



Office of  
the Schools  
Adjudicator

## **DETERMINATION**

**Case reference:** VAR751

**Admission Authority:** Greenwich Borough Council for Boxgrove Primary school, Greenwich

**Date of decision:** 27 March 2018

### **Determination**

**In accordance with section 88E of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, I approve the proposed variation to the admission arrangements determined by the Greenwich Borough Council for Boxgrove Primary School, Greenwich for September 2018.**

**I determine that for admissions in September 2018 the published admission number shall be 60.**

### **The referral**

1. Greenwich Borough Council (the local authority) has referred a proposed variation to reduce the published admission number (PAN) for Boxgrove Primary School (the school), for September 2018 to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator. The school is a community school for children aged 3 -11 in the London Borough of Greenwich.

The proposed variation is to reduce the PAN for September 2018 from 90 to 60.

### **Jurisdiction**

2. The referral was made 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”.*
3. I am satisfied that the proposed variation is within my jurisdiction.

### **Procedure**

4. In considering this matter I have had regard to all relevant legislation, and the School Admissions Code (the Code).
5. The documents I have considered in reaching my decision include:
  - the local authority's referral dated 2 March 2018 and supporting documents;
  - the determined arrangements for 2018 agreed on 15 February 2017 and the proposed variation to those arrangements;
  - a copy of the local authority's booklet for parents seeking admission to schools in the area in September 2018;
  - confirmation that the school governing board has been consulted and is in support of this proposal; and
  - a copy of the letter notifying the appropriate bodies about the proposed variation.

### **The proposed variation**

6. The proposed variation was received on 2 March 2018. The effect of the variation would be to reduce the PAN for September 2018 from 90 to 60.
7. The local authority agreed with the school governing board that the school's PAN of 60 should increase to 90 with effect from September 2017. This was on the basis that a one form of entry increase for one cohort could be accommodated in the existing school space for one academic year due to lower pupil numbers in upper year groups.
8. In order to deliver the accommodation required to support a PAN of 90 in September 2018 (and subsequent years) a building project to enlarge the school was scheduled. A PAN of 90 for September 2018 was determined on this basis. There has been an unexpected delay in the delivery of the new accommodation which means that there will be insufficient accommodation available in September 2018 for the determined admission number of 90 and a variation is proposed to reduce this number from 90 to 60.

### **Consideration of the case**

9. The building works included the construction of an extension to the school using modular units, adding a two-storey teaching block with eight classrooms. The extension had matching floor plans over the two floors each with four classrooms and accompanying toilet facilities. The project has met an unexpected delay because the proposed route for the delivery of the units is currently in dispute and is subject to legal proceedings. Until such time this is resolved, the local authority and the school are agreed that it is not possible to progress with the expansion programme. This is because there are no other routes to the site that would enable the safe delivery of the units.
10. The school is unable to operate at three forms of entry in its current

accommodation and so the local authority is seeking a variation to reduce the PAN back to the previous PAN of 60 for September 2018.

11. The appropriate bodies as specified in the Code have been consulted and no comments have been received. There is no anticipated impact on other local schools and there is sufficient capacity in other schools in the area to accommodate this reduction in the number of places.
12. Of the 68 places allocated for entry in September 2017, 49 were first preferences. With regard to entry in September 2018, out of the total 151 applications, 71 are first preferences. If the PAN for 2018 is reduced to 60, eleven applicants will need to be offered a place at a second or lower preference school. However both the school and the local authority are clear that it would not be practical in terms of teaching and learning to accommodate 71 pupils in a building with only two available classrooms.
13. The local authority states that there are sufficient places in the area to accommodate these eleven children in their second preference schools. The consideration to be made is whether it is preferable for these children to be able to attend their first choice school and be taught in very congested conditions or for a decision to be made before National Offer Day on 16 April to reduce the PAN so that places can be allocated to second preferences. Having considered the matter I consider that it is preferable to follow the second alternative and reduce the PAN before places are offered.

### **Summary**

14. The local authority with the agreement of the school governing board has requested this reduction in PAN to 60 from September 2018 because of a delay in the introduction of mobile classrooms to provide the space required for the increase of PAN which had been previously agreed. The local authority has already determined the arrangements for this school including the PAN of 90. In order to ensure that the number of places offered matches the available accommodation this variation is required. The local authority has taken the necessary steps in requesting this variation and I approve it.

### **Determination**

15. In accordance with section 88E of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, I approve the proposed variation to the admission arrangements determined by Greenwich Borough Council for September 2018 for Boxgrove Primary School, Greenwich.
16. I determine that for admissions in September 2018 the published admission number shall be 60.

Dated: 27 March 2018

Signed:

Schools Adjudicator: David Lennard Jones