



# EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION

**REPORT OF:** Executive Member for Children's Services, Young People & Education

**LEAD OFFICERS:** Director of Children's Services

**DATE:** 04 February 2019

**PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED:** Children's Services, Young People & Education

**WARD/S AFFECTED:** Bastwell

## **SUBJECT:**

Proposal to reduce the Published Admission Number (PAN) for St Michael with St John CE Primary School with effect from September 2019

### **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Schools Admissions Code 2014 ("the code") sets out a requirement for all Admission Authorities to undertake statutory consultation where they propose a variation to the admission arrangements (including the Published Admission Number (PAN)) of a school. However, once admission arrangements have been formally "determined" for a school, they cannot then be amended without approval from the Schools Adjudicator. The 2019-20 admission arrangements for this school (including its PAN) were determined prior to 28 February 2018 as required by the Code and therefore the proposed variation to the 2019-20 Reception PAN will require the School Adjudicator's approval. (The PANs of existing year groups in the rest of the school can be amended without approval from the School Adjudicator).

The purpose of consultation (as required under the Code) is to ensure transparency and openness on the contents of a proposal and allow parents, carers and other interested stakeholders to make representations that will be considered as part of the determination of the proposal.

The Local Authority, as the Admissions Authority for St Michael with St John CE Primary School, has carried out a consultation and now proposes to take the necessary steps to reduce the published admission number from 60 to 45 with effect from September 2019 for year group Reception (and all other year groups throughout the school).

### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Executive Member considers the outcome of the statutory consultation and:

- Approves a variation of St Michael with St John CE Primary School PAN from 60 to 45 for Years 1-6 from September 2019.
- Approves the LA making the required application to the Schools Adjudicator for an "in-year" variation of St Michael with St John CE Primary School's PAN in the published admission arrangements for Year R from September 2019.

### **3. BACKGROUND**

The current Published Admission Number (PAN) for St Michael with St John CE Primary School is 60. This means that the number of children admitted into the infant school Year R class each year

is limited to 60.

Over a period of 5 years the school has seen a decrease in the number of families choosing to send their children St Michael with St John CE Primary School.

The current numbers of children on roll in each year group are:

Yr R	Yr 1	Yr2	Yr3	Yr4	Yr5	Yr6
37	38	47	46	49	58	60

The proposed reduction in the PAN will mean that the number of places available for children in Year R in 2019 – and all subsequent Year R cohorts will be 45. For children who already have a place at the school in existing year groups, there will be no change (even where the number of children in that year group is above 45). Existing pupils will not be asked to transfer to an alternative school, but the admission number applied to all new applications will be the new PAN. This is the only proposed change, the oversubscription criteria will remain the same for admissions to this school.

**Population** – Demographic data for children aged birth to 3 years in the St Michael with St John CE Primary School catchment area indicates that the intake for the school over the next 3 years will remain similar to the intake over the last 3 years.

St Michael with St John Primary School's Governing Body has requested a reduction in the PAN due to the disparity between the Published Admission Number (PAN) of 60 and the actual pupil numbers attending.

Excessive surplus places create significant challenges for schools in respect of providing a cost effective class structure and managing to maintain a balanced budget. Reducing the PAN at St Michael with St John Primary School will assist the Governing Body to provide stability in their long-term planning and allow the school to continue to secure high quality educational outcomes for the students currently on roll, while continuing to provide an appropriate number of places for future pupil numbers in line with demand.

**Housing** – Within the Blackburn East area there are plans to build 182 new homes over the next 5 years. The majority of these properties will be 1 or 2 bedroom apartments. It is not anticipated that the new housing developments will significantly increase the number of primary age pupils within the area.

#### 4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

Failure to consult appropriately and seek approval/agreement from the Schools Adjudicator and the Executive Member would breach the requirements of the Code. This could leave the change to St Michael with St John CE Primary School's admission arrangements open to subsequent challenges, and could result in the reduction in the PAN not being upheld or the LA being required to re-consult on proposed changes, thus delaying implementation of the new PAN.

The LA is currently experiencing higher than typical numbers of in year school admission applications. The vast majority of these are from international new arrivals to this country. Many of these families are housed within central Blackburn and within close proximity to this school. The school and its Governing Body have been made aware that should this increase in demand continue then there may be a request from the Local Authority to increase the PAN back to 60 in the future. (Increasing a school's Pan does not require consultation or Secretary of State approval, so there should not be any obstacle to making this change in the future if it is required).

#### 5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None

## 6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications for the Local Authority.

## 7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The LA's proposals are compliant with all relevant legislation and the School Admissions Code 2014.

## 8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Managed through established staffing resource.

## 9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Please select one of the options below. Where appropriate please include the hyperlink to the EIA.

Option 1 ☒ Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2 ☐ In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. (*insert EIA link here*)

Option 3 ☐ In determining this matter the Executive Board Members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. (*insert EIA attachment*)

## 10. CONSULTATIONS

The LA consulted as required by the Code. The consultation ran from 29<sup>th</sup> November 2018 until 25<sup>th</sup> January 2019. The LA has not received any objections to the proposal. One response was received from Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council, which did not raise any objection to the proposal.

## 11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The recommendations are made further to advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an equality analysis and impact assessment has been considered. The recommendations reflect the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.

## 12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded and published if applicable.

<b>VERSION:</b>	<b>1</b>
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<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	<b>Carol Grimshaw</b>
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<b>DATE:</b>	04 February 2019
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<b>BACKGROUND PAPER:</b>	<b>Appendix A: Schools Admissions Code</b>
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