



Office of  
the Schools  
Adjudicator

## Determination

**Case reference:** VAR2532

**Admission authority:** The governing body of Walmsley CofE Primary School, Bolton, Lancashire

**Date of decision:** 7 April 2025

### 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 governing body of Walmsley CofE Primary School, Bolton, Lancashire for September 2025.

I determine that the published admission number for 2025 will be 30.

I have also considered the arrangements under section 88I(5) of the Act and find that they do not comply with requirements relating to admission arrangements in the ways set out in this determination.

By virtue of section 88K(2) the adjudicator's decision is binding on the admission authority. The School Admissions Code requires the admission authority to revise its admission arrangements within two months of the date of the determination.

### The referral

1. The governing body of Walmsley CofE Primary School (the School or Walmsley) has referred a proposal for a variation to its admission arrangements for September 2025 (the Arrangements) to the adjudicator.
2. The School is a voluntary aided school for children aged four to eleven in Egerton, a village to the north of Bolton in Lancashire. The School has a Church of England religious character. The local authority for the School is Bolton Council (the Local Authority) and the Diocese of Manchester (the Diocese) is the faith body for the School. Walmsley was judged by Ofsted to Require Improvement at its most recent inspection in February 2024.
3. The proposed variation is that the published admission number (PAN) be reduced from 45 to 30 for admissions to the reception year (Year R) in 2025.

## Jurisdiction and procedure

4. The referral was made to me in accordance with section 88E of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (the Act) which deals with variations to determined arrangements. Paragraphs 3.6 and 3.7 of the School Admissions Code (the Code) say (in so far as relevant here):

“3.6 Once admission arrangements have been determined for a particular school year, they cannot be revised by the admission authority unless such revision is necessary to give effect to a mandatory requirement of this Code, admissions law, a determination of the Adjudicator or any misprint in the admission arrangements. Admission authorities may propose other variations where they consider such changes to be necessary in view of a major change in circumstances. Such proposals **must** be referred to the Schools Adjudicator for approval, and the appropriate bodies notified. Where the local authority is the admission authority for a community or voluntary controlled school, it **must** consult the governing body of the school before making any reference.

3.7 Admission authorities **must** notify the appropriate bodies of all variations”.

5. The governing body has provided me with confirmation that the appropriate bodies have been notified. I find that the appropriate procedures were followed, and I am satisfied that the proposed variation is within my jurisdiction. I am also satisfied that it is within my jurisdiction to consider the determined arrangements in accordance with my power under section 88I of the Act as they have come to my attention and determine whether or not they conform with the requirements relating to admissions and if not in what ways they do not so conform.

6. In considering the variation request and the matters considered under section 88I, I have had regard to all relevant legislation, and the Code.

7. The information I have considered in reaching my decision includes:

- the referral from the School dated 15 January 2025;
- the determined Arrangements for 2025 and the proposed variation to those Arrangements;
- responses from the Local Authority, the Diocese and the School to my requests for further information;
- maps, including Google Maps and those showing the location of the School; and
- information available on the websites of the DfE (including the ‘Get Information About Schools’ (GIAS) and ‘Financial Benchmarking and Insights Tool’ (FBIT) websites), the Local Authority, the School and Ofsted.

8. There was some delay in my consideration of this case as the School was initially unable to provide evidence that the Arrangements had been determined by the governing body. This matter was remedied on 11 March 2025, when the School provided emails from members of the full governing body confirming their determination of the Arrangements. I remind the School that paragraph 1.49 of the Code states:

“All admission authorities **must** determine their admission arrangements, including their PAN, every year, even if they have not changed from previous years and a consultation has not been required by **28 February** in the determination year.”

## Consideration of proposed variation

9. It is proposed to reduce the PAN from 45 to 30 for entry to Year R in 2025. The proposed variation has the support of the Local Authority and of the Diocese.

10. There is no formal consultation required for a variation and so parents and others do not have the opportunity to express their views. Clearly it is desirable that changes to arrangements are made via the process of determination following consultation as the consultation process allows those with an interest to express their views. It also allows for objections to the adjudicator. None of this is afforded by the variation process.

11. Paragraph 3.6 of the Code (as above) requires that admission arrangements, once determined, may only be revised, that is changed or varied, if there is a major change of circumstance or certain other limited and specified circumstances. I will consider below whether the proposed variation is justified by the change in circumstances.

12. The major change in circumstances relied upon by the School is set out in the application for approval, which states:

“The data supplied by the local authority to schools shows a declining birth rate in the locality of the school over the coming years. The current PAN for entry to the school in Reception is 45. The numbers on roll at the school in December 2024 were 48 in year 6, 58 in year 5, 45 in year 4, 44 in year 3, 41 in Year 2, 44 in Year 1 and 42 in Reception. These figures demonstrate that the school has not been maintaining numbers at the level of its PAN in recent years. The local authority admissions portal identifies that, as of January 2025, for entry to the school in September 2025 there have been only 32 first choice applications for 45 places at the school. None of the other schools within our locality have achieved their PAN in terms of first choice requests.

At the time of determining the admission arrangements for September 2025, this information was not available.”

13. The application form also stated:

“In February 2024 the school had an Ofsted inspection which judged the school to be Requiring Improvement. Consequently, the school needs to raise standards. It is likely that a combination of financial pressure and required improvements will increase the difficulty of achieving this. The school and the local authority wish to ameliorate this situation by reducing the school’s PAN to 30. If the numbers on roll in September are at or below 30 then the school will only need to have one reception class. If the numbers on roll in September are above 30 then the school will need to have two reception classes which will have a significant impact on the school budget.”

14. I have given careful consideration to the latest available data in order to form a view about the sufficiency of school places in the local area if the PAN of the School is reduced from 45 to 30 for 2025. I have also considered the demand for places at the School, the reasons given for the change, the potential effect on parental preference and whether the change is justified taking into account all relevant circumstances.

15. The Local Authority has a duty to make sure that there are sufficient places for the children in its area. To fulfil this duty the Local Authority assesses the likely future number of places to be needed and plans to meet that need. The Local Authority uses planning areas, which are geographical areas each containing a number of schools, for this purpose. I have considered the data that the Local Authority has provided for the Bromley Cross planning area to which the School belongs, in which there are four schools (including the School) which admit pupils to Year R. Table 1, below, shows: the sum of the PANs at those schools; the number of pupils admitted to them in each of 2022, 2023 and 2024; and the number of pupils forecast to require a place in 2025. Table 1 also demonstrates the effect on surplus places of reducing the PAN of the School as has been proposed.

16. I note here that various figures were provided in respect of expected demand for places in the planning area in 2025. I have used the figure of 144, as on 4 March 2025 the Local Authority provided its most up-to-date data (which it calls its autumn projections) and stated:

“The new autumn based projections of a demand for 139 places for Sept 25 is largely in line with actual demand and a more accurate projection [than other data]. Late applications received are included. . . and there are a further 4 children known to be in the area who are yet to apply, giving a total demand of no more than 144”.

**Table 1: School places in the planning area, and the number of children admitted, or forecast to require a place**

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
<b>Number of places in Year R in schools in the planning area (with a PAN of 45 for the School)</b>	165	165	165	165
<b>Number of children admitted to Year R (2022 – 2024) or forecast to require a place (2025)</b>	143	137	142	144
<b>Vacant places</b>	22	28	23	21
<b>Vacant places as a percentage of total places</b>	13.33	16.97	13.94	12.73
<b>Number of places in Year R if variation approved (with a PAN of 30 for the School)</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	150
<b>Vacant places if variation approved</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	6
<b>Vacant places as a percentage of total places if variation approved</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	4.0

17. The Department for Education document, “Basic need allocations 2025-26: Explanatory note on methodology”, refers to the need for two per cent surplus capacity “to provide an operating margin for local authorities. This helps to support parental choice, pupil population movement, and general manageability of the system”. From the data above I note that the proportion of vacant places in the area has been far higher than this in recent years and would, according to the forecast, remain above this percentage if I agree the proposed variation.

18. I am satisfied that if the PAN of the School were to be reduced to 30 for 2025, there would be sufficient places left in the planning area for any children who might be seeking a Year R place.

19. I now turn to the number of children at the School and the reasons given by the School in support of the variation request.

20. Data supplied with the referral showed that 48 children were expected to be admitted to the School in 2025. It was therefore difficult to understand the requirement for the proposed variation. I asked the Local Authority about this matter. They maintained that 33 children are expected to require places at Walmsley in 2025 and stated:

“In 2025 most schools are not oversubscribed. The LA has considered all the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> preference applications for Walmsley and all applicants will be successful in gaining their first preference school. Therefore there is highly unlikely to be any 2<sup>nd</sup>

or 3<sup>rd</sup> preference allocations to Walmsley. In addition, the four pupils known yet to apply live close to Eagley and St Johns schools and therefore it would be expected that these would be their preferred schools as late preferences. This means that it is likely that only the 33 first preference applicants would need places at Walmsley.”

21. Table 2 shows the number of children admitted to the School in recent years and the number of first preferences for the School, plus the number forecast to require a place in 2025 (using the Local Authority figure of 33). This table uses the proposed PAN of 30 for 2025.

**Table 2: the number of children admitted to the School in recent years, with the number of first preference applications and the forecast number of admissions in 2025**

	2022	2023	2024	2025
The PAN for the School	45	45	45	30
Number of first preferences	38	46	36	33
Number of children admitted to Year R (2022-2024) or forecast to require a place (2025)	42	46	42	33
Surplus places	3	-1	3	-3

22. The data show that the School received 36 first preference applications for entry in 2024 and 42 children were admitted; consequently it seemed likely that more children than the number of first preference applications for 2025 could be admitted if the PAN remained at 45. I asked the Local Authority about this matter; they stated:

“In 2024 some of the other Bromley Cross schools were oversubscribed so Walmsley picked up some 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> preference allocations and some non-preference offers”.

23. The Local Authority provided the data in table 3, which show the PAN for 2025 of each of the schools in the planning area to which Walmsley belongs, and the number of first preference applications received. The data were provided on 4 March 2025 and include all applications up to that date, including those received from other local authority areas.

**Table 3: The PANs of the other schools in the Bromley Cross planning area, the number of first preference applications for 2025 and the distance of each school from Walmsley (as shown on GIAS)**

School	PAN	Number of first preference applications	Distance from Walmsley (miles)
Eagley Infant	60	57	0.83
Egerton Primary	30	33	0.71
St John the Evangelist	30	17	0.67

24. For 2025, the only school in the planning area that is currently oversubscribed is Egerton Primary. The Local Authority explained that none of those children will require a place at Walmsley. It also provided data on births in the planning area. For children of the right age to start school in 2024 there were 1015 live births; for children starting school in 2025 this figure fell to 911.

25. From all the data and information that the Local Authority has supplied, I am satisfied that the figure of 33 may be used as the forecast number of admissions to the School in 2025 in the event that the PAN remains at 45. In other words, if the PAN is varied as proposed and only 30 children are offered places, three children are likely to be displaced from the School, resulting in frustration of parental preference.

26. I have considered the position of these children and the schools to which they may instead be admitted. The Local Authority told me:

“the pupils least likely to be offered a place are as follows: 2 pupils resident in area 3 where there will be sufficient capacity to offer them a school near to their home address (one third preference, one non-preference), and 1 pupil who is resident in the Astley Bridge sub-area who will get a place at their second preference school.”

27. I make two observations on this matter. First, although two of the three children likely to be displaced from the School would instead be offered places at a school for which they have also expressed a preference, one would not. Second, as the Local Authority has stated (and is supported by data) a number of schools in the area are undersubscribed for 2025. They should therefore be an alternative option for places for such families in the event that they do not wish their children to attend the schools at which they are offered a place.

28. I recognise that whilst it is the case that there may be places available elsewhere for these children, there may be sound reasons why their parents expressed a first preference for Walmsley, for example to fit in with commitments such as work, family or childcare.

29. The timing of this variation request is also important. During the Autumn term of 2024, parents would have been considering their preferences, visiting primary schools, and availing themselves of information about admission arrangements. Any parent who had looked at the Arrangements for the School would have seen a PAN of 45 and may have made their application on that basis. I cannot rule out the possibility that there are a group of parents who would have expressed a different set of preferences had a PAN of 30 for September 2025 been in place at the time they were making their decisions. However, as the intake was above or close to 45 for each of 2022, 2023 and 2024, it does not seem likely that parents would have assumed that expressing a first preference for the School would certainly result in an offer of a place. I must also be clear that a first preference is simply that; it may be the school that a parent most wants their child to attend, and admission authorities must offer each applicant a place at the highest preference school

possible, but expressing a first preference is not and cannot be a guarantee of a place at that school.

30. I will now consider the impact on the School of my approving, or not approving, the proposed variation.

31. I note that the referral stated that “the school has not been maintaining numbers at the level of its PAN in recent years”. The lowest number of pupils in any one year group is currently 41, and the data above show that the School has made admissions at, or close to the level of its PAN in each of the last three years. For the sake of clarity, the PAN is the minimum number of places that must be offered for the normal year of entry (which in the case of the School is Year R). It does not apply to other year groups and is not intended to provide a guaranteed number of admissions. Nevertheless, if 33 children are admitted to Year R in 2025 this will be far below numbers in recent years and may cause organisational and financial burdens to the School.

32. The provisions of the School Admissions (Infant Class Size) (England) Regulations 2012 apply to the School, and they require that infant classes (those where the majority of children will reach the age of five, six or seven during the school year) must not contain more than 30 pupils with a single qualified school teacher, except in specific exceptional circumstances.

33. The School currently organises its pupils into a mixture of single-age and mixed-age classes. The School stated:

“A significant restructure took place during the last academic year in order to minimise the overspend this year due to numbers on roll reducing. This also included moving to mixed age classes from Years 1-4 where the numbers on roll allowed for this. The current structure of the school is therefore already two classes smaller than it has been for a number of years. . .

Children in current Years 1 to 4 are in their first year of a new 2 year curriculum which build sequentially over the two years. . .

Reducing the PAN from 45 to 30 will enable the school to have just one class of 30 [in Year R] and therefore one teacher. Due to the infant class size regulations, any children above 30 would lead to an additional member of staff being required, thus having a detrimental impact on the budget and the ability to drive school improvement at pace.”

34. The FBIT website shows that at the end of the 2023-2024 financial year, the School had an in-year balance of £28.5K and a revenue reserve figure of £134.4K. The School described its financial situation to me as follows:



“If we are unable to limit numbers to 30 to support children being taught in one class rather than two, the projected in year deficit for 2025/26 will rise due to a reduction in per pupil funding...

If we keep the planned admission number at 45 but only have 33 children in September 2025, the estimated in year overspend for 25/26 is £82,258 and the closing balance is £33,421.

If we are able to reduce the planned admission number to 30 children in September 2025, the estimated in year overspend reduces to £43,899 and the closing balance increases to £71,780.”

35. If the PAN of 45 remains in place, then if more than 30 children were to be admitted as forecast the School would, without making further adjustments to its structure and curriculum, need to organise those pupils into two classes of a size that may not be financially efficient. Even if fewer than 30 children were admitted initially, who could be accommodated in one Year R class, the School would be obliged to admit up to the PAN if additional applications were received during the year. As soon as more than 30 children were in Year R, two classes would be required. This situation creates uncertainties in school organisation and staffing as the School would not know if or when an additional class would be required.

36. If I approve the proposed variation, the School will be able to plan for certainty on the basis that in September 2025 it will need staffing for only one class in Year R. It will also be reassured that there will be no possibility of having to reorganise mid-year, for example by creating an additional Year R class, due to any in-year admissions that would take the total number of children in Year R above 30. This should enable the School to attain greater fiscal health and avoid further changes to class organisation and the curriculum that may impact upon existing pupils.

37. Having considered all the matters above, my reasoning can be summarised as follows. If the proposed variation is approved, there will be some frustration of parental preference and some detriment to a small number of children who will not be admitted to the school which would otherwise be their highest available preference. However, if the proposed variation is not approved, there will be a significantly negative financial and organisational impact on the School, with detriment to those children already at the School, and to others joining the school who may lose out if funding is diverted to pay for the provision of an extra infant class for three years. After carefully weighing the above factors, I consider that it is reasonable to conclude that the proposed variation is justified by the circumstances, and I approve it.

## Consideration of the arrangements

38. Having considered the Arrangements as a whole it appeared to me that several matters may not conform with the requirements of the Code and so I brought them to the

attention of the governing body. I have listed these matters below setting out the relevant paragraphs of the Code and where the Arrangements did not conform to requirements. Paragraph 14 of the Code requires that arrangements must be clear for parents on how places are allocated. It is this requirement which applies to the issues listed below unless otherwise specified.

39. The Arrangements do not make it clear how a parent should apply for a place for their child. They therefore do not provide the clarity required by paragraph 14 of the Code, and do not comply with paragraph 15 which states, as far as is relevant here, “All schools **must** have admission arrangements that clearly set out how children will be admitted”.

40. The Arrangements state, “School must adhere to infant class size legislation requirements and therefore no class of 5, 6 and 7 year olds (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2) can contain more than 30 pupils with one teacher.” As set out in paragraph 2.16 of the Code, additional children may be admitted under limited exceptional circumstances. As the Arrangements do not make this clear and instead cause the reader to understand that there are no circumstances in which more than 30 children may be admitted to an infant class with one teacher, they do not comply with the Code.

41. The Arrangements state (my underlining for emphasis), “The school’s published admission number (PAN) agreed for admission to the Reception Year in September 2024 is 45”. I accept that this is a typographical error as the Arrangements clearly relate to 2025; this must be corrected to provide the clarity required by paragraph 14 of the Code.

42. The Arrangements refer to “statements of special educational needs”. Statements of special educational need no longer exist; using an obsolete term renders the Arrangements unclear and in contravention of paragraph 14 of the Code.

43. In note a) “Looked After Children”, the Arrangements refer to residence orders. Residence orders have been replaced by child arrangements orders, as stated in paragraph 1.7 of the Code. Consequently the Arrangements do not comply with that paragraph or with paragraph 14.

44. In note b) the Arrangements state that, in order to qualify for prioritisation under the second oversubscription criterion, regular attendance at “any qualifying service as designated by the School Admissions Committee” is required. This same phrase is used on the supplementary information form (SIF). As this term is not defined, it is not clear to parents (or to the person signing the SIF) how the faith-based criteria will be satisfied. The Arrangements are therefore contrary to paragraph 1.37 of the Code, which states that admission authorities must ensure that parents can easily understand how any faith-based criteria will be reasonably satisfied.

45. Both the Arrangements and the SIF refer to the “closing date for applications” but do not give a date; the Arrangements state that this is “as published by Bolton Council”. The Code states, including in Footnote 8, that the deadline for submitting applications to be

allocated on National Offer Day is 15 January for primary schools. In not including this date the Arrangements are unclear and do not comply with paragraph 14 of the Code; in implying that the closing date is set by the Local Authority they are inaccurate and contrary to Footnote 8.

46. The third oversubscription criterion prioritises children who fulfil stated faith requirements and live “within the Egerton, Bromley Cross or Sharples areas”. Note c) states that, in “A map is available to view at school if required.” In respect of this:

- i. The Arrangements do not clearly define the catchment area. That is, it is not clear which addresses do and do not fall within the areas named. Consequently the Arrangements do not comply with paragraph 1.14 of the Code which requires that.
- ii. It is unreasonable to expect parents to visit the school in order to understand the catchment area, rendering the Arrangements contrary to the requirement of reasonableness in paragraph 14 of the Code.

47. A weblink in the Arrangements to “The list of nationally designated churches” does not link to such a list. Consequently the associated oversubscription criterion is unclear and the Arrangements are contrary to paragraph 1.37 of the Code.

48. Note d) in the Arrangements relates to the fifth, and final, oversubscription criterion and states, “All other applications which have not been allocated on criteria a) and b) above will be based on proximity to the school.” This aspect of the Arrangements is contrary to paragraph 1.8 (which requires that oversubscription criteria must be clear) and paragraph 14 of the Code in that:

- i. the oversubscription criteria are labelled 1 – 5, not a), b) and so on; this change of labelling renders the note and therefore the oversubscription criteria unclear; consequently
- ii. it is not clear how applicants within each oversubscription criterion will be prioritised for entry; and
- iii. there is no tiebreaker in place to decide between two applications that cannot otherwise be separated within oversubscription criteria 1-4, given that noted) appears to relate only to the fifth criterion.

49. The Arrangements contain a section headed “Late applications” which states: “Applications received after the closing date and before the Governing Board’s admission meeting will be placed last in the criteria in which they fall unless the Governing Board is satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances which reasonably prevented the application from being submitted on time.” In respect of this:

- i. What is meant by “exceptional circumstances” is not defined. This lack of clarity is contrary to paragraph 14 of the Code.

- ii. It is not clear what the “Governing Board’s admission meeting” is or when this takes place, and consequently it is not clear whether this statement is intended to apply to applications in the normal admissions round as defined in footnote 8 to the Code or to late applications (defined in footnote 58), which again is contrary to paragraph 14.

50. I asked that the School provide an explanation of this matter; it did not do so. I make it clear that in order for the Arrangements to comply with paragraph 14 of the Code parents should be able to understand easily how places for the School will be allocated. This aspect of the Arrangements must therefore be revised in order to set out clearly the matter of late applications and how they are dealt with. The School should include the definition of late applications which appears in the Code unless the Admission Authority has a good reason for inserting a different definition; this is not all applications received after 15 January but as follows:

“Late applications are applications for entry in a relevant age group which are submitted before the first day of the first term in the admission year but have not been made in time to enable the local authority to offer a place on National Offer Day.”

51. The Arrangements do not make clear that parents of a summer born child (defined in the Code as all children born from 1 April to 31 August) may choose not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group. In this respect the Arrangements do not comply with the requirement for clarity set out in paragraph 14 of the Code.

52. The Arrangements state: “Parents offered a place for their child have a right to defer entry, or to take a place up part-time, until the start of the term beginning immediately after their child has reached compulsory school age of 4.” The Arrangements are not in accordance with the Code as this definition of compulsory school age differs from that within the Code (footnote 56).

53. The Arrangements do not set out how in-year applications should be made, and are therefore contrary to Paragraph 2.26 of the Code.

54. The Arrangements state (my underlining for emphasis): “From time to time a place becomes available further up the school. The allocation of places is in accordance with the admissions criteria. Preference will be given to children moving into the area from outside the Local Authority area who do not have a school place. Applications meeting certain criteria may be referred to the in-year fair access process. Evidence will need to be provided that the child has recently moved in.”

55. The Arrangements appear to be introducing an additional oversubscription criterion for in-year admissions whereby the criteria for the normal year of entry are displaced by the addition. The Arrangements do not comply with the Code, including with the requirements for clarity set out in paragraph 14, as it is not clear:

- i. that an additional criterion has been introduced;
- ii. that applications from all looked after and previously looked after children must still be prioritised for admission, irrespective of where they live (paragraph 1.7 of the Code);
- iii. what “further up the school” means and, if this means years above the normal entry year, how in-year applications in the normal entry year are dealt with;
- iv. what is meant by “the area” and whether this amounts to a catchment area, which if so must be properly defined (paragraph 1.14 of the Code);
- v. what purpose the prioritisation of in-year applications from those “moving into the area” over those within the local authority area serves, and whether this is reasonable; and
- vi. whether the additional criterion applies to any applicants on the waiting list (paragraph 2.15 of the Code requires that each admission authority must maintain a clear, fair, and objective waiting list until at least 31 December of each school year of admission, stating in their arrangements that each added child will require the list to be ranked again in line with the published oversubscription criteria. Priority must not be given to children based on the date their application was received, or their name was added to the list. Looked after children or previously looked after children allocated a place at the school in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol must take precedence over those on a waiting list).

56. The School was asked to provide comments on the matters set out above; it did not do so. I make it clear that this section of the Arrangements must be revised so that the Arrangements comply with the paragraphs of the Code I have indicated.

57. The School has undertaken consultation in respect of its Arrangements for 2026, including to reduce the PAN to 30. The School website shows a set of proposed Arrangements for that year but the determined Arrangements for 2026 do not appear to have been published. This is in contravention of paragraph 1.50 of the Code.

58. If the Admission Authority has not yet determined its Arrangements for September 2026, I would advise that they should take this opportunity to make any necessary revisions to those arrangements to render them compliant with the Code should it be the case that they contain the aspects which I have identified above as being non-compliant.

## Determination

59. 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 governing body of Walmsley CofE Primary School, Bolton, Lancashire for September 2025.

60. I determine that the published admission number for 2025 will be 30.

61. I have also considered the arrangements under section 88I(5) of the Act and find that they do not comply with requirements relating to admission arrangements in the ways set out in this determination.

62. By virtue of section 88K(2) the adjudicator's decision is binding on the admission authority. The School Admissions Code requires the admission authority to revise its admission arrangements within two months of the date of the determination.

Dated: 7 April 2025

Signed:

Schools adjudicator: Jennifer Gamble