

Education, Young people and the Welsh Language Scrutiny Committee

09/10/2023

Subject:

Primary School Admissions Review (Rising 4s)

Purpose: To provide information on a review into primary admission arrangements.

The Scrutiny Committee is asked to:-

Review and assess the information contained in the Report and provide any recommendations, comments, or advice.

Reason(s)

- To formulate views for submission to the Cabinet / Council for consideration on the Rising 4s Policy
- In 2018/19 the Education & Children Scrutiny Committee completed a Task & Finish Review of the current provision for early years education, childcare and play opportunities. One of the conclusions identified in the report was that that the Authority's 'Rising 4s' policy is markedly different to other neighbouring local authorities' and that the 'Council undertake a formal review of its current admissions policy for full time education for 4-year-olds (the rising 4s policy).

The Scrutiny Committee is asked to:-

Cllr. Glynog Davies (Education and Welsh Language)

Directorate:

Education & Children's Services

Name of Head of Service:

Simon Davies

Report Author:

Simon Davies

Designations:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Primary School Admissions Review (Rising 4s)

1. BRIEF SUMMARY OF PURPOSE OF REPORT.

The attached document outlines a review into the Authority's primary school admission arrangements. The report considers the following:

- Background to the current primary school arrangements and the 'rising 4s' policy in particular.
- Detail on the current full time and part time admission arrangements for primary schools.
- Provides a research-based comparison of full time and part time admission arrangements with all other Local Authorities in Wales
- Information on the importance of Admission Numbers and how they affect admission arrangements.
- Outlines the challenges being faced in relation to accommodation and school capacity, inconsistency with other Authorities, nursery and early years provision, funding and the admissions process itself.

The report also considers the potential implications of any changes to current arrangements in terms of parental perception, equity of provision, redistribution of funding and consultation requirements.

Detailed work is currently ongoing to:

- Prepare to consult on a change to the full-time admission arrangements of learners from the term of their 4th birthday to the term after their 4th birthday and report back on the results.
- Complete a detailed assessment on the impact of the change in policy on each school and bring forward a recommendation for each setting.
- Engage with Voluntary Aided and Roman Catholic primary schools on the consultation and proposed change of policy.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED ?

**YES - Primary School Admissions Review (Rising 4s)
November 2022**

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report :



Signed:

Head of Access to Education

| | | | | | | |
|---|------------|------------|-----------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities | Legal | Finance | ICT | Risk Management Issues | Staffing Implications | Physical Assets |
| YES | YES | YES | NO | NO | YES | NO |

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

Any changes to primary school admission arrangements will affect Carmarthenshire's School Admissions Policy and require the appropriate consultations as laid out in the Welsh Governments School Admissions Code.

2. Legal

Section 84 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and amended by Section 40 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced the requirement for the Welsh Ministers to issue a Code in respect of the discharge of admissions functions. In particular, the Code also sought to safeguard the interests of parents, children and young people by ensuring that school admissions are administered in the fairest and most equitable way possible.

The most recent School Admissions Code was issued in 2013 and is intended to clarify the process for everyone with an interest in school admissions and school admission appeals, help admission authorities to fulfil their duties correctly and improve working practices.

3 Finance

There is an opportunity to explore altering the full-time admission of pupils, creating more 3-11 schools to offer part time nursery provision in their locality, provide more business opportunities to the non-maintained sector to provide early years provision/wrap around care and make budget efficiencies. This would require detailed financial modelling as recommended by the task and finish report.

6. Staffing Implications

A change to the primary school's admissions policy and a more detailed review into the impact on each school may have staffing implications which will be addressed in accordance with the County Council's Policy and Procedures.

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED

YES

Include any observations here

**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

THESE ARE DETAILED BELOW.

| Title of Document | File Ref No. | Locations that the papers are available for public inspection |
|---|--------------|---|
| Cabinet 12th December 2022 | N/A | https://democracy.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/documents/s67215/Summary.pdf |
| Carmarthenshire County Council School Admissions Policy 2021-22 | N/A | https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/media/1225137/school-admissions-policy-2021-22.pdf |
| https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/media/1225137/school-admissions-policy-2021-22.pdf | N/A | https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/school-admissions-code.pdf |