

EVERYCHILD PARTNERSHIP ACADEMY TRUST



BLACKWELL PRIMARY SCHOOL



REDUCTION TO PAN CONSULTATION

Consultation process from 6th November 2023 to 18th December 2023

This is the formal consultation document for the proposed reduction of the PAN at Blackwell Primary School creating a lower admission number for Early Years from 60 to 30 in September 2025

Blackwell Primary School

At present, Blackwell Primary School is two-form entry with a PAN of 60 per year group. The school is a sponsored academy for children aged four to eleven in East Grinstead and forms part of the recently merged Everychild Partnership Trust, having been sponsored by Partners in Learning Academy Trust in 2020.

Blackwell Primary School moved to its current location in 2006 as a one-form entry primary school. In 2013, Blackwell Primary underwent a major building project to transform it to a two-form entry school to accommodate an increase in pupil numbers in the town at that time. The building works were officially finished in September 2014, increasing the school's capacity to 420 children from Reception to Year 6.

PAN Consultation

Blackwell Primary School will be consulting on a proposed reduction in the published admission numbers (PAN) for Blackwell Primary School, East Grinstead, with effect from September 2025.

Length of Consultation

The length of the consultation has been determined as 6 weeks as published in line with the Department for Education Schools Admission's Code, paragraph 1.45.

Consultation Dates

6th November 2023 to 18th December 2023

Proposal

- The Trustees propose to reduce the PAN of Blackwell School from 60 to 30 with effect from September 2025
- The Board of Trustees will continue to review its PANs on an annual basis and will be flexible to react to demographic trends.

Rationale

As noted above, Blackwell Primary School has the capacity to serve 420 children in the East Grinstead locality, however it was originally conceived that the school would be a one-form entry school. Due to the current challenges in relation to the predicted and continuing low birth rates across West Sussex and Surrey, the number of students on roll from the 1st September 2023 was 322. The variance of 100 pupils has had a significant impact on the allocated funding, and consequently has a significant strain on a school budget and its viability.

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 local authorities. Changes in demand are not evenly distributed,

and some areas and schools are impacted more than others; this is the case for Blackwell Primary School.

Blackwell is located on the edge of the town and is not easily accessible due to it being situated in a large 'cul-de-sac'. There are 5 alternate primary schools, all rated GOOD with Ofsted, within a geographical 1-mile radius of Blackwell. This data is sourced from the DfE website, 'Find and compare schools in England' (See Appendix 1). Local Authority data predicts that the fall in birth rates in this geographical region, for at least the next five years, will continue to affect the number of children requiring a place in reception year (Year R).

The School Admissions (Infant Class Sizes) (England) Regulations 2012, (See Appendix 2) '*Limit on infant class sizes 4. - (1) No infant class may contain more than 30 pupils...*' As this is a mandatory requirement, the school must employ a qualified teacher for every 30 pupils (for example, for an intake of 38 pupils, the school must employ 2 qualified teachers).

Schools are largely funded by the number of pupils and one of the highest costs is staffing. If the number of pupils in Year R were over 30, even by one pupil (except in exceptional and particular circumstances), then the school would be forced to establish a second classroom with the costs that this would entail. By changing the PAN to 30, the Trust Board can plan based on the school being one-form entry and therefore ensuring financial stability and sustainability for the future.

Over many years, Blackwell Primary School has not filled the maximum number of pupil places in reception (Year R). Therefore, as the pupils have continued up through the school, the numbers for that cohort remain much lower than the maximum pupil number. As previously stated, this impacts negatively on the school budget. Also, with the local authority predicting continued low birth rates over the coming years, this will lead to a substantial in-year deficit budget and make the school financial unviable necessitating these proposed changes to the admissions arrangements.

The Consultation Process

The consultation will run for a period of 6 weeks and we are inviting stakeholders and members of the local community to respond. These are namely, but not limited to:

- Parents and Carers of Blackwell School
- Members of the Blackwell Primary School Staff
- Members of the Local Governing Board
- West Sussex Council
- Local Primary and Secondary Schools
- Members in the local community

The Consultation Response

The Consultation will run from 6th November 2023 to 18th December 2023 and you are invited to submit feedback via Google using the Link provided <https://forms.gle/p6HqphQM8ws8HEvd6> or in writing to the CEO, Everychild Partnership Trust Central Office, Hatchlands Road, Redhill, RH1 6BL.

On completion of the consultation period, the Trust Board will consider all responses received and decide how it will proceed.

Admission arrangements for the 2025-2026 academic year will be determined by 28th February 2024.

Appendix 1

[Schools and colleges in and near "Blackwell Farm Road, East Grinstead, RH19, West Sussex" - Find school and college performance data in England - GOV.UK \(find-school-performance-data.service.gov.uk\)](#)

Appendix 2

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/10/made>

[St Mary's CofE Primary School, East Grinstead](#)

Windmill Lane, East Grinstead, RH19 2DS

Primary

Ofsted rating: **2** Good (Inspected: 09 June 2022)

Distance: 0.57 miles

[Baldwins Hill Primary School, East Grinstead](#)

Lowdells Lane, East Grinstead, RH19 2AP

Primary

Ofsted rating: **2** Good (Inspected: 19 October 2022)

Distance: 0.71 miles

[Estcots Primary School](#)

Bourg-De-Peage Avenue, East Grinstead, RH19 3TY

Primary

Ofsted rating: **2** Good (Inspected: 16 July 2019)

Distance: 0.72 miles

[Halsford Park Primary School](#)

Manor Road, East Grinstead, RH19 1LR

Primary

Ofsted rating: **2** Good (Inspected: 23 November 2022)

Distance: 0.89 miles

[St Peter's Catholic Primary School](#)

Chapmans Lane, East Grinstead, RH19 1JB

Primary

Ofsted rating: **2** Good (Inspected: 05 February 2019)

Distance: 0.97 miles