

Consultation on a proposal to increase the overall capacity of Studio West from 550 to 640 (including an increase in capacity for sixth form places from 100 to 125)

Background

Studio West is part of the Kenton Schools Academy Trust. The Trust, as the Admissions Authority for the school, is consulting on and seeking comments on a proposal to increase its capacity from 550 to 640 students. The school currently teaches students from years 7 to 10 and will re-open its 6th Form intake from September 2022 as the student population works its way through the school. The school is extremely popular locally. Through this proposed change, Trustees believe that Studio West will be well placed to strengthen further its highly successful studio school offer, working with its local primary partner schools in continuing to develop quality 0-19 educational provision for the children in this part of North-West Newcastle.

- For September 2020 and 2021, the school has agreed to take additional students into year 7 over and above its PAN as a temporary measure, to help to support the local authority with the management of pressure on places. The school currently has 121 students in year 7, representing an additional 31 students above its PAN of 90.
- For September 2022, in line with its current Admissions Policy, the school intends to maintain its PAN in year 7 at 90, in the full knowledge that it will need to admit numerous students above that number on appeal. For example, even when factoring in a “bulge” year of 120 places for September 2021 new intake, there is a huge waiting list.
- Since opening to year 7 from September 2017, the school has always had to take in additional students over and above its PAN on appeal, which means that its current capacity based on a PAN of 90 totalling 450 in the main school and a projected 100 in the sixth form is already overstretched. Years 7 to 11 numbers alone are projected to be 532 for the academic year 2021-22, which will grow to an anticipated 637 with its current 6th Form capacity.
- Retaining a PAN of 90 will enable the school to maintain its relatively smaller scale specialist Studio School provision, with its strong emphasis on project-based learning and employer engagement at both KS3 and KS4. Whilst projected numbers currently include two “bulge” years, with an increase of 25 places post-16, this will level out at to an anticipated 625. The modest increase in 6th Form provision will enable, with the higher than originally anticipated actual numbers coming through, more young people to enter the 6th Form and follow their personalised, learning pathway to university and/or employment and

training, with a strong emphasis, through the school's unique curriculum offer, on supported work placement opportunities.

Specific proposal

1. The Trustees of Kenton Schools Academies Trust propose to increase, with effect from September 2022, the total capacity of the school from 550 to 640 to accommodate over-subscription and the temporary bulge in pupil numbers in years 7 and 8 from September 2021.
2. This will mean that the number of places available for children in year 7 from September 2022 will be for a "no change" PAN of 90 and for all subsequent years' cohorts, and for an increased 6th Form from 100 to 125.
3. For children who already have a place at the school in other year groups there will be no change; the admission number for all other years, in years 8 to 11 remains at 90 except where the school has assisted in the management of pupil places because of the need to accommodate a bulge in numbers locally.
4. There is no change to the Admissions Criteria for 2022-23, which are on the school's website. The current policy for admissions for 2021-22 is also published on the same website.

Factors that have been taken into consideration by the Board of Trustees in deciding to consult on this proposal include:

- Prioritising improved learning provision and 0-19 progression for local children and young people, building on strong working relationships with the school's principal primary partner schools.
- The management of pupil places locally in the context of new schools' development.
- The modelling and costing of the curriculum premised on this proposed change to ensure sustained delivery of a quality, broad, balanced 11-19 studio school curriculum.
- Early modelling and costing of the curriculum provision to ensure affordability, required space and necessary staffing.

Response to this consultation

- This consultation will run from Monday 15th March to Wednesday 28th April 2021.
- You are invited to submit comments in writing about the proposal outlined above to The Clerk to the Board, via email on governors@kenton.newcastle.sch.uk.
- Following the consultation period, the Board of Trustees will consider any comments received and decide how it wishes to proceed.
- Any subsequent objections will need to be made to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator by 15th May 2021.