



## ***FULL COUNCIL REPORT***

Date Written	4 <sup>th</sup> February, 2016
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Service Area	Schools
Exempt/Non Exempt	Non Exempt
Committee Date	2 <sup>nd</sup> March 2016

*To: Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen*

# **School Admission Arrangements 2017/18**

## **1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The authority has a statutory duty to consult on school admission arrangements annually and to determine the admission arrangements for the next admissions round by 15<sup>th</sup> April each year.
- 1.2 This report sets out the proposed Admissions Policy 2017/18 (see Appendix A) which the authority must determine by 15<sup>th</sup> April 2016.
- 1.3 As part of the school admission arrangements the authority has also reviewed the school catchment areas across the authority to ensure that they reflect the needs of the schools they serve.
- 1.4 The review identified that the catchment areas of four schools needed to be considered for change. The schools are Twynyrodyn Primary; Caedraw Primary, Ysgol Rhyd y Grug; and Ysgol Santes Tudful.
- 1.5 A proposal to amend the catchment areas of Caedraw Primary/Twynyrodyn Primary and Ysgol Rhyd y Grug/Ysgol Santes Tudful effective for admissions from September 2017 has been consulted on and the outcome of this is detailed in section 5.
- 1.6 Of the 188 respondents to the consultation all but one were responding to the proposal in so far as it impacts upon Ysgol Santes Tudful. The other respondent addressed the proposal in so far as it impacts Twynyrodyn Primary School.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That the School Admissions Policy 2017/18, attached at Appendix A, is approved in line with the statutory requirement to determine the policy by 15<sup>th</sup> April 2016.

- 2.2 That Members approve the proposed changes to catchment areas of Caedraw Primary/Twynyrodyn Primary with effect for school admissions from September 2017.

### **3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The authority has a statutory duty to consult on school admission arrangements annually and to determine the admission arrangements for the next admissions round, following appropriate consultation, by 15<sup>th</sup> April each year. The authority must consult annually with the governing bodies of all Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council's community schools; the admission authorities of all voluntary aided schools i.e. their governing bodies; and with neighbouring local authorities.
- 3.2 As part of the annual review of school admissions, it is a statutory requirement to review the school catchment areas in order to ensure that they continue to reflect the needs of the local schools and communities they serve. This process supports an effective planning of school places strategy. As a result of the review it was identified that the catchment areas of four schools needed to be considered for change: Twynyrodyn Primary; Caedraw Primary, Ysgol Rhyd y Grug; and Ysgol Santes Tudful.
- 3.3 A proposal to alter these catchment areas effective for school admissions from September 2017 was drafted for consultation as detailed in the Catchment Area Review document attached at Appendix B. Catchment Area maps to supplement Appendix B are available via the interactive link. The consultation undertaken has been detailed in Section 5.

### **4.0 CONSULTATION AND RESPONSES – ADMISSION POLICY 2017/18**

- 4.1 The School Admissions Policy 2017/18 was issued for consultation on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2015 to Headteachers and chairs of governors of all schools in the local authority (including other admission authorities), neighbouring local authorities and the Diocesan Director of Education. The annual School Admission Policy is a statutory requirement; this latest version presents the admission arrangements for nursery and pre-nursery pupils with greater clarity to support the local authority's robust application of the admissions policy.
- 4.2 Responses to the consultation were required by 15<sup>th</sup> January 2016. The draft Admission Policy 2017/18 was also placed on the council website. There were no responses to the consultation regarding the School Admissions Policy 2017/18.

### **5.0 CONSULTATION AND RESPONSES – CATCHMENT REVIEW**

- 5.1 The proposals to alter the catchment areas of Caedraw Primary and Twynyrodyn Primary and of Ysgol Rhyd y Grug and Ysgol Santes Tudful were issued for consultation on the 27<sup>th</sup> November 2015. These were issued to headteachers and chairs of governors of all schools in the local authority, (including other admission authorities), neighbouring local authorities, the Diocesan Director of Education and the Governors' Association. Details of the proposals were also placed on the council website. Consultation closed on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2016. As part of the consultation, public meetings were held at the following schools:

School	Date	Attendees
Caedraw Primary School	7 <sup>th</sup> December 2015	0
Twynyrodyn Primary School	5 <sup>th</sup> January 2016	8
Ysgol Rhyd y Grug	12 <sup>th</sup> January 2016	0
Ysgol Santes Tudful	11 <sup>th</sup> January 2016	61

5.2 There were 188 responses to the proposal to alter the catchment areas:

- Caedraw Primary School – there were no responses.
- Twynyrodyn Primary School – there was one response from a parent (against the proposal) who expressed concern that it should not affect children already living in the area.

Response:

*Pupils living in the catchment area and already attending Twynyrodyn Primary School will be able to continue their primary schooling at the school. Pupils living in the current catchment area which, if the proposal is approved, will change to the catchment area of Caedraw Primary School will still be able to apply to attend Twynyrodyn Primary School and if there is sufficient capacity at the school will be allocated a place in accordance with the admission processes.*

- Ysgol Rhyd y Grug – there were no responses
- Ysgol Santes Tudful – there were 187 responses from parents, staff, governors and members of the public. Of these responses: two were anonymous and discounted: five were in support of the proposal and 180 against.

5.3 The main areas of concern regarding the Ysgol Santes Tudful catchment area were as follows:

- A number of respondents felt that the catchment area for Ysgol Santes Tudful should continue to include Abercanaid, Pentrebach and Troedyrhiw areas; or that the changes should be carried out gradually and some felt that no changes should take place at the current time.
- Some respondents were concerned about the removal of free transport for pupils because of the proposed changes to the boundaries. A few respondents were concerned as to an increase in travelling time.
- A number of respondents felt that the school was not full.
- Many respondents felt that the number of pupils who may come to the school because of future housing developments was not certain and/or might not be realised at all. Several respondents requested that the authority wait until the school was full before changes were made.
- The governors, school and parents are concerned that there would be a drop in pupil numbers, which could have a detrimental and financial impact upon the school.

5.4 Following consideration of the outcome of the consultation, the local authority is not recommending any changes to the catchment areas of Ysgol Rhyd y Grug/Ysgol Santes Tudful for school admission in September 2017.

## 6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

6.1 Funding for the above is contained within existing budgets.

## 7.0 SINGLE INTEGRATED PLAN AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT SUMMARY

7.1 The Single Integrated Plan and sustainability Impact Summary has been completed and has indicated equitable solutions for schools and their communities. No negative impacts have been identified.

## 8.0 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) form has been prepared for the purpose of this report. It has been found that a full assessment is not required at this time. The form can be accessed on the Council's website/intranet via the 'Equality Impact Assessment' link.

**LORRAINE BUCK**  
**CORPORATE DIRECTOR (PEOPLE & PERFORMANCE)**

**COUNCILLOR HARVEY JONES**  
**CABINET MEMBER WITH PORTFOLIO FOR LEARNING**

<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>		
<b>Title of Document(s)</b>	<b>Document(s) Date</b>	<b>Document Location</b>
Catchment Area Maps	2015	Interactive maps available at: <a href="http://www.merthyr.gov.uk/resident/schools-and-learning/education-consultations/">www.merthyr.gov.uk/resident/schools-and-learning/education-consultations/</a>
Welsh Government School Admissions Code Statutory Code 005/2013	2013	Learning Department
<b>Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?</b>		<b>No</b>

***Consultation has been undertaken with the Corporate Management Team in respect of each proposal(s) and recommendation(s) set out in this report.***