

Admissions Policy Proposal FAQs

When the decision is shared will it simply be a 'yes' or a 'no' or will the full results of the survey be shared?

It will be a 'yes' or 'no'

How many children currently attending the school have older siblings who could transfer here?

There are currently families with older children at other schools but we don't know exactly how many children this proposal would effect or how many would take the opportunity to move.

Is it possible to get forecast data on how many children might be available to be admitted to year 6 in September 2017?

We have asked the Local Authority for data but have not received a reply as yet. If this data becomes available within the consultation period we will share it with parents/carers to aid their decision.

If only small numbers of children are admitted to years 6 in September 2017 will it make any difference to the current situation?

Yes, it will change the hierarchy, there will be peer role models in the playground and the School Council will have older members.

Is there a minimum number of children that you will need to admit for the proposal to go ahead?

No, but a minimum of 15 children need to be admitted to enable a teacher to be employed. If the number admitted is below 15 then classes could be split. It is a reality that for all schools where the actual potential number within any one class is 30 pupils, as it is for The Croft, resources and provision are allocated according to need and best practise whether this be a class of 30 year 2 or a class of 30 year 5 and 6, or year 4 and 5 or year 3 and 4 etc For a village or small, growing school this could also include a whole Key Stage of more than 1 year group.

It could be argued that small numbers of older children would not provide meaningful role models and also it would not be enough to employ more staff. Will the school be worse off if there are not enough children admitted to pay for another teacher?

No. School budgets are awarded annually and decisions are made to allocate the money in the most effective way. 60 places will be available in year 6. If a minimum of 15 children were admitted we would be able to employ one more teacher which *would* have an impact on after school clubs available and they would be a specialist in a particular area of the curriculum.

How would being in a split year group class affect a child?

In any class there is a wide spectrum of abilities and this would be the same in a split year group class. Currently the children work cross year groups for phonics and personalised learning to group abilities more effectively.

Are the White Horse Federation interested in the money from more pupils?

No, that is not what the WHF is about. Our focus is the value of education.

The Croft Primary School was built to address a need for more primary school places in the Old Town area. If older children from outside of the catchment join the school then would any younger sibling they may have, have priority for school places over those who live in the catchment?

Yes, having a sibling at the school is second in the list of criteria for assigning school places. Living in the catchment comes below that. However, the chance of every single year 6 child having a younger sibling that would start school at the same time, consequently blocking all the places to the local community, is slim. We haven't seen this trend with our spaces in year 3.

Could the children who apply for a place in years 6 be children who have not settled in their current school or have had to leave due to behaviour problems, and therefore could be considered to be less than ideal role models?

Yes, they could be, but equally they could be children whose parents see that The Croft Primary School is performing well and therefore wish their child to be educated here, especially as they will be due to take SATS examinations in year 6. Any child who joins The Croft Primary School, regardless of year group, is expected to act in line with the school's behaviour policy, values and ethos, and I hope you are already aware that we have high expectations.

Are the current year groups full?

Reception is full with a waiting list.

Year 1 is full.

Year 2 has 1 available place

Year 3 has 18 available places

Please note that with 18 available places in year 3, there has not been an influx of children who have not settled elsewhere or children with behaviour problems who have had to leave other schools.

Without older children in the school are the current pupils not receiving the best education?

They are getting the best education. However, the fear is that when the current year 3 children, and even year 2 children, will move on to secondary school and have the wind knocked from their sails as they will not be adequately prepared for the realities of being in an environment where they are not top of the social hierarchy.

As Principal of The Croft Primary School, what are risks are you worried about with regard to the proposed change?

The children we currently have are an amazing group of children who have developed incredible levels of confidence and my main concern is that that nurture continues as we grow sooner or later. I do not want them to be disadvantaged when they move on to secondary school due to the social restrictions of our current situation. If the result of the consultation is that the proposed change does not go ahead, I will be very grateful for ideas on how to combat this issue in a different way.

What was the rational for the school originally opening on a year by year basis?

That decision was made by the Local Authority. As an Academy we are able to set our own admissions policy, following consultation.

Are there any negative aspects to having older children in the school?

No. Primary Schools exist everywhere.

The same proposal to change the admissions policy was put forward last year and the decision was not to go ahead with the change. What were the reasons given against the proposal?

The survey results showed an almost even number of 'fors' and 'against' from our immediate school community. The Local Authority data at that time showed that there was not a need for additional Year 5 and 6 places within the locality. The decision was based on there not being a significant enough margin from the survey and also so as not to be in competition with local schools.

How many responses did you receive last year?

A few responses, with the majority against the proposal. However, it is not fair to assume the people who didn't respond are either in favour or against the proposal, so this year we are encouraging as many people as possible to respond.

Following the consultation last year it was explained that the Admissions Policy was reviewed every year, so if the consultation results in a no this time, will the same proposal be made next year?

Yes, because we believe this is what is best for the school. The Admissions Policy is reviewed every year and a consultation takes place if a change is proposed. If no changes are proposed for a long period, a consultation must take place every seven years.

If the proposal goes ahead and year 6 are admitted to full capacity (60 children) what will be the impact on daily life at the school?

Lunchtime and playtime will be staggered as it currently is as we have grown The oldest children will go last so the younger children will not be made to wait.