



## Consultation on the reduction of Sheldon School PAN

- A reduction in the school's Pupil Admission Number (PAN) from 270 to 240 pupils effective from 1 September 2026 for Year 7.
- This change is to update the admission number held by the Local Authority and the funding agreement held with the Department for Education.
- Although the Regulations and School Admissions Code relating to school admissions no longer require an admissions authority to consult when maintaining or increasing a school's PAN, there remains a requirement to consult when the proposal is to reduce a PAN. Sheldon School is the admissions authority, and is therefore seeking comments on the proposed change.

### 1. Background

- 1.1** The current PAN for Sheldon School is 270 students. This means that the number of pupils admitted into the school for Year 7 is limited to 270. Over the last 5 years the school has never met this number and has been under subscribed. This has come at significant financial cost by effectively having fewer students in each class.
- 1.2** As the reduced allocations are due to a reduction in the birth rate across Wiltshire, and particularly in the Chippenham area, there will be no detrimental effect to parents and pupils in relation to the reduction to PAN. Parents/Guardians will still be able to access their school of choice.
- 1.3** No pupil that already has a place in school will be affected by the change. However, the school proposes to continue to look towards reducing numbers in each year group over time. This consultation is part of that process.
- 1.4** Reducing the PAN to 240 will assist the governors and the Local Authority in providing stability to their long-term planning while continuing to provide an appropriate number of places for future pupil numbers living in the surrounding area and attending one of the local primary schools.

### 2. Specific Proposal on the PAN and other changes

- 2.1.** The school is proposing to reduce the PAN of secondary age pupils from 270 to 240 with effect from September 2026.
- 2.2.** This means that the number of places available for children in 2026, and all subsequent cohorts, will be 240.
- 2.3.** Factors that have been considered by the school in deciding to consult on this proposal include:
  - The continued ability of the school to provide sufficient places for local children
  - The provision of the most appropriate learning environment for all pupils thus facilitating continuing school improvement
  - Future resource planning and management
  - The capacity of the school resources management will be more effective

**2.4 Sheldon School** would be committed to reviewing the PAN if the local demographic and context dictates a need for this in the future.

**2.5 Other Changes** – the Governing Body has taken the opportunity to review the current arrangements and propose the following changes:

- Clarification that a pupil with a statement of special educational needs or education health and care plan which names the School will be admitted.
- A clarification around the meaning of looked after / previously looked after children and how it includes those who were in state care outside of England
- Further detail around applications based on medical grounds.
- Inclusion of how the tiebreak (casting lots) is to be overseen.
- Inclusion of how to apply for a place outside of the child's normal age group

#### Sixth Form

- Clarifying that oversubscription criteria applies to external applicants only.
- Confirming that successful applicants are admitted to the Sixth Form but not guaranteed a particular course of study (although the school will endeavour to meet all requests).
- Clarifying that for sixth form, both the parent and the pupil has a right of appeal where unsuccessful in obtaining a place.

*Sixth form applicants are encouraged to apply as soon as possible. There is no deadline by which to apply but in order to ensure that sixth form administration is smooth, the school will treat all those who have applied by 19<sup>th</sup> December 2025 as on-time applicants, and those applying after that date will have their application considered after all the on-time applications have been processed, this may impact on the available subject choices.*

### **3. Who is being consulted?**

**3.1** This consultation is for the specific attention of:

- Parents of children between the ages of two and eighteen
- Other persons in the area who have an interest in the proposed admissions
- All other admission authorities within the local area
- The Local Authority

### **4. How to respond**

**4.1** The consultation will run from now until Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2024. If you wish to get in touch and tell us what you think you can do this in the following ways:

- By email to [enquiries@sheldonschool.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@sheldonschool.co.uk)
- In writing to Mr Peter Lynch (Headteacher) Sheldon School, Hardenhuish Lane, Chippenham SN14 6HJ

Following the end of the consultation period we will provide an update on our website.

## Further information

### Birth rate fall

Currently the School has 9 forms of entry and a 270 PAN, which was reduced last year from 300. However, new data suggests that school numbers continue to fall locally despite the new housing development. Therefore, to ensure the school is financially viable moving forward, the PAN needs to be reduced to match the figures. The numbers on current roll and the predicted data are shown below.

Year group	Numbers on roll
7	226
8	270
9	270
10	255
11	270
<b>Average</b>	269

### Birth rate

The number of students in primary schools locally is falling and reduces over the next 3 years and beyond. The data from the local authority is below. They predicted the school would receive 238 students in 2024 and currently we have 226 students on roll. We believe that this overestimate illustrates that the number of pupils who could attend will not exceed 240. But we have acknowledged that the 2027 cohort might and therefore we have agreed with the local authority that we will continue to take all first choices of students that year and future years.

Year predicted data	7	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Number of pupils		238	251	245	270	243	235	246