



# MAPLE TREE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Climbing the branches of success

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Headteacher: Mrs C Bainbridge B Ed Hons

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## Consultation on a proposed reduction of the published admission number (PAN) for Maple Tree Primary School, Sandy, with effect from September 2020.

**Consultation period: 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2018 – 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2019**

### Background

The current PAN for each year at Maple Tree Primary School is 45. This means that the number of places that the school must make available for Reception is 45 and provision for this number must be maintained through Years 1-6.

The current PAN was established when Maple Tree was first opened in 2000 to cater for the number of children in the local area.

The school is proud that it has been recognised in the most recent Ofsted inspection as one where “pupils are attentive and enthusiastic learners” with an ethos where “pupils learn in a calm, supportive environment.” However, the structure and PAN have proved to pose inherent challenges and cause the school to be vulnerable to changes in national policy. Consequently, the Governing Body has conducted an internal strategic review that has identified the need for a consultation to establish a PAN that is both appropriate and sustainable, whilst continuing to provide a good education for all and meet the demands of the local community.

### Specific Proposal

The Governing Body of Maple Tree Primary School proposes to reduce the PAN of the school from 45 to 30. This would take effect for Reception intake in 2020 and be maintained for subsequent Reception cohorts.

This means that the number of places available for children in Reception in 2020 and subsequent Reception years would be 30. For children who already have a place at the school in other year groups there would be no change, but the admission number for all Key Stage 1 and 2 year groups would be maintained at 30 in future years.

The Governing Body has carefully considered the implications of this proposed change and the following factors have been taken into account:

- The provision of the most appropriate learning environment for all pupils.
- Sustainable financial planning.
- The availability of school places for children within our town.
- Future resource planning and management.

### Why?

- The structure and PAN, coupled with fluctuations in admissions numbers have led to mixed-age classes that vary from year-to-year. A reduction in PAN to a single class intake allows the school to remove mixed-age classes across the school. This year we have been able to avoid mixed-age classes due to pupil numbers in each year group which enables us to deliver a secure foundation for better

educational age appropriate outcomes and to prepare pupils for transition through the Key Stages. The stability also enables us to effectively manage teams across the school, aiding recruitment, development and retention of dedicated staff.

- The fluctuation in pupil numbers has made financial planning much more difficult, especially in a context where budget must cope with the cost of running and maintaining 3 classes for what is effectively 2 classes in terms of age. This is an extra demand made in funding. Long term the ideal minimum number for a financially sustainable class is 30. The school must accept new applicants at any point in the academic year if numbers are below PAN, so cannot plan on the basis that lower numbers will continue. Fundamentally the existing structure and fluctuations in numbers mean that some classes have fewer pupils than needed. This has a direct impact on costs in relation to funding we receive and forces us to continually change the structure of the classes.
- Admission figures show that we have not consistently filled the PAN at Reception for the last few years despite accepting children from outside the catchment area. Although we realise a reduced PAN might mean that a few children whose addresses are furthest from the school site might need to commence education at another local school, Maple Tree Primary School could admit these children at any point where a year group has 30 or less. Central Bedfordshire forecast there is adequate provision at other local primary schools.
- Reducing the PAN will help the Governing Body plan for the long-term stability, a sustainable financial position, and to secure high quality educational outcomes for its pupils.

#### Current Admissions Criteria

As a Foundation school, our Governing Body determines the admission arrangements in agreement with the school so we are, therefore, the 'Admissions Authority'.

Admission to the main school is normally on the basis of pupils living within our catchment.

These are the agreed criteria for admissions to the school:

1. All Looked After children or children who were previously 'looked after'.
2. Children living in the catchment area with siblings at the school.
3. Children living in the catchment area.
4. Other children with siblings at the school.
5. Children who live nearest to the school determined by a straight line distance from the school site to the child's home address.

#### How to Respond

You are invited to submit comments about the proposal within **the consultation period of Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2018 to Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2019** to Mr Ted Rowland, Chair of Governors at Maple Tree Primary School on the attached form.

Following the consultation period, the Governing Body will consider all comments received and take these into account when making a final decision on how to proceed. Admission arrangements for September 2020 will be determined and communicated by Friday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2019 to reflect the outcomes of the consultation.

For further information, please visit the school website at: [www.mapletreepriaryschool.com](http://www.mapletreepriaryschool.com)

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Designation: Parent/Carer   
(with at least one child attending the school)

Parent/Carer   
(with no children currently attending the school)

Staff

Governor

Other   
Please specify

Do you support the proposed plans to decrease the PAN from 45 to 30 pupils?

Yes, I support it

I do not support it

I don't know

Reasons for supporting/not supporting the proposal or further comments:

Signed:

Date:

**Please return by 4pm, Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2019 to**

Mr Ted Rowland, Chair of Governors, Maple Tree Primary School, Hawk Drive, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2WA or [chairofgovs@mapletreepriaryschool.com](mailto:chairofgovs@mapletreepriaryschool.com)