



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

Co-ordinated Admission Arrangements

From September 2027 entry to infant and primary school, transfer to junior school
and
transfer to secondary school

DRAFT

INTRODUCTION

The local authority (LA), under The Education (Co-ordination of School Admission Arrangements and Miscellaneous Amendments) (Wales) Regulations 2024 is required to formulate and publish a qualifying scheme to co-ordinate admission arrangements for all admission authorities, (local authority (LA) and Voluntary Aided (VA) schools) in the Neath Port Talbot local authority area, in relation to applications for the **‘normal admission rounds’** at a maintained primary school (Reception) maintained junior school (Year 3) or a maintained secondary school (Year 7) in Neath Port Talbot.

Applications outside the normal admission rounds (In-year transfer applications) will be dealt with by the relevant admission authority and not under the co-ordinated scheme.

The co-ordinated admission arrangements scheme does not affect the rights and duties of the governing bodies of the Voluntary Aided schools to set and apply their own admissions arrangements and oversubscription criteria.

EXPLANATION OF TERMS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT

Admission Authority – responsible for setting and applying a school's admission arrangements. For community schools and the Admission Authority is Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council. For voluntary aided schools the Admission Authority is the school's Governing Body.

Admission Number (AN) - is the number of pupil places available in each year group. All maintained schools admit pupils up to their published admission number for the year of entry at a school i.e. the maximum number of children that the admission authority has agreed it can admit.

Maintained School – a school that is funded by the local authority (LA).

Admission Arrangements - means the arrangements for a particular school which govern the procedures and decision-making for the purposes of admitting pupils to that school.

In Year Application - means any application for a place in any year group at a school other than at the normal point of entry.

Normal admissions round - is the period during which parents are invited to express a minimum of three preferences for a place at any state-funded school on the common application form provided by their home local authority for the normal point of entry.

Normal point of entry - means the first entry point to a school i.e. starting in reception in an infant or primary school, transferring from an infant school to year 3 in a junior school or transferring from primary to year 7 of a secondary school.

Parent/Carer - means a parent/carer which has Parental Responsibility for the child.

Local Authority (LA) – an organisation that is officially responsible for all the public services and facilities in a particular area.

Governing Body – a group of people who are responsible for running a school. They set a strategic direction and aim to promote a high standard of education achievement.

Catholic Archdiocese – a church district, made up of local parishes, under the leadership of a Catholic Archbishop.

Church in Wales Diocese – a church district, made up of local parishes, under the leadership of a Church in Wales Bishop.

Common Application Form (CAF) – which is a single application form (online or paper).

BACKGROUND

The co-ordination scheme is intended to simplify the 'normal admission rounds' process whilst reducing the likelihood of any child being left without a school place. It will also help to avoid pupils being offered multiple schools and parents/carers choosing to 'hold' offers for more than one Neath Port Talbot school. Co-ordination establishes a mechanism to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that every parent/carer of a child who has applied to a Neath Port Talbot maintained school using the common application form, is sent a single offer of a school place by the LA.

The co-ordinated arrangements applies to all Neath Port Talbot community-maintained schools for which the LA is the admission authority and to the admitting authorities for the following Neath Port Talbot VA Schools:

- Alderman Davies Church In Wales Primary School
- Bryncoch Church In Wales Primary School
- St Joseph's Catholic Infant School
- St Joseph's Catholic Junior School
- St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
- St Therese's Catholic Primary School
- St Joseph's Catholic School & 6th Form Centre

Parents/carers who wish to apply for schools in areas outside of Neath Port Talbot must apply to the admission authority for the school (the local authority/Council for that school).

APPLICATION PROCESS

1. There will be a standard application form known as the Common Application Form (CAF). This form will be available to parents/carers in the relevant year via an online system or as a paper copy on request from the School Admissions Team. Any common application forms (on-time or late forms) received directly by a school **must** be forwarded to the LA.
2. The CAF will be used for the purpose of admitting pupils at the normal point of entry to an infant, primary, junior or secondary school.
3. Parents/Carers of children with an LA IDP will not be required to make an application. School admissions at the normal point of entry for children with an LA IDP will be handled by the Additional Learning Needs Support Service. Any application for these children will be processed in accordance with the ALN code for Wales and associated regulations and will not be dealt with under this Scheme.
4. The CAF must be used as a means of expressing one or more preferences for the purposes of section 86 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, by

parents/carers resident in Neath Port Talbot wishing to express a preference for their child:

5. The CAF and the accompanying written information will:

(a) invite the parent/carer to express up to three preferences by completing the form, including in ranked order of preference;

(b) invite parents/carers to give their reasons for each preference. Parents/carers expressing a preference for a Voluntary Aided (VA) school may also be required, by the individual school admission authority (the VA school), to provide additional information or evidence relating to an application and as such, to complete a supplementary form.

(c) explain that the parent/carer will receive no more than one offer of a place at a school and that:

(i) all preferences will be treated equally initially;

(ii) a place will be offered at the highest ranking nominated school for which they are eligible for a place;

(iii) if a place cannot be offered at a nominated school a place will be offered at an alternative school.

(d) specify the closing date and where it must be returned to.

6. There is a national deadline for applications, as stated in the 'Timetable' section of this Scheme. This is the date by which completed applications (paper or online) must be received by Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council. Applications submitted by this date will be classed as 'on-time' applications.

7. Applications submitted after the published closing date will be deemed as late applications and will not be considered until after all on time applications received have been allocated and offered their places on the common offer day.

8. Completed paper or online CAFs for Reception, Junior and Secondary places are to be returned direct to Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council School Admissions Team by the closing date.

ALLOCATION PROCESS

1. The relevant admission authority will be responsible for applying the oversubscription criteria and ranking applications in accordance with their admission criteria, For Voluntary Aided (VA) schools this will be the governing body. For community maintained schools this will be the LA.
2. By the date specified in the local authority's admissions timetable The LA will provide Neath Port Talbot VA schools with details of the applications made for their schools to enable the governing body to consider and rank their applications.
3. By the date specified in the local authority's admissions timetable, governing bodies who are the admission authority for a school (i.e. Neath Port Talbot VA schools) must provide the LA with a list of all children who applied for places at their school, ranked in their order of priority under their admission arrangements, showing which criteria apply to which child.
4. Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council will rank all applications for those schools for which it is the admitting authority. Using these ranked lists and those provided by VA schools, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council will be able to determine the children who are eligible for places at each school. This will be done by comparing the number of children on each school's list to the AN for that school. If the number of preferences is equal to or less than the AN, all children on the list will be eligible for places at that school. Otherwise, the number of children eligible for places will be those children with the highest priority, up to the school's AN.
5. Where a child living in Neath Port Talbot has been refused a highest parental preference school the child will be allocated a place at the nearest suitable school in Neath Port Talbot with a place available.
6. Neath Port Talbot Council Borough Council will inform other local authorities of places in schools in Neath Port Talbot to be offered to their residents.
7. There will be a National Offer Day (see 'Timetable' section) when parents/carers will be notified which school their child has been allocated. Parents/Carers who applied online will be sent an outcome letter via email on this date. Parents/Carers who apply on a paper form will receive an outcome letter in the post. Parents/Carers who apply online will also be able to log back in to the online application system to check their allocation and accept place.

LATE APPLICATIONS

Applications submitted after the published closing date will not be considered until after all on time applications received have been allocated and offered their places on the common offer day.

If a place becomes available at an oversubscribed school it will be allocated to the child at the top of the waiting list regardless of whether the application for that child was late or on-time. However, Children looked after or previously looked after by a local authority in Wales, as defined in section 74 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 or England as defined in Section 22 of the Children Act 1989 or Children with an LA IDP will be given priority over children on the waiting list.

ACCEPTING PLACES

Where a child fails to arrive at the allocated school at the beginning of the school year and the parent/carer has not informed the school or Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council whether or not the place is required, the school will attempt to make contact with the parent to confirm this. The offer of a place may be withdrawn if the place is not taken up within a reasonable timescale and safeguarding procedures will be followed as necessary.

APPEALS

When a parent/carer is refused a place at a school for which they have applied, they will have the right to appeal to an independent panel. The letter confirming the refusal will explain:

- the reason for the refusal;
- information about the right to appeal;
- the deadline for lodging an appeal; and
- contact details for making an appeal.

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, Child and Family Support Team, determines that there are significant and material changes to the circumstances.

WAITING LISTS

Where parents/carers are refused a place for their child/ren they are automatically placed on the waiting list. Pupils' names will remain on the waiting list for the whole academic year and will only be removed if they are successful at appeal or if a parent/carer confirms in writing that they no longer wish their child/ren's name to remain on the waiting list. If a place becomes available it will be allocated in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

All waiting lists will be based on the school's oversubscription criteria and children's places on the list are subject to change according to additional information received about applications or children being added to the list. No priority is given based on the length of time that a child has been on the list or if the application was late or on-time.

Children looked after or previously looked after by a local authority in Wales, as defined in section 74 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 or England as defined in Section 22 of the Children Act 1989 or Children with an LA IDP will be given priority over children on the waiting list.

Waiting lists held by Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council will cease by 30th September 2027 in respect of applications for entry into Reception, Year 3 of Junior School and Year 7 of Secondary school.

TIMETABLE 2027/2028

Transfer to Secondary School Scheme dates	Action	Starting School and Transfer to Primary and Junior School Scheme dates
7 th September 2026	Guide for parents must be available.	7 th September 2026
31 st October 2026	National deadline for applications. Closing date for online applications or for paper Neath Port Talbot Admissions Common Application Forms (CAFs) to be received by Neath Port Talbot School Admissions Team.	15 th January 2027
27 th November 2026	Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council will notify the governing body of any school where it is the admission authority and does its own ranking, of every application for a place at that school.	12 th February 2027
4 th January 2027	The governing body of any school where it is the admission authority and does its own ranking will provide Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council with a list of all applicants ranked in priority order according to the individual school's oversubscription criteria.	12 th March 2027
25 th January 2027	Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council will inform all other local authorities of offers to be made to applicants resident in their areas.	22 nd March 2027
1 st March 2027	National Offer Day. Notification of school allocation to be sent to parents/carers.	16 th April 2027
26 th March 2027	Appeals against refusal to admit to be received by.	14 th May 2027