

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Education Skills and Culture Cabinet Board
15th March 2018**

REPORT OF HEAD OF TRANSFORMATION ANDREW THOMAS

MATTER FOR DECISION

WARDS AFFECTED – ALL WARDS

ADMISSION TO COMMUNITY SCHOOLS: 2019/2020

Purpose of Report

1. To obtain Education Skills and Culture Cabinet Board determination of the admission arrangements for community schools in relation to the 2019/2020 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 15th April 2018 its admission arrangements in relation to the 2019/ 2020 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 12th December 2017 and 2nd February 2018. Consultees included head teachers & governing bodies of community and voluntary aided schools, neighbouring local authorities.
5. It is the officer recommendation that Members determine the proposed admission arrangements attached to this report.

6. These arrangements conform to the legislative requirements and the good practice guidelines set out in the Welsh Government's School Admissions Code, 2013.

Background

7. The Council, as local authority for the relevant area, is responsible for determining the admission arrangements for community schools¹ and has a duty to consult annually on those arrangements.
8. 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
9. At its meeting of 7th December 2017, the Education Skills and Culture Cabinet Board approved consultation on proposed admission arrangements for community schools.

Proposed admission arrangements for determination

10. The proposed admission arrangements for Member determination are attached as Appendix A.
11. They include oversubscription criteria specific to secondary school admissions that support the principle of partner² schools. This reflects the need to ensure the admission arrangements give suitable priority to partner schools at secondary school transfer.

¹ The Education (Determination of Admission Arrangements) (Wales) Regulations 2006

² 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.
- catchment area is defined as the geographical area served by a school, as determined by the Council.

12. These have been the subject of consultation. No responses were received.
13. If approved, the arrangements will be effective in relation to admission to community schools for the 2019/2020 academic.

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 Code³.
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 relation to the 2019/2020 academic year, those consultations are required to be undertaken no sooner than 1st September 2017 and completed by 1st March 2018.
19. Once consultation has been completed the Council must determine by 15th April 2018 its admission arrangements, either in their original form or with such modifications as seen fit.
20. Consultation took place between December 2017 and February 2018. Consultees included head teachers & governing bodies of community and voluntary aided schools within the County Borough (the relevant area) and neighbouring local authorities.

³ School admissions code: Statutory Code document No. 005/2013

21. No comments were received.

Financial Impact

22. 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.
23. 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

24. 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.
25. The full equality impact assessment is attached to this report as Appendix B.

Workforce Impact

26. 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

27. 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.
28. In relation to the specific purpose of this report, there is a legal requirement that school admission arrangements must be determined by 15th April 2018.

Risk Management

- 29 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.
- 30 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

- 31 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 2019/2020 academic year, as attached to this report.

Reasons for the Proposed Decision

- 32 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

- 33 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, 2019/2020

Appendix B: 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

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