



Office of
the Schools
Adjudicator

Determination

Case reference: VAR2645

Admission Authority: The London Borough of Haringey for
Park View School

Date of decision: 29 October 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 London Borough of Haringey for Park View School, for September 2025.

I determine that the published admission number, for admissions to Year 7 in 2025, shall be 180.

The referral

1. The London Borough of Haringey (the Admission Authority; the Local Authority) has referred to the adjudicator a proposal for a variation to the admission arrangements for Park View School (the School) for September 2025 (the Arrangements).
2. The School is a community school for children aged 11 to 16. It is a co-educational school with no designated religious character. The School was judged to be 'Good' by Ofsted at its last inspection in February 2023.
3. The proposed variation is that the published admission number (PAN) of the School, which applies to admissions to Year 7, be reduced from 216, as determined, to 180 for September 2025.

Jurisdiction and procedure

4. Section 88E of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (the Act) makes provision for variations to determined arrangements. Paragraphs 3.6 and 3.7 of the School Admissions Code (the Code) say (insofar as is 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 Arrangements were determined by the Local Authority on 6 February 2024.
6. The Local Authority has provided me with confirmation that the appropriate bodies have been notified of the proposed variation in line with the Code, and that the governing body of the School has been consulted on the proposed variation. I find that the appropriate procedures were followed, and I am satisfied that the proposed variation is within my jurisdiction.
7. In considering the variation request, I have had regard to all relevant legislation and the Code.
8. The information I have considered in reaching my decision includes:
 - the referral from the Local Authority dated 8 October 2025, and supporting documents;
 - the determined Arrangements and the proposed variation to those Arrangements;
 - responses from the Local Authority and the governing body of the School to my requests for further information;
 - maps, including Google Maps and those showing the location of the School; and
 - information available on gov.uk websites (including the ‘Get Information About Schools’ (GIAS) and ‘Financial Benchmarking and Insights Tool’ (FBIT) websites); and the websites of the Local Authority, the School, and Ofsted.
9. 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.

10. I note here that the Arrangements of the School for 2026 have been determined, and the PAN is reduced from 216 to 189 for admissions to Year 7 in September 2026. This means that if I decide to vary the Arrangements for 2025 by reducing the School's PAN from 216 to 180 as proposed, it will be for that year only and it will not have a bearing on subsequent years.
11. In the interest of dealing speedily with this and other requests for variations for schools, I have not considered other aspects of the Arrangements. Therefore, nothing in this determination should be taken as indicating that other aspects of the Arrangements do or do not conform with the requirements relating to admissions.

Consideration of proposed variation

12. 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.
13. The Local Authority has proposed that the PAN of the School be reduced from 216 to 180 in September 2025. The governing body of the School supports the proposal.
14. Having regard to the declining birth rates in recent years, the Local Authority told me the following reason for it seeking a variation for the School:

"We are now in a position to proceed with targeted reductions in surplus capacity across the secondary estate, in line with projected demand... For the academic year beginning September 2025, [unfilled Year 7 places across Haringey's secondary schools currently] stands at over 170 vacancies. This marks a significant shift from previous years, when additional bulge classes were required to meet demand on national offer day.

Following the determination of [PANs] for September 2026 entry (finalised in February 2025), a number of maintained secondary schools in Haringey entered into formal discussions with recognised trade unions regarding proposed changes to class size arrangements. These discussions were prompted by local contextual developments and aimed to support an increase in class sizes from 27 to 30 pupils. Agreements were reached during the summer term of 2025. This adjustment was endorsed by the Local Authority and aligns with national funding assumptions and Department for Education (DfE) guidance, which recognises 30 pupils as the standard class size in secondary education.

This variation request also reflects the immediate operational context: for the current admissions cycle, currently Park View only has 184 places offered, and the school

does not currently hold a waiting list. The proposed reduction therefore formalises the existing intake and supports strategic planning for future cohorts.”

15. I have considered the latest available data to form a view about the sufficiency of school places in the local area if the PAN of the School is reduced from 216 to 180 in 2025. I have also considered the demand for places at the School, the reasons given for the change in demand, the potential effect of the proposed PAN reduction on parental preference, and whether the proposed reduction is justified taking into account all relevant circumstances.
16. The Local Authority has a duty to ensure that there are sufficient school 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. In the borough there are twelve secondary schools, including the School, for which the usual year of entry is Year 7. They altogether provided a total PAN of 2,595 places for September 2025. There is currently a surplus of 170 Year 7 places (6.6%) in the borough, which would still be ample (134 places, representing 5.2% of the reduced combined PAN of 2,559 places) if the proposed variation were to be approved.
17. I am satisfied that if the PAN of the School were to be reduced to 180 for 2025, there would be sufficient places within the borough for any children who might be seeking a Year 7 place.
18. I turn now to the demand for places at the School. The Local Authority stated, in relation to the School:

“For the current Year 7 cohort (entry to September 2025) only 184 children have confirmed offers. 179 are currently enrolled at the school and there are four pending admissions, including 2 children with EHCPs [Education, Health and Care Plan] that have Park View named on their plan. There is currently no waiting list. We will honour all 184 places; however, given the reasons outlined in this request, we are seeking for the PAN to be formally set at 180.

Based on historical trends, we anticipate natural movement within the cohort (families being offered their higher preference, moving away or seeking schools in other boroughs), which typically results in the number of enrolled pupils falling below PAN over time. Current capacity across the borough is sufficient to meet demand from any late in-year applications for Year 7, with surplus places available to ensure all applicants can be accommodated.”

19. This being the case, I am satisfied that the proposed variation would be unlikely to have any impact on parental preference. If there is any in-year application, any parent who is not successful in securing a place for their child at the School will likely be able

to secure a place at one of the five secondary schools in the borough which still have vacant Year 7 places (many within three miles of distance from the School).

20. I will now consider the impact on the School of my approving, or not approving, the proposed variation.
21. As schools are largely funded on the number of pupils and the highest costs to a school budget are staff, it is generally considered financially efficient to have classes that have 30 pupils or close to 30 pupils. The request for the variation refers to financial pressures faced by the School and the wish to align class organisation and staffing to the number of children. The situation the School wishes to avoid is staffing classes of a size that are not financially viable.

22. The Local Authority stated:

“Following successful negotiations with recognised trade unions, Park View has restructured its class size model, transitioning from 27 pupils per class to 30. This adjustment results in a revised cohort size of 180 pupils in Year 7 and other year groups to support the school’s efforts to align its staffing and financial planning with current and projected enrolment figures. This strategic change reflects both the school’s commitment to maintaining high-quality provision and the broader need for schools to adapt to demographic trends and ensure sustainable operations.”

23. The governing body of the School stated that it “fully supports the proposal [of a reduced PAN of 180 with six classes in Year 7 of 30 pupils each], recognising the following benefits:

- “Timetabling efficiencies: Larger class sizes [with a class of 30 pupil each] enable more streamlined timetabling, reducing the number of teaching groups and optimising the use of classroom space and teaching time.
- Staffing optimisation: Fewer classes allow for more effective deployment of teaching staff, reducing the need for additional recruitment and associated costs.
- Financial sustainability: A class size of 30 pupils aligns with DfE national funding models, maximising per-pupil funding and supporting long-term viability.
- Resource allocation: Economies of scale in teaching resources and curriculum delivery reduce duplication and enhance consistency.”

24. The FBIT website shows that for financial year ending March 2025, the School had an in-year deficit of about £236,000, and a negative revenue reserve of about £666,000. The School commented:

“In addition to this anticipated deficit for the 2024/25 financial year, we faced a reduction in income of roughly 5.8% in 2025/26 (Schools Funding Formula Modelling

25-26) due to rapidly declining pupil numbers across the borough. This equates to a reduced income of around £580,000 compared to 2024/25. Consequently, the projected deficit for the 2025/26 financial year would continue to grow rapidly without a PAN reduction (initially in Y7 and Y8) and significant structural change. This economic position is unsustainable, and the school must reduce its PAN and realign its staffing and resources to remain solvent.”

25. Having considered all the matters above, my reasoning can be summarised as follows:

- If the proposed variation is approved, it does not give rise to any concern about the sufficiency of Year 7 places in the borough for 2025/26. Those children in the local area seeking Year 7 places would have been admitted to the School, or any secondary school for which their parents expressed a preference, in September 2025. There is unlikely to be any frustration of parental preference as the Admission Authority has undertaken to admit all the 184 children being offered a Year 7 place at the School, including the two children whose Education, Health and Care Plan names the School. The possibility of any parental frustration in relation to any in-year application is small given the availability of surplus Year 7 places within the borough at present. There is compelling evidence that a reduction in the PAN to 180 would allow the School to plan accordingly, make the best use of its resources, and in the longer term, improve its financial position.
- If the proposed variation is not approved, the School would be obliged to offer a Year 7 place up to the existing PAN of 216 for any applicant in 2025/26. This could result in the School having to restructure its classes which may create logistical and financial challenges.

26. Taking everything into consideration, I find that the variation is justified by the circumstances and approve it.

Determination

27. 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 London Borough of Haringey for Park View School, for September 2025.

28. I determine that the published admission number, for admissions to Year 7 in 2025, shall be 180.

Dated: 29 October 2025

Signed:

Schools Adjudicator: Jackie Liu