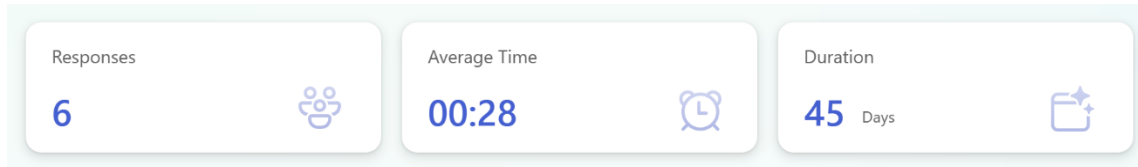


Consultation in relation to amending Higham Lane School's admissions policy for 2027-2028.

On Friday 24th October we launched a 6-week consultation process in relation to amending Higham Lane School's admissions policy for 2027-28.

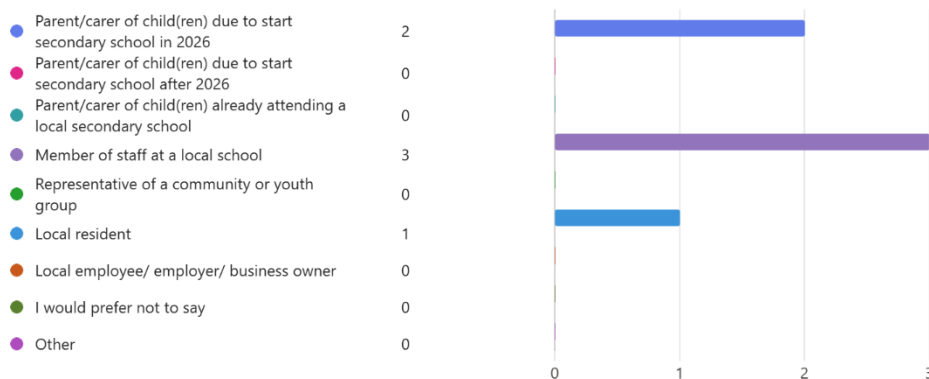


The consultation was promoted in the following ways:

- by email with local schools and organisations
- on Central England Academy Trust's website
- with parents across all of our Trust schools via school newsletters
- sent internally to all governors and staff in our Trust

Responses:

We received a total of 6 responses to the consultation as outlined below:

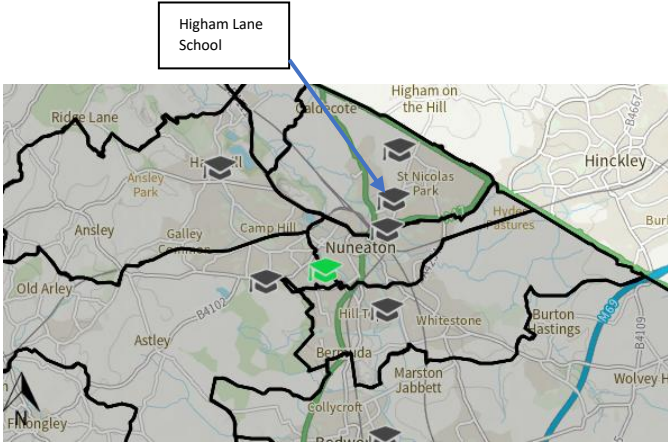



Responses were mostly supportive and in agreement with the proposed amendments to Higham Lane School's admissions policy:

Do you support the amendments that Central England Academy Trust are proposing to make to the Higham Lane School 2026/27 Admissions Policy?



Feedback received:

Member of staff at a local school - 1 comment received	Central England Academy Trust response
<p>After reviewing the rationale provided, I must register strong and unequivocal opposition to this change.</p> <p>While I understand the internal logic from a Trust management perspective, the justifications offered, such as shared values, governance, and continuity, do not withstand scrutiny as criteria for public admissions priority. Governance structures and MAT alignment are administrative constructs. They should not supersede principles of proximity, fairness, and community integrity.</p> <p>This proposal would disrupt well-established pathways for children within Hartshill and neighbouring areas, many of whom progress naturally to local schools such as Hartshill Academy. It would instead favour children several miles away over others who live closer to Higham Lane School but are not linked by Trust affiliation. Such a move risks being perceived less as a community initiative and more as a strategic redirection of pupils, and therefore funding, into the Trust's own schools.</p> <p>Furthermore, this approach fragments local educational planning and risks destabilising rolls at other schools by reallocating cohorts that historically balanced the intake across Nuneaton and surrounding areas. These shifts disproportionately affect schools serving higher-need populations.</p> <p>Admissions arrangements must be seen to serve the wider public good, not consolidate MAT interests. The proposed change fails that test.</p>	<p>The proposed admissions policy ensures that Higham Lane School will continue to prioritise looked-after and previously looked-after children, siblings, and distance from the school by the use of a clear catchment / priority area, in line with paragraphs 1.7 and 1.8 of the Code, ensuring proximity remains a key factor.</p> <p>Catchment areas, used by all Warwickshire schools, can sometimes mean that a family living within a catchment area but potentially 2-3 miles away from a school will be prioritised over a family living closer to a school but outside of its named catchment area. It is therefore not always as simplistic as distance from a school in the locality. This is the case in the Nuneaton area as shown in this map:</p>  <p>Michael Drayton's catchment area already significantly overlaps with Higham Lane School's catchment area, and so this is already an established transition route for many families. It therefore would not be destabilising rolls by relocating cohorts as they are a geographical and expected feeder school.</p> 

	<p>Under paragraph 1.9 of the Admissions Code, admission authorities may give priority to children attending named feeder schools, provided this is clearly stated in the policy. The Code recognises feeder arrangements as an acceptable criterion where they reflect reasonable local circumstances and support continuity of education.</p> <p>Our proposal to include Michael Drayton Junior School as a feeder is based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical transition pattern: A number of pupils from Michael Drayton have been offered places at Higham Lane School. • Local circumstances: The catchment areas of the two schools significantly overlap making this an established and expected transition route for many families already. The school is part of the same multi-academy trust serving the locality. • Educational continuity: The Code encourages arrangements that promote stability and progression for pupils.
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Summary

5 out of 6 responses received (83%) were supportive of the proposed changes. There were responses from a range of different stakeholders.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Central England Academy Trust proceeds with plans to amend Higham Lane School's admissions policy for 2027-28.