

**Bridgend County Borough Council**  
Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr



# Starting School 2021 – 2022

A guide to Bridgend County Borough Council's  
admission arrangements for schools

[www.bridgend.gov.uk](http://www.bridgend.gov.uk)

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## Foreword

Dear Parent/Carer,

All local authorities have an obligation to provide an opportunity for parents/carers to express a preference when choosing a school for their child/ren. This is one of the most important decisions you will take on behalf of your child. This information document has been prepared to assist you with your decisions.

As a parent/carer, you have a right to expect your child to receive a good education, but also important is your interest in your child's work at school, which will provide encouragement for the school and complement the efforts of teachers. I encourage you to take part in your school's parents' association, which will give an opportunity for you to have a closer involvement with the school.

You may be interested to know that there are parent representatives on the governing body of each school and that these are elected by the parents themselves, normally every four years. Each year, you will receive a written report of the work undertaken by the governing body of the school and a meeting will be held for the purpose of giving parents an opportunity to discuss this annual report with the governors.

We hope that your child/ren will settle easily into their new school and that they will derive many benefits from the opportunities offered.

We trust that this booklet will prove to be informative and useful and that it will promote a greater understanding between yourselves and the education service as a whole.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "L Iorwerth Harvey".

Mr Lindsay Iorwerth Harvey  
Corporate Director,  
Education and Family Support



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "C Smith".

Councillor Dr. Charles Smith  
Cabinet Member for  
Education and Regeneration

## 1. Introduction

As a Council, we think it is important for us to conduct our business in ways which are:

- Fair – taking into account everyone’s needs and situation;
- Ambitious – always trying to improve what we do;
- Customer-focused – remembering that we are here to serve the local community; and
- Efficient – delivering services that are value for money.

We want the county of Bridgend to be a good place in which to be a child or young person, or to bring up a family. Through our schools and education and family support services, we want to help all children and young people to:

- thrive and make the best use of their talents;
- live healthy and safe lives;
- be confident and caring individuals; and
- know and receive their rights.

Parents/carers are a child’s first and enduring teacher. They play a crucial role in helping their children to learn. This role should continue and extend when a child begins school. Our schools offer a great range of quality learning experiences and opportunities, but to make the most of these opportunities and help children and young people to reach their potential, it is important that parents/carers form a productive and supportive partnership with school staff, starting with ensuring that their child attends school.

Regular communication between home and school is an essential part of the partnership, which helps children and young people succeed.

Our aim is for every local school to be a good school, but we recognise that parents have the right to express a preference that their child attends any school listed in this booklet, subject to the admission arrangements specified.

This prospectus aims to provide parents with general information about Bridgend’s primary, secondary and special schools and, more specifically, details about the admission and appeals arrangements governing those schools.

We have included some additional information that may help parents in selecting a school. In some parts of Bridgend, for a range of reasons, there is pressure on school places. This means that, in those areas, parents may not always be successful in getting a place at a preferred school, especially if they do not live in the school’s catchment area.

## 2. Information and advice

If you require further information on school admission matters, or would like to provide feedback on this prospectus booklet or the admission process as a whole, we would be pleased to hear from you.

Please e-mail [pupilservices@bridgend.gov.uk](mailto:pupilservices@bridgend.gov.uk).

## 3. The stages and phases of education

### 3.1 Nursery education

Nursery education is non-statutory.

Welsh Government requires local authorities to secure a free, part-time, early-years education place for eligible three-year-olds from the term following their third birthday. The place can either be at a local authority-maintained school, or within the non-maintained sector with a registered early year's provider.

**(This prospectus applies only to admissions to nursery classes in local authority-maintained schools.)**

### 3.2 Primary education

Every child is required by law to receive full-time education from the beginning of the school term after his/her fifth birthday. However, in the Bridgend, all children are normally admitted to a reception class in the September following their fourth birthday.

In primary schools, the infant (reception, Year 1 and Year 2) and junior (Years 3 to 6) departments are part of the same school and children progress through the school from the infant to junior department without having to transfer elsewhere.

In Bridgend there are two infant schools:

- Bryntirion Infants School; and
- Cefn Glas Infants School.

Children in these schools will need to transfer to junior school or to a junior department in a primary school, on the first day of autumn term following their seventh birthday. Parents/carers of such children need to complete a school admission application to request a place for their child at the time of transfer.

### 3.3 Secondary education

Children normally transfer from primary school to secondary school at the beginning of the school year following their eleventh birthday (Year 7). Parents/carers of such children need to complete a school admission application to request a place for their child at the time of transfer.

### 3.4 Post-16 education

Post-16 education is non-statutory. It is widely available through sixth-forms in community schools in the Bridgend County Borough and other further education institutions.

### **3.5 Foundation phase**

The foundation phase is a developmental curriculum for three to seven-year-olds in Wales. It encourages children to be creative, imaginative and to have fun while making learning more effective. Learning through play is a specific focus of the foundation phase. The foundation phase curriculum is statutory in all early years' education provision, including in the private and voluntary sectors.

As the foundation phase curriculum is for three to seven-year-olds, it applies to non-statutory early years and nursery education and the statutory, primary year groups of reception, Year 1 and Year 2.

### **3.6 Key stage 2**

Children aged between 7 and 11 (Year groups 3 to 6) follow the national curriculum for Wales at key stage 2. Their education in key stage 2 builds on the experiences and learning gained in the foundation phase.

The curriculum in key stage 2 is designed around subjects and skills. It is designed to provide a firm foundation in language, mathematics and science, giving children the opportunity to achieve their best within a broad and balanced curriculum

### **3.7 Key stage 3**

Children aged between 11 and 14 (Year groups 7 to 9) follow the national curriculum for Wales at key stage 3. Their education builds on the experiences and learning gained in primary school and prepares them for making decisions about courses they will follow later in their secondary education.

The curriculum in key stage 3 is designed around subjects and skills. It provides a firm foundation in language, mathematics and science, giving children the opportunity to achieve their best within a broad and balanced curriculum.

### **3.8 Key stage 4**

Key Stage 4 covers the two years of school education (Years 10 and 11) that incorporate study for GCSEs and other examinations, when pupils are aged between 14 and 16. In some schools, key stage 4 work is started in Year 9.

### **3.9 Key stage 5**

Key Stage 5 covers the two years of education (Years 12 and 13) undertaken by learners aged 16 to 18, at a sixth-form.

## 4. The admission authority

The entry of children to schools is controlled and administered by an ‘admission authority’. In the case of community schools, this is the local authority, that is, Bridgend County Borough Council. In accordance with the Education (Relevant Areas for Consultation on Admission Arrangements) Regulations 1999, the relevant area for the admission authority is the geographical area of the County Borough of Bridgend.

Where the local authority is the admission authority, the school’s governing body is under a duty to implement the local authority’s decision on applications, and to act in accordance with the local authority’s admission arrangements.

**The local authority reserves the right to amend its admissions procedures for statutory and non-statutory education, if necessary, and as permitted by the relevant legislation.**

The local authority is the admission authority for the one voluntary controlled school in the county borough, which is Pen y Fai Church in Wales Primary School.

Within the county borough, there are five voluntary aided schools, which are financed largely by the local authority. The governing body of each voluntary aided school is the admission authority with responsibility for all admission arrangements.

The five voluntary aided schools within the county borough are:

1. St Mary’s Catholic Primary School, Bridgend;
2. St Mary’s and St Patrick’s Catholic Primary School, Maesteg;
3. St Robert’s Roman Catholic Primary School, Aberkenfig;
4. Archdeacon John Lewis Church in Wales Primary School, Bridgend; and
5. Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School.

The admissions policies for these five schools are detailed in PART 6. Parents/carers who wish to seek admission to these schools for their child/ren should contact the relevant school for further information.

The local authority has no arrangements for the provision of education at schools not maintained by the local authority.

The two special schools in the county borough are regional centres with pupils admitted from neighbouring local authorities. Admissions to these schools are not included within, or subject to the provisions of the local authority’s School Admissions Policy 2021-2022.

## 5. The Bridgend Admission Forum

The local authority is under a statutory duty to establish an admission forum.

The Bridgend Admission Forum is constituted in accordance with Annex D of the statutory School Admissions Code 2013.

The role of the forum is to help ensure that the school admissions system in Bridgend is fair, straightforward and easy for parents/carers to understand. The forum is responsible for monitoring the local authority's compliance with the statutory School Admissions Code 2013 and may advise the local authority on ways in which admission arrangements could be improved.

The terms of reference, meeting agendas, meeting minutes and annual reports of the Bridgend Admission Forum are published on the local authority's website at:

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

## 6. Welsh-medium education

In accordance with statutory requirements, the local authority policy is that every child should have the opportunity to learn and use the Welsh language. Provision is made for this in the following ways:

1. The teaching of Welsh as a second language in English-medium schools.
  - a) In the foundation phase, Welsh is taught to all pupils. The emphasis is on using the language with purpose and in meaningful situations. In addition, the incidental use of the language during the school day is encouraged.
  - b) At key stage 2, the language is further developed orally, with greater emphasis on reading and writing skills.
  - c) At key stage 3, Welsh is taught to all pupils.
  - d) At key stage 4, the teaching of Welsh is compulsory.
  - e) Opportunities are provided in all schools for pupils to continue their studies at key stage 5.
  
2. Provision for Welsh-medium education.
  - a) Welsh-medium education is available at the four Welsh-medium primary schools in the county borough for all children whose parents/carers select this medium of education.
  - b) Parents/carers residing in the catchment area of Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Ogwr may wish for their child/ren to attend the new Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Calon Y Cymoedd (formerly Ysgol Gyradd Gymraeg Cwm Garw). The local authority will be responsible for any transport costs for eligible pupils, but only if such pupils reside closer to Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Calon Y Cymoedd than to Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Ogwr.
  - c) In the foundation phase, all subjects are taught and all activities are run through the medium of Welsh.
  - d) English is introduced as a subject in key stage 2. Although all the other subjects are taught through the medium of Welsh, standards in English are equally safeguarded.

Entry to Welsh-medium schools is controlled by the application of the same admission criteria expressed within the School Admissions Policy 2021-2022.

## **7. Ensuring fair access**

### **7.1 Pupils with additional learning needs**

#### **Provision for pupils with additional learning needs**

It is the local authority's policy to educate pupils with additional learning needs with others of their own age in their local community, wherever practicable. There will, however, be occasions where the specialised provision required to meet certain needs has to be made in specially designated facilities, possibly outside the local community and, in some exceptional circumstances, outside the Bridgend County Borough. Each case will be considered individually.

Within the context of the policy, the local authority is committed to the following general principles for pupils with additional learning needs:

1. The provision of quality educational opportunities for all children and young people, and a recognition of their entitlement to equal access to a broad, balanced and relevant education irrespective of their gender, race or special need.
2. The provision of advice, guidance, support and appropriate training for governors, headteachers and staff in relation to their duties and responsibilities for pupils with additional learning needs.
3. An acknowledgement that a pupil may, at any time, have educational needs that will require special educational provision.
4. The delivery of a flexible continuum of special educational provision designed to meet the additional learning needs of individual pupils. Within this continuum of special provision it is acknowledged that the majority of pupils with additional learning needs will have those needs met in their school from the school's resources. However, it is also recognised that there are pupils whose additional learning needs require additional or different provision.
5. As with all other admission arrangements, the local authority is classified as the admission authority for special education provision.
6. The maintenance of a range of central services including specialist teachers and educational psychologists within the Inclusion Service to assist with the assessment, monitoring and evaluation of specialist provision.

7. A commitment to the principle of inclusion, which takes into consideration the efficient use of resources.
8. The additional needs of children, including those of pre-school age, will be identified and assessed, and appropriate provision made as early as possible. This will then be monitored and evaluated regularly.
9. Parents/carers will be encouraged to participate in the process of identification, assessment and intervention of their child's additional learning needs. Decisions about how and where a pupil's additional needs might be met will involve parents and take into account the pupil's own views. The process will involve giving guidance about statutory rights and ways in which parents can work in partnership with their child's school.
10. The importance of effective liaison with other agencies, both statutory and voluntary, is recognised in determining the nature of the pupil's additional learning needs, and the provision necessary to respond to those needs.
11. The provision of medical, nursing and paramedical advice, guidance and support is regarded as primarily being the responsibility of the local health services.
12. A recognition of the duty on the local authority in its strategic planning role to monitor and review regularly the provision of special education.

### **Admission arrangements for children with additional learning needs**

**Admission of children to non-mainstream education provision, is not governed by the statutory School Admissions Code 2013 for Wales. Accordingly, the school admissions arrangements detailed in this prospectus, do not apply to such provisions.**

Where mainstream provision in a community school is the named placement in a statement of special educational needs (SEN) or a local authority-maintained individual development plan IDP, the local authority will admit the child to that school.

Applications in respect of children with additional learning needs but without a statement of SEN or a local authority-maintained IDP will be considered in the same way as all applications on the basis of the procedures and admission criteria set out in this policy.

If a child is currently being assessed under the statutory process for a statement of SEN or a local authority-maintained IDP, and at a later date, the local authority concludes that the child should have a statement of SEN or a local authority-

maintained IDP, the appropriate school placement will be addressed as part of that statutory process.

## 7.2 Children with disabilities

The local authority will comply with the reasonable adjustments duty owed to disabled pupils, as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

## 7.3 Children with challenging behaviours

The local authority will not refuse to admit a child on the basis of his/her behaviour. Such children will include those who are considered to be potentially disruptive, exhibiting challenging behaviours or those who may be considered as requiring assessment for special educational needs.

After admission, a school may consider such disciplinary action as appropriate, in response to challenging behaviour. However, children exhibiting challenging behaviours may be disabled as defined by the Equality Act 2010 and require reasonable adjustments to be made for them in school.

## 7.4 All vulnerable or hard-to-place children

The provisions of School Admissions Policy 2021-2022 apply. However, in accordance with the requirements of the statutory School Admissions Code 2013, the local authority maintains fair access protocols for such children and has a panel whose role is to recommend placements that can meet the needs of these children.

## 7.5 Looked after and previously looked after children

The following are applicable even if the corporate parent is Bridgend County Borough Council.

Applications in respect of nursery admissions rounds and normal (statutory) admissions rounds

Applications in respect of looked after and previously looked after children are prioritised under the applicable oversubscription criteria, **subject to:**

1. The application for a looked after child is completed and submitted by the corporate parent (ie the local authority with responsibility for looking after the

child) and supporting evidence is provided (a Care Order or Interim Care Order).

2. The application for a previously looked after children is accompanied by supporting evidence from the former corporate parent.

### Applications for in-year admission/transfer

In accordance with the statutory School Admissions Code 2013, where in-year admission/transfer of a looked after child is being sought, the corporate parent must consult with the local authority before making the application. This is to ensure the appropriateness of the preferred school in light of the child's background and circumstances. This consultation and completion of an application is also required in respect of looked after children who have been permanently excluded from two or more schools.

Additionally, in the case of a looked after child who has been permanently excluded from two or more schools, the corporate parent must also consult with the governing body of the identified school.

For applications for in-year admission/transfer in respect of currently looked after children, a place will be offered at the agreed school and an exception to the infant class size limit (if relevant) will be applied, **subject to** the application having been completed and submitted by the corporate parent and supporting evidence having been provided (a Care Order or Interim Care Order).

For applications for in-year admission/transfer in respect of previously looked after children, a place will be offered at the preferred school and an exception to the infant class size limit (if relevant) will be applied, **subject to** the application being accompanied by supporting evidence from the former corporate parent.

The relevant supporting evidence referred to above must be submitted with the application.

## 7.6 Gypsy and Traveller children

When considering admission applications relating to Gypsy and Traveller children, the local authority will take account of Welsh Government Circular No: 003/2008 (Moving Forward – Gypsy Traveller Education) and sections 3.25 and 3.26 of the statutory School Admissions Code for Wales, 2013.

## 7.7 Children of serving UK service personnel and other serving Crown Servants (including diplomats)

'UK service personnel' refers to persons serving in the military forces. 'Crown Servants' are officers of the UK government, including diplomats.

There is no automatic right to a place at a preferred school for children of serving UK service personnel and other serving Crown Servants.

The local authority will accept a 'unit' postal address for applications from serving service personnel in the absence of a new home postal address.

For nursery and normal (statutory) admissions rounds, the local authority will treat children of serving UK service personnel and serving Crown Servants as if they are already resident at a future address **provided that** the application is accompanied by an official Ministry of Defence (MOD) or Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) letter declaring a return date and confirmation of the new home. The local authority will allocate a school place in accordance with the applicable criteria for the relevant admission round.

In respect of in-year admission/transfer applications for children of serving UK service personnel and serving Crown Servants:

- such children will be given 'excepted status' for infant class size limit purposes (if relevant), if admitted to a preferred school;
- if the application is unsuccessful and a place at the preferred school is refused, the parents/carers may appeal against the decision and any appeal hearing would be heard as a normal prejudice appeal.

Applications for children of former UK service personnel or former Crown Servants will be treated as all other applications.

## 7.8 Children recommended for placement at a particular school for medical, psychological, or compelling social reasons

To satisfy this oversubscription criterion, applicants must provide supporting evidence from a registered health professional or a social worker that states the reasons why the named school is the most suitable school and what difficulties would arise if the child had to attend another school. The evidence must be dated no more than three months prior to the application submission date.

Applications in respect of young carers will be considered under this criterion subject to provision of the necessary evidence, as set out above.

The local authority expects the applicant to provide the required evidence at the time the application is submitted. If this is not possible, the local authority must be advised of and satisfied as to the reasons and the required evidence must then be provided prior to the closing date of the admission round. If the required evidence is not provided to the local authority before the closing of the admission round, the application will not be prioritised under this criterion.

### **7.9 Applications made for children who are not UK nationals and not yet living in the UK, and UK children living abroad**

The local authority will treat applications for such children on an individual basis and in accordance with all applicable Welsh Government legislation/requirements, UK legislation and Home Office rules at the time of application. Also, any European Union law that may be applicable to the UK.

It should be expected that the local authority will seek information on a range of relevant factors, including but not necessarily limited to:

- whether the application for leave to enter the UK has been or will be successful;
- if applicable, on what terms entry to the UK has been granted; and
- the date when the child is expected to be resident in the UK.

## 8. School 'managed moves'

The local authority has a separate policy for the managed moves (transfers) of pupils between schools.

Managed moves of pupils are treated differently to regular admissions. The pupil will remain on roll at the current school during the managed move period. At the end of the managed move period, if the managed move is deemed successful, the pupil will be placed on roll at the receiving school. If the managed move is deemed to have been unsuccessful, the pupil will return to the school at which they are on roll.

The Managed Move Policy does not apply in any instances where the parent/carer completes a school admission application; the School Admissions Policy applies in all such cases.

## 9. Home-to-school/college transport

### 9.1 General

Summary information is detailed below and it is recommended that parents/carers/learners access the full policy document, which is available at [www.bridgend.gov.uk/schooltransport](http://www.bridgend.gov.uk/schooltransport)

The local authority's policy complies with the requirements of the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008, which places a statutory duty on local authorities to provide learners with free transport to the nearest suitable school if they reside beyond 'walking distance' to that school.

In the Bridgend County Borough, the term 'nearest suitable school' applies to the catchment school and this can be an English-medium, Welsh-medium, voluntary aided or maintained special school.

Where a pupil attends a school other than the catchment area school as a result of parental preference, the parents/carers have full responsibility for transport costs and arrangements.

If a learner cannot be admitted to their catchment school and, as a result, has to attend another school beyond the 'walking distance' from the home, then transport will only be provided to the next nearest suitable school. This may not be in accordance with the preferred school of the parent/carer and in such circumstances the parent/carer will be responsible for transport costs and arrangements.

Welsh Government has defined the statutory 'walking distance' as two miles for primary-aged learners and three miles for learners of compulsory school age in secondary education. The local authority measures distances by the nearest available, walking route from home to school/college using geographical information system software.

There is no statutory obligation on local authorities to provide transport for nursery-aged learners or those over the age of sixteen.

Learners attending the nearest Welsh-medium school receive free transport in accordance with the local authority's agreed policy on walking distance and available walking routes.

Learners attending the nearest voluntary aided school of the parents/carers' denomination receive free transport in accordance with the local authority's agreed policy on walking distance and available walking routes.

Learners whose families move to an address outside the catchment area of the school they attend, will not continue to be provided with free school transport if that move takes place during primary education, or in Year 7, Year 8 or Year 9 of secondary education. Applications made on behalf of pupils who move in Year 10, Year 11, Year 12 or Year will be considered individually, and if approved, a bus pass would normally be provided.

The local authority aims to provide a reliable system of transportation that carries learners safely, punctually and in reasonable comfort. In all cases, the efficient use of resources dictates the mode of transport provided, subject to any special needs requirements. Transport may be provided by means of contracted school transport services or existing public transport services such as bus, minibus, train, taxi, etc.

## **9.2 Assessing the availability of routes**

A route is considered to be available if it is safe (as far as reasonably practicable) for a learner without a disability or learning difficulty to walk the route alone or with an accompanying adult if the learner's age and level of understanding requires this. In determining the comparative safety of a walking route, the local authority conducts assessments of the risks that children might encounter along the route between home and school.

All assessments follow the Learner Travel Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance, June 2014. As routes are reviewed, provision may be withdrawn where, for example, identified hazards have been mitigated against. This will then be classed as an identified and available walking route. Parents will be given advance notice of at least one term of the withdrawal of transport and any withdrawal will normally be implemented to coincide with the start of an academic year.

## **9.3 Special circumstances**

The Home-to-School/College Transport Policy details the approach to considering the transport needs of looked after children, children with additional learning needs and/or disabilities and children for whom the provision of transport is recommended on medical grounds.

Transport may be provided to eligible learners attending schools in neighbouring local authorities, where such attendance is consistent with the local authority's admission policy.

The local authority may consider exercising its discretion to assist with the provision of transport for learners who are not otherwise eligible for free transport, where special circumstances are present. Parents/carers need to submit an application if they

consider there are special circumstances. Every application is considered on its own merits.

#### **9.4 Transport from home-to-college**

All learners aged 16 years, 17 years or 18 years on 1 September and who are attending their first course of full-time study at a further education college in that academic year, will be entitled to free transport subject to them:

- living beyond the three mile distance criterion; and
- attending the nearest college to their home that provides the course.

The usual mode of transport for college students is by bus/train.

#### **9.5 Travel Behaviour Code: Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008**

As part of the above Measure, Welsh Government introduced The Travel Behaviour Code (the Code) to promote safe travel for all children and young people, by setting out the standards of behaviour required by learners when travelling between home and school.

The Code, encourages schools and local authorities to work proactively with learners, their parents and the community to promote positive behaviour. The Code also allows the local authority to temporarily withdraw transport in circumstances where a learner has misbehaved while travelling to school/college.

The local authority will follow the procedures outlined the Code if it is considering withdrawing transport.

**The discretionary elements of the local authority's Home-to-School/College Policy are subject to review and may be discontinued. Any proposed changes will be subject to consultation with learners and parents and, if agreed, will usually apply from the start of a school year and will have regard to the Learner Travel Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance – June 2014.**

## 10. Links to other information topics

School meals:

<https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/residents/schools-and-education/school-meals/>

Grants for pupils (free school meals; pupil development grant; distinctive school clothing grant; education maintenance allowance):

<https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/residents/schools-and-education/grants-for-pupils/>

# 11. School admission arrangements

## PART 1 – General admission arrangements

### 1.1 The requirement to apply for a school place

Parents/carers **must** complete an application for a place for their child/ren. A child will not be permitted to start at a school until an application has been received and processed by the local authority and a school place has been offered by the local authority.

In respect of the nursery admissions rounds and normal (statutory) admissions rounds, a separate application is required for each child.

### 1.2 Who may apply for a school place?

In respect of applications for nursery children and children of statutory school-age, the application must be made by a 'parent' of the child, as defined by Section 576 of the Education Act 1996. This states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a biological parent but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child.

Therefore, for the purposes of education law, a 'parent' is deemed to include:

- all biological parents, whether they are married or not;
- any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person - this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, guardian or other relative;
- any person who has care of a child or young person but is not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility.

A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part-time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

The local authority uses the term 'parent/carer' to reflect the legal definition of 'parent', as detailed above.

The local authority will only accept an application from a person who is not a parent/carer if it is accompanied by an appropriate written authorisation from a parent/carer.

An applicant will be required to make a declaration of the relationship to the child and provide such information as the local authority requires, including documentation, evidencing that relationship, at the time the admission application is submitted.

The local authority expects that the parents/carers of a child reach agreement about the preferred school/s and who will submit the application, before a school admission application is submitted. The local authority will not intervene in disputes between parents/carers over school applications and will expect that these are resolved privately. If parents/carers cannot agree and a Court order stating who should be making the application and what the school preference/s should be has not been obtained, the local authority will proceed to accept the application from the parent/carer in receipt of Child Benefit for the child.

Applications in respect of post-16 admissions/transfers can be submitted by a parent/carer or the learner.

### 1.3 How to apply for a school place

For both admissions rounds and in-year admissions/transfers, a school admission application **must** be completed by the parents/carers.

Parents/carers are able to complete the relevant application online by signing up to 'My Account' on the Bridgend County Borough Council website. Guidance on completing the application is available on [www.bridgend.gov.uk/schooladmissions](http://www.bridgend.gov.uk/schooladmissions)

Any parents/carers who do not have access to their own computer/laptop or smart phone, may use the computers available within the libraries in the county borough to sign up to My Account and complete a school admission application. A parent/carer who remains unable to create a My Account and access the relevant online school admission application may contact the school, or Bridgend County Borough Council on telephone number 01656 643643, to request a hardcopy school admission application.

At the point that the 'Submit' button at the end of an online application is selected, an on-screen message confirms that the application is submitted. Therefore, parents/carers who complete an online school admission application can have peace of mind that the application has been received by the local authority. Additionally, the My Account holder can log in at any time and will be able to see the application and that its status is 'Submitted'. **It is a parent's/carer's responsibility to ensure that applications completed using the functionality in My Account, are 'Submitted' and are not left as 'Initiated', 'In progress' or Partially complete'.**

If parents/carers permit completion and submission of a school admission application for their child through the My Account of a third party, the My Account holder will be deemed to be submitting the application on behalf of, and with the full authority of, the parents/carers of the child. In these circumstances, the parents/carers will be considered as accepting responsibility for the consequence of any errors or deficiencies in the completion of the application and/or the submission of the application.

**The local authority cannot be held responsible for the non-receipt of an application that is not submitted through the online facility.**

## 1.4 Choosing a school

### Catchment schools/areas

Within the County Borough of Bridgend, each school has an area that it serves – its ‘catchment area’.

School catchment maps are published on the local authority’s website:

[www.bridgend.gov.uk/schooladmissions](http://www.bridgend.gov.uk/schooladmissions)

The local authority is committed to the principle of providing local schools for local children and will make every effort to ensure that parents/carers are able to secure a place for their child/ren at the local/catchment school, where parents/carers have expressed a positive preference for that school.

While most parents/carers choose to send their child/ren to their local/catchment school, they have the right to express a preference for their child/ren to attend any school.

Pupils are not automatically admitted to their catchment school and, therefore, parents still need to apply for a preferred place at their catchment school.

### Parental preference

The local authority is under a statutory duty to have regard to the general principle that pupils are to be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents/carers, except in the following circumstances:

- To admit the child would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources at the school, or to admit would be incompatible with the statutory duty to meet the infant class size limit.

- If the child has been permanently excluded from two or more schools, the requirement to comply with parental preference is dis-applied for a period of two years following the second exclusion. This does not apply to children who were below compulsory school age when they were excluded, nor to pupils who were reinstated after exclusion.

For admissions rounds, parents/carers are able to express a first and second preference when applying for a school place. The local authority has a duty to meet the preferences for admissions expressed by parents/carers ahead of those who have not expressed a preference.

Parents/carers must ensure that they return the relevant form expressing their first and second preferences by the deadline and not automatically assume that a place will be available for their child at a particular school, even though it may be their catchment school.

**It is strongly recommended that parents/carers select a second preference school. Limiting your choice to just one school does not improve your prospects of gaining a place for your child in that school.**

### **1.5 Arrangements with other local authorities**

The local authority has made the following arrangements with Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council, where surplus admission places are available:

1. Pupils from Abercerdin Primary School may attend Tonyrefail Comprehensive School with Bridgend County Borough Council being responsible for transport costs.
2. Pupils from Dolau Primary School, Brynna Primary School and Llanharan Primary School may attend Pencoed Comprehensive School with Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council being responsible for transport costs.

### **1.6 Child's address / place of ordinary residence**

Parents/carers will be expected to record the current address at which their child is ordinarily resident on a school admission application.

#### **Admissions rounds**

When considering whether a child lives in a school's catchment area, it is the child's place of ordinary residence that the local authority considers to be the home address and satisfying the admissions criteria.

Where the child's parents/carers are not living together but have shared responsibility for the child, and the child lives with each parent/carer for part of the periods during which the child receives education, the child will be considered as being ordinarily resident at the places where **each** of the parents/carers is ordinarily resident. Accordingly, the local authority will accept the address of either parent/carer as being the child's place of ordinary residence.

If the child's place of ordinary residence changes after a school admission application has been submitted, the local authority must be notified immediately.

Where a parent/carer provides fraudulent or intentionally misleading information relating to the child's residence, in order to obtain the advantage of a particular school placement to which the child would otherwise not be entitled, the local authority reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place. Where a place is withdrawn, the application will be considered afresh based on the accurate place of residence and a right of appeal will be offered if a place at the preferred school/s is refused. Where there is doubt about the child's place of ordinary residence, the local authority reserves the right to seek further verification from the applicant (such evidence may include, but not necessarily be limited to, a utility bill or council tax statement).

If the child's place of ordinary residence changes after the school admission application has been submitted:

1. The local authority must be notified immediately in writing (email or letter).
2. If the change is notified to the local authority before the closing date for the admission round, the change will be taken into consideration in the application of oversubscription criteria and the allocation of places.
3. If the change is notified to the local authority after the closing date for the admission round, the place of ordinary residence recorded on the application will be used in the application of oversubscription criteria and the allocation of places. The applicant will have the option to complete and submit a late application if the allocated place is at a school that is no longer the preferred school, which would be subject to the provisions relevant to late applications (see Part 1, section 1.16).
4. If the applicant does not inform the local authority of a change of ordinary residence prior to the child date on which the child would start school, the local authority will take the action detailed below under 'provision of false or misleading information'.

## In-year admissions/transfers

Whether the child's place of ordinary residence is within the preferred school's catchment area or not is of no consequence to the consideration of an in-year admission/transfer application.

### 1.7 Applications made on the basis of a future change of residence

#### Admissions rounds

Parents/carers will be expected to record the current address at which their child is ordinarily resident on a school admission application.

In the circumstances where the applicant is in the process of a house move at the time that the application is submitted and is expressing a preference for a school that is the catchment school for the future address, the following evidence **must** be provided to the local authority:

- written evidence from a solicitor that the house sale has been completed, contracts have been exchanged and that a moving date has been agreed such that the child will be resident at the new address by the commencement of the school term to which the application relates; or
- a written tenancy agreement evidencing that the child will be resident at the new address by the commencement of the school term to which the application relates.

All required evidence **must** be received by the local authority prior to the allocation and offer of places. If the evidence is not received prior to the allocation and offer of places, the application will be treated as an out of catchment application for the preferred school/s.

If the evidence does not confirm that the child will be resident at the new address by the commencement of the school term to which the application relates, the application will be treated as an out of catchment application for the preferred school/s.

#### In-year admission/transfer applications

It is not fair and equitable for the local authority to hold places open for children for undue periods of time. Accordingly, the local authority will only accept 'advance' in-year school admission/transfer applications, ie for a future admission date, where that requested admission date is in the period up to the end of the following **half term**, and the local authority is satisfied as to the reasons for the advance request.

## **1.8 Siblings**

Whether a sibling will be attending the preferred school/s is only of relevance to the oversubscription criteria for admissions rounds. It is of no relevance to applications for in-year admission/transfer.

A sibling is classified as a half or full brother/sister; a step brother/sister, an adopted brother/sister; or a child living in the same household.

An application will be considered under any relevant sibling oversubscription criteria for admissions rounds if the following conditions are met:

1. the full sibling details are recorded on the application; and
2. the sibling and the child who is the subject of the application would be attending the same school at the same time and the sibling is of statutory school-age (ie for nursery and primary school applications, the sibling must be in the reception year to Year 6; for junior school applications, the sibling must be in Year 4 to Year 6; for secondary school applications, the sibling must be in Year 7 to Year 11.)

## **1.9 Multiple birth children**

A multiple birth is defined as the birth of more than one baby from a single pregnancy (eg the birth of twins, triplets etc).

When allocating places in admissions rounds, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child, the local authority will also admit the other sibling(s).

## **1.10 Provision of false or misleading information**

Where a parent/carer provides fraudulent or intentionally misleading information in order to obtain the advantage of a particular school placement to which the child would otherwise not be entitled, the local authority reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place.

Where a place is withdrawn, the application will be considered afresh based on the accurate information, and a right of appeal will be offered if a place at the preferred school/s is refused.

Where there is doubt about the child's place of ordinary residence, the local authority reserves the right to seek further verification from the applicant in the form of documentary evidence, which may include, but not necessarily be limited to, a utility bill or council tax statement. If the local authority is not satisfied by the evidence provided and a place has already been offered, the local authority reserves the right to withdraw the offer.

### **1.11 Proximity to school**

The distance measurement will be from the child's place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate through which pupils may enter the school grounds.

In respect of residences that are within blocks of flats, the distance will be calculated from the front entrance of each flat.

The distances will be calculated to four decimal places.

The local authority uses software to measure all distances within the Bridgend County Borough that takes into account the available walking routes to the school/s.

For applications where the child's place of ordinary residence is outside the Bridgend County Borough, the distance will be measured using publicly-available web-based services.

### **1.12 Information or circumstances that the local authority does not consider when making admission decisions**

The following is not an exhaustive list, but details the principal information and circumstances that have no bearing on admission decisions:

- Any school that the child has previously attended.
- Any particular school that the child might attend in the future.
- A parent/carer communicating to any school that there is an intention to apply for a place at the school.
- An invitation to, or attendance by a child, at a 'taster'/transition day at any school.
- Allowance by any school of a visit by the parents/carers and/or child.

- Any indication either explicitly given, or assumed by a parent/carer to have been given, by a school that there are places available at the school in any year group, with the exception of sixth form places.

### **1.13 Requests for admission outside of the child's chronological age group**

Occasionally, parents/carers may seek a school place outside of the chronological group for children who are gifted or talented, or children who have experienced problems or missed part of a year due to ill-health.

The local authority will consider each request carefully and make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case. The local authority will consider what is most beneficial for the child and, in every case, will seek information from the parents, the school and an educational psychologist to inform its decision.

Where the local authority considers that an out-of-year group application is appropriate but that application is refused due to no places being available at the school, the parent/carer will be offered a right of appeal. However, there is no right of appeal if a place has been offered, but not in the desired year group (ie where the place offered is in the correct chronological year group for the child's age).

### **1.14 School capacities**

The capacity of a school is the number of pupil places it contains.

Welsh Government has published a capacity calculation methodology for all schools. This provides a robust and consistent method of assessing the capacity of all schools and is based on existing accommodation at a school and usage. However, the method does not apply to nursery or special schools or pupil referral units.

For statutory year groups (reception to Year 11), the capacity calculation informs the local authority's calculation of a published admissions number (PAN) for a school. As the PAN reflects the school's ability to accommodate pupils, the local authority will generally admit pupils up to the PAN in each statutory year group and will only exceed the PAN in exceptional circumstances.

### **1.15 Infant class size limit**

In order to improve educational standards in schools, The School Admission (Infant Class Size) (Wales) Regulations 2013 limit the number of children in reception, Year 1 and Year 2 classes to 30 when a single qualified teacher is present. The local authority can refuse admission to classes in these year groups if an admission would

result in the infant class size limit being breached (giving rise to infant class size prejudice). However, the legislation permits certain exceptions to the infant class size limit, eg the admission of children who are looked after or previously looked after.

In relation to the reception year, infant class size prejudice does not arise if the school's admission number has not been exceeded.

### **1.16 Late applications (admissions rounds)**

All applications should be submitted in time for receipt by the local authority by the relevant published closing dates.

For admissions rounds, the local authority will accept applications that are received after the relevant published closing date **provided that** the application is received prior to the offers of places being made **and** the local authority is satisfied as to the parents/carers' reasons for the late application.

All other late applications will not be accepted for inclusion in the allocation of places that will be notified to applicants on the relevant published offer dates. Such applications will be processed by the local authority after applications that were received by the closing date and in order of date received. Oversubscription criteria will not apply; if a place is available in the preferred school at the time the application is processed, it will be offered. Therefore, late applicants may find that their preferred school is already full, even if the school is their catchment school.

No applications for admissions rounds will be accepted after 31 August 2021. After this date, an in-year admission/transfer application is required and all considerations applicable to in-year admission/transfer applications will be relevant.

The local authority does not accept in-year admission/transfer applications made more than one half-term in advance of the start date. Consequently, the local authority will begin processing those applications for a part-time nursery class in April 2022 that are received after 31 August 2021, at the start of the spring term 2022.

Applications in respect of looked after children and previously looked after children or children with a statement of SEN or an IDP that names a specific school will not be treated as late applications regardless of when the application is received.

### **1.17 Notification of the decision**

In respect of applications made for admissions rounds, Welsh Government has specified national 'offer dates' on which applicants will be notified of the outcome.

Parents/carers will be notified in writing of the outcome of any school admission application. A parent/carer should have no expectation of a verbal notification.

If a place is refused at the requested school/s, the written notification will provide information regarding the waiting list and the right to register an appeal against the local authority's decision.

### 1.18 Waiting lists

The local authority maintains waiting lists for oversubscribed schools. A child will be automatically included in the waiting list unless a parent/carer has expressly advised the local authority that this action is not required.

For the admissions rounds, children will remain on the waiting list, for any school at which they have been refused a place, until 30 September 2021. Children will automatically be removed from the waiting list/s after this date.

For all in-year admission/transfer applications, children will remain on the waiting list for the school at which they have been refused for a period of three months from the date of the refusal letter. Children will automatically be removed from the waiting list after these periods have elapsed. Submission of a new application will not renew a child's place on a waiting list. If a new application is submitted and is refused, the child will be recorded as a new entry to the waiting list from the date of the refusal.

Registration of an admission appeal does not extend a child's time on the waiting list.

If a place becomes available at a school and there is more than one child on the waiting list for the year group, the place will be allocated on the basis of the relevant published oversubscription criteria and **not** the length of time a child has been on the waiting list.

### 1.19 Equalities

The local authority's admission arrangements seek to achieve full compliance with all relevant legislation and guidance, with regard to equal opportunities and human rights (Equality Act 2010, the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Welsh Language Act 1993).

### 1.20 Data protection

The local authority regards privacy as important and complies with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. The full data

protection guidance and principles of the local authority may be viewed on the website [www.bridgend.gov.uk](http://www.bridgend.gov.uk)

Any information provided by parents/carers/learners on a school admission application, an in-year school admission/transfer application or a school admission appeal registration will be held electronically and used by local authority for the purpose of processing the admission application or admission appeal request.

The local authority will share the information provided on a school admission application or an in-year school admission/transfer application with the relevant schools in accordance with the Fair Processing Statement – Education and Family Support, which is available at <https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/my-council/freedom-of-information/data-protection/>

## PART 2 – Nursery admission rounds

### 2.1 General

The local authority is the admissions authority for nursery classes in local authority-maintained schools in Bridgend County Borough. Parents/carers who wish to apply for a nursery place at a voluntary aided school should approach that school directly for an admission application form.

Places at local authority-maintained schools are part-time for three-year-olds and full-time for four-year-olds. Although nursery education is non-statutory, the local authority expects all children who are offered a part-time place to attend for five half days per school week and all children who are offered a full-time place to attend for five full days per school week.

A school admission (nursery) application **must** be completed by the parents/carers of eligible children for admissions to nursery classes in LA-maintained schools.

A child will only be permitted to attend a nursery class at a LA-maintained school if the relevant application has been submitted **and** the local authority has formally offered a place at that school.

#### Parents/carers should note that:

- Pupils who are admitted to a part-time nursery class of an infant or primary school **will not have an automatic right to continued education at the same school when applying for a full-time nursery place.** All parents/carers of children attending a part-time nursery class, whether residing within or outside the defined catchment area, will be required to complete a school admission application for a full-time nursery place at a primary or infant school, at the appropriate time, indicating their preference for a school.
- Pupils who are admitted to a full-time nursery class of an infant or primary school **will not have an automatic right to continued education at the same school when applying for a reception place.** All parents/carers of children attending a full-time nursery class, whether residing within or outside the defined catchment area, will be required to complete a school admission application for a reception place at a primary or infant school, at the appropriate time, indicating their preference for a school.
- As nursery education is non-statutory, there is **no right of appeal** in the case of a refusal of a part-time or full-time nursery place.

## 2.2 The full-time nursery admission round

### Eligibility and admission round dates

For the academic year 2021-2022, the table below shows the dates in relation to eligibility and the admission round:

| Cohort                                    | Eligible applications   | Admission round dates  |
|---|---|--|
| Full-time nursery starting September 2021 | Children born between 01 September 2017 and 31 August 2018.<br><br>These children will attain the age of four between 01 September 2021 and 31 August 2022. | Applications open –<br>09:00hrs<br>Monday, 11 January 2021<br><br>Applications close –<br>16:30hrs<br>Friday 26 March 2021<br><br>Offer date –<br>Monday 17 May 2021 |

### How places are allocated

The local authority will take into account the size of the nursery accommodation at the school when allocating full-time nursery places but will not normally exceed the school's published admission number (PAN).

Where the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, the local authority will apply the following **oversubscription criteria**, in order of priority, to allocate the places available:

1. Children who are looked after or previously looked after.
2. Children whose place of ordinary residence is within the school's defined catchment area.

Where a school is oversubscribed under this criterion, the local authority will allocate the places in the following order of priority:

- a) Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from the reception year to Year 6 in the academic year 2021-2022.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child (eg a twin or triplet), the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

- b) Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.
3. Children not currently ordinarily resident within the school's defined catchment area whose parents/carers have satisfied the local authority, by the published closing date for submission of the relevant school admission applications, that the child will be ordinarily resident within the defined catchment area by the commencement of the school term to which the application relates.

Where a school is oversubscribed under this criterion, the local authority will allocate the places in the following order of priority:

- a) Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from the reception year to Year 6 in the academic year 2021-2022.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child (eg a twin or triplet), the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

- b) Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.

4. Children recommended for placement for medical, psychological, or compelling social reasons.

5. Children living outside the school's defined catchment area will be considered for any remaining places in the order of priority set out below:

- a) Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from reception year to Year 6 in the academic year 2021-2022.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child (eg a twin or triplet), the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.

## 2.3 The part-time nursery admission round

### Eligibility and admission round dates

A child is eligible for a part-time nursery place from the term following the third birthday, in January or April.

For the academic year 2021-2022, the table below shows the dates in relation to eligibility and the admission round:

| Cohort                                  | Eligible applications  | Admission round dates   |
|---|--|---|
| Part-time nursery starting January 2022 | Children born between 01 September 2018 and 31 December 2018.<br><br>These children will attain the age of three between 01 September 2021 and 31 December 2021. | Applications open – 10:00 hrs, Monday 11 January 2021<br><br>Applications close – 16:00 hrs, Friday 26 March 2021 |
| Part-time nursery starting April 2022   | Children born between 01 January 2019 and 31 March 2019.<br><br>These children will attain the age of three between 01 January 2022 and 31 March 2022.           | Offer date (for places) - By 29 October 2021  |

**Parents/carers must ensure that they return the relevant form expressing their first and second preferences by the closing date and not assume that a place will be automatically be available for their child at a particular school, even though it may be their catchment school.**

How the local authority handles late applications is detailed in Part 1.

### How places are allocated

In determining the number of part-time nursery places available for allocation in any school, the local authority will take into account the available capacity for nursery pupils, the capacity in respect of full-time nursery pupils and the number of full-time nursery pupils already on roll at the school.

Where the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, the local authority will apply the following **oversubscription criteria**, in order of priority, to allocate the places available:

1. Children who are looked after or previously looked after.
2. Children born between 1 September 2018 and 31 December 2018 who will attain the age of three in the academic year 2021-2022 and whose place of ordinary residence is within the school's defined catchment area. **These children will be eligible for a part-time nursery place from January 2022.**

Where a school is over-subscribed the local authority will allocate the places in the following order of priority:

- a) Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from the reception year to Year 6 in the academic year 2021-2022.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child (eg a twin or triplet), the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

- b) Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.

3. Children born between 1 January 2019 and 31 March 2019 who will attain the age of three in the academic year 2021-2022 and whose place of ordinary residence is within the school's defined catchment area. **These children will be eligible for a part-time nursery place in April 2022.**

Where a school is over-subscribed the local authority will allocate the places in the following order of priority:

- a) Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from the reception year to Year 6 in the academic year 2021-2022.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child (eg a twin or triplet), the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

- b) Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.

4. Children not currently ordinarily resident within the school's defined catchment area whose parents/carers have satisfied the local authority, by the published closing date for submission of the relevant school admission applications, that

their child will be ordinarily resident within the defined catchment area by the commencement of the school term to which the application relates.

Where a school is oversubscribed under this criteria, the local authority will allocate the places in the following order of priority:

- a) Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from the reception year to Year 6 in the academic year 2021-2022.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child (eg a twin or triplet), the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

- b) Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.

5. Children recommended for placement for medical, psychological, or compelling social reasons.

6. Children living outside the school's defined catchment area will be considered for any remaining places in the order of priority set out below:

- a) Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from the reception year to Year 6 in the academic year 2021-2022.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child (eg a twin or triplet), the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

- b) Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.

## PART 3 – Normal (statutory) admissions rounds

### 3.1 Primary/infant school admission round (reception year)

The relevant age group for the reception year is 4-5 years.

Every child is required by law to receive full-time education from the beginning of the school term after his/her fifth birthday. In the Bridgend County Borough, children are normally admitted to the reception year in the September following their fourth birthday. However, parents/carers have the option of deferring their child's entry to the reception year until later in the same school year. The deferment cannot continue beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday, nor beyond the school year for which the original admission application was accepted by the local authority. Where the parent/carer wishes to defer the child's entry to the reception year as detailed, the local authority will hold a place for the child.

An application for a reception year place must be submitted. **There is no automatic admission to the reception year at any primary or infant school, regardless of the school at which the child may be attending a nursery class.**

Parents/carers who wish to apply for a reception year place at a voluntary aided school should approach that school directly for an admission application form.

#### Eligibility and admission round dates

Children born between 1 September 2016 and 31 August 2017, starting in a reception class in September 2021:

| Action  | Date                                      |
|---|---|
| Applications open on  | 10:00 hrs,<br>Monday,<br>23 November 2020 |
| Closing date for receipt of applications by the local authority                 | 16:00 hrs,<br>Friday,<br>12 February 2021 |
| Notification to parents/carers of acceptance/refusal of places (the offer date) | Friday,<br>16 April 2021                  |
| Closing date for parents/carers to submit an appeal                             | 16:00 hrs,<br>Friday<br>7 May 2021        |

## Allocation of reception places for September 2021

The local authority will normally only admit up to the school's published admission number when allocating places.

Where the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, the local authority will apply the following **oversubscription criteria**, in order of priority, to allocate the places available:

1. Children who are looked after or previously looked after.
2. Children whose place of ordinary residence is within the school's defined catchment area.

Where a school is oversubscribed under this criteria, the local authority will allocate the places in the following order of priority:

- a) Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from Year 1 to Year 6 in respect of primary schools, or Year 1 and Year 2 in respect of infants schools, attending the school in the academic year 2021-2022.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child (eg a twin or triplet), the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

- b) Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.

3. Children not currently ordinarily resident within the school's defined catchment area whose parents/carers have satisfied the local authority, by the published closing date for submission of the relevant school admission applications, that their child will be ordinarily resident within the defined catchment area by the commencement of the school term to which the application relates.

Where a school is oversubscribed under this criteria, the local authority will allocate the places in the following order of priority:

- a) Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from Year 1 to Year 6 in respect of primary schools, or Year 1 and Year 2 in respect of infants schools, attending the school in the academic year 2021-2022.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child (eg a twin or triplet), the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

- b) Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.
4. Children recommended for placement for medical, psychological, or compelling social reasons.
  5. Children living outside the school's defined catchment area will be considered for any remaining places in the order of priority set out below:
    - a) Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from Year 1 to Year 6 in respect of primary schools, or Year 1 and Year 2 in respect of infants schools, attending the school in the academic year 2021-2022.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child (eg a twin or triplet), the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

- b) Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.

### 3.2 Junior school admission round (Year 3)

In primary schools, the infant and junior sections are simply departments of the same school and children progress through the school from the infants to juniors without having to transfer elsewhere. Parents/carers are therefore **not** required to complete a school admission application, since the children are already regarded as registered pupils in the primary school.

Children attending Year 2 in an infant school do not automatically transfer to Year 3 at junior school. An application for a Year 3 place at junior school must be submitted. **There is no automatic admission to a junior school or any primary school regardless of the infant school or primary school that a child currently attends.**

Children normally enter Year 3 in junior school at the beginning of the academic year following their seventh birthday.

If parents/carers do not wish their child to attend Year 3 at junior school and instead wish for their child to attend Year 3 at a standard primary school, an in-year admission/transfer application must be submitted. Parents/carers should note that places in Year 3 in a standard primary school may be very limited or unavailable. Also,

that the local authority will not make admission decisions in respect of in-year admission/transfer applications for a September 2021 start date until Easter 2021.

Parents/carers who wish to apply for a Year 3 place at a voluntary aided school should approach that school directly for an admission application form.

### Eligibility and admission round dates

Children born between 1 September 2013 and 31 August 2014, transferring from infants school (Year 2) to junior school (Year 3) in September 2021:

| Action  | Date                                  |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Applications open on  | 10:00 hrs, Monday<br>23 November 2020 |
| Closing date for receipt of applications by the local authority                 | 16:00 hrs, Friday<br>12 February 2021 |
| Notification to parents/carers of acceptance/refusal of places (the offer date) | Friday,<br>16 April 2021              |
| Closing date for parents/carers to submit an appeal                             | 16:00 hrs, Friday<br>7 May 2021       |

### Allocation of Year 3 junior school places for September 2021

The local authority will admit children up to the school's published admission number and will only exceed the published admission number in exceptional circumstances.

Where the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, the local authority will apply the following **oversubscription criteria**, in order of priority, to allocate the places available:

1. Children who are looked after or previously looked after.
2. Children whose place of ordinary residence is within the school's defined catchment area.

Where a school is oversubscribed under this criteria, the local authority will allocate the places in the following order of priority:

- b) Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from Year 4 to Year 6 attending the school in the academic year 2021-2022.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child, the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

- c) Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.

- 3. Children not currently ordinarily resident within the school's defined catchment area whose parents/carers have satisfied the local authority, by the published closing date for submission of the relevant school admission applications, that the child will be ordinarily resident within the defined catchment area by the commencement of the school term to which the application relates.

Where a school is oversubscribed under this criteria, the local authority will allocate the places in the following order of priority:

- a) Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from Year 4 to Year 6 attending the school in the academic year 2021-2022.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child, the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

- b) Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.

- 4. Children recommended for placement for medical, psychological, or compelling social reasons.

- 5. Children living outside the school's defined catchment area will be considered for any remaining places in the order of priority set out below:

- a) Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from Year 4 to Year 6 attending the school in the academic year 2021-2022.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child, the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

- b) Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.

### 3.3 Secondary school admission round (Year 7)

Children normally enter Year 7 in secondary school at the beginning of the academic year following their eleventh birthday.

An application for a Year 7 place must be submitted. **There is no automatic admission to any secondary school, regardless of the primary or junior school that a child currently attends.**

Parents/carers who wish to apply for a Year 7 place at a voluntary aided school should approach that school directly for an admission application form.

#### Eligibility and admission round dates

Children born between 1 September 2009 and 31 August 2010 who are transferring from junior/primary school (Year 6) to secondary school (Year 7) in September 2021:

| Action  | Date                                    |
|---|---|
| Applications open on  | 10:00 hrs,<br>Monday<br>19 October 2020 |
| Closing date for receipt of applications by the local authority                 | 16:00 hrs,<br>Friday<br>22 January 2021 |
| Notification to parents/carers of acceptance/refusal of places (the offer date) | Monday,<br>1 March 2021                 |
| Closing date for parents/carers to submit an appeal                             | 16:00 hrs,<br>Friday<br>19 March 2021   |

#### Allocation of Year 7 secondary school places for September 2021

The local authority will admit children up to the school's published admission number and will only exceed the published admission number in exceptional circumstances.

Where the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, the local authority will apply the following **oversubscription criteria**, in order of priority, to allocate the places available:

1. Children who are looked after or previously looked after.
  
2. Children whose place of ordinary residence is within the school's defined catchment area.

Where a school is oversubscribed under this criteria, the local authority will allocate the places in the following order of priority:

- d) Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from Year 8 to Year 11 attending the school in the academic year 2021-2022.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child, the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

- e) Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.

3. Children not currently ordinarily resident within the school's defined catchment area whose parents/carers have satisfied the local authority, by the published closing date for submission of the relevant school admission applications, that the child will be ordinarily resident within the defined catchment area by the commencement of the school term to which the application relates.

Where a school is oversubscribed under this criteria, the local authority will allocate the places in the following order of priority:

- b) Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from Year 8 to Year 11 attending the school in the academic year 2021-2022.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child, the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

- c) Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.
- 4. Children recommended for placement for medical, psychological, or compelling social reasons.
  - 5. Children living outside the school's defined catchment area will be considered for any remaining places in the order of priority set out below:
    - b) Children who will have a sibling at the school in any age group from Year 8 to Year 11 attending the school in the academic year 2021-2022.

When allocating places, if the last place is offered to a multiple birth child, the local authority will also admit the other sibling/s.

- c) Proximity to school, as measured by the shortest available walking route from the place of ordinary residence to the nearest openly accessible school gate.

## **PART 4 – Sixth-form admissions**

### **4.1 Sixth-forms in community schools**

The local authority is the admitting authority for post-16 admissions to sixth-forms in the community schools within the county borough. However, the individual schools administer the admission arrangements on behalf of the local authority. Therefore, applications in this category should be made directly to the school.

While the local authority has a policy of open access to schools' sixth-forms, the individual schools are responsible for determining and issuing entry criteria on sixth-form admissions.

### **4.2 Other further education institutions**

Admission arrangements are determined by these institutions and applications should be made directly to the institution concerned.

## **PART 5 – In-year admissions / transfers**

### **5.1 Circumstances in which an in-year admission/transfer application is required**

An in-year admission/transfer application **must** be completed in any of the following circumstances:

1. If a child moves into Bridgend County Borough during the course of an academic year and the parents/carers wish the child to attend a school for which the local authority is the admission authority.
2. If the parents/carers wish their child/ren to move to a different school within the Bridgend County Borough during the course of an academic year and the parents/carers wish the child to move to a school for which the local authority is the admission authority.
3. If an application for an admission round has not been completed and submitted to the local authority by 31 August 2021 (ie an application is being submitted on or after the official start date of the 2021-2022 academic year).

### **5.2 School transfers**

Parents/carers who wish to apply for a place at a different school for reasons other than a change of ordinary residence are advised to carefully consider the information available on [www.bridgend.gov.uk/schooladmissions](http://www.bridgend.gov.uk/schooladmissions).

Parents/carers should talk to the headteacher of the pupil's current school about the reasons for a change of school being considered. There is a significant amount of research evidencing that changing schools is disruptive and can have a negative impact on a pupil's attainment. There are many reasons for this. It is particularly important that careful consideration is given to the impacts of moving pupils in Year 10 and Year 11, who would have already begun to study for their chosen GCSE subjects, as those GCSE subjects may not be available at a different school.

### **5.3 'Advance' requests**

It is not fair and equitable for the local authority to hold places open for children for undue periods of time. Accordingly, the local authority will only accept 'advance' in-year school admission/transfer applications, ie for a future admission date, where that requested admission date is in the period up to the end of the following half term and the local authority is satisfied as to the reasons for the advance request.

## 5.4 Availability of places

The local authority will admit children up to the school's published admission number and will only exceed the published admission number in exceptional circumstances.

As the number of pupils on roll in any school can change on a frequent basis, the local authority will not provide information on the availability of places in any year group at any school in advance of an in-year school admission/transfer application being submitted.

## 5.5 Consideration of applications

In-year school admission/transfer applications are considered by the local authority in strict order of date received.

For in-year admissions/transfers, whether the child lives in or out of the catchment area of the requested school is of no relevance to the local authority's decision on whether a place at the requested school can be offered.

If there is no place available in the relevant year group at the requested school, the local authority will refuse admission to that school unless the circumstances are such that the local authority considers an exception should be made.

Where there is a place in the relevant year group at the requested school but the in-year school admission/transfer application is not made in consequence of a change in the child's ordinary residence, or the circumstances are such that the local authority determines there is no need for an immediate move of school, **the local authority will defer the admission to the start of the following school term.** This is to minimise disruption to the education of both the child and the other children at the school.

## 5.6 Communication of the outcome

Applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome of their in-year school admission/transfer application within 15 school days or 28 calendar days of the date of the application being received, whichever is the sooner.

Parents/carers may not expect that the outcome of their application will be communicated verbally.

If the application is refused, the notification will set out the reasons for the decision and will advise parents/carers on the appeal process. As nursery education is non-

statutory, **parents/carers have no right of appeal in respect of unsuccessful nursery class applications.**

## 5.7 Waiting lists

The local authority maintains waiting lists for oversubscribed schools. If a place at the preferred school is not offered, the child will be automatically included in the waiting list for the school unless the parent/carer expressly advises the local authority that this action is not required.

For all in-year admission/transfer applications, children will remain on the waiting list for any school at which they have been refused for a period of 3 months from the date of the refusal. Children will automatically be removed from the waiting list/s after these periods have elapsed.

Submission of a new in-year admission/transfer application does not renew a child's place on a waiting list. If a new in-year admission/transfer application is submitted and is refused, the child will be recorded as a new entry to the waiting list from the date of the refusal.

Registration of an admission appeal does not extend a child's time on the waiting list, irrespective of the date for the admission appeal hearing.

If additional places become available at a school, they will be allocated to children on the waiting list on the basis of the published oversubscription criteria (see sections 15 and 16) and **not** the length of time a child has been on the waiting list. A place cannot be allocated to a child who is not on the waiting list.

## **PART 6 – Admission policies for voluntary aided schools**

The admissions policies of the following voluntary aided schools are available from the school's websites as detailed below:

St Mary's Catholic Primary School -

[https://st-marys-catholic-primary-school11.j2bloggy.com/en\\_GB/](https://st-marys-catholic-primary-school11.j2bloggy.com/en_GB/)

St Mary's and St Patrick's Catholic Primary School -

<https://stmaryandstpatrick.co.uk/>

St Robert's Roman Catholic Primary School -

<http://www.strobertscath.co.uk/>

Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School -

[www.archbishopmg.co.uk](http://www.archbishopmg.co.uk)

The admission policy of the following voluntary aided school can be requested from the school directly:

Archdeacon John Lewis Church in Wales Primary School

Brackla Way

Brackla

Bridgend

CF31 2JS

Tel: 01656 815520

## **PART 7 – Admission Appeals**

### **7.1 Nursery education**

**No right of appeal** arises in respect of the refusal to admit a child to nursery education, on either a full-time or part-time basis.

### **7.2 Statutory education**

In the vast majority of cases, children are offered places in line with the parents/carers' preference of school. If, however, a child is unable to gain admission to the preferred school, parents/carers may choose to appeal to an independent panel.

Parents/carers may accept a place offered at an alternative school whilst pursuing a place at the preferred school.

The registration of an appeal does not extend a child's time on the waiting list for the preferred school. (Please see PART 1 for information relating to waiting lists.)

A parent/carer may request admission to a year group that is different to the chronological-age year group. If the local authority considers that application is appropriate but the application is refused due to no places being available at the school, the parent/carer will be offered a right of appeal. However, there is no right of appeal if a place has been offered, but not in the desired year group (ie where the place offered is in the correct chronological year group for the child's age).

### **7.3 Post-16 (sixth-form) education**

As detailed in PART 4, the local authority is the admitting authority for post-16 admissions to sixth-forms in the community schools within the county borough. While the individual schools administer the admission arrangements on behalf of the local authority, and are responsible for determining and issuing entry criteria on sixth-form admissions, the local authority is responsible for handling all appeals in respect of refusals to a preferred sixth-form.

The parents/carers and the learner are able to appeal separately or jointly. However, if there are separate appeal registrations, the appeals will be heard together.

### **7.4 Considering whether to register an appeal**

Any person considering whether to register an appeal against the refusal of a place at the preferred school in during the 2021-2022 academic year is strongly recommended to read:

- the local authority's [School Admissions Policy and Arrangements for 2021-2022](#);
- the Welsh Government [School Admissions Code 2013](#); and
- the Welsh Government [School Admission Appeals Code 2013](#).

Any person registering an appeal will be expected to submit their grounds for appealing.

## 7.5 Registering an appeal

### Who may register an appeal?

In the case of appeals relating to statutory-age children, the appeal can only be registered by a parent or carer (legal guardian). Unless already provided to the local authority, a legal guardian **must** submit official documentation, proving guardianship, at the time the appeal registration is submitted.

In the case of appeals relating to sixth-form learners, the parents/carers and the learner are able to appeal separately or jointly.

The local authority will only accept an appeal registration from a person who is not a parent/carers if it is accompanied by an appropriate written permission from the parents/carers.

### Timescales for registering an appeal

For appeals relating to the refusal of places in an admissions round, parents/carers (or learners for sixth-form admissions) **must** register their appeal with the local authority by the relevant closing date, as detailed below:

| <b>Refusal decision</b>  | <b>Date that the local authority must receive your appeal registration</b>                       |
|--|--|
| Secondary admission round<br>(Year 7 for September 2021)                       | 16:00hrs on Friday, 19 March 2021  |
| Reception admission round<br>(Reception class for September 2021)              | 16:00hrs on Friday, 07 May 2021  |
| Junior admission round<br>(Year 3 class in a junior school for September 2021) | 16:00hrs on Friday, 07 May 2021  |
| Sixth-form admission round<br>(Year 12 for September 2021)                     | No later than 14 calendar days (or 10 working days) of the written notification of the decision. |
| In-year admission/transfer during the 2021-2022 academic year                  | No later than 14 calendar days (or 10 working days) of the written notification of the decision. |

There is no obligation on the local authority to accept an appeal registration made outside of these timescales. If an appeal is registered after these timescales, the local authority will expect detailed reason/s for the late registration to be provided. The local authority will consider the reason/s for a late appeal registration and will advise the appellant if the late appeal has, or has not been accepted.

### [Submitting an appeal registration](#)

Appeals for refusal of a place at a preferred school for the academic year 2021-2022 can be registered online by signing up to My Account on the Bridgend County Borough Council website. Guidance on completing the registration is available on [www.bridgend.gov.uk/schooladmissions](http://www.bridgend.gov.uk/schooladmissions)

Any parents/carers/learners who do not have access to their own computer/laptop or smart phone, may use the computers available within the libraries in the county borough to sign up to My Account and complete an online registration.

**Parents/carers who complete an online school admission appeal registration can have peace of mind that the registration has been received. The local authority cannot be held responsible for the non-receipt of a registration**

## **submitted through other means**

A parent/carer/learner who remains unable to access the online registration may contact Bridgend County Borough Council on telephone number 01656 643643 to request a hardcopy registration form.

## **7.6 Registering an appeal against an admission refusal by voluntary aided school**

As detailed in PART 1, the local authority does not handle admissions to the voluntary aided schools, which are:

Archdeacon John Lewis Church in Wales Primary School  
St Mary's and St Patrick's Catholic Primary School  
St Mary's Catholic Primary School  
St Robert's Roman Catholic Primary School  
Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School

Parents/carers who have been refused a place for their child/ren at one of these schools, and wish to appeal against that decision, will need to contact the school directly. Relevant details will be in the notification letter received from the school and the school's admissions policy.

## **7.7 The independent admission appeals process**

School admission appeals are conducted in accordance with the Welsh Government's School Admission Appeals Code 2013, which is a statutory code.

The local authority will refer the appeal to an independent admission appeal panel for a hearing.

Members of admission appeals panels are entirely independent of the local authority. They are volunteers who are fully trained under the requirements of the School Admission Appeals Code 2013.

The appeals process is administered by the local authority's Legal Services Department and a member of that department acts as the clerk to the panel.

### **Arrangements for the admission appeal hearing**

The clerk to the admission appeal panel will arrange a time and place for the hearing.

Parents/carers/learners will have the opportunity of attending the admission panel hearing and making their representations (oral and/or written) as to why the child should attend the preferred school. However, they may elect not to attend the admission appeal hearing and allow the appeal to be considered on a written statement only.

The appeal will be decided on the information available if parents/carers/learners have indicated an intention to attend the admission appeal hearing but do not do so, and fail to provide a reasonable explanation for not attending.

If parents/carers/learners cannot attend on the scheduled date and it is not reasonably practicable to offer an adjourned hearing, the appeal will be decided on the information available.

Parents/carers/learners will be given at least 14 days (10 working days) written notice of the appeal panel hearing, unless they agree to a shorter period. The parent/carer/learner should confirm this in writing to the clerk to the admission appeal panel.

Parents/carers/learners may be accompanied at an admission panel hearing by a friend or adviser or an interpreter; however, local authority councillors are not permitted to attend. Parents/carers/learners should inform the clerk to the admission appeal panel of any representation at least seven days before the hearing date.

Organisations such as ACE (The Advisory Centre for Education) may be able to provide assistance to parents/carers/learners in relation to school admission appeals. Information is available from the organisation's website [www.ace-ed.org.uk](http://www.ace-ed.org.uk)

### The admission appeal panel hearing and decision

When making its decision, the admission appeal panel will be obliged to follow the School Admissions Appeals Code 2013.

The admission appeal panel will firstly consider the case presented by the local authority in relation to prejudice to the efficient education provided at the school and the efficient use of resources, if another child were to be admitted to the relevant year group.

If the admission appeal panel accepts the case made by the local authority, the panel will then consider the case presented by the parent(s)/carer(s)/learner and determine whether the merits of the case outweigh the case presented by the local authority.

Parents/carers should note that an admission appeal panel has limited powers to overturn a decision by the local authority to refuse the admission of a child where infant class size legislation applies.

The decision of the admission appeal panel is legally binding. This means that if an appeal is successful, the child/learner must be admitted to the school.

## **7.8 Repeat appeals**

Parents/carers generally do not have a right to a second appeal in respect of the same school and the same academic year except where:

- there were faults in the first appeal process and there is a significant possibility that the outcome might have been affected by the faults (this may be on the recommendation of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales); or
- a fresh application is accepted because there has been a significant and material change in the circumstances of the parent/carer or child and that application has also been refused. Common examples of where a fresh application is considered are where a family has moved address or there are new medical reasons pertaining to the choice of school.

Parents/carers/learners who appeal unsuccessfully may re-apply for a place at the same school in respect of a later academic year (but subject to the timescales set out in the timetables within PART 2. Parents/carers learners will have a right to appeal if that application is also refused.