

Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy: Consultation on Admission Numbers

Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy ('the school') is consulting from 7th November to 16th December 2022 on its proposal to decrease the school's admission limit from 254 students per year group to 240.

The Proposal

Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy is proposing to decrease the current Published Admission Number (PAN) for each year group from 254 to 240, reducing the school's capacity in years 7 to 11 from 1270 to 1200, a reduction of 70 places across years 7 to 11. The capacity of the school's Sixth Form is not affected by this proposal.

Current numbers in the school

Year	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13
Number	235	195	241	250	230	110	87

Student places in year groups currently above 240 will be protected, and these additional numbers will be regarded as 'above PAN'.

Reasons for the Proposal

Numbers in the school have fluctuated over recent years, with only one year group currently being significantly above 240 and no year groups meeting the current PAN of 254. This suggests that a PAN of 240 in each year group would be sufficient to accommodate demand for places at the school. The school has taken a number of children via Gateshead Borough Council's Fair Access process to increase the number of children in the school. Reducing the PAN to 240 will not prevent the school offering additional places to in-year applicants via the Fair Access Process, but it will reduce its obligation to accept in-year applications from other routes.

Projections based on the numbers of children in local and neighbouring primary schools indicate that there may be fewer than 240 children requesting places at the school in the short to medium term. There are a few small housing developments within a short distance of the school, both planned and in progress, including in Kibblesworth and on the Ravensworth Road in Birtley. These are expected to produce only small additional numbers of secondary school-age children in the short to medium term, such that they could be accommodated within the proposed PAN of 240 per year group. Given that the median number of students per year group in years 7-11 in the school is currently 235, it is not anticipated that this reduction in PAN will adversely affect any of the local secondary schools, and nor will it restrict the choice of secondary school for pupils at local primary schools.

The school's curriculum runs on an average class size of 30. The current PAN of 254 is inefficient, with spaces unfilled in classes. This requires additional resources, depriving current and future students of the full educational benefits of the funding the school receives. Reducing the PAN to 240 will allow for more efficient curriculum-led financial planning, working on a model of 8 classes of 30 students. This will enable the school to use the funding it receives to best effect in providing a very good quality of education to all its students.

Timing of the Proposed Change

The proposed reduction in PAN to 240 would take effect for the admission of students to Year 7 in September 2023 and all other year groups.

Any enquiries about this proposal should be directed to the school at Lordlawson@Lordlawson.academy.

Andrew Fowler (Principal). October 2022