

ABERCYNON COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL



Admissions Policy

Always Creating Potential

The entry of children to schools is controlled and administered by an 'Admissions Authority'. In respect of community schools the Admissions Authority is Rhondda Cynon Taf Council (the Authority). In the case of voluntary-aided (church) schools, the Admissions Authority is the governing body of the individual church school. Within the County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf (the Authority), each school has an area that it serves – its 'catchment area'. Most parents/carers choose to send their child(ren) to their 'local' school within this 'catchment area', however, they have the right to state a preference for their child(ren) to attend any school. Whether there is an offer of a place at the preferred school will depend on the outcome of the application of the Authority's admission policy.

The Council continuously reviews and reserves the right to amend its admission procedures for non-statutory pre-nursery and nursery education. Nursery places are only available to residents of RCT, i.e. those persons paying Council tax to this authority.

1. Parents/carers must submit an application for a school place at the following stages of their child(ren)'s education:-
 - i. Admission to a pre-Nursery class, the term following a child's third birthday (such places are provided strictly according to availability, and are dependent on there being surplus classroom capacity in the Nursery of the individual school, they are not universally available).
 - ii. On admission to the Nursery year at a school

Please note that schools are now only funded for part time places for both pre-nursery and nursery provision; full time funding is only applied the term following a child's fourth birthday. Part time places provide at least 15 hours a week education provision to children. Some schools may decide to increase this level of provision should their budgets allow; parents will need to check with individual schools for details of any local arrangements made in this regard. If a school only offers part time nursery places, the allocation of morning and afternoon places will be decided by the head teacher. Pre nursery and nursery places are not available to any parent not resident within Rhondda Cynon Taf County boundary (and who are not paying Council tax to Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council), however consideration will be given to allowing entry to children who have elder siblings at the school, but only if there are spare places available.

- iii. On admission to the Reception year
 - iv. On transfer from an infant school to a junior or primary school (year 2 to year 3 only).
 - v. On transfer from a junior or primary school to secondary school
 - vi. At any time that parents/carers may wish to transfer their child from one school to another

Please see admission timetable for all of the above on page 14

2. Parents/carers may further express their right of selection in respect of –

- i. Welsh Medium education – this option is available to all parents or carers who desire it for their child(ren) (please refer to Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan)

- ii. Voluntary aided (church) schools – please see pages 15-23
- 3. The Authority and each school's governors must comply with any parent/carer preference that is expressed, **providing that there is room within the school**. In considering these preferences, the Admissions Authority must have regard for:
 - i. The overall provision of efficient education and efficient use of resources
 - ii. Welsh Medium education (as 2 i. above)
 - iii. Religious affiliation

The names of the secondary schools to which pupils from each of the junior/primary schools usually progress are given on pages 39-40. All schools within the Authority aim to provide their pupils with an educational opportunity that is best suited to each individual child. Some children will have learning needs requiring special educational provision. Parents/carers are encouraged, in the first instance, to discuss possible areas of concern with their local head teacher who may consider that the best course of action is to seek specialist advice. Parents/carers will, in some cases, already be receiving specialist support and guidance regarding the provision of education for their child. For further information on this matter, please refer to pages 24-25 which gives an outline of the Special Educational Needs services available in Rhondda Cynon Taf. Please also see page 5 Criteria for Pupil Entry.

B. Applying for a Place

1. Parents/carers have the right to express a preference when selecting a school for their child(ren). For pupils who are due to start school commencing September 2018, parents/carers **must** complete an application. Please refer to page 14 for return dates. Applications include a deadline by which they must be completed and returned. Parents of pupils due to start Nursery, Reception, transfer from Infants to Junior/Primary school or transfer from primary to secondary school in September 2018 can apply online for admission.

Applying online is quick and easy. Follow these three steps :-

- i. Visit <https://schooladmissions.rhondda-cynon-taff.gov.uk/>**
- ii. Register with a valid email address.**
- iii. Follow the instructions on the online application web pages.**

If you do not have access to your own computer, free internet access is available at the Council's One4All Centres or any Rhondda Cynon Taf Library. Alternatively, a paper application form is available by contacting the School Admissions Team on **01443 744232**.

Only applications received by the published closing date for receipt of applications will be considered in the initial round of allocation of places. Other applications received after the closing date will be considered as late applications. Late applications will be processed **after** applications which were received by the closing date and therefore late applicants may find that their preferred school is already full. Late applications will be subjected to the same admissions criteria. Any change of preference after the closing date must be made in writing to the School Admissions Team. Any preference that has changed after the published closing date will result in the application being treated as a late application. Parents/carers may wish to contact head teachers to discuss their preferences and/or to arrange to visit schools

before making a final decision. Please be aware that the head teacher is unable to offer or promise a place in their school, that is the role of the Admissions Authority.

2. The information given on the application must be accurate. There may be occasions when parents/carers are required to evidence the information given on the application.

3. Parents/carers may be requested to provide **documentary evidence** of proof of address. The only acceptable forms of documentary proof of address are – Council Tax statement; Child Benefit confirmation letter; recent gas, water or electricity bill. Original documents will be requested (which will be returned if required). Information provided may also be cross checked and verified against information held by other departments of the Authority. If the permanent address of the child changes after making an application, it is essential that you let us know as soon as possible in writing. For those parents/carers who have moved into a new property within the last six months we will require further documentary evidence namely :-

i. A photo card driving licence containing details of the new address, which has to be presented in person at Ty Trevithick **if requested**.

ii If the house move has been caused due to a change in domestic circumstances e.g. Divorce or Legal Separation, then copies of Court/Solicitor's documentation will be required **if requested**.

4. Any attempt to gain an advantage in the admissions process by giving false information is taken very seriously and the Council will investigate fraudulent claims. If we offer a place at a school and then discover that the offer was made on fraudulent or misleading information e.g a false claim to living at an address, falsified date of birth, we will withdraw the place offered. Where a place has been offered on false information the offer can be withdrawn even after your child has started at the school.

5. Where parents have shared responsibility for a child and the child lives with both parents for part of the school week, then the home address will be the address to which Child Benefit is paid. Parents will be required to provide documentary evidence to support the address they wish to be considered for allocation purposes.

6. All applications received by the closing dates will be considered in line with the Authority's Oversubscription criteria for entry to school (see paragraph C).

Parents/carers will be notified in writing of the outcome of their application including, if appropriate, the means of appealing against the decision where there is recourse to appeal.

C. How Places are Allocated

If the number of preferences received for a school is below the school's Admission Number, all applications for admission to the school will be granted. Places cannot be reserved for 'in catchment' children unless they are children of reception age whose parents have applied for their entry to school to be deferred until a later date in the same school year. If the number of preferences received for a school is above the school's Admission Number the following oversubscription criteria will be applied, in the priority order listed, to determine the allocation of available places:

Oversubscription Criteria

- **Priority Category 1:** 'Looked After' children (children in public care) & previously 'Looked After' children.

- **Priority Category 2:** Children whose home is inside the school's catchment area and have an older sibling attending the school from the same address, at the date of application, who will continue to attend that school in September 2018.
 - **Priority Category 3:** Children whose home is inside the school's catchment area who do not have an older sibling attending the school.
 - **Priority Category 4:** Children whose home is outside the school's catchment area and have an older sibling attending from the same address, at the date of application, who will continue to attend that school in September 2018.
 - **Priority Category 5:** Children whose home is outside the school's catchment area who do not have an older sibling attending the school.
- For the avoidance of all doubt the reference to 'home' in the oversubscription categories above and the 'tie breaker' overleaf refers to the actual location of the residential dwelling in which the child lives.

Please note that childcare/childminding arrangements or a parent's place of work cannot be taken into account when applying admissions criteria.

The date a parent/carer requests with a school that their child's name be put on their school's initial list is not a criteria for entry and does not guarantee a place; it merely enables information for parents to be sent out at the correct time.

Tie breaker

Children will be admitted up to the Admission Number in order of priority as outlined above. If, within any one of the priority categories listed, all the applicants cannot be offered a place, preference will be given to children living nearest to the school. Distance will be measured by the Authority using the shortest, safe walking route between the home address and the nearest open school gate. For the avoidance of doubt, in areas where no safe walking route has been identified by the Authority, the shortest driving route between the home address and the nearest open school gate will be used. The distance will be measured by using the Mapinfo System only, in order to ensure equality of opportunity to all applications. Measurements calculated by any other system will not be considered. The home address in instances where parents have shared responsibility for children, will be the address to which Child Benefit is paid.

Note Siblings

Children will be classified as siblings if-

- (a) they are half or full brother or sister
- (b) they are an adoptive or fostered brother or sister
- (c) they are children i.e. step brother/step sister living full time/permanently in the same household

Please note that cousins, nephews and nieces are not counted as siblings.

In relation to secondary school, siblings must be in years 7 to 11 of the relevant school in September 2018. Siblings attending the sixth form at a comprehensive school in September 2018 are not considered for purpose of admissions of younger children.

Multiple Birth Children (e.g. twins or triplets)

If when applying the oversubscription criteria the last child to be admitted is one of a multiple birth e.g. twin or triplet then the Authority will also admit the other sibling(s).

Children of UK Service Personnel

Children of UK service personnel will be treated as in catchment if their application form is accompanied by an official Ministry of Defence (MOD) or Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) letter declaring a definite return date and confirmation of the new address.

Admission Number Variations

Where the Authority is in the process of requesting a variation to the Admission Number of a school, due to changes in the accommodation available, the proposed number is recorded under the relevant school.

Waiting Lists

Following the allocation of places during the normal admission round, any pupil that is refused admission to an oversubscribed school will be placed on the waiting list. The list will be maintained until the 30th September (in line with the requirement in the School Admissions Code). Thereafter parents/carers must make a fresh application for admission (by completing an application form) and/or provide a written request to remain on the waiting list. Admissions in respect of pupils on waiting lists are determined by application of the over-subscription criteria, not by the length of time a child has been on the waiting list.

A. Nursery Education

Nursery education is widely provided across Rhondda Cynon Taf through maintained schools and nonmaintained registered education providers both of whom are subject to regular inspections through Estyn. Some schools are able to offer 'pre-Nursery' places to children the term following their 3rd birthday. Parents will be able to apply online in September for a pre-nursery place to start in January (term after their child's third birthday) and can apply online in January for a pre-nursery place to start in April (term after their child's third birthday).

Parents can apply online at <https://schooladmissions.rhondda-cynon-taff.gov.uk/> Pre-nursery places are provided strictly subject to availability and cannot be guaranteed at any school. Once the Nursery accommodation is deemed to be full, no further pre-Nursery pupils may be admitted. Please note that the admission of pre nursery children to any school will not be possible any later than the Friday which follows the May Half Term Break. Wherever possible we ensure provision is available within the family's catchment area. However, where schools are unable to meet the demand a part time placement will be funded in other registered education provision within private and voluntary sector settings. Parents can also apply online for such places in September and January at <https://schooladmissions.rhondda-cynon-taff.gov.uk/>

Details of these providers can be found on page 44 or alternatively you can ring our Family Information Service (FIS) free helpline on **0800 180 4151** (or 0300 if dialling from a mobile) 111 4151 for further details. A nursery place will only be funded in alternative provision if there is no capacity in a local school, to meet the child's needs. Non-Maintained registered education provision will not be funded cross county. Non- Maintained registered education providers funded dates are in line with school admission dates. The Council continuously reviews and reserves the right to amend its admission procedures for nonstatutory pre-nursery and nursery education.

1. Admission to Nursery

The Authority sets the number of places available at a nursery school. The decision to admit your child to a Nursery School will be taken in accordance with the Authority's published criteria for Pupil Entry to school (see point C page 5). Admission to Nursery Classes in Infant or Primary Schools will also be undertaken in line with the Authority's published criteria for Pupil Entry to school and in accordance with Welsh Government expectations. Pupils who are admitted either to a pre nursery or nursery class will not have an "automatic" right to continue education within that school. Whilst every effort will be made to accommodate these pupils, a formal application must be made for transfer to the nursery class (upon transfer from pre nursery provision), reception class/infant department at the appropriate time. There may be occasions when, due to over subscription, it will not be possible for this transfer to take place.

Early Years and Family Support Services

Rhondda Cynon Taf Early Years and Family Support Services provides a broad range of services to support children's development and learning as well as support to parents. EYFSS provides services such as Flying Start, open access play, parent and family support, pre-school language development support and Family Information Services. The service operates across Rhondda Cynon Taf in a number of Children's Centre and the central team, along with senior officers are based at Ty Trevithick. The full range of services provided by EYFSS is available on the Council's website or by telephoning the Family Information Service on freephone: 0800 180 4151 or free from mobiles 0300 111 4151 or fis@rctcbc.gov.uk

3. Flying Start

Flying Start is the Welsh Government's flagship early years programme for families with children who are 0-3 years of age and is delivered by the Council's Early Years and Family Support Service. In order to be eligible to access Flying Start services, families must be living in Flying Start areas. Families can check their eligibility here:

<http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Resident/ChildrenandFamilies/ParentandFamilySupport/>

[Financialsupportforfamilies/FlyingStart/WhatisFlyingStart.aspx](http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Resident/ChildrenandFamilies/ParentandFamilySupport/Financialsupportforfamilies/FlyingStart/WhatisFlyingStart.aspx)

Flying Start is made up of four strands and every Flying Start child and family is entitled to access each of these four strands. They are:

- Enhanced Health Visiting, where Health Visitors have reduced caseloads to allow them to offer intensive support to families and visit more often
- Funded quality childcare for 2.5 hours per day, 5 days per week, 42 weeks per year for children from the term after their second birthday until the term after their third birthday.
- Parenting and family support
- Early language development support

4. Foundation Phase

The Foundation Phase provides an approach to learning, with a more specific focus on learning through play and learning activities in the outdoors. The Foundation Phase curriculum is statutory in all early years education provision, including the private and voluntary sector and advisory teachers provide extra support to education providers that are non-maintained within the Local Authority. This ensures

that the principles of the Foundation Phase are acted upon in every setting that delivers education to pupils from age 3-7.

B. Primary Education

Primary education refers to nursery/infant/junior and primary schools. Children of compulsory school age (5 or over) will, at the appropriate time, attend these schools. Attendance between the age of 3 to the date of a child's fifth birthday is optional (see paragraph C1 below). By virtue of section 8 of the Education Act 1996, a child begins to be of compulsory school age when he or she attains the age of five years. A child, therefore, becomes of compulsory school age on one of three dates in the year following their fifth birthday. These dates (1st September, 1st January and 1st April) are prescribed by the Education (Start of Compulsory School Age) Order 1998 (S.I. 1998 No. 1607).

Therefore, for a child whose fifth birthday falls between:

- 1st April – 31st August, compulsory school age is 1st September
 - 1st September – 31st December, compulsory school age is 1st January
 - 1st January – 31st March, compulsory school age is 1st April
- (e.g. a child born on 1st January would not be of compulsory school age until 1st April). Children between the ages of 3-5 are recognised as pupils receiving primary education. However, in Rhondda Cynon Taf, primary education in this context may be provided in nursery schools or with registered education providers.

C. Admission to Infant Schools or Infant Departments within Primary Schools

1. All children must be in full time attendance by the commencement of the term following their fifth birthday.
2. Parents/Carers should notify the Head Teacher of their local infant school or primary school (well in advance if possible) that they have a child approaching compulsory school age. If a parent/ carer is unsure as to which school usually serves their address/locality then an officer in the School Admissions Team is available to offer advice (see page 2).
3. Pupils who are admitted to an Infant school, will not have an "automatic" right to continue their education at the junior or primary school that serves the same area. Whilst every effort will be made to accommodate these pupils, a formal application must be made for transfer to the junior/primary school at the appropriate time. Pupils admitted to a pre nursery or nursery class in a primary school must also make a formal application to transfer to the nursery class (upon transfer from pre nursery) / reception class at that school. There will be occasions when, due to over-subscription, it will not be possible for the transfer within the same local junior/primary school to take place. Should this be the case a place will be offered, in consultation with parents/carers, at an alternative school.

D. Transfer to Junior Schools or Junior Departments within Primary Schools

1. Children enter or transfer from Infant schools to Junior schools, or Junior departments in Primary schools, on the first day of the autumn term (on a given date in September) following their seventh birthday.
2. In Primary schools, the infant and junior sections are simply departments of the same school and children progress through the school from the infants to juniors without having to transfer elsewhere or make application between departments.

E. Changing Schools: Primary Education

1. Changing schools during primary education is a serious step for your child(ren) to take. In the case of moving the family home, such a decision may well be a necessity. You may wish to contact your local school or the School Admissions Team (see page 2) for advice at this time. If you decide that you would like your child to transfer from one school to another, please contact their present Head Teacher first to alert them of your decision. Should you wish to proceed with the transfer arrangements you should contact the School Admissions Team for advice in making your application to the new school.

2. Applications to any year group within a school will be judged against the relevant AN (Admission Number) for that year group and the overall capacity of the school. Parents should note, however, that classes may include more than one age group and the Head Teacher has the responsibility (authority) for placing your child in the most appropriate provision.

4. If a pupil does not take up their offer of a school place within 4 weeks of the agreed start date, the school place will be withdrawn and the parent will need to re-apply.

For all enquiries relating to preferred dress (school uniforms) please contact the school directly.

F. Admission to Secondary Schools

Children normally transfer from primary (junior) school to secondary school at the beginning of the school year (a given date in September) following their eleventh birthday. Although each primary school has a secondary school to which most of its pupils usually transfer, parents/carers are required, in all cases, to complete an application stating their preference as to which secondary school they wish their child(ren) to attend. This must be done while their child(ren) are in year 6 [the final year] of their attendance at junior or primary school.

A list indicating the secondary school to which each primary school is linked is given in Part 5 on pages 39-40. Being a registered pupil at an associated primary school does not guarantee or entitle your child to a place at a particular secondary school. Allocation of all secondary school places are subject to submission of an application and where the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, places will be allocated strictly in accordance with our published oversubscription criteria (see page 5). For all enquiries relating to school uniform please contact the school directly. (For home to school transport see pages 29-38).

Admissions at Other Times

Application for admission to a primary or secondary school at other times, e.g. for those moving into the County Borough, should be made to the School Admissions Team (see page 2), where an officer will be able to advise on admission procedure and the availability of places.

Signed.....

Date.....

Link to starting schools booklet :

<http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Resident/SchoolsandLearning/Applyingforaschoolplace/RelatedDocuments/1819/StartingSchool201819.pdf>