

MEETING:	HEREFORDSHIRE LOCAL ADMISSIONS FORUM
DATE:	18 MARCH 2010
TITLE OF REPORT:	AMENDMENTS TO SCHOOL PLANNED ADMISSION NUMBERS
OFFICER:	ADMISSIONS AND TRANSPORT MANAGER

CLASSIFICATION: Open

Wards Affected

Potentially countywide.

Purpose

To consider changes to the Planned Admission Numbers (PAN) at Broadlands, Clehonger and Much Birch Primary Schools; and John Masefield High School.

Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision.

Recommendations

THAT the Committee considers the individual school requests and the change in PAN at:

- (a) **Broadlands Primary School is agreed.**
- (b) **Clehonger C E primary School is agreed.**
- (c) **Much Birch V C Primary School is agreed.**
- (d) **John Masefield High School is agreed.**

Key Points Summary

Alternative Options

1. No alternative options other than to refuse individual school PAN change requests.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Andrew Blackman, Admissions & Transport Manager on (01432) 260927

Reasons for Recommendations

2. It is the role of Herefordshire's Local Admission Forum to consider school requests for PAN changes and make decisions whether to agree or refuse such requests.

Introduction and Background

3. According to the new School Admissions Code section 1.17 "Admission authorities of maintained schools **must** set admission numbers with regard to the capacity of the school" and "Admission authorities are required to consult before setting or amending a published admission number".

Herefordshire is currently experiencing a continued decline in the overall pupil numbers. This affects schools in different ways, with the additional affects of the Schools Admissions Code presumption to meet parental preference, subject to certain conditions. Overall funding to support pupils, schools and services is determined largely by the overall number of pupils. Local Authority services and schools are facing a number of pressures as a result which have led to redundancies and reconfigurations of Local Authority and school staff. A number of schools over the past year have requested changes in PAN, in part as a result of these pressures, or alternatively to expand their PAN to provide for increased demand in pupil numbers in arrangements that can be met in staffing and organisational terms.

Herefordshire Cabinet has requested that clusters of schools respond to the Herefordshire Schools Task Group work, by September 2010, with a formal evaluation of different options to feed into the creation of a strategic plan for Herefordshire.

The following schools have made specific requests within the context set out above:

(a) Broadlands Primary School

Broadlands has requested a reduction in its PAN from 60 to 45, giving rise to a revised school capacity of 315 pupils. For information the current makeup of preferences (1st, 2nd & 3rd) received so far for places to be offered for its new year R starting in September 2010 is:

Category	Number
Statemented child	0
Catchment Sibling	5
Catchment	4
Sibling Out of Area	3
Out of Area	3
Total	15

There are currently 201 pupils on roll. Made up as follows:

Year Group	Number of pupils
Reception	15
1	19
2	29
3	30
4	37
5	26
6	45

The proposed reduction is in line with the official sufficiency (capacity) assessment for the school and also reflects the reduction in current and forecasted demand for places.

A reduction in PAN will have no impact upon other schools in the cluster/neighbouring primary schools:

School	PAN	1st Pref 2010	Capacity	No. of pupils on roll (Spring 2010)
St James C of E Primary	30	27	210	207
St Thomas Cantilupe C of E Primary	30	27	210	192
Marden Primary	17	14	119	83
Sutton Primary	12	10	84	66
Wellington Primary	28	9	196	93
Withington Primary	15	6	105	90

A copy of the formal request from Broadlands Primary School is attached in the Appendix.

(b) Clehonger C E Primary School

Clehonger Primary School has requested a reduction in its PAN from 28 to 21. A PAN of 21 would give a school capacity of 147 pupil places.

For information the current makeup of 1st preferences received so far for places to be offered for its new year R starting in September 2010 is:

Category	Number
Stamented child	0
Catchment Sibling	4
Catchment	0
Sibling Out of Area	6
Out of Area	5
Total	15

There are currently a total of 119 pupils on roll made up as follows:

Year Group	Number of pupils
Reception	8
1	19
2	19
3	18
4	12
5	20
6	23

The proposed reduction is in line with the official sufficiency (capacity) assessment for the school and also reflects the reduction in current and forecasted demand for places.

A reduction in PAN will have no impact upon other schools in the cluster/neighbouring primary schools:

School	PAN	1 st Pref 2010	Capacity	No. of pupils on roll (Spring 2010)
Ewyas Harold Primary	20	17	140	119
Garway Primary	15	4	105	53
Kingstone & Thruxton Primary	30	23	210	170
Madley Primary	24	31	168	185
Much Birch C of E Primary	28	32	196	192

A copy of the formal request from Clehonger V C Primary School is attached in the Appendix.

(c) Much Birch V C School

Much Birch V C Primary School has requested an increase in its PAN from 28 to 30.

For information the current makeup of 1st preferences received so far for places to be offered for its new year R starting in September 2010 is:

Category	Number
Stamented child	0
Catchment Sibling	5
Catchment	7
Sibling Out of Area	10
Out of Area	10
Total	32

The current sufficiency calculation for the school gives it a capacity in the range 189 to 210 i.e. a range in the PAN of 27 to 30.

If the school were operating a PAN of 30 for the 2010 admissions round then currently the "29th place" would be offered to a pupil who has Lord Scudamore as a 2nd preference (normally over subscribed with 1st and 2nd preferences) and lives in the St Martin's catchment area. The "30th place" would be offered to a pupil who has Riverside as a 2nd preference (normally under subscribed) and lives in the Marlbrook catchment area.

Contextual data for the above mentioned schools and Cluster schools:

School	PAN	1st Pref 2010	Capacity	No. of pupils on roll (Spring 2010)
Ewyas Harold Primary	20	17	140	119
Garway Primary	15	4	105	53
Kingstone & Thruxton Primary	30	23	210	170
Madley Primary	24	31	168	185
Clehonger Primary	28	15	196	119
Lord Scudamore Primary	88	85	616	571
St Martins Primary	60	35	420	307
Riverside Primary	90	28	630	335
Marlbrook Primary	60	64	420	401

There are currently a total of 192 pupils on roll made up as follows:

Year Group	Number of pupils
Reception	29
1	30
2	30
3	27
4	17
5	29
6	30

Years Groups with more than 28 pupils are as a result of successful parental appeals.

For the 2009/2010 admissions round there were 32 1st preferences and for the 2008/2009 admissions round there were 33 1st preferences for Much Birch V C Primary School.

A copy of the formal request from Much Birch V C Primary School is attached in the Appendix.

Please note the four most relevant sections of the new School Admissions Code regarding PAN increases:

1.19 In the case of maintained schools, the local authority, as the strategic commissioner of school places, has the final decision over whether a school can admit above its published admission number. For Academies the final decision rests with the Secretary of State. Admission authorities **must** consider the overall effect on the school in continually admitting over the admission number and where they admit more than a total of 26 children above their admission number in any three year period, they **must** determine a higher admission number at the next opportunity. Admitting above the admission number does not amount to an increase in the school's admission number which can only be changed via the determination of admission arrangements or once determined, for a maintained school, via a referral to the Schools Adjudicator.

1.20 It is proposed that statutory proposals will no longer be required for schools that wish to increase their published admission number by 27 or more pupils¹⁷. However, statutory proposals are still required for schools proposing an enlargement to their premises which would increase the physical capacity of the school by more than 30 pupils and either by 25 per cent or by 200 pupils (whichever is the lesser). Any admission authority wishing to increase a school's published admission number can propose to do so during the consultation and determination of admission arrangements for all schools in the area. Consultation requirements are set out in paragraphs 1.25 to 1.30. The governing bodies of community and voluntary controlled schools for whom the local authority is the admissions authority can make representations to the local authority to increase their published admission number by writing to them with their proposal. Although the local authority, as the admissions authority, will determine the final published admission number of the school, section 88H of the SSFA allows for community and voluntary controlled schools to object to the Schools Adjudicator if they do not agree with the admissions number which has been determined for them (see Chapter 4).

1.21 If an admission authority for a maintained school wishes to increase the admission number of a school after their admission arrangements have been determined, as a result of a major change in circumstance, they **must** refer a variation to do this to the Schools Adjudicator (see paragraphs 4.23 to 4.27), except in very limited circumstances. The determination by the Schools Adjudicator **should** follow the approval by the local authority of any related proposals for enlargement of the school. A request to the Schools Adjudicator to increase admission numbers **should not** delay the local authority in co-ordinating admissions in order to make all offers to parents.

1.22 Local authorities and the Schools Adjudicator, when making decisions over setting an admission number or admitting above them, **should** have regard to the presumption that proposals to expand successful and popular schools, except grammar schools, **should** be approved. The existence of surplus capacity in neighbouring schools **should not** in itself be sufficient to prevent expansion, but the local authority **should** consider how they can take parallel action to remove surplus places.

(d) John Masefield High School

John Masefield High School has requested a decrease in its PAN from 174 to 150, which would, as the new PAN is applied to subsequent intakes, reduce the number of Year 7 to Year

11 places from 870 to 750. This is supported by the sufficiency (capacity) assessment for the school and reflects current and forecast demand for places. If at some point in the future more than 150 pupils apply for places then parents would still have the right to appeal. However as illustrated below it is not likely to be catchment pupils who find themselves in this situation.

For information the likely makeup of the categories of places to be offered for its new Year 7 starting in September 2010 is:

Category	Number
Stamented child	1
Looked After Child	1
Catchment Sibling	41
Catchment	95
Sibling Out of Area	8
Out of Area	14
Total	160

The 14 "Out of Area" requests for places are 5 Queen Elizabeth catchment pupils and 9 Out of County pupils. If the revised PAN of 150 was applied then the 4 "Out of Area" places then available would be offered to 4 Gloucestershire pupils.

There are currently a total of 746 pupils on roll made up as follows:

Year Group	Number of pupils
7	141
8	152
9	153
10	149
11	151

The current sufficiency calculation for the school gives it a capacity in the range 688 to 785 i.e. a range in the PAN of 138 to 157.

A copy of the formal request from John Masefield School is attached in the Appendix.

Comment

It is noted that in all three PAN reduction cases the revised PANs meet the needs of children from the catchment areas.

In the PAN increase case the revised PAN is not to meet demand from catchment children but rather from out of catchment parental preference children. The School Admissions Code requires Local Authorities to support such requests to maximize parental preferences.

Key Considerations

4. The national timing for consultation does not allow these requests to be delayed to tie in with school cluster discussions and any recommendations that may be made to Cabinet in October 2010. The requests for reductions in PAN reflect long term demographic trends.

Increases in PAN must be in accordance with the school's net capacity assessment, which is the case for Much Birch V C Primary School. The LA has a duty to maximize parental preferences where possible.

Community Impact

5. Not applicable.

Financial Implications

6. None.

Legal Implications

7. See comments under Risk Management.

Risk Management

8. The LA may be challenged in respect of its role to maximize parental preference wherever possible. However the LA must consider the implications of maximising parental preference within a strategic context. The work that results from Cabinet recommendations and the work of school clusters will be key to providing an agreed strategy within which to consider increases in PANs in response to parental preferences.

Consultees

9. Not applicable.

Appendices

10. Appendix - Copies of school PAN change request letters.

Background Papers

None