Consultation on PAN reduction proposal at Bradford Forster Academy

The purpose of this communication is to provide an opportunity for stakeholder views on the change of the PAN from 210 to 180 per year group.

Background

The current Published Admission Number (PAN) at Bradford Forster Academy is 210. This means that the number of children admitted to the school in Year 7 each year is a maximum of 210.

Bradford Forster Academy and BDAT are proposing to reduce the PAN to 180.

This proposal would mean that the maximum number of pupils intended to be admitted in Year 7 in 2027, and all subsequent Year 7 cohorts, will be 180. For children who already have a place at the school in other year groups there will be no change.

Currently, the net capacity of the school is 1050, made up of 210 places in each year from Year 7 to Year 11.

When planning secondary school places, the Bradford District is split into 9 secondary school planning areas. Bradford Forster Academy sits in the Bradford South East planning area.

Across the Bradford South East planning area there are 800 Year 7 places. Bradford Forster Academy currently has 68 surplus places (there are currently 142 children on roll in Year 7).

Current published forecasts indicate that the numbers of Year 7 places required in Year 7 for the next four intake years across Bradford South East planning area will fall from 2027. Forecasts for Year 7 places needed over the next five years for Bradford Forster Academy are:

2027/28:	188
2028/29:	179
2029/30:	178
2030/31:	174
2031/32:	166

The school has considered the following three options:

a) Do nothing and keep the PAN at 210 – School are predicting less than 180 on roll for the Year 7 classes and are not forecasting to fill to 210 meaning the school will not receive the maximum funding. Although the forecast indicates that Year 7 will not fill, there would be an expectation from the Local Authority that the school can still take up to 210 pupils throughout the whole intake year. This may result in a high number of in-year allocations that could potentially require changes to class organisation during the school year which is detrimental to the pupils and the school.

b) Reduce the PAN to 180, the Year 7 cohort is forecast to have between 166 and 188 allocations in the forecast years (2027 - 2031)– There will be sufficient places to meet the forecasted demand for places.

The School Admissions Code requires that all admission authorities consult where they propose to reduce a PAN. Bradford Forster Academy and BDAT are therefore seeking representations on the proposed change to the PAN for Bradford Forster Academy in the Bradford South East planning area.

Specific proposal: Amend the PAN from 210 to 180

Bradford Diocesan Academies Trust

Bradford Forster Academy and BDAT propose to reduce the PAN from 210 to 180 from 1st September 2027.

This means that the maximum number of pupils intended to be admitted in Year 7 in 2027 and all subsequent Year 7 cohorts, will be 180. For children who already have a place in the school there will be no change.

In accordance with the School Admissions Code (2021), Bradford Forster Academy and BDAT are consulting with key stakeholders, including;

- Bradford Forster Academy, Staff
- Parents/carers of current pupils and prospective parents of pupils
- All other Admission Authorities within the District including Bradford LA.
- Neighbouring Local Authorities
- Councillors and MPs
- Trade Unions
- Anyone else who has an interest in the proposed changes

A copy of the proposal has been published on the BDAT and Bradford Forster Academy website.

This consultation will run for six weeks from Monday 1st December 2025 to Friday 23rd January 2026, after which time any representations received will be considered and a report taken to BDAT for a decision to be made on the PAN for Bradford Forster Academy. Any questions in relation to the consultation should be sent to the school via School contact email address. info@bfa.bdat-academies.org

Factors that have been considered by Bradford Forster Academy and BDAT when deciding to consult on these proposals include:

- A large portion of funding received by schools is directly related to the number of pupils attending the school. Too many pupil vacancies mean that the school will not receive the maximum possible revenue. Therefore, the school is proposing to reduce the number of available places to enable the school to operate more efficiently and cost effectively whilst not having a detrimental effect on the education it offers its pupils.
- The school is located in Bradford South East planning area where there is a falling demand for secondary places from 2027 / 2031, resulting in a significant surplus across the area. There are also significantly lower numbers of younger children across Bradford South East and the wider Bradford District, registered with the NHS who will require a school place over the coming years.
- The total number of pupils from Year 7 to Year 11 recorded by the school on the October 2025 census was 916, which is below the current capacity of 1050, using 87% of the school capacity.
- Bradford Forster Academy and BDAT are more than willing to look creatively at solutions in conjunction with Bradford Local Authority in the future which may help to solve any problems resulting in a shortage of school places in the Bradford South East e.g. a bulge year. Should the LA ask the school to admit children substantially in excess of 1.5FE, the LA will employ it's bulge class funding approach.

This consultation paper will be published on the BDAT and school website

Bradford Diocesan Academies Trust

Bradford Forster Academy and BDAT believe that reducing the PAN will assist the school to provide stability in their long-term planning and allow them to deliver high quality educational outcomes for the pupils currently on roll and prospective pupils. The reduction in PAN will ensure that an appropriate number of places are provided for future pupils, in line with forecasts.