(b) Children and young people who live within the catchment area of the nursery applied for.

*COMMENT 2*

*As a catchment area is determined by the LEA and based on distance and/or other factors an addendum to describe these should be included.*

*As different capacities are available for nursery and primary places in schools and their catchment areas there will be an inherent inequality of access across the County, when additionally coupled with transport needs. This inequality is particularly pronounced across the diversity of provision. The extension of catchment areas as schools are amalgamated following school closures is likely to contribute to the inequality in nursery provision.*

(c) Children who have an older sibling who will be on the register at the school at which the nursery class is based when they are admitted.

In considering siblings, the authority determines priority by reference to full, half, step brothers/sisters, fostered or adopted siblings residing at the same address. Any sibling connection must be clearly stated in the application. In the case of multiple births, if it is not possible to offer all children a place in the nursery class, parents will be asked to decide which child should be offered a place first or parents may wish to consider an alternative setting for all children.”

If children are equally entitled to a place in the nursery in categories (a) to (c) above, priority will be given to the child living nearest, between the home and the nursery school/class, as measured by the shortest practicable walking route. The authority uses a Geographical Information System to calculate the shortest distance.

<sup>1</sup> A looked after child refers to a child who is looked after by the local authority under Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 at the time an application to a school is made and who the local authority has confirmed will still be looked after at the time of admission to the school.

In all cases evidence of permanent residence of the pupil at time of application must be supplied. Any place approved on the basis of residence will be withdrawn if the pupil is no longer permanently resident at the address at the beginning of the school term to which the application relates (term dates are published in the Information for Parents Handbook). The home address is considered to be the child's along with their parents' principal place of residence on the published date. i.e. where they are normally and regularly living. If a child is resident with friends' or relatives' (for reasons other than fostering arrangements) the friends or relatives address will not be considered in relation to application for admission to schools in Neath Port Talbot.

Where parents have shared responsibility for a child, and the child lives with each parent for part of the school week then the home address will be determined as the address where the child lives for the majority of the school week e.g. 3 out of 5 days. Parents will be required to provide documentary evidence to support the address they wish to be considered for allocation purposes.

No account will be taken of the particular infant or primary school the child is likely to attend subsequently or to the length of time the school has been aware of the parental intention to apply for a place at the school.

Only applications received by the published closing date for receipt of application forms will be processed in the initial round of allocation of places. Other application forms received will be considered as late applications. Late applications will be considered, on a weekly basis, once the initial allocation has taken place and a place allocated in accordance with availability. As nursery education is non-statutory

provision, parents have no statutory right of appeal under the School Standards and Framework Act if they are unsuccessful in gaining a nursery place. Wherever possible children will be placed within two miles of the child's place of residence

Attendance at a Nursery Class does not automatically entitle a child to a reception class place in the same school. A separate application will have to be submitted for admission to the reception class at the school you wish your child to attend.

Transport is not provided by the authority in relation to Nursery Education other than in the case of eligible Looked after Children and eligible children with a Statement of Special Education Needs attending a learning support centre or special school and meet the distance criteria as set out in the Authority's transport policy.

### **Admissions to schools including Infant, Junior, Primary and Secondary Schools**

The County Borough Council is the Admissions Authority for all maintained Community Infant, Junior, Primary and Secondary Schools.

#### *COMMENT 3*

*While the policy here excludes faith and voluntary aided schools the definitions of "suitability", feeder and partner schools are set out in this policy and impact on the equality of access education across the diversity of provision.*

All admissions to mainstream schools are approved by the Admissions Officer, School and Family Support Team. Children are admitted to reception classes in the September following their fourth birthday. Parents may defer entry until the term following their child's fifth birthday. Children transfer to secondary school in the September following their eleventh birthday. Application forms are available from the School Admissions Section, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council which the



parent should complete and return to the Admissions Officer, School and Family Support Team, Port Talbot Civic Centre, Port Talbot SA13 1PJ or parents can apply online at [www.npt.gov.uk](http://www.npt.gov.uk). The closing date for applications is **25<sup>th</sup> November 2016**. All parents of pupils due to transfer from one sector to another at the end of the academic year will be sent an Admissions Application Form by the authority during the Autumn Term. Parents will be advised on their **secondary allocated school** place on **1<sup>st</sup> March 2017** and for Infant, Junior and Primary places on **17<sup>th</sup> April 2017**.

Attendance at a Nursery Class does not automatically entitle a child to a reception class place in the same school, neither does attendance at a **primary school** automatically entitle a child to a place at the designated partner comprehensive school.

Children who are in receipt of a statement of special education needs which identifies mainstream education within a community school will be guaranteed a place at that school.

#### *COMMENT 4*

*We have “allocated” and “designated” schools described here for mainstream English and Welsh language “community schools”. How are pupils in faith and VA schools allocated their designated secondary schools? Is differentiating between pupils on the basis of language medium, but not faith, acceptable when considering equality of access?*

#### **Oversubscription criteria**

Parents have the right to express a preference which will be considered individually and complied with wherever possible. Some schools have more requests for places than there are places available. Where a school is oversubscribed preferences will still be considered but the priorities set by the authority will be applied. In deciding

which children to admit to a school, the authority applies the criteria set out below in the order of priority shown ((a) being the highest priority) and examines the merits of each case by considering any reasons put forward supporting any expressed preference. The authority will only admit up to the school's

Admission Number<sup>2</sup> nor will it breach the Infant **Class Size Regulations of 30 or less.**

#### *COMMENT*

*I understand that some primary schools are over-subscribed now following schools closures and amalgamations. Do Faith and VA schools have to meet the same requirement under 005/2013?*

<sup>2</sup> The Admission Number means the number of pupils that the Authority can admit into the school as defined in the Welsh Assembly Government, School Admission Code 005/2013. Legislation requires the class size, for classes containing pupils the majority of whom will attain the age of 5, 6 and 7 during the course of the schoolyear, not to exceed 30 pupils save for 'excepted pupils' as specified by Regulation. The relevant age group is the group at which children and young people are normally admitted [Reception for infant and primaryschools, Y3 for junior schools and Y7 for secondary schools]

(a) Children and young people looked after<sup>3</sup> or previously looked after by a local authority in Wales or England in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989.

(b) Children and young people who live within the catchment area for the school applied for.

(c) Children and young people who have an older sibling who will be on register at the school when they are admitted. In considering siblings, the authority determines priority by reference to full, half, step brothers/sisters, fostered or adopted siblings

residing at the same address. Any sibling connection must be clearly stated in the application. "In the case of multiple births, if it is not possible to offer all children a place in the school, parents will be asked to decide which child should be offered a place first or parents may wish to consider an alternative setting for all children."

(d) Children and young people attending a designated feeder school but who live outside the catchment area for the school.

#### *COMMENT 5*

*It appears that the definition "feeder school" is now superseded in information on the LA website by the term "partner school", with implications for the provision of HTST, though how and when this change was made is unclear.*

If children are equally entitled to a place in the school in categories (a) to (d) above, then priority will be given to the child living nearest, between the home and the school, as measured by the shortest practicable walking route. The authority uses a Geographical Information System to calculate the shortest distance.

Only applications received by the published closing date for receipt of application forms will be considered in the initial round of allocation of places. Other application forms received will be considered as late applications. These applications will be considered once the initial allocation has taken place and places allocated in accordance with availability.

In all cases evidence of permanent residence of the pupil at time of application must be supplied. Any place approved on the basis of residence may be withdrawn if the

pupil is no longer permanently resident at the address at the beginning of the school term to which the application relates (term dates as published in the Information for Parents Handbook). The home address is considered to be the child's along with their parent's principal place of residence on the published date. i.e. where they are normally and regularly living. If a child is resident with friends" or relatives" (for reasons other than fostering arrangements) the friends or relatives address will not be considered for allocation purposes.

Where parents have shared responsibility for a child, and the child lives with both parents for part of the school week then the home address will be determined as the address where the child lives for the majority of the school week e.g. 3 out of 5 days. Parents will be required to provide documentary evidence to support the address they wish to be considered for allocation purposes.

If parents are dissatisfied with the result of an application for a particular community school, an appeal may be submitted to the Independent Admission Appeals Panel In the case of secondary appeals by **21<sup>st</sup> March 2017** and for infant, junior and primary by **4<sup>th</sup> May 2017**, any decision made by the Panel being binding on the authority. If the appeal is not successful, further applications for a place at the same school will not be considered for the same academic year unless the Admissions Officer, School and Family Support Team,

<sup>3</sup>A looked after child refers to a child who is looked after by the local authority under Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 at the time an application to a school is made and who the local authority has confirmed will still be looked after at the time of admission to the school.

determines there are significant and material changes in the circumstances of pupil/parents or school.

The authority will keep a waiting list of unsuccessful applicants ranked in order of priority according to the Authority's oversubscription criteria. As places become available, these will be offered on the basis of the ranked order of priority. A waiting

list will be maintained until 30th September in the school year in which the applicants applied.

Transport will only be provided for the **designated school** or the **nearest suitable provision** (over 2 miles primary and 3 miles secondary). In some cases transport may be provided by the authority for eligible Looked after Children and for eligible children placed by the Authority in a learning support centre or special school provided that they meet the criteria as outlined in the **Authority's Transport policy** provided they meet the distance criteria outlined in The Local Authority's transport policy.

*Copies of individual school area maps may be obtained from the Admissions Officer, School and Family Support Team. These maps indicate the **identified school** for your locality.*

#### *COMMENT 6*

*There is an important issue here for all parents and children. Where VA and faith schools are concerned what are their catchment areas, and how do parents identify the schools?*

*Where a child is attending any primary school how is their secondary school designated as most suitable, or is distance the only consideration?*

*With language medium this is the first determinant of designation, but not faith.*

### **Admissions to Sixth Forms**

There is at present one mainstream sixth form within the authority for which the County Council is the Admissions Authority, this is at Y.G.Ystalyfera.

#### **Oversubscription criteria**

The sixth form has an Admission Number and in the event of the number of requests for places exceeding the number of places available, preferences will still be considered but the priorities set by the authority will be applied. In deciding which young people to admit to the sixth form, the authority applies the criteria set out below in the order of priority shown ( (a) being the highest priority) and examines the

merits of each case by considering any reasons put forward supporting any expressed preference. The authority will not normally exceed the sixth form's Indicated Admission Number.

(a) Young people looked after **or previously looked after** by a local authority in Wales or England in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989.

(b) Young people who have an older sibling who will be on register at the sixth form when they are admitted. In considering siblings, the authority determines priority by reference to full, half, step brothers/sisters, fostered or adopted siblings residing at the same address. Any sibling connection must be clearly stated in the application. In the case of multiple births, if it is not possible to offer all children a place in the sixth form, the parents will be asked to decide which child should be offered a place first or parents may wish to consider an alternative setting for all children.”

If children are equally entitled to a place in the sixth form in categories (a) to (b) above, then priority will be given to the child living nearest, between the home and the sixth form, as measured by the shortest practicable walking route. The authority uses a Geographical Information System to calculate the shortest distance.

Only applications received by the published closing date for receipt of application forms will be considered in the initial round of allocation of places. Other application forms received will be considered as late applications. These applications will be considered once the initial allocation has taken place and places allocated in accordance with availability.

In all cases evidence of permanent residence of the pupil at time of application must be supplied if required. Any place approved on the basis of residence may be withdrawn if the pupil is no longer permanently resident at the address at the beginning of the school term to which the application relates (term dates as

published in the Information for Parents Handbook). The home address is considered to be the child's along with their parent's principal place of residence on the published date. i.e. where they are normally and regularly living. If a child is resident with friends or relatives (for reasons other than fostering arrangements) the friends or relatives address will not be considered for allocation purposes.

Where parents have shared responsibility for a child, and the child lives with both parents for

part of the school week then the home address will be determined as the address where the child lives for the majority of the school week e.g. 3 out of 5 days. Parents will be required to provide documentary evidence to support the address they wish to be considered for allocation purposes.

If parents/pupil is/are dissatisfied with the result of an application for a particular sixth form, an appeal may be submitted to the independent Admission Appeals Panel by 21<sup>st</sup> March 2017, any decision made by the Panel being binding on the authority. If the appeal is not successful, further applications for a place at the same sixth form will not be considered for the same academic year unless the Admissions Officer, School and Family Support Team determine whether there are significant and material changes in the circumstances of pupil/parents or sixth form.

Transport to sixth forms is discretionary and non-statutory. It is currently available to all students who live over 3 miles from the school. The authority maintains the right to withdraw this provision at any time.

### **Admissions during the Academic Year**

Requests for children and young people to transfer between schools at periods other than at the normal transfer age will be determined by applying the above arrangements. Application forms are available from the School Admissions Section, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council which the parent should complete and

return to the Admissions Officer, School and Family Support Team, Port Talbot Civic Centre, Port Talbot SA13 1PJ. Successful applicants will receive a leaving date" from the school at which the child / young person is enrolled and a start date" for the new receiving school. Moving children / young people during the academic year is not encouraged and, unless otherwise stated, admission to the receiving school will be from the beginning of the following term.

Transfer into a school within Neath Port Talbot from another authority, or necessitated by a change of address, will be authorised as soon as possible but within **15 school days or 28 calendar days which is ever the sooner.**

Children who transfer due to being in receipt of a statement of special education needs will be admitted into the named school as soon as possible but within 15 working days.

### **Admission Number – Community Schools**

Each school has a set Admission Number (AN) which is calculated using the "Measuring the

capacity of schools in Wales" assessment. The school cannot refuse to admit pupils unless it has reached its admission number.

### **Admission Procedures - Community Schools**

The Local Authority is the Admissions Authority for all maintained Community Schools and Sixth Forms.

All applications for admission into a school / sixth form within Neath Port Talbot **must** be made on the appropriate form to the authority and **not** to the school. Parents can apply online

at [www.npt.gov.uk](http://www.npt.gov.uk)



Head teachers cannot admit children into the school application have to be made to the Admissions Authority, which is the local authority for community schools.

- All parents of children known to the authority and residing within Neath Port Talbot will be forwarded an Admission Application Form and accompanying Admission Arrangement notes during the Autumn Term prior to entry into school in September of the following academic year.
- Parents should return the Admission Application Form to the Admissions Officer prior to, or on, the date given on the Admission Arrangements.
- The outcome of all admission applications will be notified to parents in writing, with all outcomes sent from the central office on the date given on the Admission Arrangements.
- Parents, who are satisfied with the placement offered, will accept the offer in writing to the authority. Unfilled places will be allocated to children and young people whose parents have applied for admission ahead of those who have not formally accepted the initial offer of a place.
- Parents who are not satisfied with the placement offered have a right of appeal. Information regarding appeals will be within the contents of the letter received. Appeals will be heard by an independent panel constituted for the sole purpose of hearing appeals. Requests for admission to the relevant age group submitted on or before the administrative closing date will be processed collectively. In this respect, no advantage shall be gained from the early submission of an admission request. Requests submitted after the closing date will be processed upon receipt.

Admissions will not be determined on the basis of selection criteria involving the sitting of tests, viewing of school reports, interviewing pupils, with or without parents for the purpose

of assessing ability or aptitude.

Where requests for admission exceed the number of places available, places will be allocated by applying the Authority's oversubscription criteria.

The authority will keep a waiting list of unsuccessful applicants ranked in order of priority according to the Authority's oversubscription criteria. As places become available, these will be offered on the basis of the ranked order of priority. A waiting list will be maintained until 30<sup>th</sup> September in the school year in which the applicants applied.

Children attending the nursery class will not have an automatic right of admission to full time education at the same school. Similarly, children transferring from an infant school to a junior school, or from primary phase to secondary, do not have an automatic right of admission to any school.

The Authority will be under no duty to comply with preferences expressed otherwise than in accordance with its arrangements.

Separate admission arrangements apply to pupils for whom the Authority holds a statement of special educational need. Pupils with a statement of educational needs must be admitted to the school named on their statement.

Looked after and previously looked after children must, after children with a statement of educational needs, be given first priority in the case of oversubscription.

### **Admissions to Faith Schools**

Faith Schools are their own Admission Authority, through the governing body, and parents should approach the head teacher of their preferred school directly for details of the admission arrangements and the appropriate application form.

There are two Church in Wales primary schools and four Roman Catholic primary schools in the County Borough. At secondary level, church school education is available at St. Joseph's R.C. Comprehensive School, Port Talbot, which has a sixth form.

### **Admissions Process**

Parents informed by letter of allocation from the Local Authority

Application Forms sent to parents / carers

Completed Application Forms returned to Admissions Officer in the Local

Authority Parents/carers can apply online

Allocation of school places by the Local Authority

### **Schedule of Events for**

### **Secondary School Admissions 2017 - 2018**

**7<sup>th</sup> October, 2016**

**Application forms / School Prospectus, Information for Parents Handbook distributed to parents.**

*Application forms to be returned to:*

*Mrs H Lewis*

*Schools Admissions Officer,*

*Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council,*

*Port Talbot Civic Centre.*

*Port Talbot*

*SA13 IPJ*

**25<sup>th</sup> November 2016**

**Closing date of submission of Admission Application Forms**

**Applications processed**

*January .... Schools given indicative information regarding numbers due for admission (excluding statements).*

**1<sup>st</sup> February 2017**

**Children with statement of special education needs have placements confirmed.**

**1<sup>st</sup> March 2017**

**Parents and Schools informed of allocation of secondary places to mainstream pupils.**

**21<sup>st</sup> March 2017**

**Appeals against refusal to admit**

14 days for parents to lodge an appeal

Parents of children entering a new school (Year 7) have a minimum of 6 weeks to apply to a school of their choice.

**Schedule of Events for**

**Infant, Junior and Primary School Admissions**

**7<sup>th</sup> October, 2016**

**2017 - 2018**

**Application forms / School Prospectus, Information for Parents Handbook**

**distributed to parents.**

***Application forms to be returned to:***

***Mrs H Lewis***

***Schools Admissions Officer,***

***Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council,***

***Port Talbot Civic Centre.***

***Port Talbot***

***SA13 1PJ***

**25<sup>th</sup> November 2016**

**Closing date of submission of Admission Application Forms**

**Applications processed**

*January .... Schools given indicative information regarding numbers due for admission (excluding statements).*

**1<sup>st</sup> February 2017**

**Children with statement of special education needs have placements confirmed.**

**17<sup>th</sup> April 2017**

**Parents and Schools informed of allocation of infant, junior and primary places to mainstream pupils.**

**4<sup>th</sup> May 2017**

**Appeals against**

**refusal to admit**

14 days for parents to lodge an appeal

Parents of children entering a new school (Reception; Year 3) have a minimum of 6

weeks to apply to a school of their choice.

## **Schedule of Events for**

### **Nursery Allocations 2017 - 2018**

**7<sup>th</sup> October, 2015**

**Application forms distributed to parents.**

**Parents and Schools informed of allocation of nursery places.**

*Application forms to be returned to:*

*Mrs H Lewis*

*Schools Admissions Officer,*

*Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council,*

*Port Talbot Civic Centre.*

*Port Talbot*

*SA13 1PJ*

**14<sup>th</sup> April 2017**

**Closing date of submission of Admission Application Forms**

**Applications processed**

**31<sup>st</sup> May 2017**

### **Respondent E**

The Admission Forum is supportive of the proposal



## Admissions to schools in Neath Port Talbot County Borough 2017/2018

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council aspires to deliver an inclusive education service that:

- **celebrates diversity and respects everyone's right to education in their local community;**
- **provides access to high quality learning experiences for every child and adult; and**
- **encourages and supports individuals to realise their ambitions, achieve their potential and become active and responsible members of society.**

To meet the educational needs of children, the County Borough Council delivers a range of provision, including:

- **part-time nursery education**, available in all infant and primary schools. Successful learning begins in the nursery where children have access to rich experiences in a secure environment;
- **primary schools**, including Welsh medium and denominational schools, provide a broad education based on practical experiences designed to meet individual needs, including national curriculum areas of study.
- **secondary schools**, including a Roman Catholic and a Welsh medium school, set high standards in examinations, sport and cultural activities, and personal and social education. Pupils in all schools have access to a wide range of curricular opportunities and the national curriculum;
- **special schools**, provide rich and stimulating learning experiences for pupils with severe and complex difficulties. All pupils attending these schools have a statement of special educational needs. Specialist support for primary and secondary pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties is available in pupil referral units within the authority.
- **learning support centres**, based at a number of primary and secondary schools, provide specialist support in mainstream schools for pupils with statements of special educational needs.

Steps are taken to ensure that admission procedures do not unfairly advantage or disadvantage any groups through the application of the Welsh Government School Admissions Code 005/2013.

## **ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2017/2018**

### **Allocation of Nursery Places**

The County Borough Council is the Admissions Authority for all maintained Nursery Classes in Community Schools.

Children can access a part-time nursery place from the start of the term following their third birthday. Application forms are available from the School Admissions Section, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council which the parent should complete and return to the Admissions Officer, School and Family Support Team, Port Talbot Civic Centre, Port Talbot SA13 1PJ. Admission to a nursery prior to the start of the term following the child's third birthday can only be agreed in consultation with the admissions officer.

Children who are in receipt of a statement of special education needs which identifies mainstream, nursery education within a community school will be guaranteed a place at that setting.

In this document the published date(s) relates to the date(s) as set out in the Schedule of Events in the relevant published Information for Parents Booklet.

The authority will consider each individual application received. If the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, places will be allocated according to the following oversubscription criteria, which are listed in priority order.

#### **Oversubscription Criteria**

- (a) Children looked after<sup>1</sup> or previously looked after by a local authority in Wales or England in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989.
- (b) Children and young people who live within the catchment area of the nursery applied for.
- (c) Children who have an older sibling who will be on the register at the school at which the nursery class is based when they are admitted.

In considering siblings, the authority determines priority by reference to full, half, step brothers/sisters, fostered or adopted siblings residing at the same address. Any sibling connection must be clearly stated in the application. In the case of multiple births, if it is not possible to offer all children a place in the nursery class, parents will be asked to decide which child should be offered a place first or parents may wish to consider an alternative setting for all children.”

If children are equally entitled to a place in the nursery in categories (a) to (c) above, priority will be given to the child living nearest, between the home and the nursery school/class, as measured by the shortest practicable walking route. The authority uses a Geographical Information System to calculate the shortest distance.

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<sup>1</sup> A looked after child refers to a child who is looked after by the local authority under Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 at the time an application to a school is made and who the local authority has confirmed will still be looked after at the time of admission to the school.



In all cases evidence of permanent residence of the pupil at time of application must be supplied. Any place approved on the basis of residence will be withdrawn if the pupil is no longer permanently resident at the address at the beginning of the school term to which the application relates (term dates are published in the Information for Parents Handbook). The home address is considered to be the child's along with their parents' principal place of residence on the published date. i.e. where they are normally and regularly living. If a child is resident with friends' or relatives' (for reasons other than fostering arrangements) the friends or relatives address will not be considered in relation to application for admission to schools in Neath Port Talbot.

Where parents have shared responsibility for a child, and the child lives with each parent for part of the school week then the home address will be determined as the address where the child lives for the majority of the school week e.g. 3 out of 5 days. Parents will be required to provide documentary evidence to support the address they wish to be considered for allocation purposes.

No account will be taken of the particular infant or primary school the child is likely to attend subsequently or to the length of time the school has been aware of the parental intention to apply for a place at the school.

Only applications received by the published closing date for receipt of application forms will be processed in the initial round of allocation of places. Other application forms received will be considered as late applications. Late applications will be considered, on a weekly basis, once the initial allocation has taken place and a place allocated in accordance with availability. As nursery education is non-statutory provision, parents have no statutory right of appeal under the School Standards and Framework Act if they are unsuccessful in gaining a nursery place. Wherever possible children will be placed within two miles of the child's place of residence

Attendance at a Nursery Class does not automatically entitle a child to a reception class place in the same school. A separate application will have to be submitted for admission to the reception class at the school you wish your child to attend.

Transport is not provided by the authority in relation to Nursery Education other than in the case of eligible Looked after Children and eligible children with a Statement of Special Education Needs attending a learning support centre or special school and meet the distance criteria as set out in the Authority's transport policy.

## **Admissions to schools including Infant, Junior, Primary and Secondary Schools**

The County Borough Council is the Admissions Authority for all maintained Community Infant, Junior, Primary and Secondary Schools.

All admissions to mainstream schools are approved by the Admissions Officer, School and Family Support Team. Children are admitted to reception classes in the September following their fourth birthday. Parents may defer entry until the term following their child's fifth birthday. Children transfer to secondary school in the September following their eleventh birthday. Application forms are available from the School Admissions Section, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council which the parent should complete and return to the Admissions Officer, School and Family Support Team, Port Talbot Civic Centre, Port Talbot SA13 1PJ or parents can apply online at [www.npt.gov.uk](http://www.npt.gov.uk). The closing date for applications is **25<sup>th</sup> November 2016**. All parents of pupils due to transfer from one sector to another at the end of the academic year will be sent an Admissions Application Form by the authority during the Autumn Term. Parents will be advised on their secondary allocated school place on **1<sup>st</sup> March 2017** and for Infant, Junior and Primary places on **17<sup>th</sup> April 2017**.

Attendance at a Nursery Class does not automatically entitle a child to a reception class place in the same school, neither does attendance at a primary school automatically entitle a child to a place at the designated partner comprehensive school.

Children who are in receipt of a statement of special education needs which identifies mainstream education within a community school will be guaranteed a place at that school.

### **Oversubscription criteria**

Parents have the right to express a preference which will be considered individually and complied with wherever possible. Some schools have more requests for places than there are places available. Where a school is oversubscribed preferences will still be considered but the priorities set by the authority will be applied. In deciding which children to admit to a school, the authority applies the criteria set out below in the order of priority shown ((a) being the highest priority) and examines the merits of each case by considering any reasons put forward supporting any expressed preference. The authority will only admit up to the school's Admission Number<sup>2</sup> nor will it breach the Infant Class Size Regulations of 30 or less.

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<sup>2</sup> The Admission Number means the number of pupils that the Authority can admit into the school as defined in the Welsh Assembly Government, School Admission Code 005/2013. Legislation requires the class size, for classes containing pupils the majority of whom will attain the age of 5, 6 and 7 during the course of the school year, not to exceed 30 pupils save for 'excepted pupils' as specified by Regulation. The relevant age group is the group at which children and young people are normally admitted [Reception for infant and primary schools, Y3 for junior schools and Y7 for secondary schools]

- (a) Children and young people looked after<sup>3</sup> or previously looked after by a local authority in Wales or England in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989.
- (b) Children and young people who live within the catchment area for the school applied for.
- (c) Children and young people who have an older sibling who will be on register at the school when they are admitted. In considering siblings, the authority determines priority by reference to full, half, step brothers/sisters, fostered or adopted siblings residing at the same address. Any sibling connection must be clearly stated in the application. "In the case of multiple births, if it is not possible to offer all children a place in the school, parents will be asked to decide which child should be offered a place first or parents may wish to consider an alternative setting for all children."
- (d) Children and young people attending a designated feeder school but who live outside the catchment area for the school.

If children are equally entitled to a place in the school in categories (a) to (d) above, then priority will be given to the child living nearest, between the home and the school, as measured by the shortest practicable walking route. The authority uses a Geographical Information System to calculate the shortest distance.

Only applications received by the published closing date for receipt of application forms will be considered in the initial round of allocation of places. Other application forms received will be considered as late applications. These applications will be considered once the initial allocation has taken place and places allocated in accordance with availability.

In all cases evidence of permanent residence of the pupil at time of application must be supplied. Any place approved on the basis of residence may be withdrawn if the pupil is no longer permanently resident at the address at the beginning of the school term to which the application relates (term dates as published in the Information for Parents Handbook). The home address is considered to be the child's along with their parent's principal place of residence on the published date. i.e. where they are normally and regularly living. If a child is resident with friends" or relatives" (for reasons other than fostering arrangements) the friends or relatives address will not be considered for allocation purposes.

Where parents have shared responsibility for a child, and the child lives with both parents for part of the school week then the home address will be determined as the address where the child lives for the majority of the school week e.g. 3 out of 5 days. Parents will be required to provide documentary evidence to support the address they wish to be considered for allocation purposes.

If parents are dissatisfied with the result of an application for a particular community school, an appeal may be submitted to the Independent Admission Appeals Panel In the case of secondary appeals by 21<sup>st</sup> March 2017 and for infant, junior and primary by 4<sup>th</sup> May 2017, any decision made by the Panel being binding on the authority. If the appeal is not successful, further applications for a place at the same school will not be considered for the same academic year unless the Admissions Officer, School and Family Support Team,

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<sup>3</sup> A looked after child refers to a child who is looked after by the local authority under Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 at the time an application to a school is made and who the local authority has confirmed will still be looked after at the time of admission to the school.

determines there are significant and material changes in the circumstances of pupil/parents or school.

The authority will keep a waiting list of unsuccessful applicants ranked in order of priority according to the Authority's oversubscription criteria. As places become available, these will be offered on the basis of the ranked order of priority. A waiting list will be maintained until 30th September in the school year in which the applicants applied.

Transport will only be provided for the designated school or the nearest suitable provision (over 2 miles primary and 3 miles secondary). In some cases transport may be provided by the authority for eligible Looked after Children and for eligible children placed by the Authority in a learning support centre or special school provided that they meet the criteria as outlined in the Authority's Transport policy provided they meet the distance criteria outlined in The Local Authority's transport policy.

*Copies of individual school area maps may be obtained from the Admissions Officer, School and Family Support Team. These maps indicate the identified school for your locality.*

## **Admissions to Sixth Forms**

There is at present one mainstream sixth form within the authority for which the County Council is the Admissions Authority, this is at Y.G.Ystalyfera.

### **Oversubscription criteria**

The sixth form has an Admission Number and in the event of the number of requests for places exceeding the number of places available, preferences will still be considered but the priorities set by the authority will be applied. In deciding which young people to admit to the sixth form, the authority applies the criteria set out below in the order of priority shown (a) being the highest priority) and examines the merits of each case by considering any reasons put forward supporting any expressed preference. The authority will not normally exceed the sixth form's Indicated Admission Number.

- (a) Young people looked after **or previously looked after** by a local authority in Wales or England in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989.
- (b) Young people who have an older sibling who will be on register at the sixth form when they are admitted. In considering siblings, the authority determines priority by reference to full, half, step brothers/sisters, fostered or adopted siblings residing at the same address. Any sibling connection must be clearly stated in the application. In the case of multiple births, if it is not possible to offer all children a place in the sixth form, the parents will be asked to decide which child should be offered a place first or parents may wish to consider an alternative setting for all children."

If children are equally entitled to a place in the sixth form in categories (a) to (b) above, then priority will be given to the child living nearest, between the home and the sixth form, as measured by the shortest practicable walking route. The authority uses a Geographical Information System to calculate the shortest distance.

Only applications received by the published closing date for receipt of application forms will

be considered in the initial round of allocation of places. Other application forms received will be considered as late applications. These applications will be considered once the initial allocation has taken place and places allocated in accordance with availability.

In all cases evidence of permanent residence of the pupil at time of application must be supplied if required. Any place approved on the basis of residence may be withdrawn if the pupil is no longer permanently resident at the address at the beginning of the school term to which the application relates (term dates as published in the Information for Parents Handbook). The home address is considered to be the child's along with their parent's principal place of residence on the published date. i.e. where they are normally and regularly living. If a child is resident with friends or relatives (for reasons other than fostering arrangements) the friends or relatives address will not be considered for allocation purposes.

Where parents have shared responsibility for a child, and the child lives with both parents for part of the school week then the home address will be determined as the address where the child lives for the majority of the school week e.g. 3 out of 5 days. Parents will be required to provide documentary evidence to support the address they wish to be considered for allocation purposes.

If parents/pupil is/are dissatisfied with the result of an application for a particular sixth form, an appeal may be submitted to the independent Admission Appeals Panel by 21<sup>st</sup> March 2014, any decision made by the Panel being binding on the authority. If the appeal is not successful, further applications for a place at the same sixth form will not be considered for the same academic year unless the Admissions Officer, School and Family Support Team determine whether there are significant and material changes in the circumstances of pupil/parents or sixth form.

Transport to sixth forms is discretionary and non-statutory. It is currently available to all students who live over 3 miles from the school. The authority maintains the right to withdraw this provision at any time.

## Admissions during the Academic Year

Requests for children and young people to transfer between schools at periods other than at the normal transfer age will be determined by applying the above arrangements. Application forms are available from the School Admissions Section, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council which the parent should complete and return to the Admissions Officer, School and Family Support Team, Port Talbot Civic Centre, Port Talbot SA13 1PJ. Successful applicants will receive a leaving date" from the school at which the child / young person is enrolled and a start date" for the new receiving school. Moving children / young people during the academic year is not encouraged and, unless otherwise stated, admission to the receiving school will be from the beginning of the following term.

Transfer into a school within Neath Port Talbot from another authority, or necessitated by a change of address, will be authorised as soon as possible but within **15 school days or 28 calendar days which is ever the sooner**.

Children who transfer due to being in receipt of a statement of special education needs will be admitted into the named school as soon as possible but within 15 working days.

## Admission Number – Community Schools

Each school has a set Admission Number (AN) which is calculated using the "Measuring the capacity of schools in Wales" assessment. The school cannot refuse to admit pupils unless it has reached its admission number.

## Admission Procedures - Community Schools

The Local Authority is the Admissions Authority for all maintained Community Schools and Sixth Forms.

All applications for admission into a school / sixth form within Neath Port Talbot **must** be made on the appropriate form to the authority and **not** to the school. Parents can apply online at [www.npt.gov.uk](http://www.npt.gov.uk)

Head teachers cannot admit children into the school application have to be made to the Admissions Authority, which is the local authority for community schools.

- All parents of children known to the authority and residing within Neath Port Talbot will be forwarded an Admission Application Form and accompanying Admission Arrangement notes during the Autumn Term prior to entry into school in September of the following academic year.
- Parents should return the Admission Application Form to the Admissions Officer prior to, or on, the date given on the Admission Arrangements.
- The outcome of all admission applications will be notified to parents in writing, with all outcomes sent from the central office on the date given on the Admission Arrangements.
- Parents, who are satisfied with the placement offered, will accept the offer in writing to the authority. Unfilled places will be allocated to children and young people whose parents have applied for admission ahead of those who have not



formally accepted the initial offer of a place.

- Parents who are not satisfied with the placement offered have a right of appeal. Information regarding appeals will be within the contents of the letter received. Appeals will be heard by an independent panel constituted for the sole purpose of hearing appeals.

Requests for admission to the relevant age group submitted on or before the administrative closing date will be processed collectively. In this respect, no advantage shall be gained from the early submission of an admission request. Requests submitted after the closing date will be processed upon receipt.

Admissions will not be determined on the basis of selection criteria involving the sitting of tests, viewing of school reports, interviewing pupils, with or without parents for the purpose of assessing ability or aptitude.

Where requests for admission exceed the number of places available, places will be allocated by applying the Authority's oversubscription criteria.

The authority will keep a waiting list of unsuccessful applicants ranked in order of priority according to the Authority's oversubscription criteria. As places become available, these will be offered on the basis of the ranked order of priority. A waiting list will be maintained until 30<sup>th</sup> September in the school year in which the applicants applied.

Children attending the nursery class will not have an automatic right of admission to full time education at the same school. Similarly, children transferring from an infant school to a junior school, or from primary phase to secondary, do not have an automatic right of admission to any school.

The Authority will be under no duty to comply with preferences expressed otherwise than in accordance with its arrangements.

Separate admission arrangements apply to pupils for whom the Authority holds a statement of special educational need. Pupils with a statement of educational needs must be admitted to the school named on their statement.

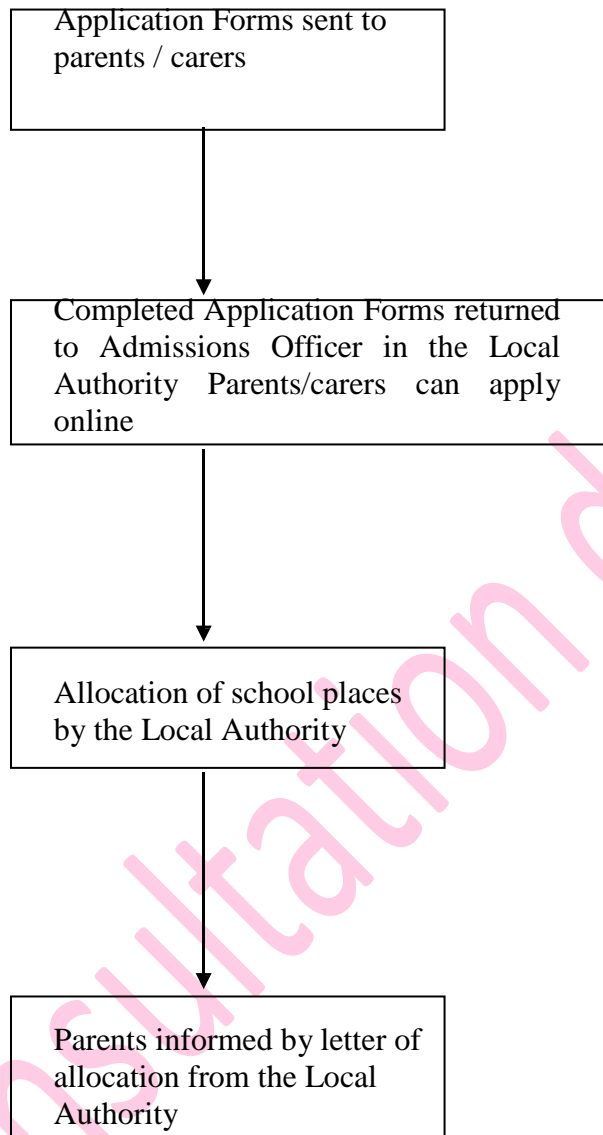
Looked after and previously looked after children must, after children with a statement of educational needs, be given first priority in the case of oversubscription.

## **Admissions to Faith Schools**

Faith Schools are their own Admission Authority, through the governing body, and parents should approach the head teacher of their preferred school directly for details of the admission arrangements and the appropriate application form.

There are two Church in Wales primary schools and four Roman Catholic primary schools in the County Borough. At secondary level, church school education is available at St. Joseph's R.C. Comprehensive School, Port Talbot, which has a sixth form.

## Admissions Process





## Schedule of Events for

### Secondary School Admissions 2017 - 2018

#### 7<sup>th</sup> October, 2016

**Application forms / School Prospectus, Information for Parents Handbook distributed to parents.**

Parents of children entering a new school (Year 7) have a minimum of 6 weeks to apply to a school of their choice.
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*Application forms to be returned to:*

*Mrs H Lewis  
Schools Admissions Officer,  
Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council,  
Port Talbot Civic Centre.  
Port Talbot  
SA13 1PJ*

#### 25<sup>th</sup> November 2016

**Closing date of submission of Admission Application Forms**

**Applications processed**

*January .... Schools given indicative information regarding numbers due for admission (excluding statements).*

#### 1<sup>st</sup> February 2017

**Children with statement of special education needs have placements confirmed.**

#### 1<sup>st</sup> March 2017

**Parents and Schools informed of allocation of secondary places to mainstream pupils.**

14 days for parents to lodge an appeal
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#### 21<sup>st</sup> March 2017

**Appeals against refusal to admit**

## **Schedule of Events for**

### **Infant, Junior and Primary School Admissions**

**2017 - 2018**

**7<sup>th</sup> October, 2016**

**Application forms / School Prospectus, Information for Parents Handbook distributed to parents.**

Parents of children entering a new school (Reception; Year 3) have a minimum of 6 weeks to apply to a school of their choice.

*Application forms to be returned to:*

*Mrs H Lewis  
Schools Admissions Officer,  
Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council,  
Port Talbot Civic Centre.  
Port Talbot  
SA13 1PJ*

**25<sup>th</sup> November 2016**

**Closing date of submission of Admission Application Forms**

**Applications processed**

*January .... Schools given indicative information regarding numbers due for admission (excluding statements).*

**1<sup>st</sup> February 2017**

**Children with statement of special education needs have placements confirmed.**

**17<sup>th</sup> April 2017**

**Parents and Schools informed of allocation of infant, junior and primary places to mainstream pupils.**

**Appeals against refusal to admit**

**4<sup>th</sup> May 2017**

14 days for parents to  
lodge an appeal

Consultation draft

**Schedule of Events for**

**Nursery Allocations 2017 - 2018**

**7<sup>th</sup> October, 2016**

**Application forms distributed to parents.**

*Application forms to be returned to:*

*Mrs H Lewis  
Schools Admissions Officer,  
Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council,  
Port Talbot Civic Centre.  
Port Talbot  
SA13 1PJ*

**14<sup>th</sup> April 2017**

**Closing date of submission of Admission Application Forms  
Applications processed**

**31<sup>st</sup> May 2017**

**Parents and Schools informed of allocation of nursery places.**

**Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Report Form**

This form should be completed for each Equality Impact Assessment on a new or existing function, a reduction or closure of service, any policy, procedure, strategy, plan or project which has been screened and found relevant to Equality and Diversity.

**Please refer to the 'Equality Impact Assessment Guidance' while completing this form. If you would like further guidance please contact the Corporate Strategy Team or your directorate Heads of Service Equality Champion.**

<b>Where do you work?</b>
Service Area: Admission to Community Schools in Neath Port Talbot 2017/2018
Directorate: Education Leisure and Life Long Learning

**(a) This EIA is being completed for a...**

Service/ Function <input type="checkbox"/>	Policy/ Procedure <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Project <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>	Proposal <input type="checkbox"/>
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**(b) Please name and describe below...**

**A policy to set out the admission arrangements for community schools in Neath Port Talbot in respect of the 2017/2018 academic year, in accordance with the Education(Determination)of Admission Arrangements) ( Wales) Regulations and the Welsh Government School Admission Code 005/2013**

**(c) It was initially screened for relevance to Equality and Diversity on 22.02.2016**

**(d) It was found to be relevant to...**

Age .....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Race .....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Disability .....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Religion or belief.....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sex .....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Marriage & civil partnership .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sexual orientation.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and maternity .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	Welsh language.....	<input type="checkbox"/>

**(e) Lead Officer**

**Name:** Helen Lewis

**Job title:-** Senior Awards Officer

**Date:** 22/02/2016

**(f) Approved by Head of Service**

**Name:** Mr Andrew Thomas

**Date:** 22/02/2016

## Section 1 – Aims (See guidance):

Briefly describe the aims of the function, service, policy, procedure, strategy, plan, proposal or project:

**What are the aims? A Policy to set out the admission arrangements for Community Schools in Neath Port Talbot in respect of the 2017/2018 Academic year, in accordance with The Education (Determination of Admission Arrangements) (Wales) Regulations 2006 and the Welsh Government School Admissions Code 005/2013**

**Who has responsibility? Director of Education, Leisure and Life Long Learning, The Head of Transformation and the School Admission Officer.**

**Who are the stakeholders? Pupils and Parents who wish their child to attend a community school within Neath Port Talbot CBC, with consideration being given to staff and the schools.**

## Section 2 - Information about Service Users (See guidance):

Please tick what information you know about your service users and provide details / evidence of how this information is collected.

Age .....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Race .....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Disability .....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Religion or belief.....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sex .....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Marriage & civil partnership .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sexual orientation.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and maternity .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	Welsh language.....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**What information do you know about your service users and how is this information collected? Information is provided via the school admission application form. The annual PLASC return, central office data base (EMS) and School data base (SIMS)**

### Any Actions Required?

**Information continues to be collected under the usual data gathering activities.**

## Section 3 - Impact on Protected Characteristics (See guidance):

Please consider the possible impact on the different protected characteristics. This could be based on service user information, data, consultation and research or professional experience (e.g. comments and complaints).

	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Needs further investigation
Age	➔ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	➔ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment	➔ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage & civil partnership	➔ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and maternity	➔ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race	➔ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or belief	➔ <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sex	→	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual orientation	→	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Welsh language	→	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Thinking about your answers above, please explain in detail why this is the case including details of any consultation (and/or other information) which has been undertaken to support your view**

The policy does not intend to make any changes to the process and procedure of admitting a pupil, who wishes to access a school place within a community school. Primary education is for those pupils aged between 3-11 years old, only pupils in this age frame may apply for primary education in Neath Port Talbot. Pupils aged between 11-16 years can apply for secondary education. There are two schools in Neath Port Talbot that provide Post 16 education, one school is a faith school, for which the Governing Body of the school is the admission authority and the other is a welsh medium community school, although there is no English medium community school providing post 16 education, however post 16 education is available via Neath Port Talbot College. In accordance with the Welsh Government School Admissions Code 005/2013 priority in relation to the oversubscription criteria is given to looked after or previously looked after pupils.

Each school with in Neath Port Talbot has been assessed for accessibility. Any pupil with a disability may be assessed on an individual basis and any relevant modifications, adaptations or reasonable adjustment can be made where applicable. Pupils who are supported by a statement will have a specific school identified and named on the statement .Section 324 requires a maintained school that is named on the statement of SEN to admit the pupil.

All schools are inclusive for pupils of all ethnic groups. Ethnicity is not a criterion with in the Admission to community schools policy.

A pupil's religion or faith is not applicable in regards to a community school.

Parents/carers and pupils can request to access education via the medium of Welsh or English.

All community schools with in Neath Port Talbot admit both girls and boys.

Neath Port Talbot provides education, for nursery, primary and secondary pupils both English and Welsh.

Consultation on the proposed policy was undertaken between December 2015 and February 2016

**What consultation and engagement has been undertaken (e.g. with the public and/or members of protected groups) to support your view?**

Consultation in accordance with the Welsh Government School admission code was undertaken with neighbouring Local Authorities, Headteachers and governing bodies of all schools with in Neath Port Talbot CBC.

**Any actions required (to mitigate adverse impact or to address identified gaps in knowledge)**

To Monitor the oversubscription and other admission criterion against protected groups.

**Section 4 - Other Impacts:**

Please consider how the initiative might address the following issues.

You could base this on service user information, data, consultation and research or professional experience (e.g. comments and complaints).

<b>Foster good relations between different groups</b>	<b>Advance equality of opportunity between different groups</b>
<b>Elimination of discrimination, harassment and victimisation</b>	<b>Reduction of social exclusion and poverty</b>

**(Please see guidance for definitions)**

**Please explain any possible impact on each of the above.**

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council aspires to deliver an inclusive education service. All community maintained schools have policies in place to prevent racism, harassment and victimisation.

Consultation process has been undertaken with Headteachers, governing bodies and neighbouring authorities.

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council aims to tackle poverty and social exclusion through various initiatives, including free school meals and school clothing grants.

Priority is given to pupils who are looked after or previously looked after.

**What work have you already done to improve any of the above?**

Neath Port Talbot CBC continually review educational inclusion.  
Monitoring the performance of schools

**Is the initiative likely to impact on Community Cohesion?**

**How will the initiative treat the Welsh language in the same way as the English language?**

Parents/carers and pupils can request to access education via the medium of Welsh or English.

**Actions (to mitigate adverse impact or to address identified gaps in knowledge).**

To Monitor the oversubscription and other admission criterion against protected groups.

## **Section 5 – Post Consultation**

Please explain the impact of the consultation process on the issues stated above.

## **Section 6 - Monitoring arrangements:**



Please explain the arrangements in place (or those which will be put in place) to monitor this function, service, policy, procedure, strategy, plan or project:

**Monitoring arrangements:** To be reviewed on an annual basis. Data collection by Welsh Government. Submission to Welsh Government report provide by the Neath Port Talbot School Admission Forum.

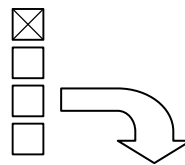
**Actions:**

To Monitor the oversubscription and other admission criterion against protected groups.

**Section 7 – Outcomes:**

Having completed sections 1-5, please indicate which of the outcomes listed below applies to your initiative (refer to guidance for further information on this section).

- Outcome 1: Continue the initiative...
- Outcome 2: Adjust the initiative...
- Outcome 3: Justify the initiative...
- Outcome 4: Stop and remove the initiative...



For outcome 3, detail the justification for proceeding here

**Section 8 - Publication arrangements:**

On completion, please contact the Corporate Strategy Team for advice on the legal requirement to publish the findings of EIAs.

The policy relating to Admission to community school in Neath Port Talbot requires an equality impact assessment as part of the publication process.

**Action Plan:**

Objective - What are we going to do and why?	Who will be responsible for seeing it is done?	When will it be done by?	Outcome - How will we know we have achieved our objective?	Progress

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\* Please remember to be 'SMART' when completing your action plan.

## NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Children and Young People Cabinet Board

7th April 2016

### Report of the Director of Education, Leisure & Lifelong Learning Mr. Aled Evans

#### Matter for Information

#### Wards Affected:

All Wards

### Scope for long term sickness projects in Schools

#### Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide Members with details of the Long Term Sickness in Schools Project and the implementation of an early intervention and effective communication methodology pilot within 4 schools, before gradually rolling out to all Comprehensive and Special schools.

#### Executive Summary

2. It is proposed that a Schools' Long Term Sickness Project is undertaken in order that we:
  - support school leaders to manage sickness levels,
  - support members of staff to return to work; and
  - ensure that associated costs and disruption are minimised.

3. In April 2016, it is proposed that a Pilot Phase will commence with 4 schools initially, piloting the early intervention and effective communication strategy, with the intention that it is rolled out to all Comprehensive Schools and Special Schools by September 2016.
4. One additional HR Officer (37hrs) will be employed on a fixed term basis for an 18 month period. The manager/Head Teacher still retains managerial responsibility and accountability, but the support of the HR Officer will ensure that Bursars and Head Teachers are trained in the new early intervention principles, and have access to advice and support. The role of the Bursars, once trained in the methodology, will be to prompt management action at each stage of the process to ensure that sickness is addressed at an early stage through the use of case management and rigorous application of the key stages.

## **Background**

5. An assessment of schools' sickness absence between 1st November 2014 and 31st October 2015 shows that schools would benefit significantly from a project that would support the management of staff absence. The majority of the current absence profile is due to long term sickness (28 calendar days or more). A significant amount of the days lost to long term sickness relate to stress related absence.
6. Whilst there is an obvious financial cost to this sickness absence, it should also be noted that there is a substantial hidden cost in the impact of staff absence on the performance of schools. In a recent Estyn report, 'The impact of teacher absence' (September 2013), it is noted that 'learners make less progress in developing their skills, knowledge and understanding when the usual class teacher is absent. Teacher absence impacts on pupils across the ability range.' The report states that 'in most schools visited, the teaching by supply staff not employed by the school is often ineffective and that the greatest negative impact of teacher absence on pupils' learning occurs in secondary schools.' The report recommends, amongst other things, that schools should manage teacher absence more efficiently. There is, therefore, an obvious imperative to address these issues.

7. A taskforce has already undertaken a central staffing pilot and their findings identified that where long term sickness is addressed at an early stage, the outcome for both the employees and the Council are more positive. Research of best practice nationally and across industries led to the development of a good practice strategy, evidence based on the principles of early intervention. Research identified that absent rates can potentially be halved over time with immediate intervention strategies that include informal contact maintained through absence. This strategy, Early Intervention and Effective Communication Strategy, was developed with the support and input of the trade unions.
8. Our intention is to build upon the work undertaken by the central pilot, initially in 12 -15 schools and in 4 tranches. To facilitate this, a Human Resource Officer will be appointed for 18 months on a temporary basis. The Human Resource Officer will work with senior leaders, mainly within our secondary sector, and their bursars to build capacity to manage sickness absence in a more dynamic way.
9. The early indications of the central project were that the strategy, whilst not preventing employees from being absent due to sickness, was proving effective at facilitating an earlier return to work.
10. There was a 'no blame' approach taken by the central team, enabling them to scrutinise and examine every aspect of managing absence, and develop a thorough understanding of the constraints in processes. This approach has helped support positive change.
11. The early intervention approach and in particular, holding the 'Return to Work Plan Meeting' at an early stage of absence (in some cases of planned surgery, before the absence has begun) creates a solid foundation for managing the absence. Roles and responsibilities are clear, interventions and support are planned and have meaningful purpose, a communication plan is established and most importantly, it establishes a clear focus on returning to work.
12. The additional HR resource will ensure that Bursars are trained in case management and are able to prompt Head Teachers to ensure that cases are being move forward through rigorous application of the key stages. The HR Officer will also be able to provide advice, guidance and support to enable Bursars and Head teachers to

improve their ability to manage sickness, as well as ensuring that data is captured and regular reports are provided to the ELLL management team to enable monitoring of the pilots and early identification of any additional interventions which may need to be made.

13. That partnership working with the trade unions, and in this case, embedding the trade union in the identification of constraints and development of solutions, ensures trust in new ways of managing absence.
14. The Central project has reported back to P & R Scrutiny Committee and the cost/ benefit analysis has a reduction in sickness costs.
15. The Early Intervention and Effective Communication Strategy combines the following:
  - Early intervention;
  - Effective communication;
  - Information Return to Work Plan Meetings with a clear focus on the return to work;
  - Additional HR resources utilised for training, advice and manager prompting at each key stage;
  - Clear roles and responsibilities - managers retain responsibility and accountability for managing absence;
  - Personal managers briefings;
  - Stress risk assessments to be carried out for every instance of identified work related stress (even where employee is not absent);
  - How to Guides on managing long term absence;
  - Occupational Health Referral Hotline to ensure referrals are necessary and add value.
16. It is proposed that the designated HR Officer initiates the project in the following order:

## **Group 1**

Dwr Y Felin Comprehensive

Dyffryn Comprehensive

St. Joseph's Comprehensive

Cefn Saeson Comprehensive

## **Group 2**

Cwmtawe Comprehensive

Maes Y Coed Special School

Cymer Afan Comprehensive

Llangatwg Comprehensive

## **Group 3**

YGG Ystalyfera

Ysgol Hendrefelin

Bae Baglan Comprehensive

## **Group 4**

Primaries (tbc)

## **Financial Impact**

17. The estimated costs of the project over an 18 month period is £60k.
18. The local authority is committed to funding 50% of this cost from central budget.
19. The Education Directorate will fund the project by £10k.
20. Participating schools are expected to fund the remaining £20k.

Based on the outcomes of the central model, it is anticipated that this project will lead to a reduction in days lost due to long term absence.

The delivery of the project will be monitored on a regular basis and reported to elected members. The monitoring process will include a cost benefit analysis.

### **Equality Impact Assessment**

21. There are no equality impacts associated with this report.

### **Workforce Impacts**

22. The workforce impacts of this project are anticipated to be positive as it will support staff back into work and allow for earlier identification of support from managers.

### **Legal Impacts**

23. There are no legal impacts associated with this report.

### **Risk Management**

24. There are no risk management issues associated with this report.

### **Consultation**

25. There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.
26. However, this proposal has been discussed with secondary school headteachers in a NAASH meeting on 28th January and an in principle agreement secured to formally progress its development.
27. Trade Union representatives also discussed the proposal at an LSPG meeting on 8th February and agreed in progressing this project subject to regular updates being brought back for discussion.

### **Recommendations**

28. It is recommended that members note the proposal to implement an 18 month Long Term Sickness project in schools with the intention to update members quarterly on its development.



### **Reasons for Proposed Decision**

29. N/a.

### **Implementation of Decision**

30. N/a.

### **Appendices**

31. None

### **List of Background Papers**

32. Maximising Attendance Policy.

### **Officer Contact**

33. Mr. Aled Evans, Director of Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning.  
01639 763298 or [a.evans@npt.gov.uk](mailto:a.evans@npt.gov.uk)



## NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Children and Young People Cabinet Board

7th April 2016

### Report of the Head of Participation - C. Millis

#### Matter for Information

#### Wards Affected:

All Wards

### Education through Regional Working (ERW) Business Plan 2016-19

#### Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the ERW Business Plan 2016-19 which was previously considered by Children, Young People and Education Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet Board on 14th January 2016 in draft form. This has now been endorsed by the Joint Committee.

#### Executive Summary

2. ERW is an alliance of 6 local authorities governed by a legally constituted joint committee. Its aim is to implement the agreed regional strategy and business plan to support school improvement. ERW's vision is for a consistently high performing school network across the region with every school a good school offering high standards of teaching under good leadership resulting in all learners achieving their maximum potential.

## **Background**

3. The ERW plan is a three year plan 2016-19 designed and delivered by the six constituent local authorities of ERW. It has been formally discussed and agreed by the Joint Committee.

There are three priority outcomes –

- Leading learning
- Teaching and learning
- Support for learning

In addition, the region is working to reduce the impact of poverty on attainment and embed a self-improving system of school led improvement.

Standards are good and improving, when compared with other regions, with performance on all indicators improving at a sustainable and consistent pace. Overall, the region performs well with pupils in receipt of free school meals more likely to perform well in ERW than in other regions.

4. The ERW strategy sets the following expectations and challenges:
  - ensure effective performance in all schools
  - robustly and consistently challenging the performance of schools and the outcomes achieved by learners
  - deploy a differentiated system of professional support to schools in proportion to need through nationally agreed categorisation framework
  - supporting strategies to develop the literacy and numeracy skills of learners
  - to improve outcomes for disadvantaged learners
  - facilitate effective school to school support in order to improve performance and outcomes

- managing and deploying well trained challenge advisers to challenge performance and broker bespoke support

### **Financial Impact**

5. There are no financial impacts associated with this report.

### **Equality Impact Assessment**

6. There are no equality impacts associated with this report.

### **Workforce Impacts**

7. There are no workforce impacts associated with this report.

### **Legal Impacts**

8. There are no legal impacts associated with this report.

### **Risk Management**

9. There are no risk management issues associated with this report.

### **Consultation**

10. There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

### **Recommendations**

11. That members note the ERW Business Plan which was endorsed by the Joint Committee with the intention to update members regularly on its development.

### **Reasons for Proposed Decision**

12. N/A

### **Implementation of Decision**

13. N/A

## **Appendices**

14. Link to ERW Business Plan below.

### **List of Background Papers**

15. ERW Business Plan 2016-19. <http://www.erw.wales/media/104696/erw-business-plan-2016-2019-eng-march-2016.pdf>

### **Officer Contact**

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