

## **High Lawn Primary School PAN reduction – Frequently asked questions**

### **The proposal for consultation**

The local authority is proposing to reduce the PAN at High Lawn Primary School from 60 places to 45 places with effect from the 2028 reception intake.

### **Why is this change necessary?**

Nationally, there has been a decline in the birth rate, meaning that there are fewer pupils entering reception classes, resulting in vacant places in many schools.

Pupil projections for the schools within Area 2: North and Central Bolton are showing a surplus of places for 2028 of 14 %. This is above the 5-10% ideal.

This increasing surplus is reflected across Bolton as a whole with pupils numbers reducing over the projection period creating 14% surplus across the borough by the end of the period.

If the surplus of places is not addressed, some schools will face financial and educational sustainability concerns that will affect pupil experience and progress.

### **Why change the admission number at High Lawn Primary School?**

High Lawn Primary School currently has a published admission number (PAN) of 60. For September 2026, only 47 pupils required places at the school. As the number of pupils requiring reception places continues to reduce this will cause the school increasing pressure financially and educationally. The Governing Body is already considering measures to address this, including this reduction in PAN.

All the other schools within the Astley Bridge area only take 30 pupils into reception. Not all of these schools are currently at capacity, but financially and educationally it would be difficult to reduce a school to an intake of less than 30 pupils.

Considering all these factors, it is most appropriate to reduce the PAN at High Lawn Primary School to a 45 intake school. Removing capacity from other schools in the area would challenge the financial and educational sustainability of those schools. Therefore, High Lawn Primary School is the preferred option to reduce numbers to address surplus places.

### **What will happen to children who have a preference for High Lawn Primary School but can not be offered a place due to the reduced admission number?**

This will affect a very small number of children. There is sufficient capacity within the other Astley Bridge schools for any children with a preference for High Lawn who cannot be offered one of the 45 places, to be accommodated at another local school. The admission offer process will identify a place at a second/third preference school or, if necessary, an alternative offer at the next nearest school with a place remaining available. The capacity in the area (with 15 places at High Lawn removed) is 165 places. In 2026 there were 122 first preferences for schools in Astley Bridge. This means that there are sufficient places within the Astley Bridge area to accommodate all children who require one.

## **Who are we consulting?**

Consultees will include:

- Parents of children between the ages of two and eighteen
- Other admission authorities within Bolton including the Academy trusts
- Governing bodies
- Adjoining neighbouring local authorities
- RC and CE Diocesan bodies and the British Council for Mosques
- General public

Consultation will take place between 12 October 2026 and 23 November 2026.