

# **PEMBROKESHIRE ADMISSION FORUM**

## **CONSTITUTION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **1. General**

The Education (Admission Forums) (Wales) Regulations 2003, require every local authority in Wales to establish an admission forum (hereinafter referred to as 'the Forum'). The constitution and terms of reference of the Forum may be amended at any time to meet changes to the primary legislation or the regulations.

### **2. Functions of the Forum**

Admission Forums have a key role in ensuring a fair admissions system that promotes social equality. Admission Forums must act in accordance with the statutory School Admissions Code and admission authorities of all maintained schools in Pembrokeshire must have regard to any advice offered by the Forum. The Forum shall provide a formal channel of communication between Pembrokeshire County Council, its maintained schools, other admission authorities in Pembrokeshire and others with an interest in school admissions in the Pembrokeshire area on such matters relating to school admissions as the County Council sees fit and as may be prescribed in regulations. In particular the Forum shall:

- a) consider how well existing and proposed admission arrangements (including catchment areas, admission numbers and over-subscription criteria) serve the interests of children and parents within Pembrokeshire
- b) promote agreement on admission issues
- c) consider the comprehensiveness and accessibility of the admission literature and information for parents produced by each admission authority within the area of the forum through the published composite prospectus
- d) consider the effectiveness of any proposed co-ordinated admission arrangements
- e) consider the means by which admissions processes might be improved and how actual admissions relate to the admission number published
- f) monitor the admission of children who arrive in the authority's area outside the normal admission round, with a view to promoting arrangements for the fair distribution of such children among local schools taking into account parental preference in accordance with section 86(1) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- g) promote effective admission arrangements for children with additional learning needs and/or disabilities, Gypsy and Traveller children, looked after children, children who have been excluded from school, young offenders, and those who are hard to place or have challenging behaviour.
- h) consider any other admissions issues not mentioned above particularly those relating to "families of schools".

- i) consider appropriate application and offer dates for all primary and secondary school admissions within their area in consultation with neighbouring authorities
- j) monitor compliance with the School Admissions and School Admissions Appeals Codes and related legislation.

### 3. Membership

Membership of the forum shall be the following “core” members appointed by the County Council:

<b>GROUP</b>	<b>RANGE</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>NOMINATOR</b>
Members or Officers of the Authority	1-5	5	Authority
Members nominated by Church in Wales	1-3	2	Diocesan Authority
Members nominated by R.C. Church	1-3	1	Dioceses
Headteacher or Governor (not C.C. appointed governors) from each school group.	1-3 from each group (i) CP & VC (ii) VA (iii) Foundation	3 1 0	Authority via Headteacher Groups
Parent Governor Representatives	1-3	2	Parent Governors

### 4. Appointment of Members of the Forum

- (a) Pembrokeshire County Council representatives in accordance with the constitution
- (b) Diocesan representatives by the relevant Diocesan Authority
- (c) Headteacher or Governor representatives on the basis of nominations received by primary headteacher groups and PASH
- (d) Parent Governor representatives to be those elected by parent governors to serve on Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

### 5. Term of Office

Each core member shall be appointed for a period not exceeding four years. Members may be re-appointed.

### 6. Removal of Members

Forum members shall cease to be members of the Forum when they cease to hold the office by virtue of which they became eligible for appointment.

Forum members nominated by a diocesan authority shall cease to be members if their nominating body notifies the secretary of the Forum that they are of the opinion that the member should no longer be a member of the Forum.

The removal of members shall be in accordance with the provisions of the Education (Admission Forums) (Wales) Regulation 2003.

## **7. Meetings of the Forum**

The Forum is required by the Regulations to meet at least twice a year. Additional meetings may be called by the Secretary in consultation with the chair.

At least seven working days' notice of a meeting of the Forum shall be given in writing to members, except in the case of an emergency.

The Secretary shall circulate the agenda and documents relevant to the meeting to members at least seven days prior to the meeting of the Forum.

The quorum of the Forum shall be 40% of its membership, rounded up to the nearest whole number.

## **8. Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair**

The Chair shall preside over meetings of the Forum. The Forum shall select a Chair and Vice-Chair at their first meeting and biennially thereafter. The Chair and Vice-Chair shall serve for a period of two years and may be re-selected. The secretary to the Forum shall act as Chair for that part of the meeting during which the Chair is elected.

## **9. Secretary of the Forum**

The Secretary of the Forum shall be the Director of Education or his nominee – subject to approval of the Forum.

## **10. Voting**

Welsh Assembly Government expects Admission Forums to seek to reach consensus in the advice given to admissions authorities. In the event of a vote, decisions shall be made by simple majority of members present and voting. In the event of an equality of votes the chair shall have a casting vote to determine the issue.

## **11. Declaration of Interest**

A member with a personal interest in a matter who attends a meeting of the Forum at which that matter is considered must disclose to the meeting the existence and nature of that interest at the start of the meeting or at such time as the interest becomes apparent. Members should regard themselves as having a personal interest in any matter if its discussion might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well being or financial position of themselves, a close relative or any employment of business carried out by such a person. The Forum shall determine whether or not a member having declared an interest shall be permitted to participate in discussion of the matter concerned.

## **12. Confidentiality**

The business of the Forum shall be conducted in private. On occasions, information of a confidential nature may be given to members of the forum to assist their understanding of the matter under discussion. Members of the Forum must observe the confidentiality of such information.

## **13. Sub Committees**

The Forum may establish sub-committees as it considers necessary to consider particular issues and shall decide upon the membership, terms of reference and procedures of such sub-committees as appropriate. The Forum shall consider the work of such sub-committees and make recommendations as appropriate.

## **14. Attendance by Officers at Meetings**

Officers of the County Council shall have the right to attend any meeting of the Forum for the purpose of giving advice.

## **15. Reporting**

The Forum will provide the Welsh Assembly Government with an annual report on its activities in the format set out in the School Admissions Code by 30<sup>th</sup> November following the end of each academic year.

## **16. Expenses**

All expenses of the Forum shall be met by the Authority and charged to the Admissions and Planning Places budget.

The Authority shall reimburse expenses of members as follows

- childcare or babysitting (other than done by a resident and responsible person at the home address) shall be reimbursed at a rate equivalent to the prevailing National Minimum Wage (NMW).
- care arrangements for a dependent (as above) shall also be reimbursed at a rate equivalent to the prevailing NMW;

- support for members whose first language is not Welsh/English (translations);
- telephone charges, photocopying, stationery, etc;
- travel expenses to be met at agreed rates as per Pembrokeshire County Council policy.

Claims must be made on an official Pembrokeshire County Council expenses claim form and submitted to the Secretary to the Forum. Where appropriate, claims for reimbursement of expenses must be supported by receipts.

### **17. Alteration of the Constitution and Terms of Reference**

Any amendment to the Constitution and Terms of Reference of the Pembrokeshire Admissions Forum shall only be considered at a meeting for which 28 days notice has been given and shall be passed only on the approval of two-thirds of the members present and voting.

Since the Forum is established to meet statutory requirements, it may also be necessary to amend the Constitution and Terms of Reference from time to time to meet changes in statutory requirements.