

Department for Education and Children

**School Admission Handbook
for Community and Voluntary Controlled
Schools in Carmarthenshire**

(November 2011)



Section 1 – Key Facts

- 1) an admission to schools is not an automatic process. **there is no guarantee of a place at a school.**
- 2) there are **limits on the number of pupils who can be admitted to a school** in any one year. once that limit is reached no further pupils will be admitted.
- 3) you **must make an application to an admissions authority** for your child to be admitted to a school. a community or voluntary controlled school cannot grant admission to a pupil.
- 4) for community and voluntary aided schools the admissions authority is **the County Council.**
- 5) for **voluntary aided schools** the admission authority is the governing body of that school and is not covered by the contents of this booklet. advice relating to the admission process is available from the school governing body.
- 6) if you have a child, including those under 4 years of age who are due to **start in a nursery or primary school between September 2012 and April 2013** you must submit an application for them to be admitted to a school to the admissions authority by the **31st January 2012.**
- 7) should you have a child transferring to a **secondary school** in **September 2012** then you must return the transfer form by the **3rd February 2012.**
- 8) if you make an application after these dates your application will be treated as being late and will be considered after those received before the deadline. This will **reduce the chances of obtaining a place for your child at a school of your choice.**
- 9) if you are offered a place for your child at a school you must **sign and return** the form accepting the offer of a place **to the admissions authority** by the date specified **or the offer of a place will be withdrawn** and the place offered to another pupil.
- 10) if you have a child with additional learning needs then you are advised to contact the head teacher of the school or the department's pupil progress officers.

Section 2 – How to apply for a place at a school

- for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools:-
 - on line at www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk
 - with the help of the school
 - by contacting the school governance unit at the Department for Education and Children, Building 2, St David's Park , Jobs Well Road, Carmarthen SA31 3HB.
- for voluntary aided schools by contacting the governing body of the school
- for schools not in Carmarthenshire by contacting the admission authority for that area.

Section 3 – When to apply

- Primary/Nursery – for all pupils by the **31st January** in the school year before the child is due to start school.
- Secondary – by the **3rd February** for transfer to secondary school in the following September.

Section 4 – Awarding Places

- the admission authority will consider the applications it has received by the deadline date of 31st January 2012 for primary schools and 3rd February for transfers from primary to secondary schools.
- the applications received will be considered against the admission number, which places a limit on the number of pupils who can be admitted to a school in any one year group.
- the authority will grant admission if the number of applications is less than the admission number limit.
- if there are more applications than places available then the admissions authority will prioritise applications and award places as follows:-

- a) looked after children
- b) children with a statement of educational needs naming the school as the specific and nearest provider.
- c) children who live in the schools catchment area and have siblings registered at the school at the time of requested admission.
- d) children who live within the catchment area but who do not have a sibling registered at the school at the time of the requested admission.
- e) children who live outside the schools catchment area but have a sibling at the school at the time of the requested admission.
- f) children who live outside the schools catchment area but who do not have a sibling at the school at the time of the requested admission.

Distance - the distance from home to school will be used to determine priority, with those living nearest the school being given priority and a place before those living further away from the school

Siblings - half or full brother/ sister or an adoptive brother or sister

Multiple birth - in cases where there is one place available and the next place is for twins/triplets the LA will admit both/all children

Children of UK service personnel – will be treated as in catchment if accompanied by an official MOD letter declaring a definite return date and confirmation of address.

5 - Completing the application form

- a pupils home address is considered to be a residential property that is the child's only or main residency, and is either :-

(i) owned by the child's parent(s) or the person with a defined legal parental responsibility for the child;

or

(ii) is leased to or rented by the child's parent(s) or the person with legal parental responsibility under a written rental agreement, signed by the landlord and tenant, of not less than six months duration.

- in applying for admission there will be a need to provide proof of address and you will be asked for this at the time an offer of a place is made.
- moving residency/change of address. if you intend changing residency and are applying for admission to a school based on a new address then the council will accept

either a solicitors letter stating that contracts have been exchanged and specifying a completion date or a signed and dated tenancy agreement. if you cannot provide proof of address by the date given for the receipt of applications then the application will be based on the current address.

- shared responsibility – where there is shared responsibility for a child , and the child lives with both parents, or persons with a legal parental responsibility for the child, for part of the week, then the main residence will be determined as the address where the child lives for the majority of the school week.
- if a school place is offered on the basis of an address that is subsequently found to be different from the child's normal and permanent address, then the place will be withdrawn and the place may be offered to another child.

Section 6 – Appeals

- If the application is for the admission of a child of statutory school age to a Community or Voluntary Controlled School is not granted by the Admissions Authority then you can ask for the case to be reviewed by an Independent School Admissions Panel within a time period which will be specified in the letter which you receive from the Authority refusing admission. The Panel can overturn the decision not to admit a pupil.
- It is important to note however that there is no right of appeal for the admission of a pupil to early years provision for a pupil who is under the school's official age range.

Section 7 – Choosing a school

- **every school has a designated catchment area** which it serves
- if the **pupil resides within the designated catchment area** of a school then you will **stand a better chance** of the application for admission to that school being successful. **there is however no guarantee** of a place.
- pupils who **reside within the catchment area** of a school will, subject to age and distance criteria, **stand a better chance of qualifying for free transport** to and from school.

- parents can **state a preference for a school, which is not the designated catchment area school. subject to the limit on the number of pupils** who can be admitted to the school **not being exceeded** and the correct procedures being followed **then admission will be granted.**
- where a **parent chooses a school, which is not the nearest or, catchment area school** then the parent will be responsible for **transporting** the child to and from school.
- when a **pupil transfers** to the **secondary school** then consideration of eligibility for **admission** to that school and also for **free home to school transport** will be based on **home address** and **not** the **primary school attended.**

Section 8 – At which age can children start school

1. Early years children – 3 year olds.

pupils will be **admitted** on a **part time basis** in the **term following their third birthday** where early years provision is made in a nursery school, a nursery or early years class in a community or voluntary controlled school.

applications should be made to the **admissions authority** by the **31st January** in the year before they are due to start.

2. Reception class children- 4 & 5 year olds

where there is no early years provision pupils will be admitted on a full time basis at the following times:-

- September if their 4th birthday is between 1st September and 31st December
- January for those who have their 4th birthday between 1st January and 31st March
- April for those who have their 4th birthday during 1st April to 31st August

by law parents must arrange for pupils who are five years of age to receive full time education at the beginning of the following terms:-

- autumn term for those who are 5 years old between 1st April and 31st August
- spring term for those who are 5 years old between 1st September and 31st December
- summer term for those who are 5 years old between 1st January and 31st March

Section 9 – School Transport

1. Eligibility – most pupils will qualify for assistance with transport to and from school if they meet all of the following criteria:-

- are residents of Carmarthenshire
- are of compulsory school age
- live over the statutory walking distance from the nearest or catchment area school

Section 10 – Further information

Should you require any further information relating to the admission process then this is available from:-

- the information to parents booklet which can be accessed online at www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk
- or
- a copy of the information for parents booklet is available at your local library
- or
- a copy is available to view at your local school
- or
- a copy is available form the school governance unit.