

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF
THE PEMBROKESHIRE ADMISSION FORUM
HELD AT OMD1, COUNTY HALL, HAVERFORDWEST
ON THURSDAY 13 JUNE 2019 AT 8:30am**

PRESENT: Mrs D Davies (Chair) Rev H Cale Cllr J Davies Mr P Edwards Mr P Harris	Ven P Mackness Cllr A Tudor Mrs T Williams Canon B Witt Cllr G Woodham
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Huw Jones (Secretary to the Forum)
Mrs Jude Stamp (Minute taker)

ACTIONS

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from:
Kate Evan-Hughes (Director for Children & Schools)

2. Admission Forum membership

Mrs T Williams informed members that the Forum was almost at full complement save for a parent governor representative which remains a vacant position, Mrs Williams has been informed that this position is in the process of recruitment in the Summer Term 2019. That position would be in place by the Autumn Term Meeting scheduled for November 2019.

Cannon B Witt informed the forum that he would be taking retirement at the end of the month and Rev J Cecil will take his position.

Mrs Davies took the opportunity to thank Cannon Witt for his support and dedication to the group.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 21st November 2018 were agreed as an accurate record.

4. Matters arising

Item 6 Update on Secondary Transfers for September 2018

Mr H Jones gave an update on secondary transfers for September 2018. The issues that had been raised around the Ysgol y Preseli Cluster had been given consideration and that a review of education provision at Ysgol y Preseli and its cluster schools has commenced.

Item 8 School Transport Issues

Mrs T Williams reported that secondary offer letters have been amended slightly to negate the issue.

DD

5. Admission Items

Advice to Headteachers – Pembrokeshire Schools:

- **Taster Days:** Mrs Williams reported that she is becoming increasingly aware of taster days being offered to prospective parents prior to applications being completed. This is causing an issue and the Education Department would like to advise Headteachers that such days are not offered unless a place has been officially offered. Mrs Williams explained that the issues arise when a place is refused when a taster day has already been given, this leads to confusion for the parents.

Mrs Davies explained the message has been given to Heads to not allow taster days prior to confirmation of admission, they have been informed that it is acceptable for parents to call in and have a walk around but no more than that.

Mr Edwards explained the difficulties around when clusters schools border, parents want to look at the options. Parents very often ask for a taster day. It is explained that this cannot be catered for individually but the school do offer a taster day for those pupils only that are in the cluster of primary.

Cllr. JT Davies queried the number of schools that are offering the taster days. Mrs Williams explained that although it is quite low, numbers are growing and is now becoming an issue especially due to the numbers of refusals.

The feeling is that this is more down to parental choice at the moment.

A discussion took place around the movement of pupils that the Haverfordwest Schools are seeing which is causing concern especially for the smaller primaries.

Resolved: Advice regarding discouragement of Taster Days to be added to Advice to Headteachers Booklet.

- **Good Practice:** Mrs Williams discussed the issue that admissions recently faced after the death of a child. A meeting of multiagency staff takes place after the unexpected death of a child, this is called a PRUDIC meeting. Mrs Williams has requested that education safeguarding inform admissions when this occurs.
- **Application deadlines for mid-term transfers:** Mr Jones and Mrs Williams discussed the problems this is causing, especially in the lead up to PLASC. The department does try and put applications through to allow schools to obtain their funding but there really needs to be less movement in terms of

Committee
/TW

DD

processing. The admissions team would like to move from transfers at the beginning of term only to change to half-termly. House movements would be dealt with as and when required.

Headteachers discussed the problems they are experiencing with parents who do not wish to resolve issues at school level.

It was acknowledged that there will always be cases when movement needs to be made if right for the pupil and some situations may need to be taken on its merit.

- Locally Agreed Protocols: A discussion took place around the increase of families moving in to Haverfordwest and where admission number is over placements are refused. This is leading to an increase of appeals. It was suggested that schools should accept pupils if they are in catchment even if they are over admission number although it was acknowledged the issues this raises in terms of funding not following the pupil immediately.

Resolved: It was agreed to implement the protocols of acceptance of pupil if in catchment but only in consultation with the Headteacher.

- Church Schools – normal admission round closing dates and offer dates: Mrs Williams explained that some church schools are in line with the local authority but some are not and asked if a reminder could be sent to follow the same dates and the authority.

TW/HJ/
Committee

Ven
Mackness

6. Admission Policy for Language Centres

At the Welsh Language Forum it was agreed to develop a language centre policy. It had been hoped that the draft policy would be a blanket for all but there are some issues that have arisen at Ysgol Caer Elen. The current draft policy does not give balance between the needs of Ysgol Caer Elen compared with the other centres at Ysgol y Preseli and Ysgol Bro Gwaun. In order to get something in place in September Mr Jones and Mrs Williams asked that when writing the next information for booklet could a point be included to say that a transfer to a school with Welsh Language centres will have regard for the Welsh language centre policy, this would give a firming up the guidance.

Committee Decision: Additional comment to be added to the Admissions Booklet noting Welsh Language Centre Policy.

Committee
/TW

92

7. Update on Secondary Transfers for September 2019

It was reported that there have been very few changes since the last meeting. The only school that is looking over subscribed is Ysgol Bro Gwaun, this had mostly been due to late applications.

Mrs Williams explained that where no application had been received, the parent/carer had been written to and allocated a school.

Mr JT Davies discussed the knock on effect around the uncertainty of Haverfordwest High VC School and the need for the Local Authority to address this.

8. Future Clerking Arrangements

Mr Jones explained that there is a meeting scheduled with Committee Services to establish whether they would be able to provide clerking support for the forum.

Since the Admission Assistant's retirement there is a real pressure on the Admissions Officer who is the only member of the Admissions Team.

9. Report on Admission Appeals

Mr Jones reported that since the last meeting on 26th November 2018 there had been 26 individual appeals, of which:

- x3 – Monkton (upheld)
- x1 – Penrhyn VC (upheld)
- x1 – Fenton (upheld)
- x5 – Haverfordwest High VC School (upheld)
- x1 – Ysgol Caer Elen (Refused)
- x3 – Pembroke Dock Community School (refused)
- x1 – Johnston (refused)

It was further noted that a further three appeals would be held on 21st June for Haverfordwest High and Milford Haven CP schools.

10. Date of next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on 7th November 2019, 8.30am – NW0D

Signed as a true record


Chair of Admissions Forum

Date 13.06.2019

HJ/TW