

# Report of the Cabinet Member for Education & Learning

Council – 30 January 2025

## Co-ordinated School Admission Arrangements Scheme



Executive Summary	
<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	
To determine the Co-ordinated Admission Arrangements Scheme for Swansea schools. The scheme is a requirement under The Education (Co-ordination of School Admission Arrangements and Miscellaneous Amendments) (Wales) Regulations 2024 which came into force on 28 June 2024.	
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>	
It is recommended that:	
1)	The proposed Co-ordinated School Admission Arrangements Scheme set out in Appendix A is approved.
<b>Decision-Making Authority</b> <a href="http://www.swansea.gov.uk/constitution">www.swansea.gov.uk/constitution</a> :	
Select from the list the constitutional basis <a href="http://www.swansea.gov.uk/constitution">www.swansea.gov.uk/constitution</a> on which a decision is being sought (Please tick all that apply):	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Article 4 "The Council Meeting"	<input type="checkbox"/> Financial Procedure Rules
<input type="checkbox"/> Scheme of Delegation	<input type="checkbox"/> Land Transaction Procedure Rules
<input type="checkbox"/> Terms of Reference	<input type="checkbox"/> Other "Please Specify"
<input type="checkbox"/> Contract Procedure Rules	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable. Explain Why
Article 4, Service Strategies, Policies and Plans: The Admission Arrangements for Schools (local discretion)	
<b>Corporate Plan Wellbeing Objectives:</b>	
Select which Wellbeing Objectives are relevant to this report (Please tick all that apply):	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education & Skills	<input type="checkbox"/> Tackling Poverty & Enabling Communities
<input type="checkbox"/> Economy & Infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/> Transformation & Financial Resilience
<input type="checkbox"/> Nature Recovery & Climate Change	<input type="checkbox"/> All
<input type="checkbox"/> Safeguarding	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
<b>Relevance to Corporate Plan Wellbeing Objectives:</b>	
The Co-ordinated School Admission Arrangements Scheme will have a positive impact on learners in Swansea by ensuring equality of access to school places. The scheme is intended to simplify the 'normal admission rounds' (i.e. Reception and Year 7 years of entry) process whilst reducing the likelihood of any child being left without a school place. It will also help to avoid pupils being offered multiple schools and parents choosing to 'hold' offers for more than one school.	
<b>Reviewed and approved by:</b>	
Access to Services, Finance, Legal, & Relevant Cabinet Member	
<b>Report Author &amp; Job Title:</b>	Melissa Taylor, Lead Admissions Officer

## **Introduction**

1. The Education (Co-ordination of School Admission Arrangements and Miscellaneous Amendments) (Wales) Regulations 2024 came into force on 28 June 2024. The regulations require the local authority (LA) to formulate and publish a qualifying scheme to co-ordinate admission arrangements for maintained schools (except for school sixth form places, maintained special schools and maintained nursery schools) within its area.
2. The scheme will apply to all admission authorities (local authority (LA) and Voluntary Aided (VA) schools) in the Swansea local authority area, in relation to applications for the 'normal admission rounds' at a maintained primary school (Reception) or maintained secondary school (Year 7) in Swansea from September 2027.
3. The first co-ordinated school admission arrangements scheme will apply to admission arrangements from September 2027.
4. The scheme will sit alongside the existing School Admission Arrangements policy and oversubscription criteria set out within that policy.

## **Advice**

5. A copy of the proposed scheme for Swansea is attached at Appendix A.
6. The local authority (LA) is the admitting authority for all community schools (schools funded and maintained entirely by LAs) in Swansea. Requests for admission to Voluntary Aided (VA) schools - Church schools (e.g. Roman Catholic, Church in Wales schools) are administered and determined by the admission criteria set by the governing body of that school. Voluntary Aided schools are responsible for determining their own admission arrangements.
7. The co-ordinated scheme does not affect the rights and duties of the governing bodies of Voluntary Aided schools to set and apply their own admissions arrangements and oversubscription criteria.
8. As outlined in Welsh Government Guidance on the co-ordination of school admission arrangements, 'co-ordinated schemes are an administrative process to make school admissions easier and less stressful for parents – they do not mean that all admission authorities in an area have to have the same or similar oversubscription criteria'.
9. The co-ordinated school admission arrangements will only apply to the 'normal admission rounds' for year of entry (i.e. Reception and Year 7). The scheme will not apply to applications for school places outside the 'normal admission rounds' (i.e. In-year transfer applications). Applications outside the 'normal admission rounds (i.e. In-year transfer applications) will continue to be administered by the relevant admission authority and not under the co-ordinated scheme.
10. The co-ordinated arrangements will apply to all Swansea community-maintained schools for which the LA is the admission authority and to the following Swansea VA Schools:

Bishop Vaughan Catholic Comprehensive  
Christchurch Church in Wales Primary  
St David's RC Primary  
St Illtyd's RC Primary  
St Joseph's Cathedral Primary  
St Joesph's Catholic Primary

11. Details of the co-ordinated school admission arrangements scheme will be published in the Information for Parents booklet 2026-2027 in line with the requirements of The Education (Co-ordination of School Admission Arrangements and Miscellaneous Amendments) (Wales) Regulations.

#### **Administration of the scheme:**

12. Currently, parents can apply for year or entry (Reception and Year 7) places as part of the 'normal admission rounds' directly with a VA school as they administer their own admissions. Parents/carers can also make a separate application with the LA for a community school for which the LA is the admission authority.
13. The co-ordinated scheme is intended to simplify the 'normal admission rounds' process whilst reducing the likelihood of any child being left without a school place. It will also help to avoid pupils being offered multiple schools and parents choosing to 'hold' offers for more than one school. Co-ordination establishes a mechanism to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that every parent of a child living in the Swansea local authority area, who has applied to a Swansea maintained school using the common application form, is sent a single offer of a school place by the LA.
14. The co-ordinated scheme will allow parents to apply using a single application (the 'common application form') via the LA's 'normal admission round' process, and to express a preference for up to 3 Swansea schools of their choosing and in order of their preference.
15. Parents expressing a preference for a Voluntary Aided (VA) school may also be required, by the individual school admission authority (the VA school), to provide additional information or evidence relating to an application and as such, to complete a supplementary form.
16. Following consideration of expressed preferences, parents/carers who have applied for a place in a Swansea school as part of the normal admission round, will receive an offer of one school place from the local authority (LA).
17. All preferences from parents will be considered equally. In the event that one or more preferences can be met, the highest preference school will be offered, with all lower preferences being withdrawn.

#### **Stakeholder Participation**

18. The LA consulted with the 6 Voluntary Aided (VA) schools in Swansea (who are their own admission authority), on the proposed co-ordinated scheme, as required by the regulations. The Admission Forum and neighbouring local

authority's were also consulted as required. There was no requirement to consult with parents. The proposed scheme for Swansea was also sent to the Roman Catholic Diocese and Church in Wales Diocese.

19. There were no objections received on the consultation from the 6 own admission authority VA schools in Swansea. No comments were received from the Roman Catholic Diocese or Church in Wales Diocese.
20. The Co-ordinated Schools Admission Arrangements Scheme was considered by the Admission Forum at a meeting held on 6th November 2024. The Admission Forum is a statutory body that has a role in ensuring a fair admissions system that does not disadvantage one child compared with another and is straightforward and easy for parents to understand.

### **Risk and Issues Assessment**

21. There are no risks or issues associated with the recommendation being made in this report. The scheme is a requirement under The Education (Co-ordination of School Admission Arrangements and Miscellaneous Amendments) (Wales) Regulations 2024.

### **Integrated Assessment Implications**

22. The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure. Further information is available at [www.swansea.gov.uk/IIA](http://www.swansea.gov.uk/IIA)
23. The Co-ordinated School Admission Arrangements Scheme will have a positive impact on learners in Swansea by ensuring equality of access to school places. The scheme is intended to simplify the 'normal admission rounds' (i.e. Reception and Year 7 years of entry) process whilst reducing the likelihood of any child being left without a school place.
24. The LA also has in place school admission arrangements that apply to all and take account of all protected characteristics to ensure that all applications for a school place are treated equally.
25. An Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) screening has been undertaken and no adverse implications have been noted.

### **Financial Implications**

26. There are no additional financial implications for the Council arising from the recommendations in this report.

### **Legal & Governance Implications**

27. The scheme is a requirement under The Education (Co-ordination of School Admission Arrangements and Miscellaneous Amendments) (Wales) Regulations 2024.

## **Appendices:**

Appendix A - Co-ordinated School Admission Arrangements Scheme

### **Background Papers:**

The Education (Co-ordination of School Admission Arrangements and Miscellaneous Amendments) (Wales) Regulations 2024 –  
[The Education \(Co-ordination of School Admission Arrangements and Miscellaneous Amendments\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2024 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

Welsh Government Guidance on the co-ordination of school admission arrangements - published 02 October 2024  
<https://www.gov.wales/guidance-co-ordination-school-admission-arrangements>