

03 September 2026

Dear

ATISN 27345 – Information relating to tribunals and appeal panels
Information requested

Thank you for your request which I received on 13 August 2026. This response relates only to the information requested about School Admissions/Exclusions Appeal Panels. The remaining parts of your request, which do not relate to School Admissions/Exclusions Appeal Panels, will be responded to separately.

You asked for information held by the Welsh Government about School Admissions/Exclusions Appeal Panels in relation to:

1. **Question 1:** Information relating to School Admissions/Exclusions Appeal Panels, including reported spend, reported running costs, appeals against decisions, judicial running costs per day, member daily rates and roles held by members.
2. **Question 3:** Combined Local Authority Expenditure on School Admission/Exclusion Appeal Panels and any support to Local Authorities to finance School Admission/Exclusion Appeal Panels?
3. **Question 4:** Combined expenditure, where this relates to the School Admissions/Exclusions Appeal Panels.
4. **Question 5:** Properties used by School Admissions/Exclusions Appeal Panels.
5. **Question 6:** Permanent staff numbers and any available breakdown of permanent staff roles in relation to School Admission/Exclusion Appeal Panels.

Our response

I can confirm the Welsh Government holds some information within the scope of your request. Where information is held by the Welsh Government in relation to School Admissions and Exclusions Appeal Panels, this is noted below.

Question 1: In relation to information concerning School Admissions and Exclusions Appeal Panels, including reported expenditure, operating costs, appeals against decisions, judicial costs and daily rates paid to panel members, the Welsh Government does not hold the detailed information requested. This information may be available from individual local authorities. However, we have provided a response to aspects of this question, where we have information to share.

SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

Appeals Information

The Welsh Government does not hold comprehensive or centrally collated information on the number of school admission or exclusion appeals made by local authorities, or detailed breakdowns of those appeals. Responsibility for administering school admission and exclusion appeals rests with individual local authorities.

The School Admissions Code requires each local authority's Admission Forum to produce an annual report, which should be made publicly available. The report includes information on the number of admission appeals made for schools within the authority's area, including how many appeals were successful and unsuccessful. The Code also states that a copy of the report should be sent to the Welsh Government's School Organisation and Admissions Branch by 30 November each year. However, there is no statutory requirement or enforcement mechanism requiring local authorities to submit these reports to the Welsh Government, and not all reports are routinely received. Consequently, the Welsh Government does not hold a complete or reliable national dataset on the number or outcomes of admission appeals.

As these reports are prepared and published locally, information on the number and outcomes of admission appeals is most appropriately obtained from the relevant local authority and/or its Admission Forum annual report. Consequently, the information contained in the table at **Annex A** is based on data supplied by third parties and should be checked with the relevant local authority for accuracy.

Panel roles and responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of those involved in school admission appeal hearings are set out in chapter 3, page 9 in the School Admission Appeals Code for Wales, which is publicly available. The Welsh Government does not hold separate information on the roles of individual panel members beyond those prescribed in the Code.

The Code identifies the following roles:

- **The Chair:** responsible for directing the proceedings, ensuring the hearing is conducted fairly and impartially, putting appellants at ease, and ensuring all relevant issues are considered.
- **Panel Members:** independent members of the appeal panel who consider the evidence presented by both parties, question the parties as appropriate, and determine the outcome of the appeal. Panel members must act independently and must not favour either party.
- **The Clerk to the Panel:** provides administrative and procedural support to the panel, advises on the School Admissions and School Admission Appeals Codes and relevant legislation, records proceedings and decisions, and notifies parties of the outcome. The clerk is not a member of the panel and must not have been involved in the original admission decision.
- **The Presenting Officer:** represents the admission authority and explains the reasons for refusing admission. The presenting officer presents the admission authority's case and answers questions from the panel and appellant.

- **The Appellant:** the parent, carer or eligible young person making the appeal, who presents the reasons why the admission decision should be overturned and may question the presenting officer.

With regard to panel member daily rates, I can confirm that these positions are voluntary and panel members are not remunerated for undertaking this role.

EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL

Appeals information

The Welsh Government does not hold comprehensive or centrally collated information on the number of school exclusion appeals made by local authorities, detailed breakdowns of those appeals or appeals against panel decisions. Responsibility for administering exclusion appeals rests with individual local authorities.

Chapter 4 of the Welsh Government's [Exclusion from schools and pupil referral units \(PRU\) guidance](#) stipulates the following reporting requirements for local authorities in relation to exclusion appeals - 4.12.6 Details of an exclusion may not lawfully be deleted from the learner's educational record even if reinstatement is directed. The governing body must, however, comply with any parent's or carer's request to append their appeal statement to the learner's record. It will be for the governing body to decide what details of the local authority exclusion are included in the learner's school record.

Panel roles and responsibilities

Chapter 4 of the [Exclusions guidance](#) also outlines requirements regarding the membership of exclusions appeals panels:

4.4 Composition of independent appeal panels

4.4.1 The local authority must constitute the independent appeal panel and should appoint a Clerk. All panels will constitute 3 or 5 members as follows:

- a lay person (the chair)
- education practitioners (1 for 3-member panels, 2 for 5-member panels), and
- school governors (1 for 3-member panels, 2 for 5-member panels)

The lay person will be the Chair. A 'lay person' is someone without personal experience in the management of a school or the provision of education, other than in a voluntary capacity or as a school governor.

Education practitioner will be a headteacher or other person currently working in education or education management.

School governor will be a governor who must have served for 12 consecutive months within the last 6 years and have not been a headteacher or teacher during the last 5 years.

4.4.2 Whenever possible panel members considering:

- a primary school exclusion should have experience of that phase of education
- a secondary school exclusion should have experience of secondary education, and
- an exclusion from a special school should have experience of that area of education The lay member should have the necessary skills and qualities to chair the panel effectively.

4.4.3 Whenever possible, to maintain a wider education view, at least one of the members of the panel should be working outside the area covered by the local authority that manages the school of the excluded learner.

Reimbursement of costs

Chapter 4 of the [Exclusions Guidance](#) stipulates - 4.4.8 Financial costs reasonably and properly incurred by members of an appeal panel in attending an appeal meeting will be covered by the Local Government Act 1972. Payments will be at a rate determined by the local authority.

Question 3: The information requested in relation to Combined Local Authority Expenditure on School Admission/Exclusion Appeal Panels and any support to Local Authorities to finance School Admission/Exclusion Appeal Panels is not held by the Welsh Government. This information may be available from individual local authorities.

Funding for school admissions and exclusions appeals is not provided directly by the Welsh Government. Rather, local authorities are expected to meet the costs of administering these appeals through the wider Revenue Support Grant (RSG) that the Welsh Government distributes to them.

Question 4: Information relating to combined expenditure, where this relates to the School Admissions/Exclusions Appeal Panels is not held by Welsh Government. A more detailed breakdown of expenditure may be available from individual local authorities.

Question 5: In relation to your question regarding properties used by School Admissions and Exclusions Appeal Panels, the Welsh Government does not hold this information. The Welsh Government's guidance does not prescribe a specific venue for Independent Appeal Panel hearings. The organisation and administration of appeal panels is a matter for Local Authorities, which are responsible for determining the venue and format of individual hearings.

Chapter 4 of the Exclusions guidance advises - 4.6.1 The local authority must arrange a suitable venue for hearing the appeal, taking into account neutrality, and suitable access and provision of additional facilities for any attendees with disabilities. Appeals must be heard in private. Appeal hearings should never be held at the excluding school.

As a result, information regarding the properties or venues used for School Admissions and Exclusions Appeal Panels may be available from individual Local Authorities.

Question 6: In relation to permanent staff numbers, these roles are appointed by the local authority and exercise functions delegated to them by the authority in connection with School Admissions and Exclusions Appeal Panels. The Welsh Government therefore does not hold any information in relation to this question. Further information may be available from individual Local Authorities.

Next steps

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government's handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government's Freedom of Information Officer at:

Information Rights Unit,
Welsh Government,
Cathays Park,
Cardiff,
CF10 3NQ

or Email: Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales

Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office,

Wycliffe House,
Water Lane,
Wilmslow,
Cheshire,
SK9 5AF.

Website: www.ico.org.uk

However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely

Annex A

Admission Forum Annual Reports received 2024/25

Local Authority	Number of appeals	Number of successful appeals
Anglesey	5	4
Blaenau Gwent	8	8
Bridgend	2	2
Caerphilly	92	13
Cardiff	172	28
Carmarthenshire	27	19
Ceredigion	3	3
Conwy	3	3
Denbighshire	9	3
Flintshire	29	23
Gwynedd	1	0
Merthyr	0	0
Monmouthshire	14	0
Neath Port Talbot	0	0
Newport	74	14
Pembrokeshire	0	0
Powys	21	9
Rhondda Cynon Taf	0	0
Swansea	26	3
Torfaen	4	3
Vale of Glamorgan	59	4
Wrexham	65	41