



February 2026



Consultation on Admissions Arrangements for Sixth Form Entry – September 2027

The Russell Education Trust (RET) is the admissions authority for Bristol Free School. The Local Governing Body (LGB) propose changes to the school's admissions policy and undertake consultation with the local community. Following this process, the LGB review consultation responses and report the outcome to the RET Board of Trustees, who determine the final policy.

Bristol Free School have recently consulted on the Sixth Form Admissions Policy for September 2027. The statutory six-week consultation ran from **Friday 12 December 2025 – Friday 23 January 2026**. The consultation was published on the school's website for the duration of the consultation period. Interested parties and appropriate bodies were consulted in accordance with 1.47 of the Admissions Code 2021.

Proposed Change: Sixth Form Published Admission Number (PAN)

Bristol Free School Sixth Form has a **Target Admission Number (TAN)** of **150 students** for Year 12. The Sixth Form Centre has limited physical capacity, and exceeding this number would significantly reduce available space, increase class sizes, and adversely affect the quality of education for both current and future students. Maintaining the TAN is essential to ensure a safe, effective learning environment and uphold high standards of teaching and student support.

Internal students are automatically entitled to a place in Year 12, provided they meet the minimum academic entry requirements. While some students choose alternative post-16 options, demand varies each year. With a Year 7 PAN of 200, there is a risk that internal transfers alone could exceed the Year 12 TAN. In 2025, **127 students progressed from Year 11 to Year 12** (a 64% retention rate based on the Year 7 PAN). This figure is likely to rise due to inclusive entry requirements and strong Key Stage 4 outcomes, where **80% of students achieve at least five grades at 4+, including English and Maths**—the minimum entry requirement for BFS Sixth Form.

The current Year 12 **Published Admission Number (PAN)** for external students is **30**, which is significantly higher than comparable local sixth forms with a similar ratio of Year 12 TAN to Year 7 PAN.

The school remains committed to serving the local community by offering places to external students in Year 12. However, to reduce the risk of exceeding the Target Admission Number (TAN) of 150, it is proposed that the **Year 12 PAN for external applicants is reduced from 30 to 10**.



It was noted in the consultation that:



- The proposed Year 12 PAN represents the **minimum number of external applicants who will be admitted**.
- This change will have **no** impact on internal Sixth Form applicants. The school will continue to offer all internal candidates who meet the entry criteria a guaranteed place in Sixth Form.
- Additional external applicants may be admitted, provided the total Year 12 intake does not exceed the TAN of 150.

Consultation Responses

1 response to the consultation was received from a local resident. This consultee expressed concern for the reduction in the PAN for external applicants from 30 to 10, as they believe this will disadvantage local families who do not live in the catchment area and could discourage external students from applying.

Decision

As set out within the consultation, the proposed Year 12 PAN of 10 is the minimum number of places which would be offered to external students. Additional external students may be admitted depending on the uptake from internal students, provided that the total Year 12 intake does not exceed the TAN of 150.

Upon consideration of the response to the consultation and following recommendations from the Bristol Free School Governing Body, the RET Board of Trustees, decided to adopt the proposed change to the school's Sixth Form Admissions Policy and have determined the final Bristol Free School Admissions Policy and Sixth Form Admissions Policy for 2027-28. These documents have now been published on the school's website.