

**Report to Cabinet  
Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2021**

Consultation also takes place with Community and Voluntary Controlled Governing Bodies, which were consulted on the Proposed Admission Numbers (PANs) for their schools for 2022/2023 school year. The requests of the governors and background information are provided below.

The PANs are set by reference to the school's net capacity. The net capacity assessment is a national measuring tool provided by the Department for Education.

In primary schools, the net capacity is calculated on the basis of the number and size of teaching spaces designated as 'class-bases'.

In secondary schools, it is based on the number, size and type of teaching spaces and the age range of the school.

The net capacity formula provides a maximum and minimum number of workplaces, to guide the setting of the admission number. The formula produces an indicated admission number [IAN]. It is permitted to set an admission number higher or lower than the indicated admission number.

<b>School name</b>	Penwortham Girls' High School	<b>District</b>	6
Current Admission Number	155		
Indicated Admission Number	155		
Proposed Admission Number	155		
Governors' Proposal	160		

### Comments made by the School

We have been oversubscribed for a number of years and continue to see the demand for single sex education in this area. As the only non-selective non fee paying girls' school in Lancashire, we believe we offer unique opportunity for girls to be educated in a specialist environment, and our consistent outcomes are testament to our continued academic success.

We will be increasing the number of classrooms this year by 2 to offer more flexibility across the curriculum; we do currently have capacity for 32 students in most classrooms.

Our current Net Capacity Assessment shows 775 as this is our planned admission number, although the capacity based on teaching spaces is 808. Once the Net Capacity Assessment is adjusted to include the addition of two additional teaching spaces (61m<sup>2</sup> each) with 160 as planned admission number, our assessment shows we have capacity for 800 on roll. The capacity based on teaching spaces on this revised assessment actually shows as 853. We could admit 160 per year group as soon as approved.

### Officer Comments

- This school sits within the South Ribble Secondary Planning Area and the pupil projections for this area indicate a significant surplus of places with 1,105 surplus places projected for 2022 and 1,078 surplus places projected in 2025.
- Focussing on the Penwortham part of this planning area shows that there have been surplus places in the Penwortham secondary schools in the last few years;
- Therefore, adding permanent places long term could contribute to the destabilisation of other schools in this planning area;

- Penwortham Girls School isn't the only single sex education non fee paying school in Lancashire, as there is Preston Muslim Girls School in neighbouring Preston Secondary Planning Area and within 3 miles of this school;
- The current forecasts show that in September 2022 there is a spike in the birth rate for one year only and then the numbers decline, even taking into account the housing and migration. Taking this spike into account the projected surplus places are still significant;

### **Recommendation**

Due to the predicted number of surplus places in the South Ribble Planning Area, it is recommended that the Published Admission Number remains at 155 but is temporarily exceeded to 160 for the September 2022 intake.

<b>School name</b>	Caton Primary School	<b>District</b>	1
Current Admission Number	10		
Indicated Admission Number	10		
Proposed Admission Number	10		
Governors' Proposal	15		

### Comments made by the School

- The previous PAN at Caton Community Primary School was 17 and the school was able to accommodate 125 pupils in the current building. Pupil numbers reduced over a period of many years due to unsettled staffing, parental discontent and two Ofsted judgements of Requires Improvement and governors reduced the PAN to 10.
- The school has the capacity to expand in terms of buildings with two additional classrooms, extensive grounds and a detached sports hall to accommodate the needs of many more pupils. There would be no additional capital costs to increasing the PAN.
- Lancashire's School Place Provision Strategy identifies Rural North Lancaster as one of the areas of increasing demand for places.
- Lancashire's strategy for additional places states that it aims to expand popular and successful schools. Caton Primary School now has a new staff team, a 'good' Ofsted judgement and a strong reputation. This has resulted in numbers on roll doubling within a two year period with 13 pupils now in Year 3 and 11 pupils in Year 5.
- LCC is committed to fair access and equality of opportunity, providing places for different sections of the community and providing diversity in school places. Caton Primary School is the only Community School (without a Religious Foundation) in the local area and it is over 5 miles from the nearest Community School in Lancaster. (That school is currently judged to be inadequate.)
- There is currently pressure on our neighbouring school Caton St Paul's which now has very large classes and recently was unable to take a pupil who has become our 11th pupil in Year 5.
- Additional homes have been built in Caton and these are not yet fully occupied and there is movement into the village. There are plans to build a housing development adjacent to Caton Primary School.

- Despite the fact that there is limited intake from the villages of Caton and Brookhouse, we are attracting pupils from Lancaster which is only ten minutes away and many from Halton which is only a five minute drive away and as Halton St Wilfrid's School is oversubscribed, we have attracted 17% of our intake from Halton.

### **Officer Comments**

The school sits within the Caton Primary planning area( not the Rural North Planning Area as quoted by the school), in which the current forecast show there is not a need for additional places;

- The birth rate drops in Sept 2022 when the school want the changes to start from;
- There has been instability within this planning area and action has been taken by both Caton schools to assist Caton Primary School to stabilise;
- The Caton Primary Planning Area is an importer which means that a large proportion of pupils who live outside the planning area go to school in Caton Planning area. Therefore, increasing the number of places would not necessarily lead to additional places for local children;
- If a school is to permanently increase their PAN we would need to see a high demand for places and with high parental preference;

### **Recommendation**

Due to the predicted number of surplus places in the Caton Primary Planning Area, it is recommended that the Published Admission Number (PAN) remains at 10 but consideration will be given to the PAN being exceeded if the school is oversubscribed.

<b>School name</b>	Brookfield Community Primary School	<b>District</b>	6
Current Admission Number	27		
Indicated Admission Number	27		
Proposed Admission Number	27		
Governors' Proposal	30		

### Comments made by the School

LCC Capacity Assessment confirms that the school building is able to accommodate 30 pupils in each year group through a recent capacity assessment.

School staffing (1 teacher and 1 full time teaching assistant per class) supports an intake of 30 pupils as this provides sufficient opportunity to support and guide pupils and to support any individual needs.

Brookfield Community Primary School consistently operates a waiting list indicating that there is a demand for additional places within our learning community.

Increasing our intake would enable parents to exercise greater choice about the most appropriate setting for their child related to location; individual family circumstances; religion or cultural factors and would support family well-being.

### Officer Comments

- The school sits within the Preston East Primary Planning Area where the current forecasts show the birth rates dropping.
- The pupil projections indicate that there is not currently a need for additional places in this Primary Planning Area and indicate a significant surplus, both in terms of intake for 2022 and future years.
- The projected surplus of places in the area for 2022 is 363 places.
- This surplus is projected to continue to increase, with September 2025 intake projected to be a surplus of 490 places.
- Adding additional places to an area that already has this many surplus places could contribute to destabilising neighbouring schools and there would be no guarantee that the school would attract the extra pupils;
- **However**, it is recognised that regularising the PAN to 30 would assist the management and organisation within the school and acknowledge that the school has been wanting to return to a 30 PAN profile for some years and

the school can now fit a PAN of 30 in the school within their existing accommodation.

### Recommendation

It is recommended that the PAN is increased to 30. This will reduce the number of appeals and assist with planning, management and organisation within school.

<b>School name</b>	Ormskirk Asmall Primary School	<b>District</b>	8
Current Admission Number	20		
Indicated Admission Number	22		
Proposed Admission Number	20		
Governors' Proposal	25		

### Comments made by the School

Our net capacity assessment is 157 – 175.

For several years our school had an admission number of 25. However in recent years we reduced this to 20.

Asmall Primary is a relatively small school which is an integral part of this local community. There is a high level of parental preference for our school, which remains over-subscribed with waiting lists / appeals each year. We have an onsite nursery but have not been able to offer places to some of these children over the past few years as our catchment area has reduced. Two years ago there were children who lived 0.2 miles away who needed to appeal. We are the nearest primary school for some of the children who are not allocated a place.

We have telephone calls regularly (most weeks) from prospective parents, asking for places for children across the school. We have to turn these away because all

but one of our classes are full. This term, again, we have had to turn away families who have moved into the area and now 'live on the doorstep' as our cohorts were full.

As the school budget is based on pupil numbers, a reduced intake of 20 has made setting the budgets increasingly difficult. Governors are concerned that our staffing is unsustainable moving forward. As our classes of 25 leave Year 6 and our new intakes of 20 arrive into Reception each summer, our total number of children on roll is reducing. This has meant that we have not been able to replace teaching assistants as they have left / retired. In order to further save funds, we have also reduced staff and hours in the school office. We now have a minimum number of support staff in school. The reduction in staff is having an impact on the management of the school as senior leaders are having to complete the tasks that previously would have been undertaken by office and support staff. Increasing our intake to 25 (as it was previously) enables us to have a more sustainable budget and to employ support staff for the children we have in school.

Local circumstances have changed. There is significant housing development within the town of Ormskirk, with new housing estates being built. New families are requesting to look around for school places next year.

The Governing Body has discussed this on several occasions over the past few years and would like to ask that consideration is given to our request to increase our intake from 20 to 25 as soon as this is possible.

### Officer Comments

- The school's Net Capacity Assessment shows this school does have enough space for a PAN of 25, without any building work;
- The School sits within the Ormskirk Primary Planning area and then current forecasts show there is a continued drop in the birth rate in September 2022. It shows that with births, housing and migration, there is more than enough places in this planning area for September 2022.
- Creating additional places where they are not required, could destabilise other schools in this planning area, particularly those not as popular;
- The current forecasts show this Planning Area is an 'importer' which means that some pupils who are born and live outside Ormskirk Planning Area go to school in this planning area. Therefore any additional places may not actually provide places for local children;
- Therefore, we would object to this proposal to permanently increase the PAN from September 2022;
- However, the current forecasts show that births, housing and migration increase in September 2023. They show that additional places are still not required, but the amount of surplus has reduced. Therefore, once another



year of data has been collected, we would be happy to review the situation for September 2023 intake.

### Recommendation

Due to the predicted number of surplus places in the Ormskirk Primary Planning Area, it is recommended that the Published Admission Number (PAN) remains at 20 but consideration will be given to the PAN being exceeded if the school is oversubscribed. A further request for 2023 would be considered, dependant on revised forecasts of the need for places.

<b>School name</b>	Duke Street Primary School	<b>District</b>	9
Current Admission Number	50		
Indicated Admission Number	52		
Proposed Admission Number	50		
Governors' Proposal	60		

### Comments made by the School

N/A

### Officer Comments

- The school has 14 classrooms but some of them are slightly smaller than ideal for classes of 30. However, they also have an IT room which is large enough at 50m<sup>2</sup> for 30 pupils.
- The current forecasts show there is not a current need for additional places in the Chorley Central Planning area, whilst surplus has been reducing, projections show this to be the position for the next five years.
- However, we are aware that the school has wanted to increase to a PAN of 60 for a number of years in order to regularise the PAN and assist in the management and organisation of the school.
- If the school can provide the accommodation to fit a PAN of 60 and they feel they can attract a PAN of 60, then we are not minded to object to the proposal;

- However, it must be noted that this would be on the proviso that the school requires no capital funding from LCC as there is not a need for additional places at present.

## Recommendation

It is recommended that the PAN is increased to 60 as long as there is no requirement for capital funding.

Consultation also takes place with the Community, who were consulted on the proposed admission arrangements for Lancashire schools - 2022/23 school year. The responses received are provided below :~

In relation to the change of GPA for Longsands Primary School

### **Feedback received from the Community:**

Lancashire County Council has invited people to submit their views and opinions on the matter of admission changes for applications to Longsands Community Primary School. I would like to put my views forward if I may.

I can appreciate that this is a very difficult task for the Council, especially if it has been set the way it is for a long time. I am not local to the area by birth, so do not know the set up/changes that have occurred over the years. Also, I will not be affected by these changes, as I have no young children due to start school.

However, I live in the Longsands area and I will see the impact it has on the community. Being Chair of the PTFA for the school, I have seen how parents and residents come together for events and provide a great support network for each other. I think this should be preserved as much as possible, especially after the unprecedented times we have experienced this year with the coronavirus.

From my understanding, the proposal is to remove the GPA criteria that the school has been operating under. This would reduce the number of criteria listed? However, there will be occasions where it will not be straight forward, and this is where I think the Council should come up with a particular process to show transparency and fairness in these particular cases. And it may help the appeals process to be shorter and less in number, especially if the initial process is seen to be based on 'common sense', so to speak.

For example, if there are parents applying in a high birth year, who live exactly the same distance from the school as each other, albeit in opposite directions, and who are out with the geographical catchment: one set of parents has a sibling

already at school, both work full time and they care for a very elderly relative who lives the other side of town. The other set of parents would like to have a school on the way to work. Who gets the place? Would it really be fair to put them in a 'draw'?

If there turns out to be more applicants than places, could the Council invite the parents not qualifying in the geographical boundary to fill in a form and state their case for getting a place as part of the application process? If it really has a great impact on them for the child getting a place, then the parents will take the time to put their case forward (you would hope). Do this before any appeals process and the allocation of places will be seen to be fairer, in my humble opinion.

I have seen first-hand how stressful it is for parents who have children in different schools, particularly if they are a drive and not just a walk away. This has a domino effect on people's lives. We need less stress and not more. It also means that the child/children may not have the best school experience if they are separated from their sibling(s). And this can have an effect on the community as a whole - people retreat to cope and the community spirit fragments.

Ironically, I think that the GPA criteria as listed should be applied to all schools under the Council, and just titled as the criteria for which you get a place at a primary school - the breakdown of how places are allocated appears to be simple, even and fair as far as they can be under the current GPA criteria.

Thank you for taking the time to read my views.

### **Feedback received from the Community:**

I am writing to express my objection to the removal of the Geographical Priority Area in relation to Longsands Community Primary School for school year 2022/23 and in particular the potential impact on houses in the Teil Green estate. I should firstly say that my 2 children both attended Longsands between 2003 and 2011, which I believe may have predated the existing GPA, and so choice of primary school is no longer an issue for me. However I still remember the angst when applying for primary places in 2003 with the uncertainty of whether we would get a place at our "local" or Community primary school rather than having to travel significantly further to e.g. Kennington, Brookfield or Sherwood.

The existing GPA forms a natural geographical zone bounded area by main roads to the east and west and brooks to the north and south. It means neighbours on the same estate are more likely to be able to send their children to the same primary school and help feel a sense of community.

Existing GPA (green) and Longsands centred Radius of 0.75km (approximate)



Changing to an “as the crow flies” measure, after catering for siblings and special needs, would mean that a large number of houses on both sides of Watling Street Road (A on map) and also houses between Eastway and Fulwood Barracks (B) and even some “behind ASDA” (C) would gain priority over houses e.g. in the north east corner of the Teil Green estate (D) which are approx. 0.75km from Longsands. The houses adjacent to Watling Street Road (A) are generally closer to Brookfield Primary than to Longsands. Similarly, the houses between Eastway and the Barracks (B) are much closer to Kennington than those in Teil Green.

Another important factor is the true journey distance given the significant impact this makes. Whilst I agree that walking should be encouraged where practical, this isn't always the case. The driving distance from the north east of Teil Green to Longsands (using Google Maps) is 0.8km, very similar to the direct measurement whereas it is 2.5km to Brookfield, 3km to Saint Maria Goretti, 3.1km to Kennington and 3.5km to Sherwood. Similarly, driving or walking distance from houses in Areas A, B and C to Longsands are 1.8km, 1.7km and 3.5km respectively unless unlit and often muddy tracks are used. If children on Teil Green did not get places at Longsands because priority was given to those who, whilst closer as the crow flies to Longsands, also had other schools near to them, this would certainly increase unwanted road miles and rush hour traffic.

I encourage you to reconsider and to maintain the existing GPA for Longsands Community Primary.

#### Officer comments

#### Recommendation

The GPA for Longsands Primary School was introduced for the September 2011 intake. It is considered that the GPA is no longer fit for purpose and that it would be simpler for parents if places were allocated using a straight line measure. This

has been discussed and supported by the head teacher and members of the Governing Body. It is therefore recommended that the GPA is removed for Longsands Primary School.

In relation to the change of GPA for Cottam Primary School

**Feedback received from the Community:** I wish to state my disagreement with the proposal to remove GPA@s relating to Cottam Primary School and in particular the right of siblings to join their older brothers and sisters already at the School.

My reason for disagreeing with this proposal is the difficulties this will cause having to take children to different schools probably for the same time plus the problems that will be caused by having different holidays etc. In addition this is not an environmental solution as it will require duplicate travel arrangements and the use of additional car journeys.

Can you also advise when benefit is being achieved by changing this "rule" which has served Schools well for many generations for the simple reason it simplifies child care?

This will impact upon us as a couple and I provide child care for our Grandchildren, one who currently attends Cottam Primary, and his sister who is now at risk of not attending the same school.

**Feedback received from the Community:** I am in support of Cottam Primary being removed having it's GPA status removed from 2022. I believe that siblings should take priority over locality, and that this should also be taken into consideration for 2021. As the area is being over developed people who were previously in the catchment area who live within 15minutes walk of the school would potentially miss out on places to families moving into the new builds. I feel this would have a much bigger impact on families who already have siblings at the school, who would be facing a logistical nightmare of trying to get children to different schools before work in the morning, or having to move a settled child to another school. I do feel that the longer term issue of over development needs addressing with further primary and secondary schools being required to meet the educational needs of the area.

**Feedback received from the Community:** I would like to comment on the proposed admission policy as I do not think the changes in relation to GPA's are fair. I was wondering how a GPA is identified, and why locality is prioritised over

siblings in these areas. This potentially puts working parents in an extremely difficult predicament as they may have to either try and manage a logistical nightmare of dropping their children off at different schools, or have to move a child who has been previously settled and happy at the school.

The changes that have been made in relation to the catchment area at Cottam Primary mean that children who live within a 15minute walking distance of the school, who have siblings already in attendance, are unlikely to get a place. I believe this is due to overdevelopment of the area without the infrastructure such as additional schools to support this. I am aware this has not been supported by the school either.

**Feedback received from the Governing Body of Cottam Primary School**

Following our Governors meeting, I write to confirm that our Governors agreed that the removal of the GPA for Cottam Primary School from 2022/3 best serves the school community.

## Officer comments

## Recommendation

The GPA for Cottam Primary School was introduced for the September 2011 intake. It is considered that the GPA is no longer fit for purpose and that it would be simpler for parents if places were allocated using a straight line measure. This has been discussed and supported by the head teacher and members of the Governing Body. It is therefore recommended that the GPA is removed for Cottam Primary School.