



**Weston CofE (VC) Primary & Nursery
School**

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Dear parent or carer

Consultation on a Reduction to the School's Published Admission Number (PAN)

I have mentioned in several past issues of Weston Weekly that there has been a dip in the number of children of school-starting age locally and nationally. This has reduced the number of children starting at a number of schools and, as a village school, it is unsurprising that we have experienced this in Weston.

A few years ago, as the number of children of school-starting age was increasing, our school increased its maximum intake (or Published Admission Number – PAN) to 20. Due to the current drop in the number of children, we would now like to reverse that process and reduce our annual intake (or PAN) to 15. This change would take effect from September 2024 onwards and would only affect new intake year groups (not children already at the school). The PAN would remain at 20 for September 2023, and then change in September 2024.

Therefore, we have asked Herts County Council to begin a consultation process on this proposal. As part of this consultation, I am writing this letter to all parents and carers at the school.

As I stated above, this change would not affect those children already at the school. Younger siblings of children already attending our school are also prioritised for places in future years, so the change would not affect them either.

A reduction in the PAN will enable the school to improve its financial sustainability since we will be able to organise classes more efficiently. Discussions of the need for this change have taken place at several meetings of the school's Governors. Since this change would make the school's financial situation more sustainable, I can reassure you that there are no plans to close the school. In fact, there are still plenty of smaller schools operating around the county.

The following wording explains more about the consultation from the point of view of Herts County Council;

The County Council is responsible for setting a published admission number (PAN) for all community and voluntary-controlled schools and must consult on any proposals to reduce PANs. After a period of demographic growth, the demand for primary places across the county has fallen and, in some areas, fewer school places are needed. This is in line with a decrease in primary demand across most other local authorities. Changes in demand are not evenly distributed and some areas and schools are impacted more than others. As part of the PAN setting process for academic year 2024/25, the County

Ofsted Inspection Jan 2018 –

'Pupils are confident and self-assured and enjoy their learning.'

'Pupils behave very well.'



Council has engaged with headteachers and governing bodies at a number of schools, including Weston Primary & Nursery School, to discuss and agree a proposed PAN reduction.

A reduction of the PAN at Weston Primary & Nursery School from 20 to 15 places from 2024/25 is proposed following a drop in the number of applications and allocations for September 2022, and other recent years. The pupil forecast indicates lower demand for Reception places across this part of Weston, Baldock and surrounding area for 2024/5 and beyond. A reduction in PAN would create a better match of places to expected demand, protecting the financial viability of the school moving forward. The Governing Body and Headteacher have both agreed to move forward with consultation on this proposal, which will assist the school both organisationally and financially.

Please visit <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/consultations/schools/school-admission-arrangements-for-2024-25.aspx> for more information about the consultation and to respond online.

Please be aware that the consultation closes on 11th December. Thank you.

Regards,

G. Holmes
Head Teacher