Broad Horizons Education Trust
Sewell Park Academy, St Clements Hill, Norwich, NR3 4BX
Email: office@bhetrust.co.uk
Website: www.bhetrust.co.uk
Telephone: 01603 937 303

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Dear Parents, Carers, and Colleagues

Consultation on proposed Published Admission Number (PAN) for 2027/28 (2026 determination year)

In accordance with the DfE's 2021 statutory 'School Admissions Code' guidance, as a Multi Academy Trust we must consult if we wish to reduce the PAN (Published Admission Number) of an academy. The PAN is the maximum admission number for the academy. A list of proposed PAN changes in Broad Horizons Education Trust academies is included as an appendix to this letter and can be viewed online at www.bhetrust.co.uk.

As an interested party at a Broad Horizons Education Trust academy, we are keen to hear your views on the proposed changes; therefore, we invite you to participate in the consultation if you have any concerns regarding the matter.

Why we are consulting

Across Norfolk, there has been a steady decline in the number of primary-age children over recent years. This means that in some local areas, there are now more school places available than there are children to fill them. To continue providing high-quality education and use our staff and resources efficiently, we are proposing to adjust our admission numbers to reflect this change.

What this means for families

It's important to reassure you that this proposal is based on local pupil forecasts, not on the popularity of our school. Each school continues to be a valued and successful part of the community, and this change is intended to help us maintain sustainable class sizes and ensure every child receives the best education within the funding we receive from the Department for Education.

This proposal will not affect children already on roll at the school.

Further FAQs are included as an appendix to this letter and a printed copy of this document is available on request from the school office.

Have your say

The consultation will run from 2 December 2025 until 19 January 2026, and we welcome your views during this period. You can respond to the consultation by emailing pan-consultation@bhetrust.co.uk.

Please include your name, address, and your connection to the school (e.g., parent, staff member, local resident). All responses must be received by 5pm on the 19 January 2026.

After the consultation period closes, all responses will be carefully considered before a final decision is made by the Trust Board. The outcome will be published on our website.

Yours sincerely,



Owen Jenkins
Chief Executive Officer
Broad Horizons Education Trust

Appendix 1: Frequently Asked Questions

Introduction

This FAQ is designed to help parents, carers, and other members of the school community understand the reasons behind the proposed changes to the Published Admission Number (PAN) at some of our schools from September 2027.

Across Norfolk, the number of primary-age children has been falling for several years. To ensure our schools continue to operate sustainably, with class sizes and staffing levels that support high-quality education, we are proposing to adjust some of our PANs to reflect local pupil forecasts.

These proposals are not a reflection of the popularity or success of any individual school, and all schools within this consultation remain an important part of their communities and will continue to welcome children as normal.

What is the PAN?

The PAN (Published Admission Number) is the number of places available for children joining the school at the normal point of entry (usually Reception for primary schools, Year 3 for junior schools or Year 7 for secondary schools). Once the PAN is set, the Trust cannot refuse an application made during the normal admissions round if the number of applicants is below that figure.

Why is it reviewed?

All admission authorities, including academy trusts, are required by law to review their PAN at least every seven years. However, it is good practice to review it more regularly when local circumstances change, for example, if pupil numbers rise or fall, so that the PAN continues to reflect actual or expected demand, both for the school and in the wider area.

Is the PAN the maximum number of children who can be admitted to the school?

Not necessarily. The PAN sets the minimum number of places that will be offered at the normal point of entry. The Trust may decide to admit above the PAN in any given year if there is sufficient demand and the school has the capacity to do so without affecting the quality of education for pupils already on roll.

Can the PAN be increased as well as decreased?

Yes. The PAN can be adjusted in either direction depending on local needs. This particular consultation relates mainly to proposed reductions in areas where pupil numbers are falling, or

there are other local factors, ensuring that schools can operate efficiently and continue to provide high-quality education.

Why is it important to have an accurate PAN?

Having an accurate PAN helps schools plan their staffing, class organisation and budgets effectively. If the PAN is not adjusted to align to local demand and pupil numbers, it may not be possible to ensure that class sizes are reasonable and resources are used effectively to support the best possible education for every child.

Could a reduction in PAN lead to mixed-age (split year) classes?

It's important to recognise that the PAN in its own right doesn't mean mixed-age classes, as the PAN just sets the minimum number of places that will be offered for that year's intake; mixed-age classes are a result of overall pupil numbers, not the PAN by itself.

Mixed-age classes occur when the number of children in the school means it is more effective to group pupils from two or more year groups together. This can happen regardless of the PAN, and it is a normal and effective feature in many smaller or rural schools. Research has shown that mixed-age classes can have positive effects on pupils' attainment in primary schools.

Setting the PAN at a realistic level helps schools plan for these situations more effectively. It allows leaders to organise staffing, class structures and resources in a way that supports children's learning and ensures the quality of education is maintained even when pupil numbers fluctuate from year to year.

Can the PAN be changed at any time?

No. There is a statutory timetable for making changes to a school's PAN. Any changes proposed for the 2027/28 academic year must be consulted on for a minimum of six weeks between 1 October 2025 and 31 January 2026, and formally determined by 28 February 2026. This ensures that parents, carers, and the wider community have enough time to understand the proposals and provide feedback before any decision is made.

Appendix 2: Proposed Published Admission Number (PAN) for 2027/28 (2026 determination year)

School Name	School Admission Point	Current PAN	Proposed PAN
Bluebell Primary School	Reception	30	20
Dussindale Primary School	Reception	45	60
East Ruston Infant School and Nursery	Reception	10	10
Edith Cavell Academy and Nursery	Reception	30	30
Hemblington Primary School	Reception	28	28
Hillside Avenue Primary and Nursery School	Reception	45	30
Martham Academy and Nursery	Reception	30	30
North Walsham Infants	Reception	60	60
North Walsham Juniors	Junior	60	60
Sewell Park Academy	Year 7	150	150
Spowston Academy	Year 7	330	310
St Clements Hill Academy	Reception	30	30
Stalham Academy	Junior	60	30
Stalham Infants School and Nursery	Reception	30	30
Thorpe St. Andrew School and Sixth Form	Year 7	300	300
Tuckswood Academy	Reception	30	15
Eaton Hall Special Academy	Special school admission process	N/A	N/A
Bure Park Special Academy	Special school admission process	N/A	N/A