

THE ROYAL SCHOOL WOLVERHAMPTON

Admissions Consultation 2027/28 – Rationale Document

Introduction

The Royal School Wolverhampton is conducting a statutory consultation on proposed changes to its admission arrangements for the 2027/28 academic year. This consultation is being undertaken in accordance with paragraphs **1.45–1.48** of the School Admissions Code (2021).

The Governing Board approved these proposals for consultation on **10 September 2025**, and the consultation period runs from **1 December 2025** to **23 January 2026**.

The School is **not proposing any change** to its **Published Admission Number (PAN)**. Instead, this consultation relates to:

1. **Material changes** that may affect the allocation of places;
2. **Non-material corrections** that bring the policy into line with the Code, improve clarity, or correct clerical inaccuracies.

This document provides the full rationale for all proposed amendments.

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SECTION A: MATERIAL CHANGES TO ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

Material changes are those which can influence which applicants secure a place. These require statutory consultation.

A1. Correction to the Stated Number of External Year 7 Day Places

Please note, the school's Pupil Admission Number (PAN) is not changing under these proposals. We are, however, proposing to correct the allocation of places in year 7 to meet our PAN.

A1.1 Background

The School's PAN for Year 7 is **112**, including **4 boarding places** and **108 day places**. When the existing policy was originally written, the School's Year 6 cohort consisted of:

- **Three classes of 25 pupils (75 total)**
- Leaving room for **33 external day places**, plus **4** boarding places, totalling the PAN of **112**.

Since then, the Primary School has grown to:

- **Three Year 6 classes of 30 pupils (90 total)**

However, the admissions policy has never been updated to reflect this structural change. The legacy wording still requires the School to offer **33 external day places**, even when 90 internal pupils have the right to continue into Year 7.

A1.2 The structural challenge

Under normal circumstances, the policy would require the School to admit:

- 90 internal pupils
- 33 external day pupils
- 4 boarding pupils

To give a total number of **127 pupils**
This significantly exceeds the legal PAN of 112.

This situation presents:

- A compliance risk,
- A safeguarding risk relating to overcrowded classes,
- A curriculum delivery risk due to room capacity limits,
- A threat to staffing ratios and specialist room availability.

Historic admissions data confirms that:

- In **two of the last four** admission cycles, the School was required to exceed its PAN as a result of the admissions arrangements on allocation day. In both of those years the school was required to accept an additional 6 day students in each year on offer day.
- In other years, PAN was preserved only because some Year 6 pupils chose not to remain at The Royal.
- In **one of the last four** admission cycles, the School was required to offer an additional 5 external places when internal places were not taken up by students
- In **one of the last four** admission cycles, the School was required to offer an additional external place when internal places were not taken up by students
- In all years, existing students elected to leave **after** the allocation day and subsequently additional places were offered to external students

A1.3 The proposed correction

The School proposes to revise the stated number of external day places from 33 to 18 in Year 7.

This will:

- Bring the admissions policy in line with the all-through structure (90 internal places + 18 external + 4 boarding = PAN 112)
- Prevent the School from being required to exceed PAN
- Maintain full fairness and clarity
- Result in only a slight reduction in opportunities for external pupils, because places vacated by internal applicants will still be offered externally.
- On average over the past 4 years 31.5 external places per year would have been offered under the proposed arrangements on allocation day.
- On average over the past 4 years a further 3.5 external places would have been offered to external candidates *after* allocation day
- On average, then, over the past 4 years we would have offered 35 external places per year under the new proposal.

We are seeking views from all interested parties on the impact of this change to the number of stated external Year 7 places.

*We are **not** consulting on the school's PAN and are **not** proposing a change to the PAN of the school or any year group.*

*We are **not** proposing changing the allocation of places in any other year group.*

A2. Reordering of Oversubscription Criteria

A2.1 Background

The current legacy policy places **siblings** and **children of staff** *after* the distance-based split between the inner and outer priority zones.

A2.2 Why this change is necessary

Under the current order, it is possible for:

- A **sibling of an existing pupil** to be refused a place
- While a **non-sibling** from a different distance banding is admitted ahead of them

Or

- A **child of a shortage staff member** to be refused a place
- While a **child whose parent is not a shortage staff member, nor a sibling** from a different distance banding is admitted ahead of them

This is not consistent with:

- The School's all-through ethos
- Common practice across Wolverhampton
- National common practice that siblings should ordinarily have priority
- The operational need to retain high-quality staff (particularly in shortage areas)

A2.3 The proposed reorder

The School proposes placing:

- **Children of staff in demonstrable skill-shortage roles**, and
- **Siblings**

above the distance-based categories in that order.

This reflects the intended priorities of the policy, aligns with paras. 1.11, 1.12 and 1.39(b) of the Admissions Code, and protects families from inconsistent outcomes.

- In the last 4 years, 3 children of members of staff in shortage subjects were not offered a place in Year 7 on allocation day and 1 of those children was not offered a place
- In the last 4 years, 3 siblings were not offered a place in Year 7 on allocation day, but were subsequently offered a place at the school.
- In the last 4 years, only one place has been allocated to an external student on the basis of distance alone (averaging 0.25 students per year) on allocation day in year 7
- In the last 4 years, only one place has been allocated to an external student on the basis of random allocation alone (averaging 0.25 students per year) in year 7
- In both circumstances those students would still have been offered a place at the Royal on or after allocation day under the proposed arrangements
- In the last 4 years, this change would not have had a material change in the allocation of places in Reception or Sixth Form

We are seeking views from all interested parties on the impact of this change to the availability of places to students.

*We are **not** consulting on other elements of our oversubscription criteria and are not proposing any further changes.*

This change would apply to all applications to join the school: Reception, Year 7, Sixth Form and in-year applications.

A3. Sixth Form Entry Requirements

The School's Post-16 general entry requirement remains:
Six GCSEs at grade 5 or above, including English and Maths.

No change is proposed.

However, the School is including this in the consultation because:

- It promotes transparency,
- It offers stakeholders the opportunity to comment,
- It supports future good practice.

This is explained in Lines 167–188 of the updated admissions document.

The school enjoys a large sixth form with a high proportion of A Level subjects alongside a small number of vocational qualifications. The school does not offer a formal Level 2 programme for Sixth Form students.

- These entry requirements are in line with national and local expectations.
- Raising entry requirements higher is unnecessary as each subject has additional, specific entry requirements ensuring that all students entering onto courses are academically prepared and able to achieve that qualification and these requirements ensure students have strong pass in English and Mathematics.
- Lowering these entry requirements would significantly disadvantage students as they would not be able to fully access our Level 3 based programme successfully

We are seeking views from all interested parties on the continued appropriateness of these entry requirements for general entry into the sixth form.

*We are **not** considering individual subject requirements for entry which we make available and review annually and are not subject to consultation.*

SECTION B: NON-MATERIAL CORRECTIONS

These corrections:

- Do **not** alter the oversubscription hierarchy
- Do **not** alter the allocation of places
- Do **not** change who can or cannot be offered a place
- Ensure compliance, clarity, and accuracy

All line numbers reference **Admissions Arrangements 2027–2028**

B1. Clerical and Formatting Corrections

These corrections fix spelling, punctuation, redundant wording, or formatting but **do not change meaning**.

Correction	Line Reference
Remove unnecessary comma	Line 10
Insert missing word “be”	Line 30
Remove unnecessary comma	Line 46
Remove unnecessary comma	Line 49
Remove abbreviation “RSW”	Line 63 (table)
Remove non-standard term “infill”	Lines 252–253
Remove stray “s”	Line 324

B2. Technical Accuracy Updates

Updates required to align with the 2021 Admissions Code or LA coordinated procedures or other DfE or LA requirements.

Update	Line Reference
Remove “independent” from description of school	Line 1
Clarification on applicants from outside the city	Line 3
CAF forms available online and in paper form	Line 34
Requirement to notify LA of address changes	Line 46
Clarification on “Home Local Authority”	Line 52
Standardising term “in-year” rather than “infill”	Line 63 (table)
Updating Pupil Premium definitions to match Code	Lines 119–121
Updating statutory appeals timeline references	Lines 314–317
Clarifying Home LA involvement in in-year allocations	Line 347

These changes ensure legal accuracy and compliance but **do not affect priority or number of places offered**.

B3. Clarifications and Interpretive Improvements

These changes increase clarity and prevent misinterpretation.

Clarification	Line Reference
Removing ambiguous “central point” in distance definition	Line 56
Clarifying “demonstrable skill shortage”	Lines 106-109
Clarifying PP categories accurately using current definitions	Lines 119–121
Clarifying meaning of “other children”	Lines 127–128
Clarifying independence requirements for random draw verification	Line 141

These enhance clarity and understanding but do **not alter** oversubscription criteria.

B4. Removals to Ensure Full Compliance with the Admissions Code

The School has removed from its Supplementary Information Form (SIF):

- Requests for non-admissible information
- Non-essential contextual descriptions
- All content not used to rank or allocate places

These removals ensure that the policy contains **only** what is lawful and relevant to the admissions process.

We are including all of these alterations and amendments for clarity and transparency. We do not consider that these impact on the ability of students to apply for and receive a place at the school.

We are seeking the views of interested parties in relation to:

- a) whether or not these corrections have a material impact on admissions*
- b) whether or not this policy complies with the School Admissions Code 2021*

Conclusion

The Royal School Wolverhampton remains committed to ensuring that its admission arrangements are:

- **Fair**
- **Clear**
- **Objective**
- **Code-compliant**
- **Aligned with the structure of the all-through school**

Stakeholders are invited to respond via:

- **The online form available on the school website:** <https://bit.ly/RSWConsulation>
- **Email:** admissions@theroyal.school (subject “Consultation”)
- **Post:** Admissions Consultation, The Royal School Wolverhampton, Penn Road WV3 0EG

Thank you for engaging with this process.