

Admissions

Analysis:

School Admissions – 2023/24 Admissions Round Analysis

The Admissions team have successfully implemented the School Admissions Policy for Nursery and Statutory Education 2022/23, which is evidenced by the following assessment:

- 100% of applications were processed within 48 hours and 100% of standard in-year transfer requests were processed within 15 days of receipt in accordance with the WG School Admissions Code (2013) and Blaenau Gwent's School Admissions Policy for Nursery and Statutory Education.
- Transfer rates have remained steady over the last 5 academic sessions, from 354 in 2018/19 and then a decrease of 229 in 2019/20 these figures were much lower due to covid. The transfer rates increased slightly in 2020/2021 to 295 with the primary reason for in-year transfer being inward migration of families into the Blaenau Gwent area, the rate then decreased slightly for 2021/2022 to 136, there has been a significant increase for 2022/23 to 255 this is primarily due to inward migration.
- Complex transfers were received on a weekly basis and referred to the Senior Education Welfare Officer for consideration of placement at the Vulnerable Learner Panel.
- Transfers for pupils with an additional learning need or an EHCP were received on a weekly basis and referred to the SEN team for consideration at ALN Panel.
- The admissions officer has attended all VLP meeting and/or liaised directly with the Senior Education Welfare Officer on pupil placement.
- The admissions officer has attended all ALN Panel meetings and/ or liaised directly with the SEN team on pupil placement.
- Two admission appeals were held for the reception admission round during the summer period. Both appeals were upheld in favour of the admissions authority due to them being class size appeals.
- The numbers of in-time applications received for pupils who applied for a school place for the 2023/24 admission round, remained consistent for nursery, reception and secondary when compared to 2022/23. Please refer to Figure 1 below for the in-time percentage comparisons:

Figure 1: In-time Application (%)

Percentage of In-time Applications 2020/21	Percentage of In-time Applications 2021/22	Percentage of In-time Applications 2022/23	Percentage of In-time Applications 2023/24
Nursery – 60%	Nursery – 71%	Nursery – 75%	Nursery – 75%
Reception – 75%	Reception – 83%	Reception – 85%	Reception – 85%
Secondary – 79%	Secondary – 80%	Secondary – 85%	Secondary – 85%

- The Council were able to sustain 100% of parental first preferences for a 4 year period in respect of secondary place allocation, and 99% of first preferences were met for the nursery and reception year groups, (please refer to **Figure 2** below). This is attributable to the effective monitoring and management of school capacities and pupil places along with the continued achievement of surplus place reduction, whereby school admission numbers for primary schools with a high surplus have been reduced over the last year and in turn the admission number has also been reduced.

Figure 2: First Preferences Met %

% of First Preferences Met for In-time Applications 2020/21	% of First Preferences Met for In-time Applications 2021/22	% of First Preferences Met for In-time Applications 2022/23	% of first Preferences Met for In-time Applications 2023/24
Nursery – 100%	Nursery – 100%	Nursery – 100%	Nursery – 99%
Reception – 99%	Reception - 100%	Reception – 99%	Reception – 99%
Secondary – 100%	Secondary – 100%	Secondary – 100%	Secondary – 100%

The Welsh Government School Admissions Code (2013) dictates that Councils must review their admissions policies annually for consultation and publication by April 15th in the academic year preceding the admissions round. Blaenau Gwent School Admissions Policy outlines the arrangements, criteria and relevant legislation that underpin school admission processes and methodology. The primary changes to the policy document for the 2023/24 academic session were as follows:

- A review of the nursery, primary and secondary admission numbers in line with the annual capacity review. This is an annual process which reviews changes to school plans and physical space within the school, which affect the provision of teaching and learning. This is carried out in line with the Welsh Government Measuring the Capacity of Schools in Wales Guidance (2011). The final agreed capacity calculations are then used to inform admission numbers.
- A review of the dates for the admission round(s), associated processing and offer deadlines.

The Admissions Policy for 2024/25 was consulted upon and published in line with the Welsh Government's deadline (April 2023).

The Admissions team have fully migrated to online admissions with the use of Capita One Online and ABAVUS (My council services) – with parents being fully supported by the team in their application process and submission.

The Admissions Forum met once over the last year (September 2022 – August 2023).

The Forum has sustained a good level of attendance at each meeting. The Forum has worked closely with the Education Transformation team in order to:

- improve school and Council awareness and partnership approaches in respect of the implementation and monitoring of the admissions round;
- improve tracking processes from live birth to secondary education (whilst ensuring alignment with Inclusion);
- address issues i.e. ensure that when in-year transfers are allocated a place a start date is offered within 10 days; and,
- explore a wider ranging data set i.e. Flying Start, placement outside of the chronological year group, home tuition and attendance data etc. Ensuring that there is a holistic approach to the management of pupil places.