



## **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.

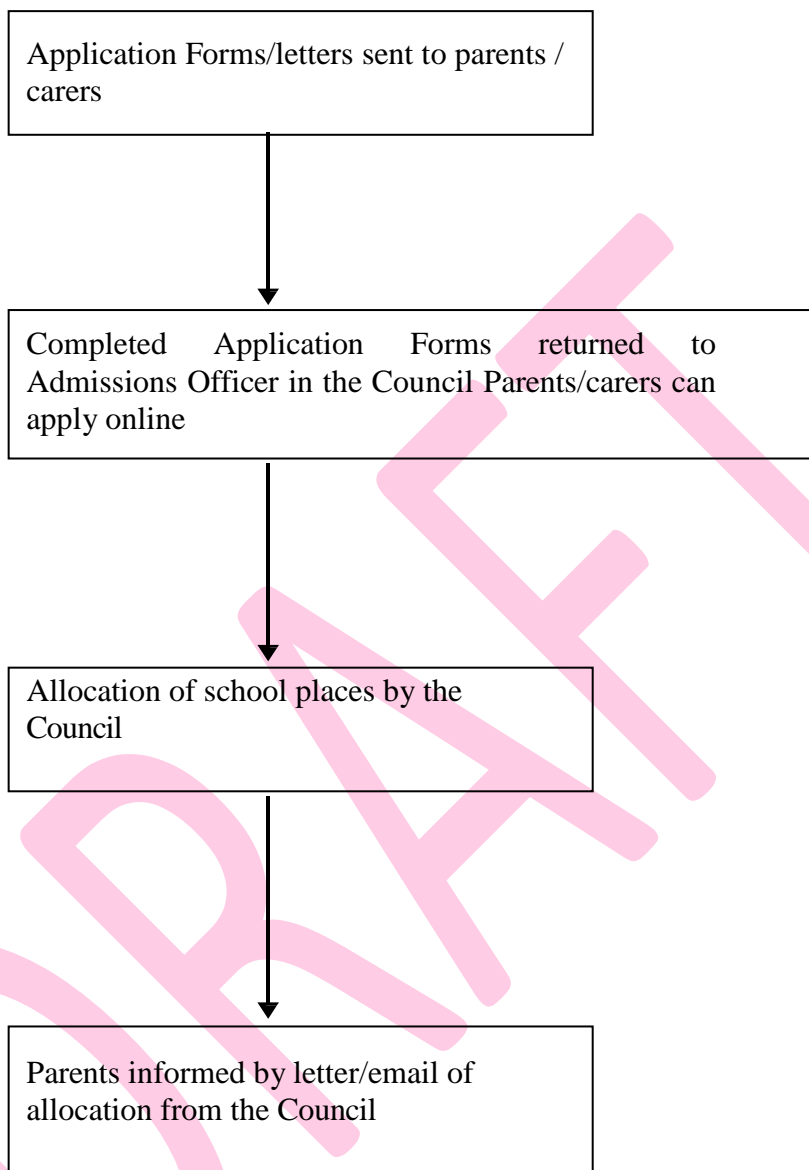
Separate admission arrangements apply to pupils for whom the Council holds a statement of special educational need. Pupils with a statement of educational needs must be admitted to the school named on their statement.

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.