

2017/18

School Admissions Policy



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Monmouthshire County Council

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Introduction

The School Admissions Code (2013) gives parents the right to express a preference for their child to be admitted to any school maintained from public funds. The Authority's admission policy sits within the parameters of the School Admissions Code of Practice and School Admissions Appeals Code of Practice July 2013

This policy is in place to cover the following:

i) Admission Round applications

- The application process to be followed for children that are eligible to start Primary School
- The application process to be followed for children eligible to transfer from Primary to Secondary School.

ii) In year transfers between Schools

The application process to be followed for children that are already of school age, but wish to transfer from one school to another.

Summary of proposed changes

The Local Authority is required to consult on its admission arrangements on an annual basis. The content of this policy and the changes within are proposed for implementation for the 2017/18 academic year and can be summarised as:

- Changes to the way in which the Local Authority administer a change of address occurring during the Admission Round process. (Pages 9/10)
- Clarification on the Local Authority's approach to applications from parents of children born during the summer term seeking admission into Reception. (pages 11/12)
- A more in depth description on how home to school distances will be calculated as part of the oversubscription criteria (pages 13/14)
- Changes to the Local Authority's application processing timescales, now allowing for school places to be allocated up to a term in advance (currently 4 weeks) (page 16)

To comment on this consultation please write to Matthew Jones, Access Unit Manager, PO Box 106, Caldicot, NP26 9AN or email matthewdjones@monmouthshire.gov.uk

Please ensure all comments are returned no later than **12 noon on Monday 29th February 2016**

Consultation Process

In accordance with the School Admissions Code of practice (2013) the Local Authority consults upon its admission arrangements on an annual basis, attempting where possible to mirror the admission round timescales of neighbouring admission authorities.

The coordinated admission arrangements will determine the date at which application forms are sent to parents as well as the publication of an agreed closing date. The Authority will ensure that this timeframe between distribution and closing date is no shorter than six weeks.

Consultation will take place between 1st September and 1st March beginning two years before the school year in which the arrangements will apply. The arrangements will then be set and published by 15th April.

The Local Authority will ensure that the following information is provided during the consultation process:

- i) Admission numbers for each school
- ii) Application procedures and the timetable for the admission process
- iii) The criteria to be applied to applications in the event that there are more applications than places for a School
- iv) Arrangements for waiting lists and how they operate
- v) Arrangements for the processing of late applications
- vi) Details of how parents will be notified of a decision on their application, as well as appeal procedures should their application be unsuccessful.

The Local Authority will consult with the following parties on its admission arrangements:

| | |
|---|--|
| | |
| Governing body of relevant Schools | All governing bodies of community Schools in Monmouthshire |
| All neighbouring Local Authorities within the area | Torfaen County Council Newport City Council Powys County Council Blaenau Gwent County Council Gloucestershire County Council Herefordshire County Council |
| Admission Authorities for all other schools in the area | All governing bodies of voluntary Aided schools in Monmouthshire Brynmawr Foundation School St Albans RC School St Joseph's RC School |
| In the case of Schools with a religious | Diocesan Director, Church in Wales |

| | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| character, such body or person representing the religion or religious denomination in question | Diocesan Director, Roman Catholic |
| | |

Admission Numbers

Prior to the consultation, the admission numbers for all schools are determined and form part of this consultation. The admission numbers for the schools are derived from the physical capacity of the school which is calculated in accordance with the Welsh Government's 'Measuring the Capacity of Schools in Wales'.

Consultation

Provision of Education in Monmouthshire

Local Authority is proud to offer the following educational provision within its County:

Nursery Education

The Local Authority has eleven nursery units attached to mainstream Schools. The Authority maintains these nurseries that provide free part time early years education for pupils from the term following their third birthday, if there are spaces available. Monmouthshire also supports many private day nurseries, prep Schools, Playgroups, crèches and cylchoedd meithrin (playgroups using the medium of Welsh). These settings are approved providers of early year's education.

Admission to Primary School (4-11)

The Local Authority offers a number of educational establishments at Primary level:

Primary Community (English) - 20
Primary Community (Welsh) - 2
Primary Church in Wales VC - 4
Primary Church in Wales VA - 3
Primary Roman Catholic VA - 2

The Local Authority is the admitting authority all Primary Community Schools (English and Welsh) and Voluntary Controlled Schools within Monmouthshire, and responsible for the admission arrangements at each of these Schools.

The Governing Bodies of the 5 Voluntary Aided Schools in Monmouthshire are responsible for the admission arrangements within their schools.

The Authority will admit a child to a maintained primary/infant school at the start of the academic year in which he/she will turn 5 years old. The legal requirements confirm that parents are able to delay the admission of their child until the term following their 5th birthday; however, it is a Local Authority Policy that the child will continue to follow their chronological year group unless exceptional circumstances apply.

When considering admission into the Reception year group as part of the admission round, parents should be aware that attendance at a nursery provision within the preferred School does exclude the need for parents to make an application for a Reception place. The Local Authority is unable to guarantee that children within the nursery can be guaranteed a place in Reception.

Special Primary Education

Overmonnow Primary School (Monmouth), Pembroke Primary School (Chepstow), and Deri View Primary School (Abergavenny) have Additional Educational Needs Units to accommodate those children whose needs cannot be met in mainstream education.

Admission to these settings will be determined via the child's Statement of Special Educational Needs

Secondary Education (11-19)

All mainstream secondary schools in Monmouthshire are mixed Comprehensive Schools and serve 11 – 19 year olds. These are situated close to the four major towns in Monmouthshire.

Attendance at a Primary or Junior school does not guarantee that a place will be made available for your child at the feeder Comprehensive school. Although every effort will be made to accommodate parental preference, where the number of applications for a school exceeds the number of available places, the over-subscription criteria will be applied.

Special Secondary Education

Mounton House Special School is located in Chepstow and accommodates 11-16 year old boys with Additional Learning and Behavioural Needs. Caldicot Comprehensive School has an Additional Educational Needs Unit to accommodate those children whose needs cannot be met in mainstream education.

Admission to these settings will be determined via the child's Statement of Special Educational Needs

Welsh Medium Secondary Education

Monmouthshire have developed close links with neighbouring Authorities, in particular Torfaen County Council with Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw and Newport City Council with Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Iscoed, to ensure that Welsh Medium Education is available at Secondary level to the children within our County.

Admission Round process in Monmouthshire

Expressing a preference

In line with the School Admissions code of practice (2013), parents must complete an application form in order to obtain a School place. Parents will have the opportunity to complete an application online or alternatively via a paper application.

All parents will be invited to express a preference on a common application form, regardless of the status of the schools for which they wish to apply and whether the school is in/out of county. The form will provide an opportunity for parents to give reasons for their preferences. All completed forms should be sent directly to the School & Student Access Unit (SSAU). **An exception to this is if parents wish to apply for a School that resides within Newport City Council – in such circumstances the parent is required to apply directly to Newport City Council under their admission arrangements.**

Although individual school admission authorities (Voluntary Aided) may require you to complete their own admission forms, all applicants must also complete a “Common Application Form”.

The Local Authority operates an equal preference scheme, which means that all preferences are considered equally in line with the Local Authority’s oversubscription criteria, and not on the basis of the order in which they are listed on the application. In the event that more than one preference can be met, the highest rank preference as declared on the application form will be offered.

Timetable for admissions

The Local Authority will consult and agree on a timetable for the Admission Round intake on an annual basis. This will outline the date by when application forms will be made available to parents, the closing date for applications, as well as the date by when parents will be informed of a decision on their application.

The dates for the Admission Round 2017/18 will be:

| Admission Phase | Application packs available to parents | Closing Date | Local Authority Allocation Period | Parents informed by |
|------------------------|---|---|--|----------------------------|
| Primary to Secondary | 3rd October 2016 | 30 th November 2016 at 12 midday | 01.12.16 – 28.02.17 | 1 st March 2017 |
| Reception | 4 th November 2016 | 13th January 2017 at 12 midday | 14.01.17 – 16.04.17 | 17th April 2017 |

Distribution of application forms

The Local Authority will distribute application packs directly to home addresses on the dates published above. Parents/ carers will be given the opportunity to choose to apply on line or to complete a paper form. Details of how to apply online will be included in the application pack circulated to parents.

Whilst the Authority endeavours to capture the details of those parents / carers who have children that are eligible for admission to school, it still remains the parent's / carer's responsibility to obtain an application pack to apply for a school place within the required timescales.

Address Validations

Parents / Carers must submit their application using their child's permanent home address. Parents / Carers are required to submit their Council Tax reference number on their child's admission application form. The Local Authority will use this information to validate that the address submitted on the application form coincides with the information held on the Local Authority's Council Tax database.

If the information provided by the parent does not coincide with the council tax database, a further check will be undertaken using the electoral register. If this does not verify the address, the Local Authority will contact the parent.

Any decision on the offer of a school place will be based upon the applicant being resident at the address declared on the application form, as at the published offer date. Any offer of a school place could be withdrawn if it is found that a parent / carer has moved from the address declared on the application form without notifying the Local Authority, if a place has been offered on the basis of home address.

Parents in the process of moving property

Parents / Carers who are in the process of moving property will be required to notify the Local Authority **at the time of application** of the proposed move and submit evidence to validate their new address, in order for this address to be considered. Suitable evidence would be a copy of the exchange of contracts (for purchases) or long term tenancy agreement (for rental arrangements). The application and notification of an intended change of address must be submitted prior to the published closing date in order to be considered as an in time application. Failure to notify the Local Authority of an intended move to a new address prior to the published closing date will result in the application being determined as a "late application".

Parents/ Carers who are in the process of moving, but are not able to validate the move prior to the closing date, will need to ensure that their completed application is submitted prior to the published closing date, and that the application provides

information on the intention to move. The Local Authority will liaise with parents/carers regarding the proposed move in order to obtain confirmation that residence at the new property has been secured. However, parents will need to provide the Local Authority with evidence that secures their change of address no later than 6 weeks prior to the published offer date in order for the new address to be considered for allocation purposes.

Where the Local Authority accepts evidence to validate a property move and uses the new property for allocation purposes, the offer of a school place will be based on the applicant and child being resident at this property at the time of the child's entrance into the School. Any offer of a school place could be withdrawn if it is found that the applicant is not resident at the property at the time of child's entrance into the school.

Any offer of a school place could be withdrawn as a result of non-compliance with the above.

Unexpected change of home address

Should a parent, who has submitted an application prior to the published closing date, notify us of an unexpected change of address that has occurred since submission of their application, the Local Authority will consider on a discretionary basis the circumstances of the unexpected change of address prior to determining the application as being late. Unfortunately, such discretion can only be exercised if notification and evidence of the change of address is provided no later than 6 weeks prior to the published offer date in order for the new address to be considered for allocation purposes.

It is a parent's responsibility to notify the Local Authority of a change of address that takes place during the application process. Failure to do so could result in any offer of a school place being withdrawn.

Shared residency

In the event that the residency of a child is shared between two parents, the address where the child concerned resides for the majority of the school week will be used for allocation purposes. This is the address that should be declared on the application.

However, if the residency with both parents during the school week is equal, the address for where the child benefit is paid will be used for allocation purposes.

School catchment areas

Whilst residing within the catchment area for a School forms an element of the oversubscription criteria, it does not guarantee a placement on this basis. The Local Authority will refuse to admit above the School's admission number, unless the application complies with the permitted exceptions listed on page 19

Admission of Multiple birth children (e.g. twins or triplets)

If when applying the over-subscription criteria to applications received requesting admission into the normal year of entry (Reception and Year 7), and the last child to be admitted is one of a multiple birth, then the Local Authority will admit the other sibling(s).

Where multiple birth applications are received for year groups other than the normal year of entry, where there is only one remaining place in the relevant year group before the Admission Number is met, the Local Authority will consider each case individually before deciding whether the admission number is exceeded. Particular consideration will need to be given to the capacity of the school and the likelihood of causing prejudice to the effective education and efficient use of resources at the preferred school.

Children of Armed Forces personnel and crown servants

Children of returning UK Service Personnel and other Crown Servants (including diplomats) moving to Monmouthshire will be determined as meeting the residency criteria for the relevant catchment school if their application form is accompanied by an official proof of posting declaring a definite return date with confirmation of the new address wherever possible.

Where the relevant catchment school has already met its admission number in the relevant year group at the time of application, the Local Authority will exceed the admission number.

Deferred entry into Primary School

The Local Authority will admit a child to a maintained primary/infant school at the start of the academic year in which he/she will turn 5 years old. However, the legal requirements confirm that parents are able to delay the admission of their child until the term following their 5th birthday. The Local Authority is obliged to ensure that any offer of a school place is held for parents who wish for their child's admission into Reception to be deferred until later in the academic year.

A parent, however, is not able to defer entry beyond the term following the child's fifth birthday, nor beyond the school year for which the application was made.

Summer term births

In the case of a child born during the summer term, they too are not legally required to attend School until the term following their fifth birthday / the September after the normal year of entry for a Reception age child. However, in such circumstances the Local Authority will continue to ensure that children continue to follow their chronological year group and therefore the child would be admitted into year 1 and not Reception.

It is only in exceptional circumstances that the Local Authority will authorise the admission of a summer term birth into a year group that is outside the normal year of entry. In such circumstances, there will need to be a suitable evidence base (e.g. report from an Educational Psychologist) that suggests the chronological year group is not suitably able to meet the needs of the child concerned.

Allocation of School places

When the number of applications received for a preferred School is less or equal to the number of available places, all children will be admitted assuming that the school concerned can meet the needs of the children concerned.

However, when there are more applications than places in a school, the admission number is exceeded and the over subscription criteria will be applied to select which children are to be offered places at the School concerned. For children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs, the Authority must admit the child concerned to the School specified on their statement.

When applying the oversubscription criteria to determine who is to be awarded places, all parental preferences will be considered equally and allocated in line with the criteria below. The highest preference school, as listed on the application form, will be offered in the event that one or more preferences can be met.

When considering the remaining available places, the following criteria will be used to determine the children that are to be offered places:

1. Looked After Children or previously Looked After Children. i.e. children who are in the care or have previously been in the care of the Local Authority, will be given priority over those fulfilling points 2-5 below. (please see note 1 below)
2. Children with exceptional medical circumstances will be given priority over those fulfilling points 3-5 below. (please see note 2 below)
3. Children with relevant siblings (please see note 3 below) at the preferred School will be given priority over points 4-5 below.
4. Children residing within the preferred school's catchment area (please see note 4 below) will be given prior consideration over point 5 below.
5. Children residing outside of the catchment area
6. After applying the categories above, or should the school continue to be in a position of over-subscription in any of the above categories, priority will be based on closeness to the preferred school, measured using the shortest safe walking route. (Please see note 4 below)

To clarify, any over-subscription in the above criteria will result in the final determination of the allocation of a place being made on distance. So for example, if there are more applications than places available after applying point 4 above, places will be allocated to those children whose home address is determined to be closer to the preferred school.

Notes:

1. The Local Authority will require suitable evidence to validate that your child was previously a Looked after Child (e.g. a copy of the adoption confirmation), in order for this criteria to be applied.
2. Applicants wishing for their application to be prioritised on the child's medical needs must be supported by a medical consultant's report (obtained by the parents at the time of application) outlining why the preferred School is the only viable option when compared with other Schools that the Authority may be able to offer.
3. Brothers and sisters, whether half, full, step, or foster will be considered relevant where living in the same household and where they will still be registered at the school when the applicant is eligible to attend.
4. The Local Authority will consider the child's home address to be the place where the child resides for the majority of the School week. In the event that the residency of a child is shared between two parents, the address where the child concerned resides for the majority of the school week will be used for allocation purposes. This is the address that should be declared on the application. However, if the residency with both parents during the school week is equal, the address for where the child benefit is paid will be used for allocation purposes.
5. The Local Authority will use Geographical Information Systems (GIS) to calculate home to school distances. The GIS software adopted by the Local Authority for these purposes will be Routefinder and MapInfo desktop Solutions.

Determination of the shortest safe walking route will be calculated using official routes known to the Local Authority and Highways agencies. The starting point of the calculated route will be determined as being the nearest network point to the main entrance of the property. The main entrance of the home address is determined by the Local Authority to be where the property receives post. The finishing point of the calculated route will be determined as being the nearest official open gate adopted for use by the preferred School.

The coordinates of an applicant address will be determined using the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) and Ordnance Survey Address base data.

Where a safe walking route cannot be determined for an applicant, the shortest driving route will be used for allocation purposes.

Late Application Arrangements

Any application that is received after the published closing date, or applications that remain incomplete as at the closing date, will be dealt with under the late application arrangements.

A change of preference received by the Local Authority after the published closing date will result in the application being determined as late.

Applications where a change in circumstances have occurred, which have an impact upon the application's status within the oversubscription criteria (i.e. change of address), could also result in the application being treated as late if these changes are brought to the Authority's attention after the closing date. The Local Authority will consider on a discretionary basis the circumstances an unexpected change of address prior to determining the application as being late. Unfortunately, such discretion can only be exercised if notification of the change of address is provided no later than 6 weeks prior to the published offer date in order for the new address to be considered for allocation purposes.

Late applications are collated and processed monthly, with prioritisation given based on the month in which they are received. A timetable for the processing of late applications for the 2017/18 admission round can be found below:

| | Month application Received | Decision issued to Parents |
|----------------------------------|---|---|
| Applies to Secondary only | December 2016 | |
| | January 2016 | 31 st March 2017 |
| Applies to Primary and Secondary | 13 th January 2017 (after 12 midday) – 31 st January 2017 | 21 st April 2017 (Primary only) |
| | February 2017 | 7 th April 2017 (Secondary) 28 th April 2017 (Primary) |
| | March 2017 | 14 th April 2017 (Secondary) 5 th May 2017 (Primary) |
| | April 2017 | 12 th May 2017 |
| | May 2017 | 9 th June 2017 |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| | June 2017 | 7 th July 2017 |
| | July 2017 | 4 th August 2017 |
| | 1 st to 6 th August 2017 7 th to 11 th August 2017 | 11 th August 2017 18 th August 2017 |
| | 14 th to 18 th August 2016 | 25 th August 2017 |
| | 21 st August onwards | Within 1 week |

In the event that the preferred School is oversubscribed, places will be allocated in line with the oversubscription criteria during the first week of the month following the month of receipt. Parents will be informed of the outcome of their applications by the end of this week.

The arrangements for late applications continue up until the last week of August. After this date, any admissions received are then processed within 1 week.

Notifying Parents

Parents will be notified of a decision on their application on the published offer date. For the 2017/18 admission round, the date by when parents will be informed of decisions on their applications will be 1st March 2017 (Secondary) and 17th April 2017 (Primary).

Any offer of a school place will be based on the applicant being resident at the address declared on the application form as at the published offer date. Parents who are aware prior to the offer date that they are unlikely to remain resident at the address declared on their application must inform us so that their application can be amended. Any offer of a school place could be withdrawn if it is later found that this is not the case.

Where parents advise us, at the time of application, that they are moving property and provide the Local Authority with evidence to validate this move, any offer of a school place on this basis would be under the circumstance that the applicant is resident at the new property at the time the child concerned commences School. Any offer of a school place could be withdrawn if it is later found that this is not the case.

Acceptance of a school place

On receipt of an offer of a school place, parents are required to confirm their acceptance of this school place in writing within 14 days of notification of the school place offer. Failure to do so could result in the offer of a school place being withdrawn.

Admission into other year groups – September 2017

Where requests are received for a change of school in September 2017, into year groups other than the normal year of entrance, these will not be considered until the start of the second half of the summer term i.e. after the Whitsun break. Parents will be notified no earlier than 4 weeks prior to the end of the 2016 academic year.

These requests will be collated on a monthly basis and are processed as per the oversubscription criteria, in the event that the number of applications received exceeds the number of available places. However it should be noted that preference will be given to those parents who are seeking a place during the current term as opposed to the new academic year.

In Year Transfers (admissions outside the normal admission round)

In Year Transfers refer to requests from parents to transfer their children between schools outside of the normal admission round. The Local Authority will not consider applications until the requested start date is no more than a term in advance.

All In Year Transfers are dealt with in date order of receipt, and where more applications are received on the same day than the number of places available, the Local Authority's oversubscription criteria will be applied to determine the child(ren) to be offered places.

Applications are usually processed within 7 working days of receipt. However in certain circumstances, for example where the child has been identified as having specific needs, it may not be possible to process the admission within the timeframe. The parent will be advised of this.

As part of the consideration process, the Local Authority will contact the child's current school to obtain information to share with the receiving school. This is to ensure that the preferred School is in a position to support appropriate transition between schools.

Allocated places will be held open for a period of 1 term from the date of authorised admission, after which time the place may be withdrawn if the child has not taken up their place during this time. Once a school place has been offered, School's will have 7 working days to arrange the enrolment of the child concerned, where an immediate start is required.

If an application is received for a Looked After Child (LAC), in accordance with the protocol that has been agreed with schools, a LAC meeting will be arranged, to which

all interested parties are invited. In advance of this meeting the placing authority is required to share relevant information including the Personal Education Plan, School records and Statement of Educational Needs, if the child has one.

Where the request for admission into school is as a result of a move into the county the parent is required to send proof of residence. Until this evidence is received the application will not be processed or considered as complete. Suitable evidence would be a copy of the exchange of contracts or long term tenancy agreement. This is to ensure that parents do not apply too far in advance of their move and subsequently deny others a place requiring a more instant admission.

Request for admission outside of chronological year group

It is the Local Authority's policy that children are admitted into their chronological year group. It is only in exceptional circumstances that the Local Authority will support admission into a year group that is not within the chronological year, for example, where there is an appropriate evidence base (e.g. report from an Educational Psychologist) that suggests the chronological year group is not suitably able to meet the needs of the child concerned.

Parents submitting an application requests for admission into a year group that is not within the chronological year for the child will be given the opportunity to share their reasons for the application with the Local Authority. The Headteacher of the preferred school will also be consulted during the process and their views considered as part of the decision making process.

Parents refused a place at the preferred school will have a statutory right of appeal against the decision that has been made; however, there is no appeal against a decision to offer a place in the preferred school but not within the desired year group

Refusal of Admission

The majority of pupils in Monmouthshire are allocated a place at the parents' first choice of school. A refusal for admission to a school is made in line with the School Admissions Code of Practice 2013 and is based on the following decisions;

- Whether to admit a child would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources
- Where an Admission Number has been met
- Welsh Government Class size regulations

If it is not possible to allocate a place at the preferred school, an alternative school place will be offered. This will either be an alternative preference (as declared on the application form) or the next nearest available school. It is then for parents to decide whether or not to accept the place at the alternative school.

If a place is offered at the next nearest available school, the child concerned may be entitled to free home to school transport should the distance criteria between home and school address be met. For more information on home to school transport entitlement please refer to the home to school transport policy.

However, it is recognised that parents may not want a place at the next nearest available school and will be provided with details of other schools with available places within the area. In these circumstances, free home to school transport would not normally be provided

Following refusal of a school place, the child's details will be held on a waiting list until 31 August of the academic year for which they are applying. If any places are handed back during this time places will be allocated from the waiting list as per the oversubscription criteria.

Waiting Lists

For those applicants that have been unsuccessful in obtaining a place at their preferred school(s), waiting lists will be held up until the end of the academic year for which the application is made. After such time, the existing waiting lists will be cleared and a fresh application will be required. The child's details will automatically be added onto the waiting list for the preferred school(s) at the time of refusal.

Waiting lists will be prioritised as per the oversubscription criteria and not based upon the date that the application was submitted. **It is the responsibility of the applicant to inform The School and Student Access Unit of any change in circumstances which impacts on the oversubscription criteria and therefore their child's place on the waiting list. An example of this would be a change of address.**

Should a place become available at the preferred school(s), the waiting list will be "frozen" in order to allow the School and Student Access Unit to fill the vacancy. The date at which the waiting list is frozen shall be determined as the date that the Local Authority is satisfied that the place becomes available.

The parent concerned will be contacted by the School and Student Access Unit within 7 working days of the place becoming available, if their child qualifies for consideration of the place. The parent will be given 7 days to formally accept or decline the offer of the school place in writing. After such time, the child's name will be withdrawn from the waiting list, and the place will be offered to the next child on the waiting list, as the Local Authority will assume that the place is no longer required.

Appeals

In accordance with the School Admissions code of practice and the School Admission appeals code of practice 2013, the Local Authority will make arrangements to enable the parent of a child to appeal against a decision to refuse a place at the preferred School.

The appeal will be determined by an Appeals Panel established in accordance with School Admission Appeals code 2013. The panel must consist of three to five members appointed by the Local Authority from the following categories:

- People who are eligible to be lay members (persons without personal experience in the management of a school or the provision of education in any school, disregarding experience as a governor or in any other voluntary capacity).
- People who have experience in education; who are familiar with educational conditions in the LA's area or who are parents of registered children at a school (other than the school at which the appeal is made).

Independent Appeal Panels must consider each case individually on its merits and they cannot limit themselves, in advance, to the admission of any particular number of pupils.

Consideration by an Appeal Panel should be in two distinct stages:

1. The Factual Stage, where the panel decides as a matter of fact whether there was a lawful reason to refuse admission; if there was not, the child must be admitted; if there was, the committee must move on to:
2. The Balancing Stage, where the panel exercises its judgement to balance the degree of prejudice to efficient education which would result from admitting the child, and the strength of the parents' case, so as to arrive at a decision which is binding on the admissions authority.

The decision of the appeal panel will be binding on the Local Authority.

Time frame for Hearing Appeals

Parents will receive a letter refusing admission and will be advised of their right of appeal. The decision to appeal does not prevent the parent / carer accepting a place at an alternative school whilst the hearing is convened, as the panel will determine the appeal on the basis of application.

Appeal Hearings are convened by the Chief Executive Officer's representative, and will be heard within 30 School days of the date of application for appeal.

Infant Class Size Initiative

The Welsh Government is committed to ensuring that no child in Key Stage 1 will be in a class where the pupil teacher ratio is more than 1:30. The Infant Class Size Initiative was a phased programme between September 1999 and September 2001 thus ensuring that all children up to the age of 7 will be taught in classes containing no more than 30 pupils.

Two main changes arose from the class size legislation. Firstly, admission authorities must not to admit a child to an infant class if in doing so would result in a class operating at a greater than 30:1 pupil/teacher ratio.

An admission authority can refuse to admit a child to a school where to do so would require the school to take 'qualifying measures' (i.e. employing an additional teacher, building an additional classroom) to meet the statutory class size limit.

Secondly, when dealing with admission appeals under class size legislation, Appeal Panels do not follow the two stage process as outlined above.

Instead, an Appeal Panel will be able to uphold a parental appeal only if the decision to not admit the child was due to the admission arrangements being incorrectly implemented or the decision of the admission authority was not one which a reasonable admission authority would make in that particular case.

Key Stage 2 class size limits

Whilst there are no regulations to limit class sizes to 30 in Key Stage 2, the Local Authority is committed to complying with the Welsh Government target to ensure that the 1:30 pupil teacher ratio in Key stage 2 is maintained.

Exceptions to the Infant class size initiative

Welsh Government Regulations require Authorities to limit infant class sizes to no more than 30 pupils and to ensure that junior classes do not exceed 30 pupils. There are however exceptions to these regulations (called "excepted pupils") which may allow the 30 pupil class limit to be exceeded. Excepted pupils are:

1. Children whose statements of SEN specify that they should be educated at the school concerned, and who were admitted to the school outside a normal admission round.

2. Children who are looked after by local authorities (looked after children), or who have ceased to be looked after (previously looked after children) as a result of being adopted or being placed with a family or given a special guardian and are admitted to the school outside a normal admissions round.
3. Children initially refused admission to a school, but subsequently offered a place outside a normal admission round by direction of an admission appeal panel, or because the person responsible for making the original decision recognises that an error was made in implementing the school's admission arrangements.
4. Children admitted outside the normal admission round who:
 - the maintaining local authority confirmed cannot gain a place at any other suitable school within a reasonable distance of their home because they have moved into the area outside a normal admission round, or
 - they desire a religious education, or a Welsh speaking education and the school in question is the only suitable school within a reasonable distance.
5. Children who were admitted to the school outside the normal admission round after which the school has arranged its classes, and after the first day of the school year, the effect of which would mean that the school would have to take a relevant measure if such children were not excepted pupils.
6. Children of armed forces personnel who are admitted outside the normal admission round.
7. Children whose twin or other sibling from a multiple birth are admitted as non-excepted pupils, as the final pupil(s) allocated a place before the admission number is reached.
8. Children who are registered pupils at special schools, but who receive part of their education at a mainstream school.
9. Children with SEN who are normally educated in a special unit in a mainstream school, who receive part of their lessons in a non-special class.

APPENDIX A

DIRECTORATE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

CO-ORDINATED ADMISSION SCHEME FOR SEPTEMBER 2017 **PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

INTRODUCTION

This scheme applies to all admission authorities, (Local Authority (LA) and Voluntary Aided Schools (VA), in the area with regard to parents with children wishing to join the normal year of entry at a maintained primary school in Monmouthshire from September 2016. (A glossary of terms is also shown in Appendix C).

All parents will be invited to express a preference on a common application form, regardless of the status of the schools for which they wish to apply and whether the school is in/out of county. The form will provide an opportunity for parents/carers to give reasons for their preferences. All completed forms should be sent directly to the School & Student Access Unit (SSAU). **An exception to this is if parents wish to apply for a School that resides within Newport City Council – in such circumstances the parent is required to apply directly to Newport City Council under their admission arrangements.**

Although individual school admission authorities (Voluntary Aided) may require you to complete their own admission forms, all applicants must also complete a “Common Application Form”.

Pupils with a Statement of Special Education Needs will be admitted to the school named on their Statement.

1. Consideration of Applications and Allocation of Places (Normal Admission Round)

When applying the oversubscription criteria to determine who is to be awarded places, all parental preferences will be considered equally and allocated in line with the criteria below. The highest preference school will be offered in the event that one or more preferences can be met.

If none of the preferences can be met, the Local Authority will ensure that as far as is reasonably possible, an offer can be made.

The closing date for the first stage of applications is **12 midday on Friday 13th January 2017** and written notification of the outcome of each application will be given via the School & Student Access Unit by **17th April 2017**.

If a parent applies for a place outside Monmouthshire, the Authority to which they have applied will inform the parent and Monmouthshire of the decision to offer or refuse.

Late applications or changes to the order of preference will be considered after the first stage has been completed. Where a parent expresses a preference within the first stage and then changes a preference after 12 midday on 13th January 2017, this will be deemed as a late application.

Similarly, applications where a change of circumstance have occurred, which have an impact upon the application's status within the oversubscription criteria, will result in the application being treated as late if these changes are brought to the Authorities attention after the closing date.

2. TIMETABLE FOR PRIMARY CO-ORDINATED ADMISSIONS FOR SEPTEMBER 2016

PRIMARY SCHOOL (including Voluntary Aided Schools)

2.1 Stage 1

| | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Applications made available to parents | 4 th November 2016 |
| Applications received either paper or on line | By 13th January 2017 |
| Details of applications sent to Voluntary Aided Schools and other LAs, as appropriate. Details of applications made to Voluntary Aided Schools returned to School and Student Access Unit | By 22nd January 2016 |
| Voluntary Aided Schools and neighbouring LAs return ranked lists of pupils to School & Student Access Unit indicating the over-subscription criterion that each child has been considered under and identifying refusals | By 24th February 2017 |
| School & Student Access Unit / Voluntary Aided Schools allocate the highest preference place available and notifies other LA's, as appropriate | By 10th March 2017 |
| School & Student Access Unit allocates places to Monmouthshire children without an offer | By 17 th March 2017 |
| School & Student Access Unit sends list of pupils to be offered places to each Monmouthshire School | By 24th March 2017 |
| School & Student Access Unit / Voluntary Aided Schools send notifications to parents/carers | On 17th April 2017 |

| | |
|---------|-----------------|
| Appeals | May – July 2017 |
|---------|-----------------|

Stage 2

Following the first stage of allocations, late applications will be considered and slotted in where possible using the admissions criteria. However there is no guarantee that late applications will be dealt with before **17th April 2017**.

At this stage, parents/carers will be able to apply for reconsideration to a school they placed as a higher preference to the one offered.

The processing of late applications will be done on a monthly basis, so, for example, applications received in April 2017 will be collated and processed during the first full week in May 2017 with schools and parents being notified by the end of the second full week. These will be processed as per the over-subscription criteria.

APPENDIX B

CO-ORDINATED ADMISSION SCHEME FOR SEPTEMBER 2017 SECONDARY SCHOOLS

INTRODUCTION

This scheme will apply to all schools in the area for parents with children wishing to join the normal year of entry at a secondary school in Monmouthshire from September 2017.

All parents will be invited to state three preferences on a common application form, regardless of the status of the schools for which they wish to apply and whether the school is in/out of county. The form will provide an opportunity for parents/carer to give reasons for their preferences. All completed secondary transfer forms should be returned directly to the School & Student Access Unit. **An exception to this is if parents wish to apply for a School that resides within Newport City Council – in such circumstances the parent is required to apply directly to Newport City Council under their admission arrangements.**

Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs will be admitted to the school named on their statement.

1 Consideration of Applications and Allocation of Places (Normal Admission Round)

When applying the oversubscription criteria to determine who is to be awarded places, all parental preferences will be considered equally and allocated in line with the criteria in Appendix 1. The highest preference school will be offered in the event that one or more preferences can be met.

If none of the preferences can be met the Local Authority will ensure, as far as is reasonably possible, that an offer can be made at the next nearest available School.

The closing date for the first round of applications is **12 midday on 30th November 2016** and written notification of the outcome of each in county application will be given via the School & Student Access Unit on **1st March 2017**.

For preferences to attend a School outside of Monmouthshire, written notification on the decision to offer / refuse a place at the chosen School will be given by the relevant Local Authority / Admission Authority in line with their offer date.

Monmouthshire will have regard to any offer made by another Local Authority. If the other Local Authority can offer a higher preferred school, Monmouthshire will not make an offer.

Late applications or changes of order of preference will be considered after the first stage has been completed. Where a parent expresses a preference within the first stage and then changes a preference after **30th November 2016**, this will be deemed as a late application.

Applications where a change of circumstance have occurred, which have an impact upon the application's status within the oversubscription criteria, will result in the

application being treated as late if these changes are brought to the Authorities attention after the closing date.

2. TIMETABLE FOR CO-ORDINATED ADMISSIONS FOR SEPTEMBER 2017 SECONDARY SCHOOLS

2.1 Stage 1

| | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| Applications available to Parents | 3 rd October 2016 |
| Applications received | By 30th November 2016 |
| Details of applications sent to Monmouthshire schools and other LA's, as appropriate | By 9 th December 2016 |
| Consultation with neighbouring LAs on cross border preferences | By 16 th December 2016 |
| School & Student Access Unit allocates the highest preference place available and notifies other LA's, as appropriate | By 27th January 2017 |
| School & Student Access Unit allocates places to Monmouthshire children without an offer | By 17th February 2017 |
| School & Student Access Unit sends list of pupils to be offered places to each Monmouthshire school | On 24th February 2017 |
| School & Student Access Unit sends notifications to parents/carers | On 1st March 2017 |
| Appeals | May – July 2017 |

2.2 Stage 2

Following the first round of allocations, late applications will be considered and slotted in where possible using the admissions criteria. There is no guarantee that late applications will be dealt with before the **1st March 2017**.

The processing of late applications is undertaken on a monthly basis, so applications received in April 2017 will be collated and processed during the first full week in May 2017 with schools and parents/carers being notified by the end of the second full week. These will be processed as per the over-subscription criteria.

Consultation

ADMISSION AUTHORITIES

- Monmouthshire County Council
- Voluntary Aided Schools (Monmouthshire)
 - Archbishop Rowan Williams Church in Wales Primary School
 - Llanfair Kilgeddin Church In Wales Primary School
 - Magor Church In Wales Primary School
 - Our Lady & St Michaels Roman Catholic Primary School
 - St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School, Chepstow
- Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
- Gloucestershire County Council
- Herefordshire County Council
- Newport City Council
- Powys County Council
- Torfaen County Borough Council
- Brynmawr Foundation School
- St Albans RC School
- St Joseph's RC Schools

Glossary

Normal Year of Entry

The year in which a pupil is scheduled to commence / change school

Maintained School

A school maintained either by the LA or the Diocese

Common Application

Pre-printed form with pupil details and unique pupil reference Number

School admission numbers**Secondary**

| SCHOOL | Capacity | AN |
|-------------------------------|----------|-----|
| Caldicot Comprehensive | 1500 | 253 |
| Chepstow Comprehensive | 1282 | 193 |
| King Henry VIII Comprehensive | 1308 | 219 |
| Monmouth Comprehensive | 1600 | 253 |

| SCHOOL | Capacity | AN |
|--|----------|----|
| Archbishop Rowan Williams C in W Primary | 210 | 30 |
| Cantref Primary | 210 | 30 |
| Castle Park Primary | 210 | 30 |
| Cross Ash Primary | 210 | 30 |
| Deri View Primary | 300 | 42 |
| Dewstow Primary | 210 | 30 |
| Durand Primary | 210 | 30 |
| Gilwern Primary | 210 | 30 |
| Goytre Fawr Primary | 210 | 30 |
| Kymin View Primary | 210 | 30 |
| Llandogo Primary | 111 | 15 |
| Llanfair Kilgeddin C in W Primary | 40 | 5 |
| Llanfoist Fawr Primary | 210 | 30 |
| Llantilio Pertholey C in W Primary | 210 | 30 |
| Llanvihangel Crucorney Primary | 77 | 11 |
| Magor C in W Primary | 388 | 55 |
| Osbaston C in W Primary | 210 | 30 |
| Our Lady & St. Michael's RC Primary | 197 | 28 |
| Overmonnow Primary | 417 | 59 |
| Pembroke Primary | 210 | 30 |
| Raglan C in W Primary | 210 | 30 |
| Rogiet Primary | 210 | 30 |
| Shirenewton Primary | 210 | 30 |
| St. Mary's RC Primary | 210 | 30 |
| The Dell Primary | 420 | 60 |
| Thornwell Primary | 357 | 51 |
| Trellech Primary | 180 | 25 |
| Undy Primary | 359 | 51 |

| | | |
|-----------------------|------|----|
| Usk C in W Primary | 300 | 42 |
| Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni | 235 | 33 |
| Ysgol Y Ffin | 180 | 25 |
| | 7024 | |

Consultation