**RHONDDA CYNON TAF SCHOOL ADMISSIONS FORUM**

**Minutes of the meeting of the School Admissions Forum held at**

**Ty Trevithick on 30th January 2024**

**Present: -**

Claire Christy Admissions Officer, RCT (Chairperson)

Catrin Edwards Head of Service Transformation and Data Systems

Claire Jones Headteacher, Heol Y Celyn Primary school

Andrew Brazier Exclusion Prevention & Interventions Teacher RCT

Rebecca Crumbie Bursar, Cardinal Newman RC School

Matthew Love Deputy Headteacher St Johns CIW High School

Emma Strathdee School Admissions, Caerphilly Council

Angie Williams-Roberts In Year Transfer Co-ordinator, RCT

James Michalski School Admissions, Merthyr Council

Rhian Grundy Parent Governor Representative

**Apologies: -**

Those absent from the meeting with apologies were as follows: -

Helen Cook

Anne Robertson

Rebecca Morteo

Daniel Williams

Kayleigh Oliver

**1. Welcome to the meeting**

* 1. Mrs Rhian Grundy was welcomed to her first Admission Forum Meeting as the new Parent Governor Representative.
  2. All forum members introduced themselves.

**2. Minutes**

**Noted**

* + 1. The minutes of the Admissions Forum Meeting held on 20th June 2023 were accepted as an accurate record.

**3. Matters Arising**

3.1 There were no matters arising.

**4. Election of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson**

4.1. It was agreed that Mrs Claire Christy remain as the Chairperson.

* + 1. It was agreed that Mrs Helen Cook remain as the Vice Chairperson.

**5. Consultation on RCT’s Admissions Policy 2024/25**

Mrs C Jones joined the meeting at this stage

**Noted**

* + 1. CC highlighted all the changes.
    2. CE reiterated that the changes with regard to the new schools opening this September, they were already included in the 2024/2025 Starting School Book.
    3. In September, the new schools open and that will result in the closures of Cilfynydd Primary School, Hawthorn Primary School, Heol Y Celyn Primary School, YGG Pontsionnorton, Pontypridd High School and Hawthorn High School.
    4. In the draft policy, we have excluded Rhigos Primary School, as it is currently out to consultation to close.
    5. It was highlighted that Bishop Hedley Roman Catholic Comprehensive School which has an RCT associated Primary School namely, St Margarets RC Primary School, has changed its name to Blessed Carlo Acutis Catholic School.
    6. CE explained that we have received a request to include a full admission policy for this school within RCT’s Starting School Book for 2025/2026.
    7. CE explained that we only include RCT faith schools within our Booklet which JM from Merthyr confirmed was fine.

**7**. **Update on Online Admissions**

**Noted**

7.1 Late applications for all transfer groups continue to be received.

7.2 To date 1794 Nursery applications have been received, of which, 1678 were made online and 116 were paper applications

7.3 2167 Reception applications have been received, 2054 online and 113 paper applications.

7.4 2430 Secondary applications have been received, 2322 online and 108 paper applications.

7.5 50 Infant to Junior applications have been received, 48 online and 2 paper applications.

7.6 1157 online applications were received in total for Pre-nursery for January 2024, of which 1089 were online applications and 68 were paper applications.

7.7 Online applications for Pre-nursery for April closes on 9th February 2024.

**8**. **In Year Transfer Update**

**Noted**

8.1 For primary from September 2023 to December 2023 there have been 726 In Year Transfers received. Of which 272 were house moved into RCT and 115 house moves within RCT.

8.2 There was 256 In Year Transfer requests received during this period for Secondary school places. Of which 88 were moves into RCT and 21 moves within RCT.

8.3 23 were for children previously Elective Home Educated (EHE), 3 Permanent exclusion, 65 specialist placements and 44 transferring for social issues.

8.4 CE raised that a couple of secondary school Headteachers have raised concerns with regard to the vast number of movements with some having 18 transfers so far this year. However, she explained that the number of transfers received for each secondary school are probably average and what we would expect to see compared to last year’s figures. Also, the panel were reminded that it is parental choice.

8.5 ES enquired how the new process is going with regard to parents obtaining a transfer form from their current school (if in RCT) which is then signed by the Headteacher so we know they are aware of the transfer request.

8.6 CC explained that it appears to be going well, however, if a parent is insistent that they don’t want to approach the current school they must still be provided with a form. In the majority of cases this is not a problem and the parents approach their child’s current school and provides the Headteacher with the opportunity to speak with them for the reasons for the transfer and if anything can be done to avoid a transfer.

8.7 ES explained that it would be beneficial to know the reasons for transfer requests however, we are unfortunately unable to request this information.

8.8 AWR expressed her concern regarding parental choices when a pupil is involved that has already had multiple moves.

**9. Appeals Update**

9.1 CC informed members that with regard to secondary places for September 2024, the only school oversubscribed this year is Y Pant Comprehensive School.

9.2 We anticipate approximately 9/10 appeals to be received.

**10**. **Fair Access Panel**

9.1 AB and AWR both provided the panel with an update regarding the children that have recently been considered at the Fair Access Panel.

9.2 AB showed the managed moves they have had so far this year.

9.3 AB explained that a successful Managed move is when they have gone on roll with the receiving school.

9.4 AB explained the levels of behaviour and level of severity of incidents. There have been 33 Permanent Exclusions for 2023/2024 which is very high and there have been 8 since Christmas.

**10**. **Any Other Business**

**Noted**

10.1 Catrin formally thanks AB for all his help and support, as he will be retiring from his role shortly, so this is his last Admissions Forum Meeting.

10.2 Everyone wished AB well and all the very best for a long heathy and happy retirement.

10.3 The next Forum Meeting will be held on Tuesday 18th June 2024 at 9.30 a.m.