



Ceredigion County Council

Information for Parents about Ceredigion Schools

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Strategic Director for Learning and Partnerships

September 2015



LETTER FROM THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR

September, 2015

Dear Parent/Guardian,

In accordance with the law all Local Authorities have an obligation to provide an opportunity for parents/guardians to express a preference when choosing a school for their children. This is one of the most important decisions you will take on behalf of your child.

This information document which outlines the policies of Ceredigion Local Authority has been prepared to assist parents. Governors and Headteachers may provide supplementary details related to their schools.

As a parent/guardian you have a right to expect your child to receive a good education, but also important is your interest in your child's work at school which will provide encouragement for the school and complement the efforts of teachers. Many schools will have a Parents' Association or P.T.A. which you may join and which will give an opportunity for you to have a closer involvement with the school and with the Learning Services in Ceredigion.

You may be interested to know that there are parent representatives on the Governing Body of each school and that these are elected by the parents themselves, normally every four years. Each year you will receive a written report of the work undertaken by the Governing Body of the school.

I hope that your child will settle easily into his/her new school and that he/she will derive many benefits from the opportunities offered.

I trust that this booklet will prove to be informative and useful and that it will promote a greater understanding between parents/guardians and the Learning Service as a whole.

Yours faithfully,

J. Barry Rees

Strategic Director for Learning and Partnerships

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INTRODUCTION

As a parent you have a responsibility to make sure that your child, between the ages of 5 and 16, is provided with a suitable education. The parents of the vast majority of pupils in Ceredigion have decided for their children to be educated in schools which Ceredigion Local Authority maintains.

You will want the best for your child, so take every opportunity to learn as much as possible about the Learning Services and what it offers. Most importantly make sure you find out as much about the school which you wish to apply for your child to attend. The governors and staff at the school will look forward to working with you to help to develop your child's potential ability. They too want the best for your child.

This booklet aims at providing parents/guardians and others with general information about primary and secondary education in Ceredigion. The booklet contains the basic details on how pupils are admitted to the schools and some of the policies and support given by the Local Authority.

Each school on the list will have its own school prospectus which will describe in detail the school, its aims and its organisation. If you are interested in learning more about a particular school then ask the headteacher of the school for a copy of their prospectus.

The information in this booklet refers as far as possible, and the information is correct at the time of publication, to the school year beginning in September, 2016.

A Brief Outline

The Local Authority has a legal obligation to ensure that all 5 to 16 year olds receive appropriate full-time education. Approximately 9,500 pupils attend the Authority's schools.

Ceredigion Local Authority maintains 47 primary schools. About 40% of the Authority's primary schools have 50 pupils or fewer on roll. In most of these schools, Welsh is the main medium of the life and work of the school. At secondary level the Authority promotes 5 comprehensive schools, varying in size from 450 pupils to 1300 pupils. Two of these schools are designated as bilingual schools where a large number of subjects are taught through the medium of Welsh. The Authority also maintains one 3-16 school and one 3-19 school. The schools provide education for pupils from three years old to sixteen and nineteen years old, respectively.

In order to cater for children with special educational needs, the Authority has a wide range of provision, including specialist resource centres and behavioural units, some of which are attached to mainstream schools. In addition to these facilities, a range of specialist support staff assist in ensuring that, wherever possible, children with special needs are educated in mainstream schools.

The Authority no longer has responsibility for Further Education Colleges of which there is one such establishment within the County, namely Coleg Ceredigion.

Ceredigion's Learning Services are based on the philosophy of offering lifelong learning opportunities for each member of the community. In co-operation with our partners, we attempt to provide youth activities, adult education, basic skills for adults, opportunities to learn Welsh, training and a number of community development projects. We believe that these opportunities contribute to developing the individual and forming an inclusive society within a bilingual Ceredigion.

The Local Authority not only concerns itself with what happens in the classroom, it also provides a whole range of associated services including school transport, school meals, cleaning, training, buildings, development, educational advice and governor support. Although the Careers Service is not directly provided by the Local Authority, the Authority continues to support career guidance throughout the learning service. Careers Wales has been formed as an independent provider and provides a careers guidance service in Ceredigion.

The Learning Service employs in the region of 2,000 people and is the largest of the Local Authority's services with an annual budget of £55 million for 2015/2016. The administrative headquarters for the Learning Service is situated at **Canolfan Rheidol, Rhodfa Padarn, Llanbadarn Fawr, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion, SY23 3UE** and provides a focal point of contact for parents, pupils, elected members, staff and the general public. In addition to advice on the services noted above which can be obtained from the Learning Services, a number of support agencies such as advisors, educational psychologists and inclusion officers are also located at Canolfan Rheidol.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Where can I get more information?

Parents are encouraged to contact schools, speak with the headteachers and to read the schools' prospectuses which are available from the school. If further information or assistance is required the staff at the Learning Services will help wherever possible.

Enquiries relating to Primary and Secondary Education should be addressed to the **Strategic Director for Learning and Partnerships, Canolfan Rheidol, Rhodfa Padarn, Llanbadarn Fawr, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY23 3UE. Tel: 01970 633601**
E-mail : education@ceredigion.gov.uk Website: www.ceredigion.gov.uk

As from the school year 1999-2000 the procedure for admissions has changed and ALL parents are requested to express a preference for a school(s) prior to a school place being allocated by the Strategic Director for Learning and Partnerships.

Ceredigion Music Service
01970 633614
gwasanaeth.cerdd@ceredigion.gov.uk

Welsh in Ceredigion Schools
01970 633656
addysg@ceredigion.gov.uk

Education Inclusion Service
01970 633619
stuart.bradley@ceredigion.gov.uk

Free School Meals
01970 633650
decdata@ceredigion.gov.uk

Governor Support
01970 633676
governors@ceredigion.gov.uk

Planning Education Provision
01970 633364
addysg@ceredigion.gov.uk

School Admissions
01970 633672
cheryl.evans@ceredigion.gov.uk

School Meals
01970 633679
gill.jones2@ceredigion.gov.uk

Special Educational Needs
01970 633693
sen@ceredigion.gov.uk

Transport
01970 633555
hpw@ceredigion.gov.uk

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Must my child receive full-time education?

Yes. By law parents must ensure that their child receives full-time education from the beginning of the term following the child's 5th birthday until he/she is of school leaving age at 16. Parents can be taken to court if they do not carry out this legal requirement.

The Local Authority has a legal obligation to ensure that all 5-16 year olds receive appropriate full time education.

Who has parental responsibility for the child?

You should be aware that following changes made to the law about children by the Children Act 1989, which became law in October 1991, schools need to know who has "parental responsibility" for each child. This is to ensure that proper authority is given when the school needs parental permission. It will also make sure that persons with parental responsibility who do not live with a child can be provided with school reports and given an opportunity to take part in the child's education. Further changes in the law took place in 2003.

- Mothers always have parental responsibility (unless a Court Order is in place that states she will no longer have the responsibility). e.g. in adoption cases.
- Fathers who were married to the mother prior to 2003 have parental responsibility.
- Fathers also have parental responsibility for a child if the child was born after 2003 and their name is on the child's birth certificate.
- Unmarried fathers, step-parents, relatives and other persons can obtain parental responsibility but they do not have it automatically.

Parents are asked to co-operate with school staff by providing the school with details of the persons with parental responsibility for a pupil. Any changes in the arrangements for parental responsibility or in the day to day care of the child should be notified to the school.

Any reference to parents within this booklet extends to include anyone having responsibility for pupils.

ADMISSION OF PUPILS TO SCHOOLS

TYPES OF SCHOOLS

What are the different types of schools in Ceredigion?

Most schools in Ceredigion are maintained by Ceredigion County Council through the Local Authority. These include 47 primary schools, 1 3-16 school, 1 3-19 school and 5 secondary schools. Amongst these, there are two voluntary aided primary schools within the county, namely St. Padarn's R.C. School, Aberystwyth (Catholic) and Llanwenog V.A. School, Llanwenog (Church in Wales). Admission enquiries for these two schools should be made to their Governing Body. Contact details for all schools are included at the end of this booklet.

CHURCH SCHOOLS

General enquiries about Church Schools should be made to:

Church in Wales Schools

Reverend Bryan Witt
Diocesan Director of Education
The Vicarage,
Bridge Street,
St. Clears,
Carmarthen,
SA33 4EE

Tel: 01994 230266

Catholic Schools

Mr Bernard Stuart
Diocesan Director of Education
Curial Office
27 Convent Street
Greenhill
Swansea,
SA1 2BX

Tel: (01792) 652757

CHOOSING A SCHOOL

How do I choose a school for my child?

Within Ceredigion most parents send their child to their local school, however, parents may express a preference for a different school. Parents should read the school prospectus or arrange with the Headteacher(s) to visit the school(s) prior to expressing a preference.

Parents may express a preference:

- when their child starts school at the Foundation Phase;
- when their child transfers to the Secondary School;
- at any time parents wish to transfer their child to another school.

Parents should express a preference for more than one school, failure to do so might mean that your child could be allocated to a school which is not your preference.

Must the Authority provide a place for every child who wishes to be admitted to a particular school?

No. The Admission Authority must meet the preference if it can, but certain factors will be taken into account. These include:

- the school admission number
- the efficient use of resources and accommodation
- the character of a school (generally religious)

It is possible that parents may not be successful in gaining a place at their first choice school. It is important therefore to understand that the Authority can only admit pupils within the resources available.

Does the school select its pupils?

No. None of the schools are allowed to select pupils.

Who controls admission to schools?

The admission of children to school is controlled by an "Admission Authority". In the case of community schools in Ceredigion the Admissions Authority is Ceredigion County Council (the Local Authority or LA). In the case of a Voluntary Aided School the Admissions Authority is the Governing Body of the school (Llanwenog and St Padarn Schools). The admission policies of Voluntary Aided Schools can be found at the end of this booklet.

Do schools have a limit upon the number of pupils that can be admitted?

Yes. All schools must admit pupils up to their published admission number.

Where applications exceed the admission number for a school, all applications will be assessed against the oversubscription criteria and pupils will be admitted up to the admission number.

Oversubscription Criteria

Where there are more children wishing to enter a particular school than there are places, the following oversubscription criteria will be used in order of priority:-

- looked after children and previously looked after children;
- the school for which a preference has been expressed is the nearest suitable school and the child will have a sibling* attending the school at the time of admission;
- the school for which a preference has been expressed is the nearest suitable school;
- children for whom the school is not the nearest suitable school but will have a sibling* attending the school at the time of admission.

(*Siblings includes half-siblings, step siblings, adoptive and foster children living in the same house.)

Where more than one child meets these criteria and applicants still remain then the child living nearest to the school will be admitted. **All distances will be measured by the shortest walking distance between the main school gate and the point where the child's dwelling meets the public highway.**

The LA uses Google Maps to measure all distances.

Please note that the above oversubscription criteria applies to applications for Nursery, Primary and Secondary Education.

REFUSAL AND APPEAL

What if my request is refused?

If your request is refused then you may appeal against the decision. The Local Authority has established an Independent Appeals Panel to consider appeals from parents whose application for a preferred school has not been approved. Appeals Panels will normally be held in private but parents will be given an opportunity of presenting their case either directly or with the assistance of their chosen representative.

N.B. There is no appeal against non statutory nursery provision.

Can I be placed on a waiting list?

Yes. Should the Authority not be able to offer a place to a child at their first choice of school during the normal admission round their name will be kept on a waiting list until the 30th of September of the relevant academic year. Priority for places will be given according to the oversubscription criteria and not according to the date on which application for a place was originally submitted.

Twins or other sibling from a multiple birth.

If the final place allocated up to the admission number is one of a multiple birth, then the Authority will also admit the other sibling(s).

Children of UK Service personnel and other Crown Servants (including diplomats).

Families of UK Service personnel and other Crown Servants are subject to frequent movement within the UK and from abroad, often at relatively short notice.

As a result, applications for school places for the approaching school year will be considered if accompanied by an official Ministry of Defence or Foreign and Commonwealth Office letter declaring a return date. School places will then be allocated in advance if the applicant would meet the criteria when they move to their destination.

Unit postal addresses for applications from service personnel will also be accepted, in the absence of a new home postal address.

ADMISSION TO SCHOOL

Admissions Timetable.

Type of Provision	Closing date	Decision letter sent
Nursery	29th January 2016	18th April 2016
Primary/Reception	29th January 2016	18th April 2016
Secondary	18th December 2015	1st March 2016

Please note: Parents must apply for a place at whatever school(s) they would like to send their child. Applications forms are available at schools, from the Learning Services and online at www.ceredigion.gov.uk.

LATE APPLICATIONS

Late applications, i.e. applications received after the closing date will be considered after all applications which were received on time.

NURSERY EDUCATION

Is it possible for my 3 year old child to receive nursery education?

The Local Authority is under a duty to provide free part time nursery places to all children in the Local Authority area in the term after they have attained their third birthday. This will be available in nursery classes in some primary schools, local playgroups and day nurseries that meet the criteria set by Ceredigion Early Years and Childcare Partnership. Please ask your local playgroup / day nursery for further details.

What are the dates by which my child has to reach the right age before being allowed to go to school and by when must I apply?

Type of Provision	Age	Date by which the appropriate age must be reached	Term for Admission
Nursery	3	31 December 2016 31 March 2017 31 August 2017	Spring 2017 Summer 2017 Autumn 2017

ADMISSION TO A RECEPTION CLASS OF A SCHOOL WITH A NURSERY CLASS.

Must I apply when my child is ready to move from the nursery class or unit in a school to the reception class in the same school?

Yes. Being a pupil in a nursery class or unit does not automatically make your child eligible for admission to the reception class in the same school. Forms will be sent to parents with their nursery decision letter, but are also available from the school.

ADMISSION TO A PRIMARY SCHOOL/RECEPTION CLASS

When can I apply for my child to be admitted to a primary school?

Where there is no nursery class or unit a child may be admitted the term after he/she has reached the age of 4 years.

What are the dates by which my child has to reach the right age before being allowed to go to school and by when must I apply?

Type of Provision	Age	Date by which the appropriate age must be reached	Term for Admission
Primary/ Reception	4	31 December 2016 31 March 2017 31 August 2017	Spring 2017 Summer 2017 Autumn 2017

Deferred Entry

Parents may apply for a school place for a child who is not of compulsory school age, and the admissions authority, at the request of the parent, may agree to the child deferring entry to the reception class until he/she is of compulsory school age (5 years). The effect of this is that the place is held for that child and is not available for another child. Applications for deferred entry must be submitted by the same closing date as non-deferred applications. If you delay applying until your child has reached compulsory school age, your preferred school may already be full.

Infant Class Size.

Statutory limits on class sizes provide that when a single school teacher is present, infant classes (reception year, year 1 and year 2) may not contain more than 30 pupils.

The admission authority can refuse to admit a child to a school where to do so would cause class size prejudice, that is to say, prejudice to efficient education or efficient use of resources as a result of the relevant measures that would be needed to comply with the duty to limit the size of infant classes.

ADMISSION TO SECONDARY SCHOOL

When should my child start in the secondary school?

Pupils usually transfer to a Secondary School at 11 years of age. Pupils reaching the age of 11 by 31st August will transfer from primary to secondary school at the start of the next academic year i.e. 1st September.

How many secondary schools are there in the county?

There are 5 comprehensive schools and 1 3-16 school and 1 3-19 school in Ceredigion.

What are the dates by which my child has to reach the right age before being allowed to go to school and by when must I apply?

Type of Provision	Age	Date by which the appropriate age must be reached	Transfer Pack Sent	Submit application	Decision Letter Sent	Term for Admission
Secondary	11	31 August 2016	6 November 2015	18 December 2016	1 March 2016	September 2016

Please note: If you request a different school from the named school and it is granted, you need to be aware that, **you as parents will be responsible for the transport arrangements and the cost of transport to and from that school.**

SCHOOL LEAVING DATE

When are pupils allowed to leave school?

When your child reaches the age of 16 during a school year, he/she can leave school on the last Friday in June.

VOLUNTARY AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOLS ADMISSION POLICIES

LLANWENOG VOLUNTARY AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOL'S ADMISSION POLICY

Admissions to the school are the responsibility of the Governing Body. The number of pupils to be admitted annually shall be determined by the admission number which shall be revised annually by the Local Authority and the Governing Body in consultation with the Diocesan Council for Education. The admission number is currently **7**. The official capacity of the school is **51**.

The governors welcome applications from parents of Church in Wales pupils and pupils of other denominations who support the Christian ethos and traditions of the school.

The present criteria for admissions are as follows:-

1. Looked after pupil
2. Pupils with either a brother or a sister already at the school.
3. Children, for whom, Llanwenog Primary School is the nearest suitable school.
4. Baptised Church in Wales children.
5. Children of parents of other denominations who wish to share in the Christian ethos of the school.
6. Exceptional cases referred to the Authority by Social Services or the relevant Medical Officer where the admission to a particular school is necessary for the medical or social well-being of the child. In such cases a letter from a registered health professional such as a doctor or social worker will be required, which provides supporting evidence in order that full consideration can be given to the case.

Appeals

If any applicant for entry is refused, then parents have the right to appeal. The official procedure is as follows:-

In the first instance a letter should be sent to the Chairman of the Governors asking for reconsideration. If this is unsuccessful parents should apply through the Chairman to go to an Appeals Committee.

The decision of the Committee is binding upon the governors, although there are further stages available to parents if they wish to pursue them.

ST. PADARN'S ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL'S ADMISSION'S POLICY

St. Padarn's is a Catholic Primary School situated in the Diocese of Menevia and is maintained by Ceredigion Local Authority. The ethos of this school is Catholic. The school was founded by the Catholic Church to provide education for children of Catholic families. We ask all parents applying for a place here to support and respect this ethos, its importance to the school community and the education it provides.

- a) The admission of children to school is controlled by an 'Admission Authority.'
In the case of St. Padarn's School, the Admission Authority is the governing body of the school. They are responsible for determining and administering the policy relating to admission of pupils to the school. It is guided in that responsibility by:
- the requirement of the law.
 - the advice of the Diocesan Trustees on the nature and purpose of its duties and in fulfilment of its Trust Deed and Instrument of Government.
 - its duty towards the school and Catholic community it serves.
 - the Catholic character of the school and its Mission Statement.
- b) Parents may express a preference for the school and the admission authority must meet the preference unless to do so would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources. If there is room and resources in the school the place will be provided. All prospective parents should express a preference in writing – School admission application forms are provided by the school in the school prospectus and Ceredigion admission forms are sent with the prospectus.

Parents will be informed in writing by the school of the outcome of their admission application.

- c) Places will be allocated up to the school's admission number. However, should the number of applications exceed the admission number the following oversubscription criteria, listed in priority order, will be used to allocate places, remembering that as a Catholic School it is our obligation to provide a Catholic education for baptised Catholic children and therefore, Catholic children will always have the first right to admission. However, all children have to apply for a place through the Admissions Committee, which is a sub-committee of the Board of Governors.

Oversubscription Criteria

Where the number of applications exceeds the number of places available the Governing Body will apply the following oversubscription criteria in priority order.

1. Baptised Catholic 'Looked After' and previously 'Looked After' children, in the care of a Local Authority, within the parishes served by the school.
2. Baptised Catholic children within the parish served by the school.
3. Other Baptised Catholic children.
4. 'Looked After' and previously 'Looked After' children who are in the care of a Local Authority (children in care) or provided with accommodation by them (e.g. children with foster parents)
5. Children who have a sibling* attending the school at the time of admission.
6. Children of other Christian Denominations.
7. Non-Catholic children who have a sibling* attending the school at the time of admission.

8. Children of other faiths whose parents seek Catholic schooling.
9. Non-Catholic children whose parents seek Catholic education for their child.

All Christian applicants will be required to produce baptismal certificates.

(*Siblings include half-siblings, step siblings, adoptive and foster children living permanently in the same household)

In the event of a tie, a place will be offered to the pupil who lives nearest to the school. All distances will be measured by the shortest walking distance between the main school gate and the point where the pupil's dwelling meets the public highway.

Should the School not be able to offer a place to a child during the normal admission round their name will be kept on a waiting list until 30th September.

Priority for places will be given according to the above criteria and not according to the date on which the application for a place was originally submitted. Applications submitted after the closing date will be considered after the applications submitted on time.

Overseas pupils shall be admitted to a school where appropriate provision can reasonably be made to meet their needs.

The School does not permit admissions by selection or banding nor based on the interview of parents or financial contribution to the school.

Admission Number and Capacity

Admission numbers are calculated based on the Welsh Government formula which is directly linked to the school's capacity. Admissions to the school are the responsibility of the Governing Body. The number of pupils to be admitted annually shall be determined by the admission number which shall be revised annually by the LA and the Governing Body in consultation with the Diocesan Council for Education. The admission number is currently **19**. The official capacity of the school is **134** pupils.

Deadline for Receipt of Primary Admission Applications

The deadline for receipt of applications for admissions to primary schools in January, April or September 2017 will be **29th January 2016**. Admissions will take place termly. All applications for the School will be considered together following the deadline. In the event of over-subscription, the criteria shown earlier are applied.

Early and Late Applications

Priority will not be given to applications based on the date order in which they were received. Applications submitted after the closing date will be considered after the applications submitted on time.

Admissions at Other Times

Admissions to schools outside the normal cycle e.g. for those moving into the county, will be considered in the same way as those applying for entry at the usual time.

Deferred Entry

Parents may apply for a school place for a child who is not of compulsory school age (5 years) and the admissions authority, at the request of the parent, may agree to the child deferring entry to the reception class until he/she is of compulsory school age. The effect of this is that the place is held for that child and is not available for another child.

Appeals

If parents are unsuccessful in obtaining a place for their child at the school then they will be notified in writing of the reason(s) why a place has not been secured and of their right of an independent appeal.

Any appeal against non-admission to the school must be made in writing within ten days of the date of notification that an application for a place was unsuccessful. The letter of appeal should be addressed to The Chair of Governors, c/o St. Padarn's RCP School, Llanbadarn Road, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion. SY23 1EZ.

Notes

- Children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs who name the school must be admitted. This will reduce the number of places available to applicants.
- In all categories, for a child to be considered as a Catholic, evidence of Catholic Baptism or Reception into the Church will be required. Those who face difficulties in producing written evidence of Catholic Baptism/Reception should contact their Parish Priest. Failure to provide evidence of Catholic Baptism/Reception may affect the criterion the child's name is placed in.
- Distances are measured by the shortest walking distance between the main school gate and the point where the pupil's dwelling meets the public highway. The LA uses Google Maps to measure all distances.
- In a very small number of cases it may not be able to decide between the applicants of those pupils who are qualifiers for a place, when applying the published admission criteria. For example, this may occur when children in the same year group live at the same address, or if the distance between the home and school is exactly the same, for example, blocks of flats, or where there are multiple births. When the LA is considering twins, triplets or other multiple births for one remaining place, the family will be offered the place and may decide :
 1. if they will accept it for one sibling whomever they decide; or
 2. they decline the place and it is offered to the next person in the allocation after the twins/triplets/multiple births.

The multiple birth sibling(s) would not be given priority on admission other than considered as a sibling link once the family had accepted the place(s) offered for one of the twins/triplets/multiple births.

- The home address of a pupil is considered to be the permanent residence of a child. The address must be the child's only or main residence for the majority of the school week. Documentary evidence may be required.
- Where care is split equally between mother and father, parents must name which address is to be used for the purpose of allocating a school place and proof may be requested.
- Admissions to St. Padarn's Playgroup does not secure an admission to the Primary School. The Playgroup is an independent body and although many of the children do eventually attend the school, there is **no guarantee** of a place.

SCHOOL ARRANGEMENTS

What about school terms?

The school year runs from 1st September of one year to 31st August the following year and consists of three terms. Dates for the commencement and ending of the school terms vary from year to year but broadly they are:

Autumn Term - September to December

Spring Term - January to March/April (depending on when Easter falls)

Summer Term - April to July

Each term is divided into two with a week's half-term holiday. These usually occur in October, February and May/June.

The 2016/2017 School Year

TERM	BEGINS	HALF-TERM		ENDS	No. SCHOOL DAYS
		BEGINS	END		
Autumn 2016	Monday 5th September, 2016	Monday 24th October, 2016	Friday 28th October, 2016	Friday 16th December, 2016	70
Spring 2017	Tuesday 3rd January, 2017	Monday 20th February, 2017	Friday 24th February, 2017	Friday 7th April, 2017	64
Summer 2017	Tuesday 25th April, 2017	Monday 29th May, 2017	Friday 2nd June, 2017	Friday 21st July, 2017	58
TOTAL					192

The above dates may change.

- i) **Thursday 1st September 2016, Friday 2nd September 2016 and Monday 24th April 2017** will be designated INSET days for all Maintained Schools. The remaining 2 INSET days to be taken will be at the discretion of each individual school.
- ii) All schools will be closed **Monday 1st May, 2017** for the May Day Bank Holiday.

Further information on the school year can be found at www.ceredigion.gov.uk

RECORDS

Are records kept on my child?

Yes. All schools, along with the Local Authority keep records on every child at school. These will include personal information such as addresses, names of parents, family doctor, place of contact should the need arise. Schools also keep records of pupils' achievements in each area of the curriculum. You will receive a report at the end of each school year giving you information on your child's general development and his/her progress in each subject.

INFORMATION THE SCHOOL WILL NEED

What information will the school need from me?

You may be asked for evidence of your child's date of birth such as a birth certificate or medical card. The school will also need to know who has parental responsibility for the child. This is to ensure that proper authority is given should the school need to have parents permission at any time e.g. in an emergency. The school also has a legal responsibility to make sure that persons with parental rights are provided with school reports and are given the opportunity to take part in the child's education.

The use made of this personal information

The **Welsh Government** uses the information collected to do research, primarily to inform educational policy changes and funding. The research is done in a way that ensures individual pupils cannot be identified. Examples of the sort of statistics produced can be viewed at www.learning.wales.gov.uk or www.wales.gov.uk/statistics

The **LA** also uses the personal information collected to do research. It uses the results of the research to make decisions on policy and the funding of schools, to calculate the performance of schools and help them to set targets. The research is done in a way that ensures individual pupils cannot be identified.

The **School** uses the information it collects to administer the education it provides to pupils. For example;

- the provision of educational services to individuals;
- monitoring and reporting on pupils' educational progress;
- the provision of welfare, pastoral care and health services
- the giving of support and guidance to pupils, their parents and legal guardians;
- the organisation of educational events and trips;
- planning and management of the school.

Organisations who may share personal information

Information held by the School, LA and the Welsh Government on pupils, their parents or legal guardians may be shared with other organisations when the law allows, for example with;

- other education and training bodies, including schools, when pupils are applying for courses, training, school transfers or seeking guidance on opportunities;
- bodies doing research for the Welsh Government, LA and Schools, so long as steps are taken to keep the information secure;
- central government, local government and education consortia for the planning and provision of educational services;
- social services and other health and welfare organisations where there is a need to share information to protect and support individual pupils;
- various regulatory bodies, such as ombudsmen and inspection authorities, where the law requires that information be passed on so that they can do their work.

Your rights under the Data Protection Act 1998

The Data Protection Act 1998 gives individual certain rights in respect of personal information held on them by any organisation. These rights include;

- the right to ask for and receive copies of the personal information held on you, although some information can sometimes be legitimately withheld;
- the right, in some circumstances, to prevent the processing of personal information if doing so will cause damage or distress;
- the right to ask for wrong information to be put right;
- the right to seek compensation if an organisation does not comply with the Data Act Protection 1998 and you personally suffer damage;
- in some circumstances a pupils' parent or legal guardian may have a right to receive a copy of personal data held about a pupil in their legal care. Such cases will be considered on an individual basis where the individual is deemed to have insufficient understanding of their rights under the Act.

You also have the right to ask the Information Commissioner, who enforces and oversees the Data Protection Act 1998, to assess whether or not the processing of personal information is likely to comply with the provisions of the Act.

HOLIDAYS DURING TERM TIME

Can I take my child on holiday during term time?

Parents do not have an automatic right to withdraw pupils from school for a holiday and, by law, have to apply for permission in advance. The LA actively discourages holidays in term time in that they are damaging to the pupil's continuity of learning and headteachers have been advised by the ERW Consortium not to authorise holidays taken in term time.

CHARGES FOR EDUCATION

Will I have to pay for my child's education?

No. All state schools are free for all children. The school will supply free of charge equipment needed including books, papers, pens and pencils.

You may be asked occasionally to make a voluntary contribution towards some school activities that take place during school hours.

The objectives of charging provisions in the Education Reform Act 1988 (as incorporated in subsequent Education Acts) came into force from 1st April, 1989, are:-

- to maintain the right of free school education;
- to establish that activities offered wholly or mainly during normal teaching time should be available to all pupils regardless of their parents' ability or willingness to help meet the cost;
- to emphasise that there is no statutory requirement to charge for any form of education or related activity, but to give LAs and schools the discretion to charge for optional activities provided wholly or mainly out of school hours;
- to confirm the right of LAs and schools to invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school, or in support of any activity organised by the school, whether during or outside school hours.

The circumstances where charging is permitted can be divided into four categories though in each category there are exceptions where charging is not allowed. The categories are:-

(i) Individual Instrumental Music Tuition:

The Education Act 1993 (as amended by succeeding Acts) permits charging for Instrumental Music Tuition in particular circumstances. (This must be provided free where it forms part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination);

(ii) Board and Lodging;

(iii) Education outside School Hours (Optional Extras);

(iv) Recovery of Examination Fees:

Where a pupil is entered for an examination for which he or she has not been prepared by the school e.g. has received private tuition, or where pupil re-sits an examination for which no additional preparation has been given since the examination, the examination entry fee can be passed on to parents.

If a pupil fails to fulfil the examination requirements of a public examination (prescribed or otherwise) without good reason (as defined by whichever body paid the fee), the LA or Governing Body may recover from the parents any fees paid.

The Education Reform Act 1988 (as amended in succeeding Acts) requires LAs and Governing Bodies to draw up their own policies in respect of charges and remission arrangements. The charging policies determined by the Governing Body should not be less favourable than the policy of the LA. Should further information be required the Headteacher or the Strategic Director for Learning and Partnerships can provide a copy of the policy document.

SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES

Since 1st September, 1999 each school has had to have its own governing body which comprises of members of the local community, parents, teachers and representatives of the Local Authority. Governing Bodies of Church Schools (Voluntary Aided and Voluntary Controlled) are also represented by the church authority.

In recent years, a succession of Education Acts has greatly increased the roles and responsibilities of Governing Bodies and also the accountability for their actions. The day to day running of a school is still the responsibility of the Headteacher but governing bodies have general oversight of the schools, in particular to matters pertaining to the curriculum, discipline, finance and staffing.

In order to assist governors in carrying out their duties, the Authority provides extensive support and a comprehensive training programme on all aspects of governors' responsibilities.

Further information regarding governing bodies can be obtained from the Strategic Director for Learning and Partnerships or on the County's website www.ceredigion.gov.uk

HOW ARE SCHOOLS ORGANISED AND WHAT PUPILS ARE TAUGHT - THE CURRICULUM

What is meant by year groups and Key Stages (KS)?

The pupil's progression through years of compulsory education is divided into four key stages. The key stages are the same no matter what the local pattern of school organisation. The table below shows the key stages against the corresponding pupil ages and year groups.

KEY STAGE	DESCRIPTION OF YEAR GROUPS	AGE OF THE MAJORITY OF PUPILS AT END OF SCHOOL YEAR
Foundation Phase	Nursery - part time	3
	Nursery - full time	4
	Reception - 1st year Infant	4 - 5
	Y 1 - Infant	5 - 6
KS2	Y 2 - Infant	6 - 7
	Y 3 - 1st year Junior	7 - 8
	Y 4 - Junior	8 - 9
	Y 5 - Junior	9 - 10
KS3	Y 6 - Junior	10 - 11
	Y 7 - 1st year Secondary Sector	11 - 12
	Y 8 - 2nd year Secondary Sector	12 - 13
KS4	Y 9 - 3rd year Secondary Sector	13 - 14
	Y 10 - 4th year Secondary Sector	14 - 15
Sixth Form (KS5)	Y 11 - 5th year Secondary Sector	15 - 16
	Y 12 - 1st year/Lower Sixth	16 - 17
	Y 13 - 2nd year/Upper Sixth	17 - 18

Y - Year

It must be noted that some children may be taught in classes with children of a different age group. Headteachers can answer queries with reference to this.

PRIMARY EDUCATION

In Ceredigion, there are 47 primary schools providing for children from 4-11 years old.

10 of these primary schools have specific nursery classes connected to them providing for children from 3-4 years old. The letter 'N' on the list of schools denotes schools which have nursery classes. The 3-16 and 3-19 schools also have nursery classes.

(The Local Authority, however, funds a number of non-maintained providers, e.g. Mudiad Meithrin, Day Nurseries and the Wales PPA, to provide part-time education on their behalf. A full list of these providers can be found on Ceredigion's information website - cis.ceredigion.gov.uk.)

Approximately 40% of the Authority's primary schools have 50 pupils or less on the register. In the majority of schools, the Welsh language is the main medium of the life and work of the school.

What are the school year groups within the County's primary schools?

Following the National Curriculum system the various age groups are denoted according to specific years - Reception, Year 1, Year 2 and so on up to Year 6.

After celebrating their 11th birthday all pupils should transfer to secondary school. Please note that education is seamless in 3 to 16 and 3 to 19 schools.

What is my child taught in Primary School?

All pupils of compulsory School age and in schools maintained by the Local Authority or providing Education on its behalf, follow the 2008 Curriculum and the 2015 revisions. The Curriculum is divided into two parts:

- *The Foundation Phase Framework (Revised 2015);*
- *The 2008 Curriculum for pupils from 7 to 14 years of age.*

The Curriculum is organised on the basis of two Stages – The Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2.

From September 2015 the *Foundation Phase Framework* applies to all pupils from nursery to year 2 and therefore pupils from 3 to 7 years old. Key Stage 2 applies to years 3-6 namely pupils from 7 to 11 years of age.

In all schools in Wales the following areas of learning are included in the *Foundation Phase Framework*:

Foundation Phase - Seven Areas of Learning -

- Personal and Social Development, Well-being and Cultural Diversity,
- Language, Literacy and Communication Skills,
- Mathematical Development,
- Knowledge and Understanding of the World,
- Physical Development,
- Creative Development,
- **Welsh Language Development.

Religious Education - Guidelines in Agreed Syllabus.

*** Settings and schools defined as Welsh medium providers will not need to deliver the Welsh Language Development Area of Learning. They follow the educational programme of the Language, Literacy and Communication Skills Area of Learning. In settings and schools where English is the main medium of communication, children's Welsh language skills should be progressively developed throughout the Foundation Phase by implementing the Welsh Language Development Area of Learning.*

Foundation Phase Profile Assessments

In line with statutory guidance an assessment will be undertaken within six weeks of your child beginning their reception year. The assessment will be based on the following four areas of learning: Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity; Language, Literacy and Communication Skills (English or Welsh); Mathematical Development; and Physical Development.

In all schools in Wales, the following subjects have been included in Key Stage2:

Core Subjects – Mathematics, Science, Welsh, English.

Foundation Subjects – Geography, Art and Design, Music, Physical Education, Design and Technology, Information Technology, History.

Religious Education – Guidelines in Agreed Syllabus.

The Study Programmes indicate what should be taught to pupils during Key Stage 2 and the Attainment Targets describe the standards expected with regard to the pupils' learning.

Information on the curriculum in each school is included in the school's prospectus. If you have any questions, please contact the Headteacher of your local school.

SECONDARY EDUCATION

What is my child taught in Secondary School?

All pupils of compulsory school age in maintained schools follow the National Curriculum. The National Curriculum is organised on the basis of two Key Stages – Key Stages 3 and 4.

Key Stage 3 applies to years 7-9 (11-14 year-old pupils).

Key Stage 4 applies to years 10-11 (14-16 year-old pupils).

In 2008, the National Curriculum in Wales was revised to put particular emphasis on the development of **thinking skills, communication, number, and information and communication technology (ICT)** across all of the National Curriculum subjects.

In all schools in Wales the following subjects are included in the National Curriculum:

Core subjects – mathematics, science, Welsh and English.

Non-core subjects – geography, art and design, music, modern foreign languages, physical education, design and technology, ICT, history.

In addition, religious education, personal and social education (PSE) and physical education are taught to all pupils.

The Study Programmes of the National Curriculum in each subject indicate what should be taught to pupils during each Key Stage and the Level Descriptions describe the standards expected with regard to the pupils' learning.

The Welsh Government has put in place clear guidelines with regard to the education provided for 14-19 year-old pupils. These guidelines are called '**14-19 Learning Pathways**'.

The Learning Pathways include a combination of six key elements which will, together, ensure, over time, that all learners have the best combination of learning experiences to meet their needs. In addition, the key elements enable people who are learning to obtain the assistance and guidance they require to realise their potential. The six key elements are:

- individual Learning pathways to meet the needs of all learners;
- more choice and flexibility with regard to programmes and ways of learning;
- a Learning core that begins when the young people are 14 years old and continues until they are 19, wherever they learn;
- Learning Coach assistance;
- opportunity to have personal assistance;
- impartial careers advice and guidance.

14-19 Learning Pathways will encourage more young people to realise their potential so that they will be better equipped for the world of work and better informed and harder-working citizens. It will do this by helping to ensure that young people gain better qualifications and that a higher proportion of young people at 16 go on to learn more in the world of education and training, by offering more choice, promoting equal opportunities and by helping to achieve their potential.

Learning Pathways notes the right that all pupils have of access to a wide range of academic and vocational courses.

Should you have any questions on the educational provision of any one of the six secondary schools or the 3-19 school within Ceredigion, please contact the Head Teacher of the relevant school.

TESTS AND EXAMS

The Local Authority will comply with the requirements of statute. All examinations for which pupils are prepared in school time must be approved by the Schools Examination and Assessment Council. The Local Authority will enter pupils for such examinations after appropriate consultation with parents, and in accordance with the school's recommendation. The timetable for the majority of these external examinations is arranged by the WJEC (Welsh Joint Education Committee).

STATEMENT ON PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS

The Local Authority would support the Governing Body's policy in securing that each registered pupil at the School is entered, at such time as they consider appropriate, for each prescribed public examination for which he/she is being prepared at the School at the time in question in each syllabus for that examination for which he/she is being so prepared.

The Governing Body shall not be required to secure that a pupil is entered for any examination, or for any examination in any syllabus for that examination, if either:-

- (a) the Governing Body consider that there are educational reasons in the case of that particular pupil for not entering him/her for that examination or (as the case may be) for not entering him/her for that examination in that syllabus; or

- (b) the parent of the pupil requests in writing that the pupil should not be entered for that examination or (as the case may be) for that examination in that syllabus.

Neither is the Governing Body required to secure that a pupil is entered for any examination in any syllabus for that examination if the Governing Body have secured that pupil's entry for another prescribed public examination in a corresponding syllabus.

Further information may be obtained from the school.

RELIGION

What about religion at school?

All religious education in the Local Authority's county and controlled schools is in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus which is required by law. Although Religious Education must be non-denominational, teaching about denominational differences is allowed and religious education must be provided for all pupils. Each school must hold a daily act of collective worship. The Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) has prepared advice and guidance to schools on this.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from religious education and may do so having informed the Governing Body in writing.

COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE CURRICULUM

What should I do if I have a complaint to make about the Curriculum and related matters?

If you have any concerns you should in the first instance discuss them with the Headteacher.

However should you wish to make the complaint formal, the Local Authority has procedures in place a copy of which is available at the school or at the Learning Services.

Where appropriate those who make a formal complaint may make representations before an Appeals Panel.

(Please contact the respective school or the Learning Services for further information).

THE LANGUAGE OF LEARNING

Does every child have to learn Welsh and English?

For schools in Ceredigion the teaching of Welsh and English, either as a first or second language, is an **essential requirement reflecting the National Curriculum**.

Special provision may be made for the following groups:

- i) pupils who have moved into the area recently - for whom extra tuition in the Welsh language will be provided at nearby language centres.
- ii) pupils who are officially assessed to be suffering from learning difficulties and where the introduction of a second language may impede educational development and for whom education through their first language is essential.
- iii) overseas pupils for whom the first language is neither Welsh nor English and where the introduction of a third language may impede educational development and for whom the acquisition of English is essential.

What is the County's policy on the teaching of Welsh and English in its primary schools?

Ceredigion Local Authority has a firm policy on the teaching of Welsh and English in its schools. The Local Authority's aim is to educate pupils so that they are thoroughly bilingual by the time they leave the primary school. In this way pupils will find that they are able to participate fully in the bilingual community of which they are a part. In order to support your child's development in the Welsh language, we urge you to consider how practical it would be for your child to have opportunities outside the classroom. This can be done in several ways:

- Encourage your child to take part in social activities through the medium of Welsh, under the auspices of the Urdd, the Young Farmers' Clubs or other organisations;
- Support your child to practise the reading of Welsh books;
- Help your child to discover the Welsh media – television, radio and internet;
- If you cannot speak Welsh, you can try learning the language alongside your child. The lessons are fun and learning the Welsh language can open doors socially and in the world of work. We have also established 'Welsh for the Family' classes, lessons which have been specially tailored for parents in terms of time and content.

Certain areas of the county have distinctive cultural and linguistic characteristics which need to be taken into consideration when evolving an effective language policy for Ceredigion as a whole. The policy has been implemented by introducing three categories of schools.

PRIMARY SCHOOL CATEGORIES.

Welsh-Medium Primary School (WM) - All Pupils in the Foundation Phase experience the areas of learning through the medium of Welsh. Welsh is the main teaching medium at Key Stage 2. English is introduced formally as a subject at Key Stage 2 and is taught through the medium of English, and English may occasionally be used for some aspects of some subjects.

Dual Stream Primary School (DS) - Two types of provision exist side-by-side in these schools. Parents/pupils opt either for the mainly Welsh-medium or mainly English-medium provision.

Predominantly English Medium Primary School but with significant use of Welsh (EW)
- Pupils in the Foundation Phase experience the areas of learning in both languages but with greater emphasis on English. Children's Welsh Language Skills will be progressively developed throughout the Foundation Phase by implementing the Welsh Language Development Area of Learning. In Key Stage 2, both Welsh and English are used in teaching but there is greater emphasis on English.

What are the principles governing the teaching of Welsh and English in the County's secondary schools?

In order to continue to successfully develop bilingual skills it is expected in general that pupils that have studied Welsh as a first language at primary school will continue to do so at secondary school. Pupils that have studied Welsh as a second language can transfer, under certain circumstances, to study Welsh as a first language.

Secondary Schools meet the requirements of the National Curriculum by providing the teaching of Welsh as a subject to the age of 16 as well as a range of subjects through the medium of Welsh or bilingually.

Details regarding the policies of each school are to be found in the individual prospectuses and the county's Schools' Welsh Language Strategy is on the Council's website.

SECONDARY SCHOOL CATEGORIES

Bilingual Secondary School

This category has 4 sub-divisions (of which only the following 3 apply to Ceredigion secondary schools), according to the percentage of subjects taught through the medium of Welsh and whether there is parallel provision in English. The categories and definitions do not reflect the number or proportion of pupils taking advantage of provision in Welsh in a school.

Bilingual Secondary School - Category 2A (AB) – At least 80% of subjects apart from English and Welsh are taught only through the medium of Welsh to all pupils. One or two subjects are taught to some pupils in English or in both languages.

Bilingual Secondary School - Category 2B (BB) – At least 80% of subjects (excluding Welsh and English) are taught through the medium of Welsh but are also taught through the medium of English.

Bilingual Secondary School - Category 2C (CB) – 50 to 79% of subjects (excluding Welsh and English) are taught through the medium of Welsh but are also taught through the medium of English.

English Medium Secondary School

Predominantly English Medium Secondary School (EM) – Pupils are mainly taught through the medium of English. Welsh is taught as a second language up to Key Stage 4. One or two subjects (which would include Welsh first language) may be taught as an option through the medium of Welsh or using both languages.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN) AND INCLUSION SERVICES

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN)

What provision can a child with special needs expect in Ceredigion?

There are a variety of support systems available for children with SEN in both the primary and secondary sectors.

- i) The majority of children receive appropriate support in their local mainstream school. Depending on the severity of need this can range from class/subject teacher support to Teaching Assistants and/or specialist teacher input.
- ii) **Specialist Resource Centres.** These centres cater for children with more severe disabilities and are staffed by specially qualified and experienced teaching and support staff.
- iii) For a very few children with severe and complex needs, consideration can be given to out-of-county placement.

The Local Authority's **Educational Psychology Service** works to support the development and learning of children and young people through the use of psychology, by working with individuals and groups of children and young people, teachers, families and other agencies.

The Local Authority's SEN/ALN Advisory Team work with school staff to provide advice and support with meeting the needs of pupils across the range of SEN/ALN. This includes supporting pupils with hearing and/or visual difficulties.

The Local Authority's **multi-agency Disabled Children's Team** also provides advice and support to the parents of pre-school and school-children with disabilities.

How are the needs of pupils with SEN identified, assessed and provided for?

It is important to identify the needs of children with SEN at the earliest possible opportunity.

Pre-school children who may have SEN are usually referred to the Local Authority via the NHS Health Boards, Disability Team, the MM/PPA Referral Scheme or Social Services Department although the referral might come from the parents themselves. The child's needs may be assessed by the Educational Psychology Service and/or other agencies and as a result appropriate provision is made for him/her after full discussion with the parents.

A child already in school would have his/her special educational needs identified by the teaching staff through close observation and recording or by a professional involved with the child.

The SEN Code of Practice for Wales provides practical advice to local authorities, maintained schools, early years settings and others carrying out their statutory duties to identify, assess and make provision for children's special educational needs.

The general principles are that:

- a child with special educational needs should have their needs met;
- the special educational needs of children will normally be met in mainstream schools;
- the views of the child should be sought and taken into account;
- parents have a vital role to play in supporting their child's education;
- children with special educational needs should be offered full access to a broad, balanced and relevant education.

What if I need support and advice regarding the SEN provision for my child?

In the first instance you should contact the headteacher and/or Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) at your child's school. If your concerns are not addressed at this level, the LA offer parent drop-in sessions where your concerns can be discussed. In addition the LA will then make arrangements for a SNAP (Special Needs Advisory Project) Parent Partnership Service and a Dispute Resolution Service.

Your right to appeal to the SEN Tribunal for Wales (SENTW) is not affected by entering into the above services.

What if my child with special needs has to travel to a school other than the local school?

When the LA names a school in a child's statement, which is different from the nearest school to where you live, the LA is responsible for providing transport. It is open to the LA to name the school preferred by the child's parents, so long as the parents meet the transport costs.

Where can I obtain further information on SEN?

Any further information can be obtained from the **Strategic Director for Learning and Partnerships, Canolfan Rheidol, Rhodfa Padarn, Llanbadarn Fawr, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion, SY23 3UE**

OTHER PROVISION

If my child is admitted to hospital what education facilities are available there?

Education facilities are made available in hospitals where children are admitted for treatment and may be patients for more than a few days. The hospital education service maintains close contacts with the child's usual school to ensure there is continuity of education.

Is there any occasion when home tuition is provided by the Local Authority?

Home tuition is provided for some children, such as those who are at home recovering after a stay in hospital, or who have medical problems and are temporarily unable to attend school.

If home tuition is felt to be necessary, a request will be sent to the Strategic Director for Learning and Partnerships by the child's Headteacher or the Education Inclusion Officers (EIO) for the area.

EDUCATION INCLUSION OFFICERS

What is the role of the Education Inclusion Officer?

Ceredigion is served by a team of Education Inclusion Officers (EIOs) who provide a link between the school, the Learning Services, the families of pupils and the children/young persons.

They have quite a different role to play from teachers and their aim is to ensure that children are helped in getting full benefit from their education. Most of their work comes from schools but you can speak to an EIO any time you wish to have advice about:

- Your child's education/school attendance

- Changing schools

- Employment of children (that is when your child has a job)

- Performing (that is when your child is taking part in films, plays, pantomime, etc. during school hours)

- Pre-school admissions

- Your child's illness

- Other support services

EIOs also do court work for the Local Authority. Once registered in a state school a parent commits her/himself to the law regarding school attendance and therefore if they fail to ensure good attendance the EIO may well take court action at the Magistrates court, which could result in a fine being imposed to a maximum of £1000.

EIOs are also responsible for the administration and issuing of penalty notices for unauthorised absence from school (once a request is received from school).

EIOs are also responsible for applying at the Family Proceedings Court for Education Supervision Orders. A leaflet explaining what this means is available from the Learning Services (Tel: 01970 633634).

EIOs also assist in securing alternative educational provision for certain children in years 10 and 11, for example work experience or participation on a specific project, if the school feels that this would be of benefit to the pupil.

EIOs also undertake the monitoring of the educational progress of Looked After Children that are under the care of the local authority.

An EIO also represents the Learning Services on the "Ceredigion Youth Offending Team".

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

All schools within Ceredigion will adhere to the 'ALL WALES CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES 2008' and the 'Keeping Learners Safe' guidance document published by the Welsh Government. All schools in the County have a Safeguarding Children Policy and an Anti-Bullying Policy which are audited annually. Staff employed at schools have a key role in safeguarding and promoting children's welfare and will report all 'child in need' or 'child protection' concerns to the School's Named Child Protection Co-ordinator. The Child Protection Co-ordinator will have received specific training that will enable them to make an informed decision with regard to matters brought to their attention. Prior to making a 'Child in Need' referral or a 'Child Protection' referral they may seek advice either from the LA's Named Officer for Child Protection or from the Duty Officer at Ceredigion Social Services Department.

Effective sharing and exchange of relevant information between professionals is essential in order to safeguard children. Whenever possible, consent should be obtained before sharing personal information with third parties, but the public interest in child protection always overrides the public interest in maintaining confidentiality or obtaining consent from families. A child's safety is the paramount consideration in weighing these interests. All school staff receive training on matters pertaining to safeguarding and protection of children.

SCHOOL MEALS AND MILK

Are meals available in all schools?

Yes. Your child may buy dinner at the school. However, if your child has any medical dietary requirements you should discuss the matter with the headteacher so that the child is served appropriate meals. A letter will be required from either the pupil's doctor or dietician. Children may wish to bring a packed lunch from home. If so they will be allowed to eat it in school and will be supervised.

School Meals

All school meals are made daily, using natural ingredients and traditional cooking methods. Wherever possible we endeavour to source our ingredients locally.

The Local Authority fully support the Welsh Government's plan for improving food and drink provided in schools in Wales in conjunction with "Appetite for Life" which became a Statutory Measure in both primary and secondary schools in September 2013.

The Benefits of a School Meal

- Your child can benefit from healthy nutritious meals, saving you time not to have to make a packed lunch.
- Children benefit from sitting down and eating together at a table and are encouraged to try new foods.
- Your child will develop healthy eating habits at an early age which hopefully will continue into later life.
- Your child will receive a 1/3 of their daily nutritional requirements by having a school meal.
- Meals are balanced and healthy and there is variety from one day to the next.
- We cater for vegetarians and all special diets whilst considering religious and medical nutritional requirements.
- Your child can join in with special themed meals that link in with subjects being taught in class and also national initiatives.

School meals are excellent value for money and provide a healthy and nutritious two course meal and drink.

Allergen Information

Our Recipes and Ingredients

From 13th December 2014, the EU Food Information for Consumers Regulation (EU FIC) comes into force. The EU law has listed 14 allergens that need to be identified if they are used as ingredients in a dish. This means that from 13th of December 2014, information will be available at your Child's school kitchen for every item on the menu that contains any of the 14 allergens as ingredients.

The 14 Major Allergens are - **Celery, Cereals containing Gluten, Crustaceans, Eggs, Fish, Lupin, Milk, Molluscs, Mustard, Nuts, Peanuts, Sesame Seeds, Soya, Sulphur Dioxide.**

How to pay for your child's lunch.

School lunches currently cost **£2.30 per day** (£11.50 per week). This should be paid every Monday in advance to the School Meals clerk at the school. Payment is preferred in the form of a cheque made payable to Ceredigion County Council, however cash is also accepted. 'Alwyn yr Afal' dinner money envelopes are now available at your child's school.

Can I get free school dinners for my child?

Yes, if BOTH the following criteria apply: -

1. The pupil/s attend schools under the jurisdiction of Local Authority
AND
2. The pupil/s live with a parent, partner or legal guardian currently receiving either:
 - Income Support; or
 - Income based Job Seekers Allowance; or
 - Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999; or
 - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (IR); or
 - Child Tax Credit but not Working Tax Credit and have an annual income, as assessed by HM Revenue & Customs that does not exceed £16,190 [new rates may apply from April 2016] **PLEASE NOTE: If you receive Working Tax Credit you do not qualify;** or
 - Guaranteed element of State Pension Credit; or
 - Working Tax Credit 'run-on' - the payment someone may receive for a further four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit; or
 - Universal Credit

You can ask for an application form at your school or, alternatively, you can contact the Educational Information Team at the Learning Services, Canolfan Rheidol, Rhodfa Padarn, Llanbadarn Fawr, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion, SY23 3UE
(tel: 01970 633664 or e-mail: decsdata@ceredigion.gov.uk).

Do pupils have free milk in school?

In accordance with the Welfare Food Regulation 1988 the authority provides milk free of charge to pupils under the age of five. The Local Authority also provides milk for pupils attending Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2) in accordance with the Welsh Government scheme. Children attending the County's special needs units also have free milk.

Free school breakfasts.

Free school breakfast is available at many primary schools within the County and some schools have 'before-school' clubs. Ask your school for further details.

CLOTHING AND MAINTENANCE GRANT

Can I apply for a school uniform grant?

Yes. If your child is entering Year 7 and with an existing eligibility to Free School Meals you be entitled to the Welsh Government's School Uniform Grant. Applications will be sent out to eligible families from early June and you will have until the 31st October to return. Families moving into Ceredigion from outside, after the beginning of term have an extended deadline of 31st January.

A BACS transfer or a cheque will be issued as a contribution towards the cost of articles of uniform that is deemed acceptable by the school governing body.

Can I apply for a maintenance grant?

An Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is an incentive allowance paid to eligible young people who stay on at school or college after school leaving age, attend regularly and achieve learning goals.

The Welsh Government recognises that some young people from low income households need extra support and encouragement to continue in education after school leaving age in order to make the best of their learning and development opportunities.

For more information contact your secondary school or search for 'EMA' in the website:
www.studentfinancewales.co.uk

My child has been invited to represent the County at national level. Is there any support that I can apply for?

The Learning Services will consider applications from pupils who are invited to attend National/International courses for music. Pupils that are invited should contact either the Peripatetic Music teacher or email geraint.evans@ceredigion.gov.uk (01970 633614) to request an application form. The application form must be completed by the applicant and authorised by the course leader/tutor after completion of the course. The grant is a contribution towards the cost of the course and is available to pupils currently attending a school within Ceredigion. Some of the courses eligible for consideration are with the National Youth Brass Band, National Youth Choirs, National Youth Jazz, National Youth Wind Orchestra of Wales and National Youth Theatre of Wales.

SCHOOL COUNSELLING SERVICE IN CEREDIGION

The School Counselling Service is a professional, confidential service available to pupils in secondary schools and year 6 in Ceredigion. The service offers young people a regular space to talk and think about things that are important to them. The service operates in line with British Association of Counsellors and Psychotherapists (BACP) Ethical Framework and emerging Welsh Assembly Government School-based Counselling Services in Wales Strategy. The counselling service provides support for children and young people with social, emotional and behavioural concerns, supporting them in fulfilling their potential. The service consists of professionally qualified counsellors, supervisors and trainers with many years of experience of working with children and young people.

The counselling service is tailored to the individual requirements of children and young people. It provides:

- one to one counselling for young people
- staff training upon request
- consultancy
- links and liaison with other appropriate agencies
- group work after liaison with other agencies
- a service which should be promoted as support and should have no stigma attached to it
- Access to one to one counselling sessions in school will be by self-referral by young people of Secondary School age Referrals can also be made by school staff, other professionals working with young people and parents/guardians with the young person's consent.

All secondary schools in Ceredigion operate their School Based Counselling service in accordance with the Secondary School Based Counselling Policy for Counselling for Ceredigion. This policy can be found on our website:

http://www.ceredigion2020.org.uk/utilities/action/act_downloadcfm?mediaid=37994&langtoken=eng

HOME TO SCHOOL / COLLEGE TRANSPORT

Is every child provided with free school transport?

No. The Local Authority provides free school transport for children of statutory school age on the following basis:

- i) Primary age pupils who live over two miles from the nearest appropriate primary school
- ii) Secondary age pupils who live over three miles from the nearest appropriate secondary school.

There are a number of discretionary circumstances where transport may be provided.

STATEMENT ON HOME TO SCHOOL/COLLEGE TRANSPORT

1. PUPILS

The obligation on the LA to provide free transport to facilitate attendance of pupils at school is provided for in Section 509 of the Education Act 1996 and The Travel (Wales) Measure 2008.

- a) Transport will be provided free of charge for pupils of primary and secondary school age travelling over the statutory walking distance to/from the main entrance of their nearest suitable school.

A pupil applying for assistance must be a Ceredigion resident. If he/she is attending the nearest suitable school and the distance between home and school by the shortest pedestrian route is equal to or greater than the distances indicated below, they will normally be provided with free transport.

Primary Aged Pupils (from 5 years of age) - 2 miles or more from the school.

Secondary Aged Pupils - 3 miles or more from the school.

Distance is measured by the shortest walking route between home and school. (From the nearest council maintained road to the property, to the main school entrance).

- b) Assistance may also be provided for pupils in certain circumstances on the grounds of:-
 - capacity
 - closure of school / re-organisation of school(s)
 - safety
 - medical
 - statement of educational needs
 - a change of residence in a final examination year
 - continuation of an advanced course of study not being available at the designated school
 - religious beliefs (within an 8 miles radius of the school)
 - post 16 students
- c) Pupils who do not qualify for 'free transport' as defined in a) and b) above may be allowed following a written application to the Corporate Passenger Transport Unit, to travel on LA contracted vehicles **if there are spare places available.**

THIS CONCESSION COULD BE WITHDRAWN AT ANY TIME (E.G. SHOULD THE VEHICLE BECOME OVERSUBSCRIBED) AND THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR TRANSPORT WOULD REVERT TO THE PARENTS

2. STUDENTS OF FURTHER EDUCATION

Assistance for individuals aged 16 to 19 attending College will be provided by the most economic basis similar to pupils aged 16+ attending Secondary Schools. Please contact the Corporate Passenger Transport Unit for further information.

3. GENERAL

- 3.1 To help ensure that the vehicle loadings remain within the legislative requirements each pupil is issued with their own 'travel ticket' indicating the vehicle to which they have been allocated.

Whilst there is some lee-way given at the beginning of the Autumn Term, generally pupils who are not able to display the ticket will not be carried by the contractor. [It is important therefore that if a parent thinks his/her child qualifies for "free transport" that the appropriate application form is submitted to the Corporate Passenger Transport Unit **no later than 30th April, 2016.**]

- 3.2 The majority of pupils entitled to assistance will be conveyed by vehicles specifically contracted to the LA however use may also be made of public passenger transport or a fixed rate mileage allowance may be made for parents/pupils making use of their own vehicles.

- 3.3 Booklets are available from the Corporate Passenger Transport Unit offering advice and guidance for pupils/students and parents on what they can do in order that the journey to and from school/college may be undertaken safely.

- 3.4 Where contract or public passenger vehicles are used then it is not always possible to arrange the routes of vehicles to pass close to the homes of all pupils. Parents may therefore be required to make their own arrangements for their children to get to and from the nearest 'pick-up' point of the vehicle. Every effort is made to keep this distance as short as possible and it should not exceed 1.5 miles. **IN THESE INSTANCES THE ASSISTANCE OF PARENTS IN ESCORTING PUPILS SAFELY TO AND FROM VEHICLES IS SOUGHT.**

- 3.5 Parents are requested to note that they may appeal against a decision to refuse to provide free transport. Such an appeal should be submitted with any supporting evidence to the Strategic Director for Learning and Partnerships within 28 days of being notified of the original decision.

**The Corporate Passenger Transport Unit may be contacted on
01970 633555 or
e.mail hpw@ceredigion.gov.uk**

THE COMMUNITY EDUCATION SERVICE

The Local Authority is committed to lifelong learning. The service offers opportunities for everybody in the area to improve their living standards through learning new skills and gaining access to our culture and way of life. The activities available have been aimed to meet the needs of young people (through statutory and voluntary sectors) and the adult sector.

For adults, classes are held during the day and in the evenings in several centres across the County. The classes include Welsh for Adults / Welsh for the Family as well as bilingual courses in several areas. Further information can be obtained from the County Council's website: www.ceredigion.gov.uk and at www.dysgubro.org.uk

CEREDIGION FAMILY INFORMATION SERVICE

The Ceredigion Family Information Service (FIS) is a free, impartial service providing high quality information to children, young people, families and professionals throughout Ceredigion.

Information available includes:

- Registered childcare providers (including After School Clubs, Holiday Clubs, Childminders, Day Nurseries and Sessional Care);
- Family support services;
- Directory of services for children and young people;
- Education and training;
- Becoming a registered childminder and much, much more.

To access this information telephone the Family Information Service on 01545 574187 or e-mail fis@ceredigion.gov.uk.

You can also visit our web-site for further information <http://fis.ceredigion.gov.uk>

CAREERS GUIDANCE

Are pupils offered any advice on possible careers?

Yes. The Careers Wales Company delivers information, advice and guidance to students within schools and colleges.

The Careers Wales Company aims to help young people make those difficult decisions about their future. It has up-to-date expert knowledge of education, training and employment and pupils are seen, in groups or individually when needed, by Careers Advisers in school, or in one of their centres, to help them plan their future by:-

- advising what subjects to study and the significance of their choice
- assisting them to formulate a plan of action for progression in education, employment or training
- informing them about labour market information, job vacancies, training opportunities and college courses, entry requirements and applications
- providing specialist help for those with disabilities and promoting equality of opportunity

The Careers Wales Company seeks to ensure that parents and guardians are aware of all the services on offer and actively encourages parental involvement throughout the careers guidance process.

Careers advisers may be contacted through the school or the Careers Wales Company centres:

- 2 The Barn Centre, Alexandra Road, Aberystwyth, SY23 1LN Tel: 01970 636150
- Garth House, 19 Bridge Street, Lampeter, SA48 7AA Tel: 01570 421347
- 9 Priory Street, Cardigan, SA43 1BU Tel: 01239 622100