



**CORPUS CHRISTI CATHOLIC VA PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
**THE GOVERNING BODY**  
**Chair: Mrs Anna Murphy-Sullivan**

11 December 2024

Dear Parents and Carers

**Issue - Background UK Declining Birth Rate**

BCP Council's 2024 Primary Places Planning Data document forecast out to academic year 2026/27, shows a substantial decrease in the number of primary school aged children requiring a school place. To put this in perspective, the current Published Admissions Number (PAN) in the Bournemouth SE Region, within which our school falls, offers 480 places against a gradual decrease in demand falling to 340 in 2026/27. Clearly, this is unsustainable and, in response, BCP Council has asked schools to re-examine their PAN with a view to decreasing their admissions numbers. Further, According to data from the Office of National Statistics (ONS), the number of live births nationally has fallen for five consecutive years, with the total number of live births in 2023 being the fewest since 1977.

The current Published Admission Number (PAN) at Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School is 60, this means that the maximum number of children admitted in Reception each year is 60. The net capacity of the school is 436, made up of 60 places in each year from Reception to Year 2 and 64 places in each year in Key Stage 2.

**School's Response to the Issue**

An Extraordinary Full FGB (which includes the admissions panel) met Monday 4th November and unanimously, after much consideration, agreed to reduce the PAN from 60 to 45 from September 2026, against the three options shown below.

Governors considered the following three options:

- a) Do nothing and keep the PAN at 60 – The Reception classes are not forecast to fill to 60 meaning the school will not receive the maximum funding to enable two classes per year group. Although the forecast indicates that reception will not fill, there would be an expectation from the Local Authority that the school can still take up to 60 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 and resources during the school year which is detrimental to the pupils and the school. This was rejected - unanimously.
- b) Reduce the PAN to 45. The BCP Council primary school places planning forecast shows a surplus of 120 places in the Bournemouth South East area (2026 - 2028) which is the area the school is located. By reducing the PAN there will still be sufficient places to meet the forecasted demand for places. Agreed - unanimously.
- c) to reduce PAN to 30 . This was rejected - unanimously

Please rest assured: **for children who already have a place at the school in other year groups there will be no change and the full implementation of this proposal will only take effect from September 2032.**

## **Admissions Consultation Requirement and Process**

The School Admissions Code 2021 sets out the requirement for admission authorities (Governors) to consult where they propose to reduce a PAN. Hence Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School is seeking the views of the following stakeholders:

- Parents/carers of current pupils and prospective pupils
- School Staff
- Portsmouth Diocese
- BCP Council inc Councillors
- Admission authorities of other primary schools

The Consultation will start from **11th December 2024** until **24th January 2025**

All views submitted during this time will be collated in a report for the Full Governor Body to consider who will decide whether to reduce the PAN at Corpus Christi Catholic School and by how much.

## **Corpus Christi School Admissions Policy 2026/27 Specific Proposal**

Corpus Christi Catholic Primary school Full Governor Body propose to reduce the PAN

from 60 to 45 starting the 1st September 2026. This is the only proposed change to the school's admission arrangements.

If the proposal is agreed, the maximum number of pupils admitted to Reception in 2026, and all subsequent Reception cohorts will be 45. For children who already have a place at the school in other year groups there will be no change.

Prior to consulting on this proposal, Governors have considered the following:

- the total number of pupils from Reception to Year 6, as recorded by the school at the October 2024 census, was 419, which is below the current capacity of 436
- a large portion of the funding received by schools is directly related to the number of pupils attending the school. Too many vacancies mean that schools do not receive the maximum possible revenue per class
- forecasts for future Reception intakes suggest the school is likely to have a significant number of vacancies each year if the PAN remains at 60; a reduction to 45 is therefore required to allow the school to continue to operate efficiently and cost-effectively
- due to declining birth rates, the number of Reception places offered by schools in our school places planning area is significantly higher than that required by the surrounding population. When there is a high level of surplus places in an area, each school is at risk of rapid changes in parental preference having a significant impact on the number of pupils it admits each year. PAN reduction to 45 at Corpus Christi Primary school could therefore have a positive, stabilising effect for all local schools
- the proposed PAN reduction will leave sufficient Reception places for local children

## Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School Future Structure Rationale

The School Governors believe that reducing the PAN from 60 to 45 at Corpus Christi Primary

School will provide stability for the school's long-term planning and allow it to continue to deliver high quality educational outcomes for the pupils currently on roll. The reduction in PAN will ensure that a more appropriate number of places are provided for future pupils, in line with current trends and forecasts for the area.

Yours Sincerely,



Anna Murphy-Sullivan  
Chair of Governors



Simon Lennon  
Headteacher