

Minutes

Newport Admissions Forum

Date: 21 November 2017

Present: Roman Catholic Diocese (in the Chair)
School Admissions & Appeals Manager
Service Development Manager (Vice Chair)
Local Community Representative – GEMS

VA Schools Representative
Looked After Children in Education Representative (Non – Voting)

Clerk to the Forum

Apologies: Cabinet Member for Education & Young People
Chief Education Officer
Local Community Representative – Early Years
Anglican Diocese Monmouth
Community Schools Representative
Local Community Representative (SEN)

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence are as noted above. –

2. Minutes of meeting held on June 2017

The minutes of the meeting held 27 June 2017 were confirmed as a true record.

3. Matters Arising

None raised

4. Review of Membership

RH reported the following updates to the Forum;
CR and JW are no longer on the Forum
Sarah Morgan has replaced James Harris as Chief Officer of Education.
Also, vacancies for parent governors.
Emailing out to seek nominations and will send out to members to vote.

5. September 2018 admissions update

JL updated the Forum on the current position for 2018 nursery, reception and secondary applications.

Currently the nursery window has closed and notifications will be given on 30 November. The total number of applications has increased as has the number of applications completed online - 83% 2018.

Closing date for secondary schools is 30 November, so far 59% of applications have been received online, there is an expectation that this number will increase as the deadline approaches.

Chase up exercises shall be carried out to contact parents to complete application forms online.

Reception applications close on 12 January, the current situation is in line with previous year.

Priority is placed on making a preference for catchment schools, a survey has been undertaken to gain an understanding of why parents make the choices and do not choose their catchment school. Results will be shared at the next Forum.

6. In-year admissions update

Members of the Forum were asked to note the following highlights in the accompanying report;

- 188 primary applications were received in the summer term, 66% of first preferences were met - 30 primary in-year appeals were held during the summer term.
- 29 secondary applications were received, 52% of first preferences were met – 11 appeals were heard, 9 of which were for Bassaleg.
- The number of first preferences met for nursery applications is lower at 40% as parents apply for only one place.
- So far this term there has been a huge increase of in-year applications, the majority of which are people moving into Newport.
- 134 in-year appeals were held, 30 were successful.

7. Availability of school places

The Availability of School Places Report is issued to a number of frontline staff such as social services, GEMS and housing on a half-termly basis, in order to assist colleagues when advising those parents that are moving within or into Newport.

Summary of key facts;

- WG guidelines recommend a surplus of 10%, Newport is under for primary in all clusters, apart from Newport High (10%) and Llanwern (19%).
- The west of the city is much more pressured, Welsh medium is above 10%.
- Year 6 and above is much less pressured but as this pressure will move through the school as the year groups move up.

AR noted that there was pressure on the bulge years and that other factors will affect future availability, e.g. the Severn tolls and people moving from Bristol to Newport.

LJ added that the city is growing significantly and developers have stated that the same house in Bristol is £100,000 difference. She added that Newport is growing quicker than any other LA and that 19 other LA's in Wales have diminishing populations.

MD noted that GEMS has received 180 referrals in SE Wales, 97 of which are from Newport. He stated that Newport primary schools are most in demand for EAL. There are a lot of transitions which makes it very challenging, he noted that there are many Romanian and transient families leaving schools in June/July and he believes this is linked to farming in their countries.

8. Consultation on admission arrangements 2019

JL informed the panel that the 2019/20 policy is due to go to consultation, but there will be no changes. Policy will be determined by April.

It was noted that RC schools do not have to consult if there are no proposed changes.

DW noted that the sibling priority for nursery places will not be in the policy until all community schools have a nursery as this will disadvantage some children.

9. Annual report

JL shared the draft of the annual report and explained that it is shared to Welsh Government by 30 November and is part of the statutory requirements.

It was noted on page 6 the issues that have been identified and what steps have been taken to address them.

LJ discussed the pressures across the city.
106 agreements through developments

B and b programme developments.
Jubilee Park Primary School opened as planned.
All schools are now primary not separate infant and junior schools.

Other challenges are:

Children traveling across the city and split siblings, including transport, costs poor punctuality

Increase in on-time applications

10. Reorganisation programme

DW – informed the forum of the current situation that all six 2016/17 proposals were implemented as planned for September 2017

2017/18 programme has started, there are four proposals.

Summary of key facts;

- Permanent removal of the Learning Resource Base currently located at Llanwern High School
- Expansion of Maes Ebbw School to increase capacity from 100 to 150 pupil places - proposal is currently pending.
- Expansion of Millbrook Primary School from 1 form entry to 1.5 form entry - a decision on whether or not to publish a statutory proposal is currently pending.
- Establishment of a new 2-form entry primary school on the Glan Llyn development – the formal consultation period has now ended and a consultation report is in the process of being drafted.
- Extension of age-range of Pentrepoeth Primary School to 3-11 will be implemented in January 2018

11. AOB

None

12. Future meeting dates

20 March 2018 - confirmed
Proposal – 19 June 2018 - confirmed