



**Consultation on proposal to
change the Published
Admission Number for
Richard Coates CE
Primary School**

13 October 2023

Consultation on the proposal to change the published admission number for Richard Coates CE Primary School

13 October 2023

Background

Pele Trust is the admission authority for the following schools:

Belsay Primary School, Darras Hall Primary School, Heddon St. Andrews CE Primary School, Ponteland Primary School, Ponteland High School and Richard Coates CE Primary School.

Following an annual review, the Board of Directors have identified an amendment they wish to make to the current arrangements.

Published Admission Number (PAN)

The PAN is the number of places we make available as part of our normal intake; this is Reception places in primary schools and Year 7 places in secondary schools. Once the PAN has been set for a school, we will not refuse any applications submitted during the normal admission round for Reception or Year 7 places where the PAN has not been exceeded.

If there is an unexpectedly high demand for places in a particular school and the Trust believes we could admit additional children, we will inform the LA and either admit children above the PAN, as an exception, or increase the PAN accordingly to accommodate more children.

Proposed PAN change for 2025-26

The proposal is to amend the PAN for Reception places at Richard Coates CE Primary School.

NB: The PAN will remain unchanged for all other Pele Trust schools.

School	Phase	Current PAN	Proposed PAN 2025-26 entry
Richard Coates CE Primary School	Primary	60	30

Rationale

In July 2016, Northumberland County Council decided to amend the school organisation within the Ponteland partnership of schools from a 3-tier structure to a primary-secondary model. The pupil modelling for the partnership was based on having seven feeder primary schools that comprised the five Pele Trust primary schools as well as Stamfordham Primary and Whalton Primary. In September 2019, Ponteland Community Middle School changed its status to become a primary school thereby creating an additional primary school to the modelling done during the initial consultation.

Over the last 3 years, the intake in Reception at Richard Coates CE Primary School has been under the PAN (see table below). This has resulted in year groups of between 35 and 45 pupils each year, which has created significant budgetary pressures on the school as class sizes are restricted to 30 in the Early Years and Key Stage 1. This has meant the school has had to operate two classes in these year groups with all the associated staffing costs such as full-time class teachers and teaching assistants.

This table reflects the year group sizes as at September 2023

Year group	Current PAN	Current cohort
Reception	60	44
Year 1	60	45
Year 2	60	35

Budget forecasts indicate that Richard Coates CE Primary School will move into a significant deficit budget that may not be recoverable if no action is taken therefore Directors wish to reduce the PAN to 30, i.e. one class. They believe this will enable the school to operate on a sustainable model that will bring financial stability in the long term. Consideration was given to agreeing a PAN of 45 pupils and adopting mixed-age groups, however, this is not a model preferred by the school or Directors.

Admissions policy

There is no plan to alter or amend the oversubscription criteria within the Pele Trust Admission Policy therefore the consultation is limited to the proposal in respect of reducing the PAN for Richard Coates CE Primary School.

Consultation process

The consultation process will last for a 6-week period (not including the October half-term break). It will commence on Friday 13 October and conclude on Thursday 30 November.

Consultation documents have been shared with the following:

- Pele Trust schools (Headteachers, staff, Academy Committee and parents)
- Wider Ponteland partnership schools including Ponteland Community Primary School, Stamfordham Primary School and Whalton Primary School
- Northumberland County Council (Admissions Team)
- Newcastle Diocesan Education Board (Joint Education Team)
- Newcastle Local Authority (Admissions Team)
- Coates Educational Foundation

In addition, the consultation document is available via the Richard Coates Primary School and Pele Trust websites at www.richardcoatesprimary.co.uk and www.peletrust.org.uk

Consultation responses

Pele Trust Directors welcome comments on the proposal to reduce the PAN for Richard Coates Primary School from 60 to 30 places.

Responses to the consultation can be sent by email to c.barker@ponthigh.org.uk or by post to Clare Barker, c/o Ponteland High School, The Crescent, Callerton Lane, Ponteland, NE20 9EG.

The deadline for responses is midnight on Thursday 30 November 2023.

Our Schools

Belsay School

Darras Hall Primary School

Heddon St Andrew's CE Primary School

Ponteland High School

Ponteland Primary School

Richard Coates CE Primary School

