

CABINET

Date of Meeting	12 th March 2024
Report Subject	School Admission Arrangements 2025/2026
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Education, Welsh Language, Culture and Leisure
Report Author	Chief Officer (Education & Youth)
Type of Report	Operational

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To advise on the outcome of the statutory consultation exercise on the admission arrangements for 2025/2026 and to recommend approval.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That the proposed admission arrangements for 2025/2026 be approved.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS
1.01	<p>In accordance with the School Admissions Code, the Council is required to undertake a statutory consultation exercise on its admission arrangements for the following year. Consultation must be complete by 1 March and the admission arrangements must be determined by 15 April each year. Statutory consultees include all schools in the area, the diocesan authorities and neighbouring authorities.</p> <p>Consultation must cover the full admission arrangements including the admissions policy, oversubscription criteria, the timetable for admissions and admission numbers (i.e. the maximum number of pupils to be admitted by the admissions authority in to each year group). This information is attached as Appendices 1, 2 and 3.</p>

1.02	<p>The current admission arrangements have been in place since 2003 and the majority of parental preferences continue to be met. For information, the number of admission appeals in recent years is detailed in the table below:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="320 416 1331 719"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Secondary Appeals</th> <th>Primary Appeals</th> <th>Total Appeals</th> <th>Total appeals upheld by Panel**</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2018/19</td> <td>85</td> <td>56</td> <td>141</td> <td>88/62%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2019/20</td> <td>50</td> <td>39</td> <td>89</td> <td>48/54%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2020/21</td> <td>44</td> <td>47</td> <td>91</td> <td>52/57%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2021/22</td> <td>52</td> <td>35</td> <td>87</td> <td>64/73%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2022/23</td> <td>29</td> <td>28</td> <td>57</td> <td>39/68%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2023/24*</td> <td>38</td> <td>7</td> <td>45</td> <td>24/53%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>*to date **i.e. appeal won by parent</p> <p>It is anticipated that oversubscription will continue at secondary level in some areas of the County as a consequence of new housing developments, and parental preference.</p>	Year	Secondary Appeals	Primary Appeals	Total Appeals	Total appeals upheld by Panel**	2018/19	85	56	141	88/62%	2019/20	50	39	89	48/54%	2020/21	44	47	91	52/57%	2021/22	52	35	87	64/73%	2022/23	29	28	57	39/68%	2023/24*	38	7	45	24/53%
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1.03	<p>The consultation process took place between 8th January 2024 and 2nd February 2024 and no comments were received. There are no changes proposed to the admission arrangements. The proposed admissions timetable has been drawn up in consultation with neighbouring authorities and takes in to account factors such as allowing parents sufficient time to visit/research schools and express their preferences, the time needed to process applications, etc. The timetable also incorporates the “common offer dates” prescribed by the School Admissions Code (i.e. 1 March for secondary and 16 April for primary).</p>																																			
1.04	<p>As part of the consultation, Head teachers were asked if there have been any changes to the accommodation at their Schools which could necessitate a review of their Admission Number. No requests have been received.</p>																																			
1.05	<p>There are changes to the capacity and admission numbers at a number of schools as a result of extensions and/or new builds. These revised figures are included in Appendix 2 and Appendix 3.</p>																																			
1.06	<p>For September 2025 there is a change to the capacity and admission number for Ysgol Croes Atti Y Flint will increase as a result of a new school building. Ysgol Croes Atti capacity is increasing from 207 to 240 with the admission number increasing from 24 to 34.</p>																																			
1.07	<p>Drury C.P was included in consultation for September 2024, however the plans to extend for this site are still in design development, construction has not yet commenced, the increase of admission number is on hold, and will remain as shown on Appendix 2.</p>																																			

1.08	There are between 1700 and 1800 applications each year in each of the three admissions phases, i.e. for Year 7, Reception and Nursery. In addition, there are more than 1200 applications received during the academic year to transfer schools, many because of house moves into the area. All applications are made online and assistance is provided by Admissions Officers and Flintshire Connects staff for any parents experiencing difficulties completing the form.
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2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
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2.01	<p>There are no revenue/capital implications.</p> <p>There is a new admissions system in the process of being implemented, which is expected to be in full use for school admissions by September 2024. Transition to the new admissions system is being appropriately managed and resourced.</p>
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3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
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3.01	The annual determination of admission arrangements must be carried out in accordance with the framework and timetable in the School Admissions Code. Consultation has been completed and approval is being sought within the deadlines set out in the Code. Adherence to the Code minimises the risk of challenge to the Public Services Ombudsman or by way of judicial review.
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3.02	<p>Well-being Principle Impacts</p> <p>Ways of Working (Sustainable Development) Principles Impact</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="320 1352 1385 1968"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="327 1361 852 1391">Ways of Working Principle</th> <th data-bbox="858 1361 1378 1391">Impact</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="327 1400 852 1496">Long-term</td> <td data-bbox="858 1400 1378 1496">Positive – ensures that high quality fair, legal and equitable admission processes are in place.</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="327 1505 852 1720">Prevention</td> <td data-bbox="858 1505 1378 1720">Positive – effective admissions processes will provide positive transition for children from childcare to education and also across primary and secondary transition points for learners.</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="327 1729 852 1960">Integration</td> <td data-bbox="858 1729 1378 1960">Positive – effective admissions processes support the integration of children from varying social backgrounds and allow them to develop friendship groups, in-line with the Wellbeing and Future Generations Act (2015).</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Ways of Working Principle	Impact	Long-term	Positive – ensures that high quality fair, legal and equitable admission processes are in place.	Prevention	Positive – effective admissions processes will provide positive transition for children from childcare to education and also across primary and secondary transition points for learners.	Integration	Positive – effective admissions processes support the integration of children from varying social backgrounds and allow them to develop friendship groups, in-line with the Wellbeing and Future Generations Act (2015).
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	Collaboration	Positive – partnership arrangements with schools and other neighbouring councils to manage the admissions process within and across Flintshire boundaries.
	Involvement	Positive – communication with learners, parents/carers and other stakeholders throughout the admissions process.
3.03	Against the seven well-being goals of the Act, the potential impact of the report and its recommendations would be evaluated as follows:	
	Well-being Principle	Impact
	Prosperous Wales	Neutral
	Resilient Wales	Neutral
	Healthier Wales	Neutral
	More Equal Wales	Positive impact – school admission process is delivered in a way that is inclusive for all
	Cohesive Wales	Neutral
	Vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	Positive impact – school admission process ensures access to Welsh medium school places
	Globally Responsible Wales	Neutral

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED/CARRIED OUT
4.01	All statutory consultees have been consulted in accordance with the School Admissions Code.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 – Admission Arrangements 2025/26
5.02	Appendix 2 – Primary Admission Numbers/ Secondary Admission Numbers

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/school-admissions-code.pdf

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	<p>Contact Officer: Natalie Summers, School Admissions Team Leader Telephone: 01352 704187 E-mail: natalie.summers@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
	<p>School Admission Arrangements – the overall procedure and practices about how to apply for a school place, including the criteria to decide how places are allocated, application procedures, the timetable for the admissions process, how late applications are handled, waiting lists and the appeal process.</p> <p>School Admissions Code – a Code issued by Welsh Government in respect of the discharge of admissions functions. All admission authorities have a statutory duty to act in accordance with the Code.</p> <p>Oversubscription criteria – a list of criteria which an admission authority must adopt to be used for the allocation of places if there are more applications received than there are places available.</p> <p>Admission Number – the number of school places that an admission authority can admit in each year group.</p>