Lovelace Primary School

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Consultation to reduce pupil addition numbers for
Reception in South of the Borough Schools for September 2028

Dear Families,

We are writing to inform you of important update around school based planning in our local area.

As you may already be aware, the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames is experiencing a significant decline in pupil numbers. As the Headteachers of Lovelace and Ellingham Primary Schools, we have met with our Governing Bodies and Kingston Council to review the current admissions data—specifically looking at the falling number of Reception-age children in Chessington and especially in our corner of South of the Borough.

Across Kingston, Reception applications have been declining since 2015, and local authority forecasts indicate that cohort sizes will continue to drop over the coming years. Locally, in the South of the Borough, there were 269 reception pupil applications for 270 school places in 2015. Whereas in 2025, this reduced dramatically and there were 191 reception applications for 270 school places, leaving a surplus of 79 school places across our area of Chessington.
The forecast is that the number of reception pupils will remain at this level but also that it is likely to continue to fall, leaving a growing number of vacant reception spaces in our schools each year.

Our absolute priority is to ensure that both of our schools continue to provide the highest standards of education, enriched learning environments, and first-class teaching for our community. Because school funding is largely determined by pupil numbers, empty spaces in classrooms creates budget pressures that can stretch resources thinly. By formally aligning our PAN (the number of places we offer in Reception each September) with actual local demand, we will secure long-term financial stability for our schools.

As a result, Governing Bodies across a range of schools in Kingston Borough have decided to review their Admissions Arrangements, this includes Lovelace and Ellingham schools. A formal consultation is being launched today by AfC (Achieving for Children) with parents and the local community on a proposal to permanently reduce the Published Admission Numbers (PAN) in a number of schools, including ours, from **September 2028**:

Lovelace Primary School: *Reducing from 90 to 60 Reception places (from three classes to two).*
Ellingham Primary School: *Reducing from 60 to 30 Reception places (from two classes to one).*

First and foremost, we want to reassure you that this proposal is not a reflection on the quality, reputation, or success of our schools. By taking proactive steps now rather than reacting to budget pressures later, we can safeguard our schools' long-term financial sustainability.

Adjusting our intake size protects our budgets enabling us to maintain and even enhance our current staffing levels, specialist resources, and allows us to support our communities and families which we value so much.

This proposed change will not affect children who already attend our school, nor will it alter our current class structures for existing year groups. The proposed reduction applies only to future Reception admissions.

The local borough's formal consultation is your opportunity to read the full details of the proposal and share your views. You can access the consultation documents and submit your feedback directly via the borough's website at

http://kr.afcinfo.org.uk/admission-arrangements before the closing date of **Wednesday 6th January 2027.**

To help answer any immediate questions you may have, we have put together the following *Frequently Asked Questions*:

Frequently Asked Questions

How will current pupils be impacted by this change?

Current year groups at both schools will not be affected at all. This proposed change applies strictly to the number of places available for new Reception cohorts starting in **September 2028** and beyond.

I have a younger child who I hope will join the school—will they be impacted?

While there will be fewer places available overall, the admissions criteria and application process will remain exactly the same. Children with siblings already at the school will continue to receive the exact same priority in our oversubscription criteria as they do today.

Are other schools in Kingston in the same position?

Yes. Falling birth rates, combined with families moving out of London due to rising living costs, have affected schools across the capital. Several other primary schools in Kingston have already reduced their intake or are currently consulting on similar reductions for their September 2027 and 2028 intakes.

We will be hosting an informal drop-in session in our schools where you will have the opportunity to ask questions or discuss what this means for our school in person. There is no presentation for this session, but if you would like to ask questions the leadership team will be available to talk any concerns through with you. At Lovelace this session will be Monday 20th November at 2.45pm.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support and partnership in making our school such a wonderful place for our children to learn and grow.

Best wishes,
Miss Kelly Dixon