

Consultation on the reduction of the Published Admissions Number at Windlesham Village Infant School for September 2021

Windlesham Village Infant School seeks opinions regarding their wish to reduce the Published Admissions Number from 60 to 30, with effect from September 2021.

Before 2013, Windlesham Village Infant School had a Published Admissions Number of 40 and operated mixed-age classes for all year groups, due to fluctuating numbers. This made it very difficult to plan ahead and deploy staff effectively. Our school was expanded to a 2- form entry infant school with a Published Admissions Number of 60 in 2013, in cooperation with Surrey County Council, to meet a growing basic demand for infant school places in the area and to provide stability of numbers.

Since 2016, Surrey has been dealing with a declining birth rate and our numbers have fallen accordingly over time. Fewer children in our school has had an impact on our budget, which has continued to be mitigated by the ongoing flexibility of the school staff and academy reserves. Income generation has been a key focus for the school and lettings have significantly increased over the past year, although much-needed revenue and marketing opportunities have been lost due to school closure over the recent COVID-19 pandemic.

Until recently, the Local Authority had asked our school to maintain its Published Admissions Number of 60, despite falling rolls, so as to meet the demand in school places in the coming years. However, with a continuing trend of lower birth rates in Surrey Heath and limited housing development, it is clear that there is less demand for school places in Surrey Heath and Surrey County Council can now support our application to reduce our annual intake to 30.

The birth rate in Surrey Heath has been in decline since a peak in 2008, which has impacted upon the number of pupils needing a school place for Reception each year for all schools in Surrey Heath.

Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
No. of births	974	1012	1029	988	959	974	940	945	932	972	884	865	792

Given the decline in demand and the choice of good schools in the area, our numbers have been in a state of flux for some time and we have to be reactive to numbers, meaning uncertainty for parents and staff.

The below table shows the predicted number of births in Surrey Heath, based on demographic data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and taking into account estimated population projections and migration factors. This illustrates that the birth rate is expected to plateau, with small decreases year on year.

Birth year (academic)	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Predicted no. of births	921	918	914	910	909	907
Starts Reception in (Sept)	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029

Remaining a two-form entry school with a Published Admissions Number of 60 is no longer sustainable for Windlesham Village Infant School and budget information shows that the school is currently operating an in-year deficit.

Pupil place forecasts

The local authority combines birth data with pupil movement trends and housing data in order to produce a forecast of pupil numbers.

Below are the Reception year pupil forecasts for the planning area of Windlesham, Bagshot and Lightwater, in which our school is located, and for the borough of Surrey Heath as a whole. The data demonstrates there is to be a predicted surplus of places in not only the planning area, but across the entire borough. Please note that, for the purposes of these forecasts, the Published Admissions Number for Windlesham Village Infant School is still assumed to be at 60.

Windlesham, Bagshot & Lightwater			
School year	No. of Year R pupils	PAN for planning area	Surplus no. of places
2020-21	204	240	36
2021-22	196	240	44
2022-23	202	240	38
2023-24	202	240	38
2024-25	201	240	39
2025-26	200	240	40
2026-27	199	240	41
2027-28	199	240	41
2028-29	200	240	40

Surrey Heath			
School year	No. of Year R pupils	PAN for borough	Surplus no. of places
2020-21	994	1,080	86
2021-22	952	1,080	128
2022-23	980	1,080	100
2023-24	972	1,080	108
2024-25	971	1,080	109
2025-26	964	1,080	116
2026-27	957	1,080	123
2027-28	955	1,080	125
2028-29	954	1,080	126

Reducing our Published Admissions Number to 30 will mean:

- Certainty that there would be one class per year group
- Financial stability and viability
- Clear staff deployment plans

It should be made clear that we have agreed with Surrey County Council that we would revise our Published Admissions Number in the future if there was to be an increase in the demand for Reception places in the borough.

Please use the consultation response form to register your opinion by 22/10/20 and return it to:

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