

# Coordinated School Admission Arrangements for September 2024

## CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

CONSULTATION PERIOD:  
28 NOVEMBER 2022 – 16 JANUARY 2023



This document can be made available in Braille.  
Information can also be made available in other community languages if needed.  
Please contact us on [029 2087 2720](tel:02920872720) to arrange this.



## Background

Coordinated admission arrangements are a way of applying for a school place that allows parents to apply for voluntary aided (faith based) schools, foundation schools and community schools using one application form. Parents can state their order of preference when applying and, once applications have been processed in line with the relevant admissions criteria, would be offered only the highest preference school place that they are eligible for.

At present, parents applying for a secondary school place can receive multiple offers and can decide which school is their preference after offers are made.

A coordinated admissions arrangement still allows parents to apply for admission to the same number of schools, but asks parents to nominate the order of their preference at the time of application.

Cardiff Council has successfully coordinated admissions with three partner secondary schools since the 2018/2019 intake year. A pilot ran as part of 2018-2020 school admission arrangements, with coordinated admissions between all community secondary schools, Whitchurch High School (foundation school), St Teilo's Church in Wales High School (voluntary aided) and Corpus Christi Catholic High School (voluntary aided).

The pilot was successful with all of the Admissions Authorities who were involved reporting the process as being beneficial overall. Each of the above schools has decided to remain as a partner within the coordinated admission arrangements. Each of the schools retains the responsibility for consulting on and setting its admissions arrangements.

The Council has expanded the coordinated arrangements for secondary schools by including The Bishop of Llandaff Church in Wales High School in the process from September 2023.

The Council has also coordinated primary school admissions arrangements with St Mellons Church in Wales Primary School since September 2021 and from September 2023 twenty other faith primary schools will be part of the coordinated arrangements.

The Council is now seeking to further expand the coordinated arrangements for secondary schools by including Mary Immaculate High School in the process from September 2024.

## What are we proposing to do?

- Include Mary Immaculate High School within the coordinated secondary school admissions process for the Year 7 age group intake from September 2024.

## Where can I find more information?

This document sets out the proposal to expand coordinated admission arrangements with partner secondary schools in Cardiff.

Further information in respect of school admissions arrangements can be found on the Council website: [www.cardiff.gov.uk/admissionarrangements](http://www.cardiff.gov.uk/admissionarrangements)

If you are unable to access this document on-line, printed copies will be available by post on request. You may request a copy by e-mailing [schoolresponses@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:schoolresponses@cardiff.gov.uk) or by telephoning 02920 872720.

We will organise online drop-in sessions that you can attend if you would like us to explain the suggested changes to you. You can also ask us questions.

If you would like to attend an online session please contact us by e-mailing [schoolresponses@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:schoolresponses@cardiff.gov.uk) and tell us when you would like to attend. We will then provide a link and instructions for attending the session.

## How can I give my views?

- You can fill in the response form on page 13 of this booklet
- You can attend a drop-in session
- You can provide your views at [www.cardiff.gov.uk/admissionarrangements](http://www.cardiff.gov.uk/admissionarrangements)

The closing date for responses to this consultation is **16 January 2023**.

Unfortunately responses received after this date will not be considered by the Council.

## Explanation of Terms used in this document

**Admission Authority** – Responsible for setting and applying a school’s admission arrangements. For community schools and voluntary controlled schools the Admission Authority is Cardiff Council. For voluntary aided schools the Admission Authority is the school’s governing body.

**ALN** – Additional Learning Needs. This may be due to learning difficulties, physical disabilities or behavioural problems. (ALN is sometimes referred to as Special Educational Needs).

**Catholic Archdiocese** – a church district, made up of local parishes, under the leadership of a Catholic Archbishop.

**Community School** – a maintained primary or secondary school where the Council arranges school admissions.

**Foundation School** – a maintained primary or secondary school where the school’s governing body administers school admissions. The school buildings and land are owned by the governing body or by a charitable foundation.

**Governing Body** – A group of people who are responsible for running a school. They set a strategic direction and aim to promote a high standard of educational achievement.

**Local Authority** – an organisation that is officially responsible for all the public services and facilities in a particular area. In Cardiff the local authority is Cardiff Council.

**Maintained School** – A school that is funded by the local education authority (LA).

**Offer Day** – A consistent date on which all Admissions Authorities inform families of the outcome of their school applications.

**Voluntary Aided School** – a maintained primary or secondary school where the school’s Governing Body administers school admissions.

# Coordinated Secondary School Admissions

## Why are we proposing these changes?

The coordinated admissions arrangements for admission to secondary education have been beneficial for school, parents and pupils alike.

The Council and the Catholic Archdiocese of Cardiff are keen to expand the coordinated admissions arrangements to include more schools.

Mary Immaculate High School has agreed to consult on being part of the coordinated admissions arrangements.

## Planning and budget

Coordinated admission arrangements between community schools and voluntary aided schools mean more certainty around the number of Year 7 pupils transferring to a school. If a pupil accepts a place at one school they are not able to also hold a place at another school within this partnership.

This leaves schools better able to plan ahead for the school year. For example, if the school knows how many pupils will enrol in Year 7 then it will be in a better position to manage class organisation and staffing arrangements.

## Transfer to secondary education

Coordinated admission arrangements were piloted in Cardiff secondary schools for the Year 7 intakes in 2018, 2019 and 2020 and retained for the 2021, 2022 and 2023 intakes. The coordinated arrangements initially applied to all community schools, Corpus Christi Catholic High School, St Teilo's Church in Wales High School and Whitchurch High School. The arrangements were expanded to include The Bishop of Llandaff Church in Wales High School from the September 2023 intake.

Under the current arrangements, pupils wishing to apply for these schools complete a Common Application Form online via the Council website. In addition, pupils applying for Corpus Christi Catholic High School, St Teilo's Church in Wales High School or The Bishop of Llandaff Church in Wales High School also submit a supplementary form directly to the school.

Under the proposals, Mary Immaculate High School would also be part of the coordinated arrangements.

Pupils applying for a place at the schools within the coordinated process would be offered only the highest preference school place that they are eligible for.

## Allocation of places

Applying through the Common Application Form means that the Council knows the order of parents' preferences. Therefore, when the voluntary aided and foundation schools send their ranked list of applicants to the Council, it is possible to allocate places according to the stated preference. This does not guarantee that a place will be allocated. In some cases a pupil could still be unsuccessful in gaining a place at any school after the oversubscription criteria have been applied.

Only allocating one school place to each child means that parents are unable to 'hold' offers for more than one school in the coordinated process. Therefore, more children can be offered places in the earlier admission rounds.

In the 2022 intake, 309 children held more than one school place for entry to Year 7 after the first admission round. Of the children who were offered places at Mary Immaculate High School, 94 were also offered at least one other school place. 69 of these children held one additional place and 25 held two additional places.

Table 1 shows the school places held for entry to Year 7 in September 2022, after the first round of admissions, by pupils also holding a place at Mary Immaculate High School. Offering only one school place to these pupils would have released 119 school places in the first admission round. This would potentially leave fewer children without a school place and more children being offered a higher preference school place on Offer Day.

**Table 1: School places held by pupils also holding a place at Mary Immaculate High School at entry to Year 7 in 2022**

Number of school places held	Number of pupils
Cantonian High School	17
Cardiff West Community High School	28
Cathays High School	8
Corpus Christi Catholic High School	14
Fitzalan High School	18
Radyr Comprehensive School	3
St Teilo's CW High School	3
The Bishop of Llandaff CW High School	27
Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Plasmawr	1
	<b>119</b>

## What are the Proposed Arrangements and how would they work?

The existing coordinated arrangements with Corpus Christi Catholic High School, St Teilo's Church in Wales High School, The Bishop of Llandaff Church in Wales High School and Whitchurch High School would be unchanged. Pupils applying for Mary Immaculate High School would apply via the Common Application Form on the Council's website. They would also submit a supplementary form directly to the school.

Pupils applying for a place at St Illtyd's Catholic High School would continue to submit applications directly to the school.

Coordinated secondary school admissions for the Year 7 age group would follow the timetable as outlined below (for the September 2024 intake):

### 25 September 2023 – 20 November 2023

- Parents/carers would complete a Common Application Form online. They would express up to five preferences for community and/or voluntary aided schools.
- Parents/carers applying for a voluntary aided school, within the coordinated admissions arrangements, would also complete a supplementary application form for the individual school. This form would be returned directly to the school's governing body along with any required references, documentary evidence and any other information required.
- Applications via the online Common Application Form would close on 20 November 2023.

### December 2023 - February 2024

- Voluntary aided and foundation schools would rank all applicants according to their school's admissions criteria. Having produced a list of applicants in order of priority, they would submit this list to Cardiff Council to enter into the Central Admissions Database.
- The Central Admissions Database would then allocate the highest preference place to which a child qualifies for admission.

### Friday, 01 March 2024

- Pupils applying for a place at the schools within the coordinated process would be offered only the highest preference school place that they are eligible for. Applicants would be informed of their right to appeal, if any of their school applications were unsuccessful.
- Decisions are sent by email (or a letter if you have asked for your offer to be sent by post). They can also be viewed online or be given over the phone after 12pm on the Offer Day.

### 15 March 2024

- Deadline for parents/carers to respond to the Council, either accepting or refusing the offer of a school place.

## What are the benefits of coordinated admissions?

The following benefits would be expected to result from coordinated arrangements:

- More pupils offered a place on Offer Day in the initial round of applications.
- More pupils securing a higher school preference.
- More parents/carers able to plan work and childcare commitments much earlier.
- Fewer families needing to submit another admission application in a later admission round.
- Fewer statutory school appeals.
- Schools will be better able to plan their budgets, class organisation and staffing arrangements as they will have a clearer idea of how many pupils they will be admitting.

## What are the disadvantages of the coordinated arrangements?

The current system allows for parents to apply to multiple Admission Authorities with the potential for their child to be offered multiple school places. This allows them to secure offers for more than one school, with a later decision stage at which they can choose which school offer to accept.

A minority of parents may feel disadvantaged as a result. However, they would still retain the right to parental preference and the opportunity to rank order their school preferences. The proposed arrangements would also increase each applicant's opportunity of being offered one of their higher preferences.

## Alternative options

The alternative option is doing nothing. The existing arrangements would be retained. The inefficiencies within the current pupil allocation system would remain. Many pupils would receive multiple offers of places, whilst others may receive offers for a lower preference or no offer at all. Continuing the existing system would mean Admission Authorities are unable to allocate more places to children in the initial allocation round.



## How would schools be affected?

The proposal does not have any impact upon a school's admissions policy nor impose any change to its governance. The governing body of Mary Immaculate High School would still consult on and determine their own admissions arrangements, and would still rank the order of applicants against their own oversubscription criteria.

The Council would support the school by undertaking some of its administrative tasks including address verification and home to school distance measurements, if this is their preference.

It will not affect parents' ability to express their preference for a community school or voluntary aided school when submitting an application.

Therefore, it is anticipated that it would have little or no effect on the number of pupils that will be on roll at English-medium or Welsh-medium community schools or at voluntary aided schools in the city.

It is the Council's view that coordinated admissions help schools to plan their budgets, class organisation and staffing arrangements, as all schools will have a clearer idea of which pupils they will be admitting at an earlier stage.

## How would standards in schools be affected by the changes?

### Standards

The Council has made a clear commitment to continuing the investment in, and improvement of, Cardiff schools to make sure every child has the best possible start in life ([www.cardiffcommitment.co.uk](http://www.cardiffcommitment.co.uk)).

The Council works closely with the governing bodies of schools to make sure that standards in schools are high, that teaching is good and that leadership and governance is strong.

The Council does not expect the proposal to have any negative impact on the quality of standards of education at any of the schools involved in the coordinated admissions process.

### Teaching and learning experiences

The Council works closely with the governing bodies of schools to ensure that standards in schools are high, that teaching is good and that leadership and governance is strong.

The Council does not expect this proposal to have any negative impact on the quality of standards of education or the delivery of Key Stages 3-4.

## Care, support and guidance

All schools have a suitable range of policies and provision in place to promote pupils' health and wellbeing.

Schools are committed to fostering school communities in which learning is valued and pupils achieve their potential in a happy and safe environment in which they show respect and tolerance for others.

The Council would work with the leadership of each of the schools to make sure everyone at the school understands their responsibility for helping to improve and sustain care, support and guidance.

## Leadership and Management

Governing bodies are responsible for setting and applying the admission arrangements for voluntary aided schools. This would not change under the coordinated admission arrangements.

There is no information that suggests that the proposals would have a negative effect on schools' leadership and governance or impact on educational outcomes.

## How would pupils with Additional Learning Needs be affected?

Schools in Cardiff receive delegated funding to enable them to provide extra support and focussed interventions for pupils who have ALN.

Pupils with ALN are offered school provision in a range of settings across Cardiff which support identified pupil needs. This includes supported placements in mainstream schools and places in Specialist Resource Bases (SRBs) and Special Schools

Admissions to specialist provision are managed by the Council, subject to a statement of Special Education Needs (SEN) or Individual Development Plan (IDP).

There are no plans to make any changes to how children are admitted to ALN provision.

There is no information available that suggests that the proposals would have a negative effect on ALN provision. Schools would continue to provide ALN support for pupils appropriate to the level of need.

## How would pupils receiving Free School Meals be affected?

Some of the funding that a school receives is based on the number of pupils in the school who receive Free School Meals. All schools in Cardiff would receive funding for these pupils.

There is no information available that suggests that the proposals would have a negative effect on pupils at the school who receive Free School Meals.

## **How would pupils with English as an Additional Language be affected?**

There is no information available that suggests that the proposals would have a negative effect on how children with English as an additional language are supported. All schools in Cardiff would continue to provide support that is appropriate to the individual needs of each pupil.

## **How would Minority Ethnic pupils be affected?**

There is also no information available that suggests that the proposals would have a negative effect on provision for any ethnic group.

## **Financial Matters**

It is the Council's view that schools will be better able to plan their school budgets for forthcoming academic years as they will have a clearer idea of which pupils they will be admitting. A large proportion of a school's budget is based on the number of children on roll.

## **Human Resources Matters**

It is the Council's view that this proposal is unlikely to impact on school staffing. Working practises would change, but may not reduce.

## **Transport Matters**

It is the Council's view that this proposal is unlikely to impact on traffic. It does not relate to any change with respect to supply of school places nor any change to school catchment areas.

## **Learner Travel Arrangements**

Under these proposals there are no plans to change the Council's policy on the transport of children to and from schools. The Council's transport policy for school children can be viewed on the Council's website ([www.cardiff.gov.uk](http://www.cardiff.gov.uk)).

## **Impact of the proposals on the Welsh Language**

The Council does not expect any negative impact on the Welsh Language from this proposal.

As some Welsh-medium schools have reported difficulties in planning budgets owing to parents being offered a school place but later taking a place at an alternative school, it is expected that the proposals would have a positive benefit overall.

## Equality Matters

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is a process that looks at a policy, project or scheme to make sure it does not discriminate against anyone based on the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010 (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion/belief, sex, sexual orientation).

An initial Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out. It concluded that the proposed changes would not negatively affect a particular group in society. Where particular groups are identified as being impacted, mitigating actions have been identified.

This assessment will be reviewed after the consultation and at key points if the proposals were to proceed.

The proposal will have a positive impact on children in Cardiff achieving their full potential by promoting and improving access to learning in the city, giving children the best start by providing a better experience for children starting school or going into Secondary School for the first time.

This will be as a result of school staff being able to maximise on the efficiencies of the admissions process to provide a more effective start for children to allow them to realise their maximum potential earlier than later.

The Council (Admissions Authority for Community Schools) and Governing Bodies (Admissions Authority for Voluntary Aided and Foundation Schools) will continue to strengthen their partnership in delivering positive outcomes for the city and its citizens; working collaboratively with a shared agenda to achieve significant cost and efficiency savings.

## Community Impact

It is the Council's view that this proposal is unlikely to negatively impact on any community in Cardiff.

## Next steps, how to make your views known and feedback form

### What happens next?

The Council will collect and summarise the feedback from this consultation. Council officers will then report this to the Council's Cabinet to inform elected members of stakeholders' views, as part of the proposed 2024-2025 School Admission Arrangements. Once the Cabinet have determined the Admission Arrangements, the Admission Policy will be available for anyone to view/download on the Council website. You can also get a copy by using the contact details in this document.

### Consultation period

The consultation period for these proposals **starts on 28 November 2022 and ends on 16 January 2023**.

See page 2 for further details of how to respond and make your views known.

The responses from the consultation will be considered as part of the proposed School Admission Arrangements for 2024-2025.

### Determination of the admission arrangements

The Council's Cabinet will determine the proposed Admission Arrangements for 2024-2025 in March 2023.

### Decision Notification

After determination, Cardiff Council would inform stakeholders. The Admission Policy will also be published on the Council's website.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Will the oversubscription criteria for Mary Immaculate High School change?

Mary Immaculate High School will continue to consult on, set and apply their own admission criteria. The governing body will rank applicants for places at their school based on their own criteria.

### Will coordinated admission arrangements mean that my child is definitely offered a school place?

The coordinated admission arrangements do not guarantee that a place will be allocated. In some cases a pupil could still be unsuccessful in gaining a place at any school. However, because multiple places cannot be held by one pupil under these arrangements, your child is more likely to be offered one of their preferences.

### Am I more likely to get a place at a school if I put it as my only preference?

Listing only one school as a preference does not make it more likely that you will get a place in the school. Applicants are ranked according to the school's oversubscription criteria. Parents are encouraged to use all of their preferences. If an applicant could be offered a place at more than one school, they will be given a single offer for their highest preference school.

### How many schools can I apply for?

The Council's online application process will allow you to state up to five preferences. Applicants are encouraged to use all of their preferences. You can also submit additional applications if you wish to do so.

### If I don't get an offer of a place at Mary Immaculate High School will I miss out on a place at my catchment school?

You will be able to apply for both Mary Immaculate High School and your catchment community school using Common Application Form on the online portal. You can rank five schools according to your preference and will be offered the highest preference school place that you are eligible for. Therefore if you are not offered a place at Mary Immaculate High School, you can still be offered a place at your catchment community school, if you are eligible for a place once the oversubscription criteria have been applied.

# Have Your Say!

## CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM

You can complete this response form online at [www.cardiff.gov.uk/admissionarrangements](http://www.cardiff.gov.uk/admissionarrangements)

We are proposing to:

- Include Mary Immaculate High School within the coordinated secondary school admissions process for the Year 7 age group intake from September 2024.

### Please tell us whether you are responding as (tick all that apply)

Parent or Guardian\*

Grandparent\*

Member of Staff\*

Pupil\*

Governor\*

Local Resident

Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

\*Please confirm which schools you are affiliated with

### 1. Do you support the proposal to include Mary Immaculate High School within the coordinated secondary school admissions.

YES       NO       NO OPINION

Please explain why:

### 2. Do you have any other comments on the School Admissions Policy?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Post Code \_\_\_\_\_

**The closing date for responses to this consultation is 16 January 2023.**

The Council is not able to consider any consultation responses received after this date.

Consultation responses will **not** be counted as objections to the proposal.

Objections can only be registered following publication of a statutory notice.

If you wish to be notified of publication of the Consultation report please provide an email address. If you do not provide an email address we cannot keep you up to date

**Thank you for your comments**  
**Please return this form to the School Organisation Planning Team, Room 401, County Hall, CF10 4UW by no later than 16 January 2023.**

The information you have provided above will be processed by Cardiff Council in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation. The information provided to us in relation to this consultation will be treated as confidential but it may be used by the Council or disclosed to others when required by law. The purpose of processing the personal data is required to perform a specific tasks in the public interest. Any responses received can be requested under the Freedom of Information Act and may have to be made public, however any information that would identify an individual such as name and address would be removed.

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[https://www.cardiff.gov.uk/ENG/Home/New\\_Disclaimer/Pages/default.aspx](https://www.cardiff.gov.uk/ENG/Home/New_Disclaimer/Pages/default.aspx)



## ABOUT YOU

Please provide your postcode below to allow us to more accurately pinpoint respondents' views and needs by area:

What was your age on your last birthday?

- |                                   |                                |                                |                                |  |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under 16 | <input type="checkbox"/> 25-34 | <input type="checkbox"/> 45-54 | <input type="checkbox"/> 65-74 | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 16-24    | <input type="checkbox"/> 35-44 | <input type="checkbox"/> 55-64 | <input type="checkbox"/> 75+   |  |

Are you...?

- |                                 |                               |                                |  |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Female | <input type="checkbox"/> Male | <input type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|

Do you identify as a disabled person?

- |                              |                             |  |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|

Please tick any of the following that apply to you:

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deaf/ Deafened/ Hard of hearing    | <input type="checkbox"/> Visual impairment   | <input type="checkbox"/> Long-standing illness or health condition (e.g. cancer, diabetes, or asthma) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mental health difficulties         | <input type="checkbox"/> Wheelchair user     | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Learning impairment / difficulties | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobility impairment | <input type="checkbox"/> Other  |

Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

What is your ethnic group?

Where the term 'British' is used, this refers to any of the four home nations of Wales, England, Northern Ireland and Scotland, or any combination of these.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> White - Welsh/English/Scottish/Northern Irish/British    | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian/Asian Welsh/British - Bangladeshi                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White - Irish  | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian/Asian Welsh/British - Indian                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White - Gypsy or Irish Traveller                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian/Asian Welsh/British - Any other                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White - Any other white background                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Black/African/Caribbean/Black Welsh/British - African   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups - White & Asian             | <input type="checkbox"/> Black/African/Caribbean/Black Welsh/British - Caribbean |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups - White and Black Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> Black/African/Caribbean/Black Welsh/British - Any other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups - White and Black African   | <input type="checkbox"/> Arab  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups - Any other                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other ethnic group (please specify)                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian/Asian Welsh/British - Chinese                      | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian/Asian Welsh/British - Pakistani                    | Prefer not to say  |

The information you have provided above will be processed by Cardiff Council in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation. The information provided to us in relation to this consultation will be treated as confidential but it may be used by the Council or disclosed to others when required by law. The purpose of processing the personal data is required to perform a specific task in the public interest. Any responses received can be requested under the Freedom of Information Act and may have to be made public, however any information that would identify an individual such as name and address would be removed. For further information on how Cardiff Council manages personal information, see our full Privacy Policy on the Council's website

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