



Response to consultation on proposed expansion to 1300 capacity (including 250 in Sixth Form) - 4 November to 15 December 2019

The school has been growing over the last five years and the changes to the capacity are only to confirm the current numbers we actually have in the school. The decision to increase the numbers in each year group were a balance between affordability, capacity of classrooms and outdoor space, and offering the best-balanced curriculum for all students.

To maintain our excellent provision, we needed to increase numbers to allow for a broad curriculum. This also supports students' choices in year 9 for their GCSE options. Subjects in the past that did not run are now viable due to our increased numbers. The same is true of our Sixth Form, and increased numbers in lower school lead to an increased offer of subjects for students.

To accommodate this, we have increased our staffing, with classes remaining the same size, and we have been able to increase the number of tutor groups, thus reducing the number of students in each tutor group.

All of this has been accommodated whilst a new eight block classroom is under construction, which will give us the additional space we require. Our new lunch hall was also vital in this decision and, as a member of staff who is on duty every day, the experience of the new facility is incredible. This year is tight as we are still building the block of eight classrooms. Next year we will have much more capacity around the site with a new block and landscaped space around the new Dining Hall.

Our last continued issue is transport. We have been working with the council for a number of years on this problem. The bus companies are working with us but this will continue to be a focus for improvement. B&NES have also responded to our road safety concerns and are looking to place a pedestrian crossing outside of the school.

The decision to increase was not an easy one, but ultimately it was made to increase the experience of current and future students who attend Ralph Allen School.

Andy Greenhough

Headteacher

The Palladian Academy Trust will now put forward the proposal to the Regional Schools' Commissioner.