



Office of  
the Schools  
Adjudicator

## **DETERMINATION**

**Case reference:** VAR657 and VAR658

**Admission Authority:** Leeds City Council

**Date of decision:** 16 January 2015

### **Determination**

**In accordance with section 88E of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, I approve the variation to the admission arrangements determined by Leeds City Council for Farsley Westroyd Infant School and Nursery and Farsley Spring Bank Junior School, Leeds for admission in September 2015.**

**I determine that for admissions to Farsley Westroyd Infant School and Nursery the admission number for the reception year will be 30.**

**I determine that for admissions to Farsley Spring Bank Junior School the arrangements will be introduced for admission to the reception year to include a published admission number of 60.**

### **The referral**

1. Leeds City Council, the local authority, (the LA) as the admission authority of Farsley Westroyd Infant School and Nursery (the infant school) and Farsley Spring Bank Junior School (the junior school) (the schools) has referred variations to the adjudicator on 17 December 2014 about the admission arrangements (the arrangements) for the two schools for September 2015.
2. Following agreement by both governing bodies, the LA approved proposals to change the age range for both schools to become primary schools catering for 5 to 11 year olds from September 2015.
3. The variation requested is to agree appropriate admission arrangements at both schools with a reduced published admission number (PAN) of 30 for reception year (YR) at the infant school and the introduction of arrangements for the admission of children into YR at the junior school with a PAN of 60 for September 2015.

## **Jurisdiction**

4. The referral was made to me in accordance with section 88E of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (the Act) which states that:

“where an admission authority (a) have in accordance with section 88C determined the admission arrangements which are to apply for a particular school year, but (b) at any time before the end of that year consider that the arrangements should be varied in view of a major change in circumstances occurring since they were so determined, the authority must [except in a case where the authority’s proposed variations fall within any description of variations prescribed for the purposes of this section] (a) refer their proposed variations to the adjudicator, and (b) notify the appropriate bodies of the proposed variations”.

5. I am satisfied that the proposed variation is within my jurisdiction.

## **Procedure**

6. In considering this matter I have had regard to all relevant legislation and the School Admissions Code (the Code).
7. The documents I have considered in reaching my decision include:
  - a) requests for an in-year variation from both schools;
  - b) statutory notice of proposals to make prescribed alterations to the two schools dated 26 March 2014;
  - c) the Department for Education (DfE) net capacity assessments for both schools;
  - d) the current determined arrangements for the two schools and the proposed changes to the arrangements;
  - e) the LA’s booklet for parents seeking admission to schools in September 2015; and
  - f) details of the consultation process for the statutory proposal.

## **Background and consideration of factors**

8. On 26 March 2014 the LA published a statutory proposal for to make a prescribed alteration to change the age range of both schools to become through primary schools catering for 5 to 11 year olds. The intention is to create additional capacity to accommodate the increasing demand for primary school places caused by the growing pre-school population in the area. Following a period of consultation, the proposal was approved by the LA’s Executive Board on 25 June 2014. This approval constitutes a major change in circumstances for the schools. Admission arrangements for September 2015 were determined and

published in line with the Code and now require variation in order for the agreed changes to the junior school's age range to be implemented and PANs agreed at both schools.

9. I agree that the approval of the proposal by the LA constitutes a major change in circumstance for the schools and as the decision was taken in June 2014 for admission in September 2015 the current arrangements determined prior to the statutory proposals being determined require variation.
10. Farsley Westroyd Infant School and Nursery is a community infant school which currently admits children to YR and caters for three key stage 1 year groups (YR to Y2) in addition to a separate nursery class. The current arrangements include a PAN for admission into YR of 60. In 2014, 60 pupils were admitted from 79 first preference applications. Currently there are 181 children on roll; the DfE capacity assessment calculates the maximum capacity as 189.
11. Farsley Spring Bank Junior School is a community junior school which currently admits children to Y3. The school caters for children in four key stage 2 year groups (Y3 to Y6). The current arrangements include a PAN for admission into Y3 of 60. Currently there are 235 children on roll; the DfE capacity assessment calculates the maximum capacity as 240.
12. The arrangements are those used by all community schools within the LA. Appropriate admission is given to children with special educational needs where the statement names the school; oversubscription criteria give priority to looked after and previously looked after children, those with special medical or social needs, siblings, children attending named linked schools and distance between home and the nearest school. Appropriate definitions and a tie breaker are included in the arrangements.
13. The present arrangements for the two schools provide 420 places across the seven school years. (180 in the infant school and 240 in the junior school). The approved proposal converts both schools into through primary schools with the PAN for admission into YR of 60 in the current junior school and 30 in the current infant school giving a total YR PAN of 90. When the schools have been fully established in September 2018 this will provide 630 places (210 in the current infant school and 420 in the current junior school). This is an increased capacity of 210 places.
14. I am of the view that the establishment of two through primary schools would provide the additional capacity required for the estimated growth in primary population in the area in the next few years.

15. The junior school variation requires arrangements to be put in place for admission to YR for the first time in September 2015 and with a PAN of 60. The infant school variation requires a reduction in PAN for YR from 60 to 30.
16. I agree that varying these PANs for 2015 and then the LA determining the same PANs in future years would provide the required increase in capacity for the area over the four year period of transition. I also agree that other minor changes of wording are required to reflect the new school age ranges so that the school names do not include the terms infant or junior.
17. Proposed transition arrangements include retaining a point of admission at Y3 in the junior school and this will allow pupils who wish to transfer to the junior school to do so if they do not wish to stay on at the infant school in the newly created key stage 2 classes. All other arrangements remain the same.
18. The governing bodies of both schools were consulted before the statutory proposal was published and both are in favour of the change. The LA undertook extensive consultation on the proposed changes and reported that no significant negative responses were received.
19. Open meetings have been held at both schools for parents and the local community and all questions posed and responses provided at these meetings are detailed on the schools' websites. A page on the schools' websites has been created specifically to collate any information about the expansion programmes and all letters to parents are available on the page. All the schools in the local area have been notified of the variation in line with the Code and no negative responses have been received.
20. Both schools will increase in size if they admit up to the revised PANs as anticipated. The infant school will increase from 181 to 210 and the junior school will increase from 235 to 420. The statutory proposals do not detail the project costs for this expansion but both state that *"No new or additional site is required for this change. The school will expand on its existing site. Some additional building and/or remodelling of existing buildings will be required. This will be phased in agreement with the school, and be subject to the normal planning permission process."* Both schools are satisfied with this position.

## **Conclusion**

21. I have concluded that the variations which the LA has requested are necessary to support the implementation of the agreed prescribed alteration to the age range of both schools to become two through primary schools; one at the current junior school and one at the current infant and nursery school. This constitutes a major change in circumstances for both schools.

22. I agree that the variation will reduce the PAN of the infant school at YR from 60 to 30. Children currently in Y2 will be able to continue in the school into newly created key stage 2 classes.
23. I further agree that arrangements are put in place for admission to YR at the junior school with a PAN of 60 with a change in wording in the arrangements as necessary.

### **Determination**

24. In accordance with section 88E of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, I approve the variation to the admission arrangements determined by Leeds City Council for Farsley Westroyd Infant School and Nursery and Farsley Spring Bank Junior School, Leeds for admission in September 2015.
25. I determine that for admissions to Farsley Westroyd Infant School and Nursery the admission number for the reception year will be 30.
26. I determine that for admissions to Farsley Spring Bank Junior School the arrangements will be introduced for admission to the reception year to include a published admission number of 60.

Dated: 16 January 2015

Signed:

Schools Adjudicator: Mrs Ann Talboys