

Admission Forum Annual Report 2024/25

Admission Authority: Torfaen County Borough Council

Secretary to the Forum: Kelly Slade

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Membership and attendance of the Forum

Name	Position	Time served as Forum Member *	Membership by category (see table below)
1.	Chair		
2.	Vice Chair		
3. Dan Mutlow		July 2025	S/CV
4. Keri Smith		July 2025	S/CV
5. Lindsay Smith		July 2025	S/CV
6. Learne Harris		July 2025	S/VA
7. Anna Britten		July 2025	S/CV
8. Sarah Truelove		July 2025	S/CV
9. Anthony Ager		July 2025	S/CV
10. Hannah Bedford		July 2025	LA
11. Charlotte Dickens		July 2025	LA

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

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

Meeting dates and attendance (Please note that nothing in the Education (Admission Forums (Wales) Regulations 2003¹ 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)

	Date	Number of Forum Members in attendance - by category
First meeting	23/10/2024	No forum established
Second meeting	29/01/2025	No forum established
Third meeting	22/10/2025	4 – S/CV 1 - LA

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

Torfaen has not managed to establish a joint forum with an adjoining authority.

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 2006² [including consultation on the arrangements³ 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)?

The Council has received the consultation documents in relation to 1 Torfaen school for whom the Governing Body is the admission Authority.

² [The Education \(Determination of Admission Arrangements\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2006 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](http://legislation.gov.uk)

³ 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?**

Torfaen is committed to serving the interests of all children, particularly those identified as being vulnerable.

Torfaen works closely with GEMS and the Refugee resettlement Officer to place children who are refugees/Asylum seekers in a school as efficiently as possible ensuring there is adequate support available for them. There is a robust system in place, and all agencies are involved from Health, Housing, Translators, and Counselors. Frequent meetings take place to ensure that the children are continuously monitored, ensuring the appropriate support is being given to the children and their families. GEMS provides schools with numerous opportunities to engage in training events and provide individual support to those learners who need it.

The over-subscription criteria takes into account Children Looked after and Children previously Looked After as first priority. This includes admitting children to their most appropriate placement even if it means exceeding the admission number. I work closely with the CLA coordinator and GRT Officer to ensure that children are placed in a timely manner and that the necessary support is provided. Other agencies identified to support these children are CAHMS and Iscan which have proved to be successful in settling the children into school with the correct support being identified. The Counselling service is also used frequently.

The transfer protocol continues to be reviewed and updated to ensure that the interests of vulnerable children are being met and to increase consultation partnership agreements with Social Services.

An LA Managed Move Policy is in place and working reasonably well in relation to placing 'hard to place' children. A significant amount of work was completed during 23/24 to streamline policies and practices. The panel was re-established in September 2024 and is running more effectively.

The Council's over-subscription criteria gives priority to children for whom an application is being made on medical grounds. At the beginning of the process all relevant agencies are involved in order that all plans are in place before the child starts in order that his/her needs are met. Priority is afforded to those children for whom a specific school is named on the IDP (School/LA).

Torfaen Admission Team has close links with the Education Welfare Service and Social Services to ensure children are in attendance at school.

Torfaen has a Traveler Liaison Officer who the Borough works closely with in order to ensure the children are attending school. A protocol is in place for the swift admission of children whose parents have had to seek refuge due to Domestic Violence.

Links have been established with the non-maintained sector and Flying Start provision to assist in transition arrangements to nursery and Reception classes, reducing the number of late applications and thus increasing the likelihood of a successful application. Links have also been forged with the Educational Psychology service in order that families of vulnerable children are contacted before the admission round in order to engage and work with the specialist team.

Whilst the Council policy provides for all children to be offered a free part-time nursery place from the start of the term following their third birthday, in certain circumstances where recommendations are made on specific medical, ALN or have social services involvement, children are offered a full-time place at a Council-maintained setting. This is facilitated through close working relationships with colleagues in Social Services/ALN team.

Children of Armed Forces and Crown Servant families planning on relocating to Torfaen are determined as meeting the residency criteria for the relevant school if their application is appropriately evidenced, thus ensuring that they are not disadvantaged.

The CLA Protocol for Admissions which has been updated strengthens the admission arrangements and links with the Vulnerable Children's Manager for the admission of pupils who are vulnerable, and those moving into County from other areas.

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 Schools Admission Team endeavors to process all in year transfers within the 15 school day limit which is set out in the School Admission Code. This is sometimes difficult due to placing children with ALN. Some of these cases are inevitably transferred to the Managed Move Panel, which in the best interest of the child is also used to discuss the appropriateness of the pupil placement. The Managed Move Panel consists of all Secondary Head Teachers or representatives who can make a delegated decision at the meeting. The purpose of the panel is to discuss the hard-to-place pupils, to make the placements fairer and more transparent and to equally share the pupils between the schools as opposed to 1 school admitting more than other schools. Due to additional circumstances surrounding the applications some have not been completed within the 15 days' timescale.

The admissions team have one member of staff who predominantly focuses on processing in-year transfers. Part of this role has seen the implementation of making the procedures for in year transfers more robust and challenging. Any in-year application which has been received due to reasons such as 'unhappy with current school, bullying, etc' will be queried by the officer and both the school and parent is contacted to see if the difficulties can be resolved before the application is processed. The statistics prove that this is successful as the amount of pupils transferring for the reason 'unhappy at school' is reducing. This process will be monitored going forward.

616 applications were received during the academic Year 24/25 to transfer either between Torfaen Schools or into Torfaen Schools from outside of the Borough.

246 applications at Secondary school level within Torfaen were requested, 190 were successful, 21 were refused and 35 were withdrawn.

370 applications at Primary School level within Torfaen were requested, 332 were successful, 7 children were refused and 31 were withdrawn.

9 Fair Access

On comparison with last year's overall transfer requests there has been a increase of 16. The LA and schools are working more collaboratively to endeavor to reduce the amount of transfers between Torfaen schools.

The one issue which is still problematic are the summer born babies and admission into Reception and being held back a year. This needs more clarity in the Code as more parents are opting for this. They are requesting for children to be held back a year but to be admitted into the Reception cohort as opposed to the Year 1 in line with their chronological year group. Torfaen has adopted its own

policy to address this issue to provide more clarity to school, parents/carers and pupils.

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

Where the School Admissions Team have been unable to accommodate requests outside of the normal admissions round, due to the availability of places, this has led to an increase in free home to school transport provision (and costs), siblings in different schools and has also had an impact upon attendance, which is being discussed with the Education Welfare Service.

The number of late phase transfer applications continues to be an issue, causing delays in applications being processed and thereby increasing the possibility of pupils being refused places in their first choice or catchment schools. This causes uncertainty for pupils, parents and schools during the transition process. The Council has tried to address this through publicity, advertising and working with schools and Education Welfare Officers. The Admission Forum has supported this and suggested initiatives to increase the number of on-time applications made through the on-line facility. The usage of the on line facility is now on the increase and the Admissions Team are working closely with schools to ensure that parents are being contacted before the closing date to submit their forms. The LA went online for nursery applications for the first time for Nursery 2024, this has reduced paper submissions and provides a better service for applicants.

The forum were keen to ensure that the LA continues to work in partnership with neighbouring Authorities and schools in relation to cross boundary admission arrangements including regional Welsh schools and Faith schools. Opening and closing dates are practically in line with other neighbouring Authorities. Offer dates are now in line for all Authorities which makes the process more manageable. The Forum raised the issue of the offer dates being so late in the year, this could cause issues in relation to schools preparing their school budget and that appeals could be heard in the summer holidays which will increase parents and children's anxiety. The LA provide indicative estimates to schools roughly 3 weeks following the closing date to help and support them with their budget predictions.

The number of Admission appeals being lodged continues to rise for in year transfers.

The membership and the attendance of the Admission Forum for Torfaen has seen a positive change recently. Although we have not had any volunteers for the role of Chair/Vice Chair we now have a complete membership of the forum.

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

There is currently no co-ordinated admission scheme in Torfaen although we do have a good rapport with all schools, including the Faith Schools, whom we work closely with when making any decisions. We will be adopting a co-ordinated admissions scheme with all primary schools in Torfaen from 2027. The faith secondary school in Torfaen has opted out of this and will continue to receive and process their own applications.

School Admissions and Appeals

This data includes figures in relation to the phase transfer process for September 2024 admission

Name of School	Admission number	Number of applications	Number of parental preferences that were met	Number of successful applications	Number of appeals	Number of successful appeals
Blaenavon Heritage	64	61	57	57	0	0
Blenheim Road	45	38	31	31	0	0
Coed Eva Primary	60	77	58	58	0	0
Croesyceiliog Primary	60	70	46	46	0	0
Cwmffrwdroer Primary	45	33	27	27	0	0
Garnteg Primary	60	48	41	41	0	0
George Street	60	55	37	37	0	0
Greenmeadow Primary	36	30	23	23	0	0
Griffithstown Primary	60	48	40	40	0	0
Llantarnam Primary	45	62	45	45	2	1
Llanyrafon Primary	58	70	42	42	0	0
Maendy primary	33	32	23	23	0	0
Nant Celyn Primary	60	69	50	50	0	0
New Inn Primary	75	84	69	69	0	0
Penygarn Primary	63	44	41	41	0	0
Pontnewydd Primary	60	38	30	30	0	0
Woodlands Community Primary	45	34	31	31	0	0
Ysgol Bryn Onnen	30	22	18	18	0	0
Ysgol Gymraeg Cwmbran	47	27	21	21	0	0
Ysgol Panteg	60	71	59	59	0	0
Henllys	30	17	17	17	0	0
Our Ladys	30	28	28	28	0	0

Padre Pio	30	18	18	18	0	0
Ponthir	16	15	15	15	0	0
St Davids	30	29	29	29	0	0
Abersychan	190	154	138	138	0	0
West Monmouth	260	220	192	192	0	0
Croesyceiliog	240	327	240	240	2	2
Cwmbran High	250	224	206	206	0	0
Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw – Secondary	197	130	129	129	0	0
Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw – Reception	30	22	14	14	0	0
St Albans	170	191	170	170	0	0

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

Where appropriate, and following discussion items at meetings, the Council will write to Head Teachers on specific matters at the request of members of the Admission Forum.

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

Please also provide the relevant link:

Signature: K Slade

(Secretary to the Forum)

Date: 24th November 2025

Please return the completed report by 28 November 2025