

Statutory consultation on the proposed reduction in Published Admission Number for Appleton Academy for the 2025/26 academic year

Consultation Document

Background

The current Published Admission Number (PAN) at Appleton Academy is 60 but, following an earlier consultation to reduce PAN, will reduce to 50 from 2024/25. This means that the number of children admitted to the school in Reception from 2024/25 onwards is a maximum of 50.

When planning primary school places in Bradford, the District is split into 26 primary school planning areas. Appleton Academy sits in the South West 1 planning area.

In recent years across the Bradford District, there has been a significant reduction in the number of younger children registered with the NHS. This has led to a high level of surplus places in some of the primary school planning areas, including South West 1.

According to data from the Office of National Statistics (ONS), the number of live births nationally has fallen in five of the last six years, with the total number of live births in 2022 being the fewest since 2002. Given the falling number of births nationally and across the District, there has been a significant reduction in the number of Reception places required across this planning area; the Council does not anticipate that there will be a significant increase in the number of places required in the near future.

Of the cohorts currently in Reception to Year 6 at Appleton Academy, only the 2019 intake had reached the PAN of 60 at the relevant January school census. On average for these cohorts, there have been 10 surplus Reception places at that point in the school year. 46 Reception children were on roll in January 2023.

Across the South West 1 planning area, there were 225 places available to start Reception in 2023. However, the total number of places allocated on National Offer Day was 197. This has since fallen slightly to 195 on roll in September 2023 and continues to be below the number of available places. 40 children were allocated to start Reception at the school. This number fell slightly to 39 children starting at the school in September.

Forecasts for 2025-2027 estimate 37-38 allocations to the school, if the PAN remains at 50. A PAN reduction to 30 would cap the school's intake; additional children in this forecast would be accommodated in other local schools and help to alleviate the surplus places across the planning area as a whole.

The proposed PAN reduction will provide 195 places in the planning area from 2025. Current published forecasts indicate that the numbers of places required in Reception for the next four intake years across South West 1 are:

2024/25:	185
2025/26:	190
2026/27:	184
2027/28:	181

The Local Authority's forecast information has been used to model the school's budget over the next five years. This process showed that, if the PAN remains at 50, the school is likely to face financial difficulty. The proposed PAN reduction will help to ensure the school maintains a financially stable position.

The School Admissions Code requires that all admission authorities consult where they propose to reduce a PAN. As the Admission Authority, Exceed Academies Trust is seeking representations on the proposed change to the PAN for Appleton Academy.

In accordance with the School Admissions Code (2021), Appleton Academy is consulting with key stakeholders, including:

- Parents/carers of current pupils and prospective parents of pupils
- Bradford Council (the Local Authority in which the school is situated)
- All other Admission Authorities within the District
- Neighbouring Local Authorities
- Councillors and MPs
- Trade Unions
- Anyone else who has an interest in the proposed change

A copy has been sent to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator and the proposal will be published on the school's website.

This consultation will run from Monday 2nd October 2023 until Sunday 19th November 2023, after which time any representations received will be considered and a report taken to the Academy Trust for a decision to be made on the PAN for Appleton Academy.

Specific Proposal

Appleton Academy propose to reduce the PAN from 50 to 30 from 1 September 2025.

This means that the maximum number of pupils intended to be admitted in Reception in 2025, and all subsequent Reception cohorts, will be 30. There will be no impact on children who already have a place at the school in other year groups.

Factors that have been considered by the Trust when deciding to consult on this proposal include:

- A large portion of funding received by schools is directly related to the number of pupils attending the school. Too many vacancies mean that schools will not receive the maximum possible revenue. Therefore, the school is proposing to reduce the number of available places to ensure the school can continue to operate efficiently and effectively.
- The school is located in South West 1 planning area, where there continues to be a falling demand for primary school places, resulting in a surplus across the area.
- The total number of pupils from Reception to Year 6 recorded by the school on the May 2023 census was 351, which is below the current primary phase capacity of 420.
- Due to the lower numbers of younger children registered with the NHS who will require a school place in the coming years, the Council expects that there will be sufficient school places available for local children if the PAN is reduced. If agreed, the overall PAN for the South West 1 planning area will be 195 from 2025.

- Appleton Academy, Exceed Academies Trust and the Council will look creatively at solutions in the future, should there be a rise in birth rates and a shortage of school places in the South West 1 planning area – eg a bulge intake.

Exceed Academies Trust believe that reducing the PAN at Appleton Academy will provide stability for the school's long-term planning and allow it to continue to deliver high quality educational outcomes for the pupils currently on roll. The reduction in PAN will ensure that an appropriate number of places are provided for future pupils, in line with forecasts.

Any representations should be made via an online survey. Please visit <https://online1.snapsurveys.com/AppletonPrimary> or scan this QR code: to complete the survey:



Alternatively, if you would prefer a paper copy of the response form, please contact the school office or email info@appletonacademy.co.uk. Completed paper response forms can be returned to the address on the form or handed in to the school office.