

**Proposal to undertake a consultation to reduce the PAN from September 2024
at Birkby Infant & Nursery School.**

Dear Parent/Carer,

Please be aware that the governing body have taken the decision to reduce the PAN (Pupil Admission Numbers) at Birkby Infant and Nursery School from September 2024. Please see all the necessary information below.

Kind Regards
Diana Wilson

1. Background

1.1 The current published pupil admission number (PAN) to Reception for Birkby Infant and Nursery School is 150.

1.2 In recent years, admissions have been down.

1.3

1st Preference	113
2nd Preference	1
Late Application Pref 1	18
Late Application Pref 2	1
Total	133

July 2022- 113 children were on roll for Reception that identified Birkby as their first choice.

By 9th September the number joining us rose to 117. We currently have, despite late entrants 123, (instead of the 131 with either first preference or late application first preference-see above) -however 8 of these children are in our own Specialist SEN/D class.

1.4 *September 2022; Year 1 had 128 -4 of whom are in the SEN/D class. Current Year 1 still has 124 plus 4 children with EHCPs in our own specialist SEN/D class.*

However, since September 5 children have left and 5 have joined. (-1 child joined us on the 8th September for 19 days!!!)

1.5 *September 2022; Year 2 had 137- 5 of whom have EHCPs and are in our own specialist SEN/D class. Current Y2 has 140 in total (5 children joined and 3 have left since 9th September.)*

1.6 *Our late entrants' number 75, 14.9% which is 4.5% above National.*

1.7 *Our Nursery numbers October 2021 were 76.8 and for the census October 2022 the numbers were 60-showing a 16.8 fall.*

1.2 Reducing the PAN will assist the Governing Body in providing stability to their long-term planning while continuing to provide an appropriate number of places for future pupil numbers living in the surrounding area and attending one of the local primary schools.

1.3 Although the Regulations and Code of Practice relating to school admissions no longer require an admissions authority to consult when maintaining or increasing a school's PAN, there remains a requirement to consult when the proposal is to reduce a PAN. Birkby Infant School is a community school and the admissions authority Kirklees Council.

2. Specific Proposal

2.1 The Governing Body propose to reduce the Published Admission Number of the school from 150 to 120 with effect from September 2024

2.2 This means that the number of places available for children in Reception in 2024 – and all subsequent Reception cohorts – will be 120. For children who already have a place at the school in other year groups there will be no change

2.3 Factors that have been considered by the Governing Body to inform their decision to ask Kirklees Council to consult on this proposal include:

- The continued ability of the school to provide sufficient places for local children
- Local changes to demographics and data provided by the local authority show a steady decline in the number of children in the immediate local area.
- Increased admissions capacity in the immediate local area with the recent addition of a local academy with 60 places to the range of local schools available
- How previous parental preference patterns about the choice of school have impacted on numbers arriving in reception given the numbers resident in the local admissions area
- The provision of the most appropriate learning environment for all pupils thus facilitating continuing school improvement and the possibility of closing the gap for our disadvantaged and EAL pupils. 21 of our September starters across the school spoke no English on arrival.
- NB with all due respect we acknowledge the option of having mixed classes to alleviate financial constraints however we do not consider this to be viable option to best serve our community of children considering the high levels of EAL 84.3% which is 64.7% above National and disadvantaged 24.1%, 0.8% above national and FSM 24.5% which is 1.8% above National and all these cohorts are ascending in number. The merging of our EYFS and KS1 would impact greatly on our EYFS provision which is already struggling with the much lower baseline of children on entry. Children achieving a GLD 2022 was 58% which was below LA and National. Merging Y1 and Y2 classes would not be in the best interests of our children, staff or community as the learning gaps between the children would increase exponentially.
- However, we have chosen to have a vertically grouped class of SEN/D children comprising of 4 Reception children, 8 Year 1 children and 5 Year 2 children to enable us to better meet the needs of children with high need.
- Future resource planning and management will be able to be devoted to school improvement rather than every budget heading being pared back to the bone to be able to retain experienced staff in case of the KS1 class size being breached. We have lost the equivalent of 3.1 experienced EYFS and KS1 teachers and moreover sadly from the LA and teaching.
- The capacity of the school resources management will be more effective if the school is dealing with slightly less fluctuations in terms of numbers within main school as well as having to deal with declining numbers in Nursery. Furthermore, the problem created with a constant fluctuation in numbers has, as said before caused the school to lose experienced staff but trying to recruit skilled, experienced staff, often on short term contracts, to accommodate a sudden influx of pupils is becoming increasingly difficult, in fact, almost impossible. This then poses real challenges for the school in maintaining a high quality of education for all - meaning that a sudden rise in numbers presents as many problems as a fall.
- The school PAN would directly reflect the admission number for our Nursery provision which is 120.

2.4 The school would be committed to reviewing the Pupil Admission Number if the local demographic and context dictates a need for this in the future.

2.5 The school has informally discussed the reduction in PAN with the immediate local schools including, Birkby Juniors (the school that will obviously be most affected in the long term) Ashbrow Junior & Infant School, Fixby Junior & Infant, St. Thomas CofE Primary, Christchurch Academy, St. Patricks and Our Lady of Lourdes, North Huddersfield Trust School and Brambles Academy. They have all been supportive and recognise our need for future stability.

2.6 As an Infant and Nursery School we are bound by infant class size legislation. If the school takes in, as is typically the case in recent years, around 124 pupils we have to staff five classes but we receive funding for only 124 pupils, the equivalent of 4.13 classes. This creates financial hardship within the school and the savings that have to be made elsewhere impact upon the quality of education the children receive, especially as this situation in the immediate future will occur year on year.

3. Who is being consulted?

3.1 This consultation is for the specific attention of:

- Parents of children between the ages of two and eighteen
- Other persons in the area who have an interest in the proposed admissions
- All other admission authorities within the local area
- The local authority
- Adjoining neighbouring local authorities

4. How to respond

4.1 This consultation will run until 23rd December 2022. You are invited to submit comments in writing about the proposal above through the admissions consultation survey, any queries about the proposal can be.

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