

Statutory consultation on the proposed reduction in Published Admission Number for University Academy Keighley for the 2022/23 academic year

Background

The current Published Admission Number (PAN) at University Academy Keighley is 180. This means that the number of children admitted into the academy each year is a maximum of 180 (excluding any additional admissions due to appeals). The total admission number for the academy is 900 across Years 7-11.

University Academy Keighley occupies a large site in the Utley area of Keighley and shares the site and building with Beechcliffe Special School.

The Pupil Place Planning team in Bradford splits the district into eight secondary school planning areas. University Academy Keighley is located in the Keighley Planning area along with two other secondary schools. Since 2013/14 there have been a significant number of surplus places available in the Keighley planning area and the current forecasts highlight this will continue until the end of the current forecast range in 2026/27.

Until recently the future of University Academy Keighley had been significantly in doubt due to falling student numbers, poor standards and the significant financial pressures caused by crippling PFI costs. The academy was also due to move to WCAT before the Trust ceased trading and was dissolved in 2017.

In September 2018, University Academy Keighley and its strategic partner Carlton Bolling took the decision to lease part of its building to Beechcliffe Special School. The arrangement helped to ensure the long-term future of the academy and ease some of the financial burdens on the academy. Under Carlton Bolling's leadership the academy has now significantly improved and received a 'Good' Ofsted judgement (January 2020) and the number of students on roll has significantly increased, the financial burdens via the PFI costs remain.

In September 2020 an additional area of the University Academy Keighley building was leased to Beechcliffe Special School. This has supported Beechcliffe Special School and Bradford Council in meeting the increased demand for places in specialist provision. The lease has also enabled University Academy Keighley to continue to ease the financial burdens caused by the PFI on the academy.

Due to the additional leased area there is not currently the space to accommodate 180 pupils in every year group.

The local authority forecast for University Academy Keighley indicates that University Academy Keighley is not expected to fill to 180 in any year between 2020/2021 -2026/27. The academy is also not expected to fill to above 150 in any year except in 2022/23. However, the Keighley planning area and the Bradford district are both forecasted to have space therefore leaving no shortfall of places.

The School Admissions Code requires that all admission authorities consult where they propose to reduce a PAN. University Academy Keighley is therefore seeking representations on the proposed change to the PAN for the University Academy Keighley in the Keighley Planning area. In accordance with the School Admissions Code (2014), University Academy Keighley is consulting with key stakeholders, including;

- University Academy Keighley – Governing Body/All Staff
- Parents/carers of current pupils and prospective parents of pupils
- All other Admission Authorities within the District
- Neighbouring Local Authorities
- Trade Unions
- Anyone else who has an interest in the proposed changes.

A copy has been sent to the Schools Adjudicator.

The Academy will publish the proposal on our website.

This consultation period will run for six weeks from 27th November 2020 to 22nd January 2021, after which time any representations received will be considered by the Governing Body.

Specific Proposal

University Academy Keighley proposes to reduce the Published Admission Number from 180 to 150 from September 2022.

This means that the maximum number of pupils intended to be admitted in Year 7 in September 2022, and all subsequent Year 7 cohorts, will be 150.

Factors that have been considered by the Governing Body when deciding to consult on this proposal include:

- Due to the additional leased area there is not currently the space to accommodate 180 pupils in every year group.
- The revenue from the lease and the reduction in numbers will enable the academy to operate more efficiently and cost effectively and help to ensure the academy's long-term sustainability.
- The academy is located in the Keighley planning area where there continues to be a surplus of secondary school places across the area.
- The total number of pupils from Year 7 to Year 11 recorded by the school October 2020 census is 636 and is well below the current academy PAN 900.
- Due to the current numbers of younger children in primary schools in the district, the council forecast expects that there will be sufficient school places available for local children if the PAN is reduced. University Academy Keighley believes that reducing the PAN will assist the academy to provide stability in their long-term planning and allow them to deliver high quality educational outcomes for the pupils currently on roll.

Any representations should be made by email to Mr J Skurr - consultation@uak.email by 22nd January 2021.