



07 October 2024

Dear Stakeholder

Discovery Trust Admissions Consultations: Proposal document to reduce the Published Admission Number in Discovery Schools

Discovery Trust is its own admissions authority as prescribed in the National Admission Code 2021, and it is our responsibility to consult on any proposed changes to our admissions criteria. We seek to reduce the Published Admissions Number (PAN) for three schools, effective from September 2026/27 reception intake year and all subsequent years thereafter.

The rationale behind the proposed changes lies within the core values of the Discovery Trust. As we aspire to make all schools sustainable, inclusive, and equitable to the communities that that we serve.

Background

Discovery Trust works closely with its Local Authority partners to monitor and evaluate the predicted future demand for places in its schools. It has become apparent that there is a declining birth rate locally which we are not immune too. The demand for places is forecasted to drop to such an extent that it is necessary to propose a PAN reduction for three schools to ensure they remain financial sustainable and continue to be able to meet the changing demand for school places in catchment areas. We believe it is unlikely that the schools will fill up to their existing PAN in the next several years, based on the number of births and future forecasts for school places.

In order to ensure that schools do not run into financial difficulty as a result of falling pupil numbers, the Local Authorities have encouraged all primary schools to review their published admissions number and consider reductions where they feel it is appropriate.

These school have had excess capacity in the early year groups for some time now and are understandably concerned that continued falls in birth rates will further impact adversely upon their pupil numbers over the next few years.

The Proposal

We propose to reduce the Pupil Admission Number (PAN) for the Reception Year Group for the following schools for September 2026/27 intake and subsequent years;

Greystoke Primary School: 60 to 45 PAN

Farndon Fields Primary School: 60 to 45 PAN

Redlands Primary School: 60 to 45 PAN

The proposal to reduce the PAN would ensure that local schools are the right size to meet current demand.



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This means that the number of school places for pupils wishing to request a place at these schools at Reception in take will be as above. For pupils who already have a place at the school changes in class sizes will be managed appropriately as children progress through the school to Year 6. This change will mean that for two schools, mixed age classes will be planned for in future years.

This is the only proposed change to the admissions criteria; all other criteria will remain the same. There will be no other changes to the admission arrangements. The proposed change will not affect families seeking a first-time admission place at the school for September 2026.

The proposed change will help our schools to effectively focus its teaching and learning resources to match the demand of school places in the catchment area. The Trust and school staff are working hard to continue to improve the outcomes of all our children and feel strongly that the proposed reduction will benefit future outcomes for our young learners, whilst still enabling us to meet the changing demand for places.

The consultation

We place great importance on seeking views of our families, staff colleagues and the wider community. We hope all current, future families, our staff and any other interested stakeholders will provide feedback on this proposal.

As set out in the Schools Admission Code, we are entering into a 6-week statutory consultation. Following the consultation, the Discovery Trustees shall consider the consultation results and determine the subsequent admission arrangements.

The consultation will run for six weeks starting Monday 07th October until Friday 15th November 2024.

All stakeholders are invited to submit comments in writing about the proposal. Please complete our online form <https://forms.office.com/e/SEeaeRFgD6> or alternatively email consultation@discoverytrust.org (Please ensure the 'Subject or Title' of your email states "PAN Consultation").

For the duration of the consultation the Trust and school websites will display the following documents:

- Draft Admission Policy for September 26/27
- Link to online form
- Stakeholder letter

School websites: [Greystoke Primary School](#) [Farndon Fields Primary School](#) [Redlands Primary School](#)

Yours sincerely

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