

# Admission Forum Annual Report 2023/2024

## Admission Authority: Bridgend

Secretary to the Forum: Miss E Giles

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## Membership and attendance of the Forum

Name	Position	Time served as Forum Member as at 1 September 2023*	Membership by category (see table below)
1. Mr R Davies	<b>Chair</b> Group Manager (Strategy, Performance and Support) Bridgend County Borough Council Education, Early Years and Young People Directorate	9 years (Re-elected 2019)	LA
2. Mr J Tarran	<b>Vice Chair</b> Headteacher Archdeacon John Lewis Church in Wales Primary School	10 years (Re-elected 2023)	S/VA
3. Miss E Giles	<b>Secretary</b> Senior Pupil Services Officer Bridgend County Borough Council Education, Early Years and Young People Directorate	0 year (new member from 1 September 2023)	LA
4. Cllr J-P Blundell	Cabinet Member for Education	1 year	LA
5. Ms R Garner	ALN (additional learning needs) Lead Early Years, Cognition and Learning, and CMMI (complex medical and motor impairment) Bridgend County Borough Council Education, Early Years and Young People Directorate	2 years	LA/SEN/ALN
6. Ms Beth Davies	Childcare Manager Bridgend County Borough Council	2 years	LA

		Education, Early Years and Young People Directorate		
7.	Mr R Pawar	Headteacher Bryntirion Comprehensive School	1 year	S/CV
8.	Mrs K John	Headteacher Brackla Primary School	6 years (Re-elected 2021)	S/CV
9.	Mrs D Hughes	Headteacher Ysgol y Ferch o'r Sgêr	0 (new member from October 2023)	S/CV
10.	Mr A Howells	Headteacher Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School	1 year	S/VA
11.	Ms A Robertson	Director of Schools Archdiocese of Cardiff	1 year	RC
12.	Ms R Morteo	Acting Diocesan Education Lead for the Llandaff Diocese	1 year	CIW
13.	Ms R Owens	Parent governor Heronsbridge School	1 year	PG
14.	Ms C Bloomfield	Parent Governor Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen	1 year	PG
15.	Mr S Sweeney	Community governor Tremains Primary School	1 year	L/COM

**\*If served more than 4 years also include date of re-election.**

### **Additional members**

Mrs Melanie Treharne, Education Engagement Co-ordinator, Bridgend County Borough Council  
Ms Claire Christy, School Admissions Officer, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

<b>Acronyms for Core Members</b>		
<b>Members Nominated by</b>	<b>Core Membership</b>	<b>Acronym</b>
LA - any member or officer of the authority	1 to 5	<b>LA, LA/SEN/ALN, LA/LAC</b>
Church in Wales Diocesan representatives	1 to 3	<b>CIW</b>
Roman Catholic Diocesan representatives	1 to 3	<b>RC</b>
Schools - community and voluntary controlled	1 to 3	<b>S/CV</b>
Schools – foundation	1 to 3	<b>S/F</b>
Schools – voluntary-aided	1 to 3	<b>S/VA</b>
Parent governor representatives	1 to 3	<b>PG</b>
Representatives of the local community	Up to 3	<b>L/COM</b>

**Meeting dates and attendance** (Please note that nothing in the Education (Admission Forums (Wales) Regulations 2003<sup>1</sup> precludes some or all members taking part virtually). Regulation 9 of the 2003 Regulations provides that core members can regulate their own procedure subject to any provision in those regulations)

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Number of Forum Members in attendance - by category</b>
<b>First meeting</b>	<b>17 October 2023</b>	<b>10</b> 4 x LA; 2 x S/VA; 2 x S/CV; 1 x RC, 1 x PG
<b>Second meeting</b>	<b>6 February 2024</b>	<b>9</b> 3 x LA; 2 x S/VA; 2 x S/CV; 1 x RC, 1 x PG
<b>Third meeting</b>	<b>4 June 2024</b>	<b>10</b> 3 x LA; 2 x S/VA; 3 x S/CV; 1 x RC, 1 x PG

<sup>1</sup> [The Education \(Admission Forums\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2003 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

**Has your authority established a joint forum with an adjoining local authority? If yes, can you provide details of the authority concerned and how successful this has been.**

Not applicable.

**Please confirm whether admission authorities within the forum area have completed the consultation and determination of admission arrangements process within the timescales required by the Education (Determination of Admission Arrangements) (Wales) Regulations 2006<sup>2</sup> [including consultation on the arrangements<sup>3</sup> by 1 March in the determination year and determination of the final arrangements by 15 April of that year].**

**If any admission authority has not met the timescales, please give details here.**

**How many consultation documents have you seen from admission authorities (not including other local authorities)?**

Admission arrangements must be consulted upon for the 'determination year', beginning two years before the school year in which the arrangements will apply. Therefore, in the 2023-2024 school year, arrangements were being determined for the 2025-2026 school year.

All admission authorities within Bridgend completed the consultation and determination of admission arrangements for 2025-2026 within the timescale stipulated in the Regulations.

Consultation documents were received by the local authority from admission authorities outside of Bridgend – Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council and St Richard Gwyn Catholic High School.

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<sup>2</sup> [The Education \(Determination of Admission Arrangements\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2006 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> This includes consultation on sixth form arrangements for schools with sixth forms which should be carried out at the same time.

**What admission arrangements have been put in place to serve the interests of vulnerable children?**

**Have they proved successful?**

**What other arrangements have you identified to support these children?**

**The following information relates to the local authority's admission arrangements in respect of those schools for which it is the admission authority.**

The local authority's centralised admission process allows greater control and monitoring of the admissions of vulnerable children.

For admissions rounds and in-year admissions/transfers processed during the 2023-2024 school year, looked after children or previously looked after children were prioritised for admission to the school of corporate parent/parent/carer choice. Officers in Pupil Services worked closely with the Education Engagement Team to ensure such pupils were able to access appropriate provision.

All children with a statement of special educational needs (SEN) or a local authority-maintained individual development plan (IDP) were admitted to the placement named on the final statement. All applications in respect of children with additional learning needs but without a statement of SEN or a local authority-maintained IDP were considered in the same way as all other applications, based on the procedures and admission criteria set out in the 2023-2024 School Admissions Policy.

The local authority did not refuse to admit a child on the basis of their behaviour. (This encompasses children considered to be potentially disruptive, exhibiting challenging behaviours or potentially requiring assessment for special educational needs.) The Mainstream Fair Access Panel considered referrals of vulnerable and hard-to place pupils.

The purpose of the Mainstream Fair Access Panel is to consider the most complex individual cases for admission to mainstream places, ensuring that pupils are placed fairly, in schools that can meet their needs, with negative impacts on the effectiveness of education provision both for the learner and the provider being minimised.

The consideration of an individual case by the Mainstream Fair Access Panel may result in reference to the Additional Learning Needs Panel and/or the Access to Education Panel. These panels have a wider remit in respect of vulnerable and hard to place children, most particularly those that may need to be considered for specialist education provisions.

The local authority's oversubscription criteria, applicable in admissions rounds, set out the relative priority of applications in respect of children with medical or psychological conditions, or particular social circumstances (such as young carers). Applications were prioritised under the criterion where the required evidence from a registered health professional was provided (the reasons why the preferred school was considered to be the most suitable school and the difficulties that would arise if the child had to attend another school) and accepted. For in-year admission/transfer applications in respect of such children where there was no capacity in the year group of the requested school, the same evidence requirements and considerations were applied to make a final determination on whether a place would be offered at the requested school.

No applications in any admissions round were received in respect of children who met the oversubscription criterion relating to children of a serving member of UK service personnel or Crown Servant. No in-year admission/transfer applications were received relating to children of a serving member of UK service personnel or Crown Servant.

From April 2022, families began to arrive in Wales from Ukraine under the national scheme arrangements. Welsh Government advised local authorities that the school admissions legislation in Wales, reflected in the statutory School Admissions Code 2013, and on which admission authorities policies are based, applied fully to admission applications in respect of arriving children. Therefore, such applications would have no exceptional status and admission authorities should process and make decisions on the applications as they would for all other applications for school places. (This same position applies in respect of children arriving in Wales under the two established refugee schemes for families from Syria and Afghanistan, and also the scheme for families from Hong Kong.) The decisions made by the local authority on applications for school admission, and home-to-school transport eligibility, for children arriving from Ukraine reflected this position.

Following an admission decision, communications with the parent/carer and the school regarding starting arrangements reflected the advice issued by the Chief Medical Officer in respect of health screening under the national pathway established for the families arriving in Wales.

In the period to 31 August 2024, the local authority received three in-year school admission applications in respect of Ukrainian children. These two were in respect of primary school learners (including Nursery), and one was in respect of a secondary-aged learner.

- For the two applications in respect of primary school learners, one was accepted and the learner was admitted to the requested schools. The remaining one application was in respect of Year 6 admission that had to be refused due to there being no places

available in the relevant year group at the requested school. An alternative school was offered which the parent accepted.

- For the one application in respect of secondary aged learner, the application was accepted and the learner was admitted to the requested school.

No families with school-age children from Afghanistan were re-settled in Bridgend during the 2023-2024 school year.

No additional families with school-age children from Syria were re-settled in Bridgend during the 2023-2024 school year.

The local authority's admission decisions on all applications in respect of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children took full account of the 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.

**How well have the agreed in-year admission procedures worked?**

**How many children have been admitted to each school under the procedures?**

**Have you identified an increase in numbers for in-year admissions, if so, what action has been identified to address the issue?**

**The following information relates to in-year admission/transfer applications made to the local authority in respect of those schools for which it is the admission authority.**

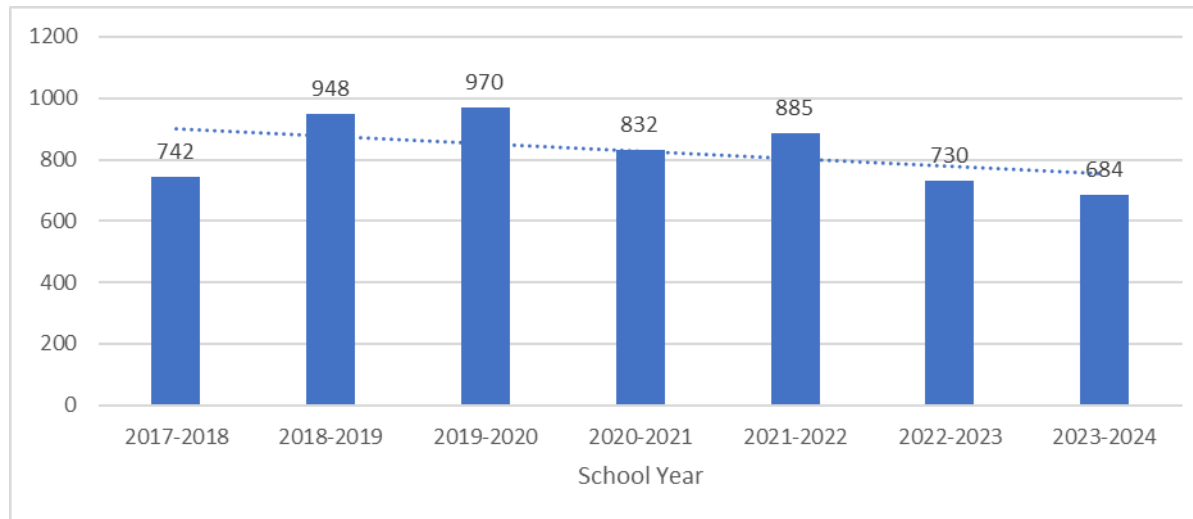
In accordance with the local authority's published School Admissions Policy, all in-year admission/transfer requests received during the 2023-2024 school year were considered in strict order of date received and against the requested school's published admissions number and the current class structures and numbers. Account was taken of the specific circumstances of the child and family, if appropriate. If a place was available in the relevant year group at the requested school, the place was offered. If no place was available in the relevant year group at the requested school, the application was refused and the local authority advised the applicant/s of the next nearest school with an available place in the relevant year group and the right of appeal (for applications in respect of statutory-age education).

**Mainstream in-year admission/transfer applications in respect of primary school children, including Nursery**

- The number of applications received by the local authority for primary aged-children (including Nursery) is detailed in Figure 1. There was a decrease in the number of applications received in 2023-2024 compared to 2022-2023. For the previous five years from 2017-2022, there was a marginally increasing trend in the number of applications received, with the number of applications received in 2023-2024 being more in line with those for 2022-2023.



Figure 1

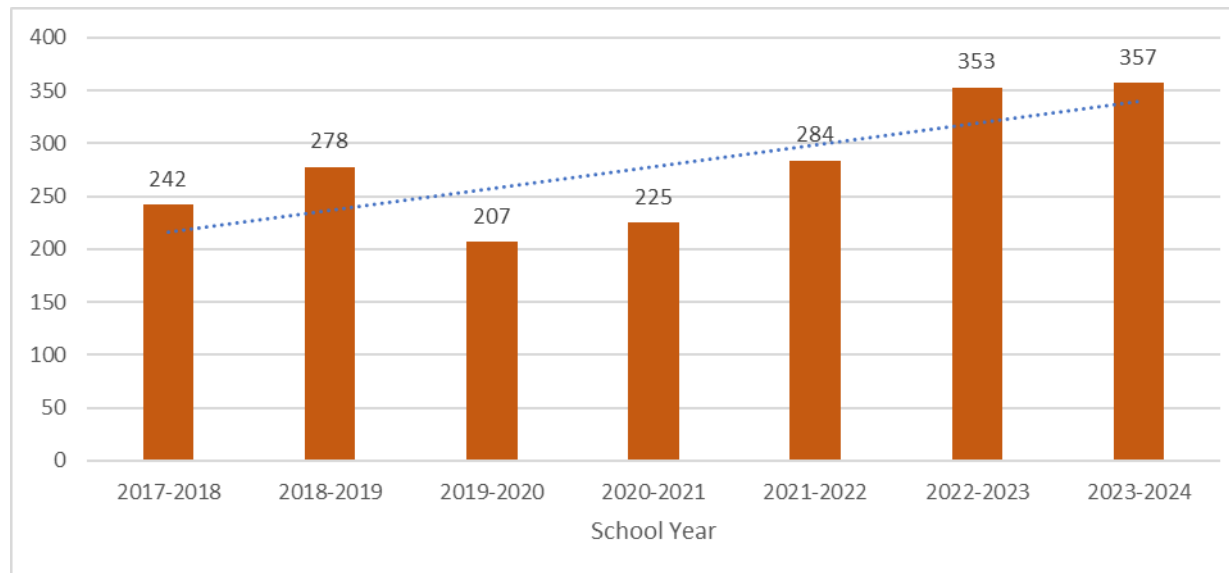


- Of the 684 applications received in 2023-2024:
  - 29 (4.2%) were withdrawn before progression to a decision by the local authority. In the majority of these cases, this was due to the application having been submitted too early, per policy, given the requested admission date, the application had been submitted in error, or the application was withdrawn as the child had been admitted to a specialist provision.
  - 552 (80.7%) were accepted for admission to the requested school.
  - 79 (11.5%) were refused for the requested schools, due to oversubscription of places in the requested year groups.
  - 24 (3.5%) were refused because admission would result in an infant class size breach.
  - For the 103 applications that had to be refused, an alternative school was offered in respect of 77. For the remainder, an alternative school was not offered as either the learner was already attending the nearest alternative school, or the parent/carer had advised that no alternative school would be considered.
- In 2023-2024, the local authority reported a surplus capacity of places in primary schools, for Reception through to Year 6, of 18.52%.

**Mainstream in-year admission/transfer applications in respect of secondary-aged pupils, Years 7 to 11**

- The number of applications received by the local authority for secondary-aged pupils (Year 7 to Year 11) is detailed in Figure 2. There was an increase in the number of applications received in 2023-2024 compared to 2022-2023. For the seven years from 2017-2024, there was a marginally increasing trend in the number of applications received.

Figure 2



- Of the 357 applications received in 2023-2024:
  - 23 (6.4%) were withdrawn before progression to a decision by the local authority. In the majority of these cases, this was due to the application being withdrawn as the child had been admitted to a specialist provision.
  - 290 (81.2%) were accepted for admission to the requested school.
  - 44 (12.3%) were refused for the requested schools, due to oversubscription of places in the requested year groups.
  - For the 44 applications that had to be refused, an alternative school was offered in respect of 32. For the remainder, an alternative school was not offered as either the learner was already attending the nearest alternative school, or the parent/carer had advised that no alternative school would be considered.
- In 2023-2024, the local authority reported a surplus capacity of places in secondary schools, for Year 7 through to Year 13, of 19.37%.

**Please provide a short summary of the key admission issues identified for the area and how the forum has addressed them?**

**The following information relates to the local authority's admission arrangements in respect of those schools for which it is the admission authority.**

- **Standardisation of admission rounds.**

The forum noted the standardisation of all admission rounds being open for broadly 14 weeks, apart from the Part-Time Nursery Admission round, which would continue to be open for broadly 8 months. It was noted that there had been changes to the wordings in certain sections of the School Admissions Policy 2025-2026 to improve clarity or to reflect existing practice within the policy. The sections where changes are proposed are detailed below:

1. Section 8 – Ensuring fair Access

The local authority has a Mainstream Fair Access Panel. The panel can consider and make decisions on applications for mainstream school places for individual children within these specific groups, in accordance with the defined terms of reference.

2. Section 8.1 – Children from overseas and UK children living abroad

Welsh Government has issued guidance for admission authorities when processing applications for overseas children. The local authority will process all such applications in accordance with the published guidance.

- **The number of available Part-time Nursery places in schools.**

The forum noted that variation year-on-year is inevitable given the factors that determine the number of such places and that this is explained each year in the School Admissions Policy. The forum noted that if there are no Part-time Nursery places available at a school, but the Full-time Nursery number is low, the local authority consults with the school on whether it is appropriate to convert some of the unfilled Full-time Nursery places to Part-time Nursery places, for that year. The forum did not request any further action.

- **Applications for first preference Welsh-medium schools with second preference English-medium schools.**  
The forum noted that over 50% of the applications where the first preference school was a Welsh- medium school, the second preference, where recorded, was not a Welsh-medium school. For Part-time and Full-time Nursery applications, there was a the figure was still over 50%. The forum noted that parental preference applies, and parents/carers often request that the expressed second preference, English-medium school, is processed, rather than give consideration to any other Welsh-medium schools with available places.
- **Admission appeal hearings.**  
The forum received comprehensive information on the number of admission appeals, The number of appeals had increased over the previous five years, both for admission rounds and in-year admissions, due to an increase in the number of oversubscribed schools. The forum noted that virtual appeals were becoming the preferred option for parent/carers and panel members, but the local authority would still undertake face-to-face hearing if this was requested. The forum did not request any further actions.
- **School admissions for children arriving in Bridgend from Ukraine and resettlement/refugee schemes**  
The forum received comprehensive information on the numbers of applications received and outcomes. The forum did not request any further actions.
- **Advance in-year admission or transfer applications**  
The forum noted there were no changes to School Admission Policy 2025-2026 in respect to the process an in-year application. The forum did not request any further actions.
- **School admission policies of the voluntary-aided (VA) schools**  
The forum noted that some of the policies were extremely concise. It was suggested that the VA schools give consideration to adopting sections of the local authority policy each year, to ensure their policies are comprehensive. The diocese confirmed that they had reviewed the VA school admissions policy that were provided to the forum, and that support, and advice had been given in relation to the governing body reserving the right to admit over their admission number in respect of applications from those of Catholic faith. The necessary amendments were made, and the forum did not request any further action.

- **Admission arrangements with neighbouring authorities**

The forum noted the proposal to improve clarity on the admission arrangements with neighbouring authorities regarding transport arrangements. There are no admission arrangements in place with neighbouring authorities.

- **Co-ordinated school admission arrangements**

The forum noted the Welsh Government Consultation for Co-ordinated school admission arrangements opened at the end of November 2023 and feedback was to be returned by the 12 January 2024. The forum noted that The Education (Co-ordination of School Admission Arrangements and Miscellaneous Amendments) (Wales) Regulations 2024, require local authorities to formulate and publish a scheme to co-ordinate admission arrangements for all maintained schools, (except school sixth form place, maintained special schools and maintained Nursery schools, but including boarding schools) within their area. The forum highlighted that in order to work within the co-ordinated admission arrangements, any application for would need to reflect the additional questions and supplementary information required for the voluntary-aided schools.

**Is there co-ordinated admission activity in your local authority?  
If so which admission authorities in your local authority area are participating?  
Has it been successful/beneficial?**

There are no co-ordinated admission arrangements in Bridgend.

## School Admissions and Appeals

### 1. Schools for which the local authority is the admission authority

#### 1.1 Primary (Reception) admission round for September 2023 – applications received and appeals arising

Name of School	Admission number	Number of <b>first preference</b> applications for the school (on-time and	Number of successful <b>first preference</b> applications	Number of appeals	Number of successful appeals	Total number of parental preferences that were met for the school
Abercerdin Primary School	30	22	22	0	-	28
Afon y Felin Primary School	19	20	19	0	-	19
Betws Primary School	30	15	15	0	-	15
Blaengarw Primary School	24	12	12	0	-	12
Brackla Primary School	45	45	45	2	1	46
Bryncethin Primary School	35	33	33	0	-	33 2 (second)

Name of School	Admission number	Number of <b>first preference</b> applications for the school (on-time and	Number of successful <b>first preference</b> applications	Number of appeals	Number of successful appeals	Total number of parental preferences that were met for the school
Brynmenyn Primary School	60	50	50	0	-	50
Bryntirion Infants School	40	22	22	0	-	22 1 (second)
Caerau Primary School	60	43	43	0	-	43
Cefn Cribwr Primary School	20	21	20	0	-	20
Cefn Glas Infants School	66	57	57	0	-	57
Coety Primary School	60	63	60	2	0	60
Corneli Primary School	46	24	24	0	-	24
Coychurch Primary School	19	20	19	0	-	19
Croesty Primary School	30	19	19	0	-	19
Cwmfelin Primary School	30	25	25	0	-	25
Ffaldau Primary School	30	13	13	0	-	13
Garth Primary School	30	17	17	0	-	17
Litchard Primary School	60	62	59	0	-	59 1 (second)
Llangynwyd Primary School	14	10	10	0	-	10



Name of School	Admission number	Number of <b>first preference</b> applications for the school (on-time and	Number of successful <b>first preference</b> applications	Number of appeals	Number of successful appeals	Total number of parental preferences that were met for the school
Maes yr Haul Primary School	75	63	63	0	-	63
Mynydd Cynffig Primary School	60	46	46	0	-	46
Nantyllyllon Primary School	40	31	31	0	-	31
Nantymoel Primary School	30	28	28	0	-	28
Newton Primary School	34	27	27	0	-	27
Nottage Primary School	60	31	31	0	-	31
Ogmore Vale Primary School	53	32	32	0	-	32
Oldcastle Primary School	60	49	49	0	-	49 (First) 1 (second)
Pencoed Primary School	72	71	71	0	-	71 1 (second)
Penybont Primary School	45	40	40	0	-	40 (First) 1 (second)
Pen y Fai Church in Wales Primary School	30	24	24	0	-	24
Pîl Primary School	30	23	23	0	-	23
Plasnewydd Primary School	45	10	10	0	-	10
Porthcawl Primary School	28	21	21	0	-	21

Name of School	Admission number	Number of <b>first preference</b> applications for the school (on-time and	Number of successful <b>first preference</b> applications	Number of appeals	Number of successful appeals	Total number of parental preferences that were met for the school
Tondu Primary School	42	25	25	0	-	25
Trelales Primary School	30	19	19	0	-	19
Tremains Primary School	65	61	61	0	-	61 (First) 2 (second)
Tynyrheol Primary School	10	9	9	0	-	9
West Park Primary School	55	46	46	0	-	46
Ysgol Cynwyd Sant	45	35	35	0	-	35
Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Ogwr	54	48	48	0	-	48
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Calon y Cymoedd	30	26	26	0	-	26
Ysgol y Ferch o'r Sgêr	33	17	17	0	-	17
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1774</b>	<b>1375</b>	<b>1366</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1373 (First) 9 (second)</b>

The total number of preferences met does not equal the number of applications received, as some applicants who were not offered the first preference school had not expressed a second or third preference and did not subsequently request admission to any other school for which the local authority is the admission authority.

**1.2 Junior school (Year 3) admission round for September 2023 – applications received and appeals arising**

Name of school	Admission number	Number of <b>first preference</b> applications for the school (on-time and late)	Number of successful <b>first preference</b> applications	Number of appeals	Number of successful appeals	Total number of parental preferences that were met for the school
Llangewydd Junior School	90	90	90	1	0	90 (all first)

**1.3 Secondary school (Year 7) admission round for September 2023 – applications received and appeals arising**

Name of school	Admission number	Number of <b>first preference</b> applications for the school (on-time and late)	Number of successful <b>first preference</b> applications	Number of appeals	Number of successful appeals	Total number of parental preferences that were met for the school
Brynteg School	333 (working PAN 345)	318	318	3	0	318 (first) 27 (second)
Bryntirion Comprehensive School	210	240	210	17	1	211
Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen	276	244	244	0	-	244 (all first)
Cynffig Comprehensive School	180	145	145	0	-	145 (all first) 1 (second)
Maesteg School	228	169	169	0	-	169 (all first)
Pencoed Comprehensive School	214	163	163	0	-	163 (all first) 1 (second)

Name of school	Admission number	Number of <b>first preference</b> applications for the school (on-time and late)	Number of successful <b>first preference</b> applications	Number of appeals	Number of successful appeals	Total number of parental preferences that were met for the school
Porthcawl Comprehensive School	246	188	188	0	-	188 (all first) 1 (second)
Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd	165	129	129	0	-	129 (all first)
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1852 (1864 including working PAN)</b>	<b>1596</b>	<b>1566</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1567 (first) 30 (second)</b>

It is known that, as in previous years, a proportion of the parents/carers who applied for a place for their child at Bryntirion Comprehensive School or Brynteg School, also applied to Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School. 15 places offered at Bryntirion Comprehensive School and 14 places offered at Brynteg School were refused by parents/carers who accepted places at Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School.

## 2. Schools for which the local authority is not the admission authority

### 2.1 Primary (Reception) admission round for September 2023 – applications received and appeals arising

Name of school	Admission number	Number of applications for the school (on-time and late)	Number of successful applications	Number of appeals	Number of successful appeals	Total number of parental preferences that were met for the school
Archdeacon John Lewis Church in Wales Primary School	30	19	19	0	-	19
St Marys Catholic Primary School	30	23	23	0	-	23
St Marys and St Patricks Catholic Primary School	25	20	20	0	-	20
St Roberts Roman Catholic Primary School	22	18	18	0	-	18
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>80</b>

### 2.2 Secondary school (Year 7) admission round for September 2023 – applications received and appeals arising

Name of school	Admission number	Number of applications for the school (on-time and late)	Number of successful applications	Number of appeals	Number of successful appeals	Total number of parental preferences that were met for the school
Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School	131	199	131	21	5	136

It is known that, as in previous years, a proportion of the parents/carers who applied for a place for their child at the school also applied to the local authority for a place at Bryntirion Comprehensive School.

**What methods have the Forum used to promulgate any advice or decisions it has reached?**

Advice or decisions were shared with relevant stakeholders through the local authority's normal communication mechanisms.

Minutes of Bridgend Admission Forum meetings are published on the local authority's website.

**Date Forum's advice published on Admission Authority's Website:**

The minutes of the forum meetings are published to the School Admissions Forum page of the Bridgend County Borough Council website, following their approval.

**Please also provide the relevant link:**

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

Signature: *Emma Giles*

(Secretary to the Forum)

Date: 28 October 2024

**Please return the completed report by 30 November 2024**