

**Minutes of the Admission Forum, Ceredigion held in Ystafell Brenig,
Penmorfa, Ceredigion on Wednesday, 26th September, 2018**

PRESENT: Councillor Catrin Miles (Chair), Philippa Davies (Parent-Governor, Ysgol y Dderi), Peter Leggett (Headteacher, Ysgol Gynradd Rhydypennau), Enid Brophy (Headteacher, Ysgol Padarn Sant)

OFFICERS PRESENT: Barry Rees (Corporate Director); Meinir Ebbsworth (Corporate Lead Officer:Schools/Chief Education Officer); Cheryl Evans (Administrative Assistant) and Lis Williams (Democratic Services)

(14:00 – 14:55)

1. Apologies

Eifion Evans (Chief Executive), Councillor Odwyn Davies (Chair of the Learning Communities' Overview and Scrutiny Committee) and Councillor Endaf Edwards (Vice-Chair of the Learning Communities' Overview and Scrutiny Committee) apologised for their inability to attend the meeting.

2. Procedure

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked attendees for their presence.

It was noted that three senior County Council officials are invited to the meeting and it was agreed to study the group's constitution to consider whether it is necessary for the three to sit on the Group.

3. Disclosure of Personal Interests

No personal interests were disclosed.

4. Minutes of Meeting held on 27th March, 2018

It was resolved to confirm that the minutes of the meeting held on 27th March, 2018 were correct.

5. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Meeting held on 27th March, 2018

There were no matters arising.

6. Information for Parents Document

Cheryl Evans reported that the Information for Parents Document is in the process of being updated with the final document scheduled for completion by the end of October. It was agreed that hard copies as well as an electronic copy would be sent to all Committee members.

Following an enquiry in the previous meeting, it was stated that it is not possible to keep a record of the exact number of individuals who read the document on-line. It is only possible to record the number of people who access the web page 'Schools Admissions'. This data has only been recorded since last March and figures will be reported upon in the next meeting.

It was reported that school admission forms can now be completed on-line. Peter Leggett stated that these on-line forms were discussed in the

Aberystwyth Area Headteachers' Meeting and that the feeling was that the on-line system made it too easy for parents/guardians to transfer their children from one school to the other. Following completion of the form, confirmation is sent acknowledging receipt of the form, with families taking it for granted that the transfer has been approved. The system does not provide an opportunity for the school to which a transfer request has been made to consider the request and to plan for the transfer, as well as consulting with the previous school. Due to the fact that the procedure for changing schools is so easy, this system does not provide an opportunity for families and schools to be reconciled, should the request for transfer be made following a difference of opinion. It was agreed that the system needs to be tweaked and a protocol put in place, so that Headteachers can contact one another when a transfer request is received from a neighbouring school.

It was agreed that Cheryl Evans will attend the next Ceredigion Headteachers' Business Meeting, in order to discuss the on-line system and to address any concerns.

7. ADMISSION APPEALS

Reference was made to five appeals received during the previous six months; two to Ysgol Comins Coch, two to Plascrug and one to Ysgol Gynradd Aberaeron. Three of the appeals were won by parents/guardians, one in Comins Coch, one in Plascrug and one to Ysgol Gynradd Aberaeron, with the Authority winning the two other appeals.

It was reported that arrangements are being made for four other appeals in the near future: three to Ysgol Plascrug and one to Ysgol Uwchradd Aberteifi.

It was agreed that it would be beneficial to add a question to the pupil admission form asking why parents/guardians wish to choose schools outside their natural area.

8. PUPIL NUMBERS AND ADMISSION NUMBERS

There has not been a substantial change to pupil numbers (full-time equivalent) from what was reported in the previous meeting, although final numbers are expected shortly. A discussion was held regarding admission numbers for multi-site schools and it was reported that there would be only one admission number for the school as a whole. The site that pupils attend would be at the discretion of the Headteacher.

9. SCHOOL ADMISSIONS' POLICY 2020/21

Cheryl Evans stated that the draft Admissions' Policy 2020/2021 would be circulated to schools and Governors, with a request for a response to the document by 1st of March, 2019.

Point 4.2 has been strengthened in terms of year groups where pupils will be admitted to the year group relevant to their chronological age and permission will not be granted for pupils to join year groups above or below their

chronological age. This is consistent with Ceredigion's Special Educational Needs Policy.

The Strategic Director reported that attention will shortly be given to the Transport Policy protocol, to bring it in line with the Admissions' Policy, especially during the restructuring of schools.

10. ANY OTHER MATTER

Peter Leggett referred to the fact that schools are currently receiving an increasing number of enquiries regarding flexible education provision and that parents/guardians are opting for full-time elective home education, as schools do not operate flexible education provision for pupils of statutory school age.

The Corporate Lead Officer:Schools/Chief Education Officer reported that a piece of work is currently being undertaken regarding flexible education/elective home education where guidance will be provided for schools in due course. In schools where there is a shortage of spare places, there are instances of pre-statutory school age pupils engaged in flexible education occupying the place of pupils who wish to attend school on a full-time basis.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed to hold the next meeting after 1st March, 2019 in order to report on the responses received to the draft Admissions Policy 2020/21.

An enquiry was made as to the change in meeting times, with meetings now held during the day rather than in the evening. This had resulted in some members finding it difficult to attend. It was agreed to continue holding the meetings during the day and in order to facilitate the attendance of Committee Members, it was agreed to arrange meetings to coincide with other meetings held at Penmorfa.