



14 December 2020

Dear Headteacher

Consultation: Proposal to Reduce the Published Admission Number of Rye Community Primary School (the School) from 60 to 45 from September 2022.

The School is an academy within the Aquinas Church of England Education Trust (Aquinas).

This letter outlines the case for reducing the published admission number (PAN) of the School and how you can respond to the consultation which will run from Monday 14 December 2020 to Sunday 31 January 2021. The deadline for responses is Sunday 31 January 2021.

At present the PAN of the School is **60** pupils per year group. It is proposed to reduce the PAN to 45 pupils which would mean 15 less places being offered each year. Currently, there are a substantial number of unallocated places each year. The current PAN of 60 pupils is consistently higher than demand. Reducing the PAN will allow the School to meet local demand yet shape the provision to match actual intake. It should be noted the purpose of the proposed reduction is not to cap admissions permanently at the lower level, but to bring the admission capacity in line with actual demand. Reducing the PAN will allow the School greater stability for long-planning while continuing to provide an appropriate number of places for future pupil numbers living in Rye and the surrounding area.

Current pupil numbers and mixed age teaching

	Year 20/21	Phases 20/21	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	Phases 21/22
YR	39	39	20	19			78
Y1	39	82	28	27	27		(26, 26, 26)
Y2	43						81
Y3	38	76	24	27	25		(27, 27, 27)
Y4	38						81
Y5	43	89	21	25	20	23	(27, 27, 27)
Y6	46						

Given the numbers in the current academic year (2020/21), in order to match the teaching to the intake, the School has moved from single-year teaching to mixed-year teaching in Years 1 to 6 with three classes in Year 1/2 and Year 3/4, four classes in Year 5/6 whilst retaining two classes in reception. In 2021/22, the School will move the three classes in Year 1/2, 3/4 and 5/6 whilst maintaining two classes in reception.

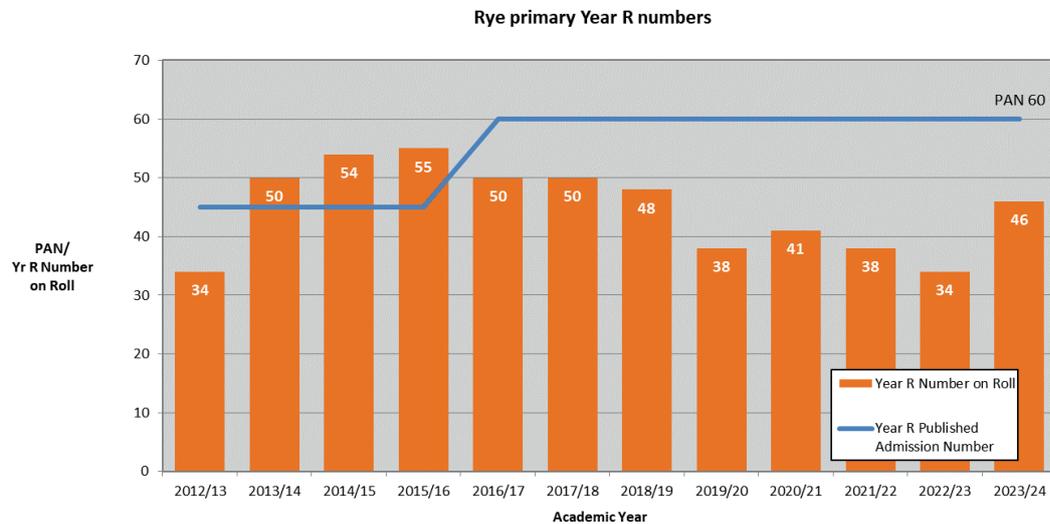
The School's income is based on the number of pupils who attend, not the PAN; therefore, there will be no financial loss to the School through this reduction. However, there will be increased efficiency as the staffing model is brought closer to an optimal class size of 30 pupils. This in turn will facilitate greater efficiency in the purchasing and targeting of other educational resources to support learning.

Primary places in Rye

In Rye, there is one primary school which includes an additional nursery setting. The School opened in 2008/09 with a PAN of 45 pupils. The buildings were extended in 2014 to accommodate rising numbers and the nursery setting. As a result, in 2016/17 the PAN was increased to 60 pupils. Since

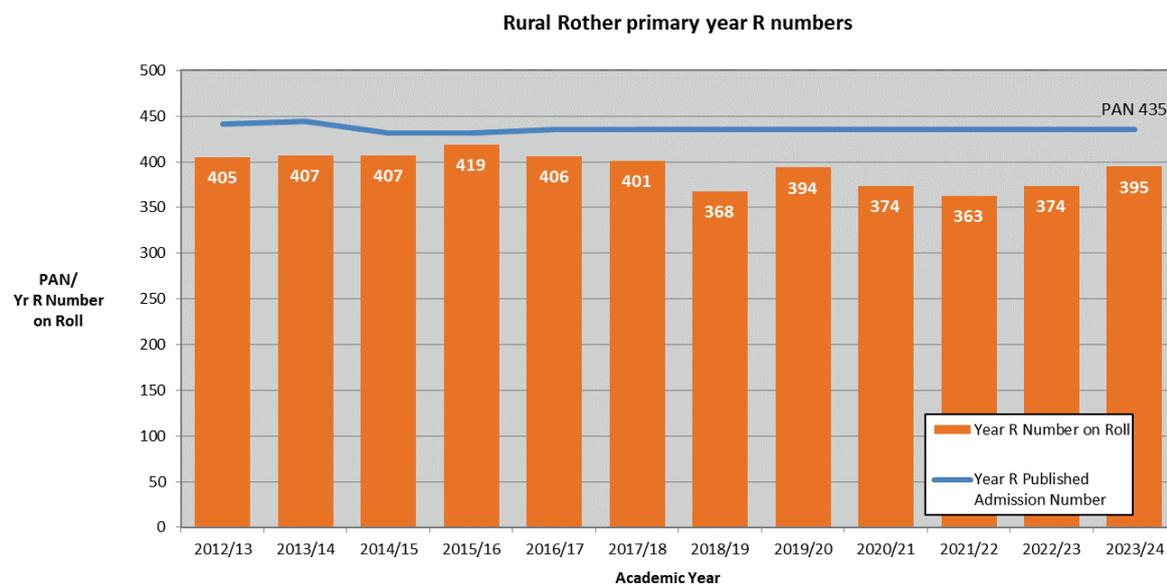
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the increase, the School has consistently fallen short of the PAN. The Local Authority’s forecast does not see reception intake exceed 45 pupils until 2023/24 at the earliest. If this forecast turns out to be the case, then by 2022/23 or 2023/24 surplus places could exceed 30%.



Impact on other local schools

There is some movement of pupils between Rye and surrounding schools, notably St Thomas’ CE Primary School (Winchelsea), Peasmarsh CE Primary School and St Michael’s CE Primary School (Playden). If pupil numbers at the School begin to recover in the coming years, this could impact on pupil numbers at some of the surrounding schools, which rely on families living in Rye choosing them to remain viable. A reduction in PAN would not reduce the ability of the School and other surrounding schools to meet local need.

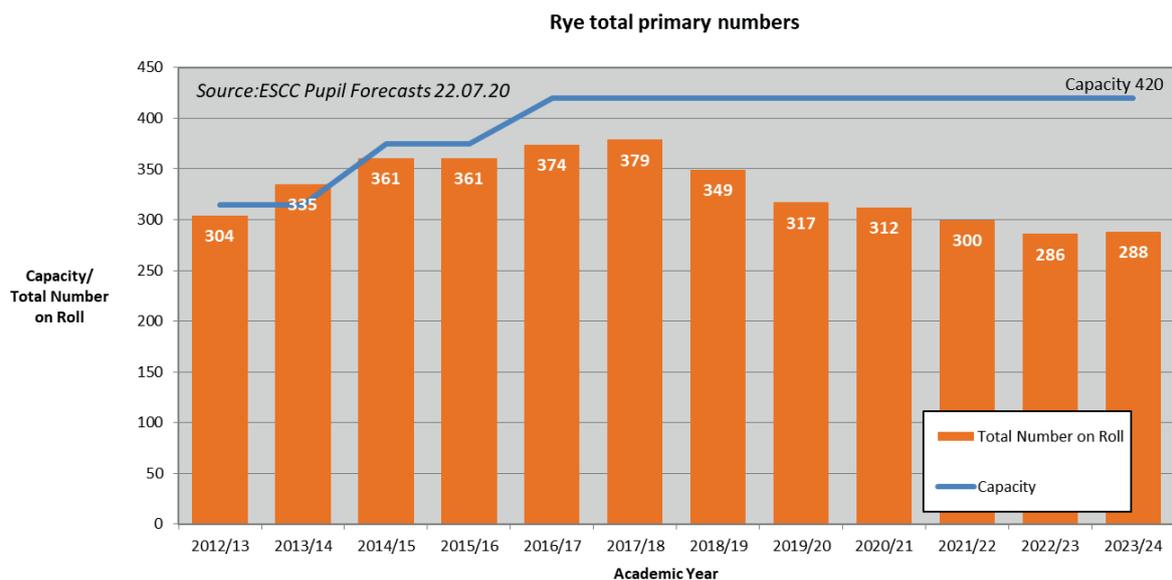


Local births and housing

Data from the Local Authority shows births in the area tend to fluctuate from year to year. There is some correlation between intake and local births but typically intake does not exceed 75% of such.

Births	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19
	50	64	65	78	64	70	73	59	69	60	47	65
Intake	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24
	34	50	54	55	50	50	48	38	41	38	34	46
%	68%	78%	83%	70%	78%	71%	66%	64%	59%	63%	72%	71%

With this in mind, the place planning undertaken by the Local Authority indicates that the number of available places is in excess of demand for such places in the Rye area.



It is against this background of demand for places being considerably less than the available capacity that Aquinas seeks to reduce the PAN of the School to 45 so that the School can:

- Shape its provision to match actual intake, bringing admission capacity in line with actual demand.
- Undertake long-planning based on a full intake.
- Continue to build its curriculum based on mixed-year teaching.
- Ensure increased efficiency in its staffing model.
- Take advantage of other educational resources to support learning as a result of an improved staffing model.

For purposes of the Admissions Code 2014, a copy of the proposed admission arrangements for the School for 2022/2023 are attached. In this regard, the only change which requires consultation is the reduction in PAN as all other changes are for clarification.

We would welcome your views and comments on this proposal and invite you to respond by Sunday 31 January 2021:

- In writing to Consultation re Rye Community Primary School, Aquinas Church of England Education Trust, Magpie Hall Lane, Bromley BR2 8HZ ; or

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- By email to info@aquinatrust.org inserting Consultation re Rye Community Primary School in the subject box.

Please provide details of your name and contact details to assist us in collating the responses. Whilst all responses will be acknowledged, it will not be possible to correspond with individual respondents. However, the School and Aquinas websites will be updated with information on the progress of the consultation process.

Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, local restrictions and protective measures in schools, it is unlikely that a public meeting will be possible. However, this will be kept under review and dependent on local restrictions.

At the conclusion of this consultation, the Trustees of Aquinas will make a decision which will include a review of the responses received. This decision will be published on the Aquinas and the School websites.

We look forward to receiving your comments.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathy Griffiths".

Kathy Griffiths
CEO of Aquinas



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