

# Bridgnorth Endowed School

## Sixth Form Closure and Reduction in the Published Admission Number (PAN)

### Consultation Paper

Consultation on the closure of Sixth Form provision and a  
reduction in the PAN at Bridgnorth Endowed School

**Closure of the Sixth Form with effect from September 2019**

(Existing Year 12 and 13 students to complete their qualifications)

(No proposed intake of students into the Sixth Form in September 2019)

(Sixth Form to close in August 2020)

**Reduction in the PAN for entry in September 2020**

The Governors at Bridgnorth Endowed School have put together the following information to help parents, staff and students and other interested parties comment on the proposed closure of the Sixth Form and reduction in the PAN at Bridgnorth Endowed School.

There will be a public consultation evening at 6pm on Thursday 29 November 2018 in the Old Hall, Bridgnorth Endowed School.

**We would like to invite you to send your comments to**  
[consultation@bridgnorthendowed.co.uk](mailto:consultation@bridgnorthendowed.co.uk)

**Please put either 'Sixth Form Closure' or 'Reduction in the PAN' in the subject line and please indicate your interest, e.g. staff, parent, student, etc.**

**The consultation will run from 19 November 2018 until the close of business on 14 January 2019.**

Thank you for your consideration.

# Bridgnorth Endowed School Sixth Form Closure Consultation Paper

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## Vision

Our mission is simple; an outstanding secondary school (11-16) with high standards of academic achievement for all, underpinned by traditional values of discipline, courtesy and good manners.

We aim to deliver an all-round education that inspires young people to achieve beyond what they believe is possible, through an academic curriculum and exciting extra-curricular programme, within a positive setting.

Our focus is to develop the character and academic skills that our students will need in order to compete for places at the best universities and the most sought after apprenticeships.

We are looking to recruit a maximum of 120 students each year, and 600 students in total, so that we may create a school structure that will allow for staffing and financial stability in the long-term future.

## Proposal

1. To consult on the proposal not to recruit new sixth form students from September 2019 at Bridgnorth Endowed School. This will mean that the Sixth Form would close when the current Year 12 students complete their studies in July 2020.
2. To reduce the published admission number at Bridgnorth Endowed School from the current number of 174 to a proposed number of 120.

## Background

### Closure of the Sixth Form

In recent years, a reduction in government funding for sixth form provision in schools has created a financial dilemma for governors and school leaders in setting budgets. There has been an increasing need for schools with small sixth forms to top up post-16 funding from the 11-16 budget, thus diverting funds away from their target group. In addition, schools with small sixth forms (fewer than 200 students) are particularly at risk of losing their Key Stage 5 provision due to non-viable class sizes and an inability to offer a sufficiently broad curriculum. Furthermore, over the last ten years the number of students being educated in the town of Bridgnorth has fallen by twenty percent and the number of students staying in Bridgnorth to study post-16 courses has fallen by forty percent.

Having implemented a number of strategies over the last five years to improve the viability of the Sixth Form that have ultimately proved unsuccessful, it is regrettably the considered opinion of the trustees and governors at Bridgnorth Endowed School that removal of sixth form provision is necessary for the continued good of the whole school.

It is anticipated that the removal of the Sixth Form at Bridgnorth Endowed School will result in more resources being available to support the school's mission to be an outstanding 11-16 school.

### Reduction in the published admission number (PAN)

Over the last ten years the number of students being educated in the town of Bridgnorth has dropped from 1907 students to 1533 students. The PAN at Bridgnorth Endowed School has remained the same and is currently 174.

Given the reduction in the number of students in the town of Bridgnorth over the last ten years it is very unlikely that we will ever see 174 students joining Bridgnorth Endowed School in a single year group. With two secondary schools in Bridgnorth there is an oversupply of secondary school places.

A reduction in the PAN will allow us to modify the school structure that was originally designed to provide an education for a larger number of students.

We believe that a reduction in the PAN to 120 will enable us to create a new school structure that will bring staffing and financial stability to Bridgnorth Endowed School in the long-term future.

## Context

### National

- Funding for 16-19 provision has fallen year-on-year for the last eight years, and is currently at its lowest since 2002.
- Several small schools across England have closed their sixth forms due to decreased funding and small class sizes.

### Bridgnorth Endowed School Sixth Form

- Bridgnorth Endowed School Sixth Form currently consists of 54 students, which means some classes have as few as one or two students.
- With a large number of students seeking 16-19 provision outside of Bridgnorth, fewer students remaining in Bridgnorth result in Bridgnorth Endowed School being able to offer only a limited number of A-level and vocational subjects.
- With reduced numbers, the proportion of the budget required from the 11-16 funding to maintain the sixth form is increasing to an unsustainable level.

## Rationale for the closure of the Sixth Form

### Changing trends in Bridgnorth

The number of students attending a secondary school in Bridgnorth has decreased by 20% in the last ten years.

The table below shows the total number of students taught in the two secondary schools in the town of Bridgnorth during the last ten years.

Year	Number of students taught in the two secondary schools in Bridgnorth
2007-08	1907
2008-09	1899
2009-10	1865
2010-11	1841
2011-12	1788
2012-13	1720
2013-14	1650
2014-15	1626
2015-16	1569
2016-17	1533

The number of students remaining in the town of Bridgnorth for their 16-19 provision has decreased by 40% in the last ten years.

The table below shows the total number of students studying 16-19 courses in the Bridgnorth.

Year	Number of students studying 16-19 courses in a school sixth form in Bridgnorth
2007-08	324
2008-09	311
2009-10	297
2010-11	284
2011-12	268
2012-13	258
2013-14	236
2014-15	212
2015-16	208
2016-17	195

### Size of sixth form colleges

An average sixth form college has around 1000 students, while an average school sixth form has approximately 200. As a result, economies of scale apply which means it is more expensive per student for schools to provide sixth form provision than a sixth form or further education college.

The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that sixth forms with **less than 200** students are at risk of not being financially viable. The total number of students in the Bridgnorth Endowed School Sixth Form over the last ten years is shown in the table below:

Year	Number of students in Bridgnorth Endowed Sixth Form
2009-10	150
2010-11	150
2011-12	145
2012-13	135
2013-14	118
2014-15	93
2015-16	97
2016-17	101
2017-18	82
2018-19	55

As a result, schools with small sixth forms are forced to subsidise the sixth form from other funding streams, such as that for 11 to 16 year olds.

## Funding at 16-19

The uncertain future of school sixth forms has been highlighted in the media and particularly in the light of the budget changes to post-16 funding, which has substantially declined over the last eight years.

Analysis from the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) has revealed that funding per student in sixth forms has fallen by more than a fifth (21 per cent) per student since 2010-11 – and it remains lower than at any point since 2002-03.

Bridgnorth Endowed School recognises the value of having a sixth form, but it has to be financially viable, and not detract resources from other areas of the school.

The table below illustrates the extent of the funding difficulty. Small schools with less than 200 students may be required to divert funds from their 11-16 budget to subsidise their small sixth form.

Year Group	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
Year 12	49	44	57	39	16
Year 13	44	53	44	43	39
Total	93	97	101	82	55
Difference from 200	-107	-103	-99	-118	-145
Average Income Per Student	£4,094.90	£4,138.96	£4,131.21	£4,022.48	£4,022.48
Balance	-£438,154.30	-£426,312.88	-£408,989.79	-£474,652.64	-£583,259.60

## Alternative sixth form provision

An increasing number of students are choosing alternative sixth form and further education colleges that are able to offer a wider variety of courses than are on offer at Bridgnorth Endowed School. As a result of fewer students staying in the town of Bridgnorth for 16-19 courses, Bridgnorth Endowed School has had to reduce the number of courses it is able to offer which in turn then sees fewer students choosing to remain at the school.

Over the last five years, Bridgnorth Endowed School has asked students about the reasoning behind their decisions regarding 16-19 provision. Some of their responses are shown below:

- Students are seeking a breadth of curriculum that Bridgnorth Endowed School is not able to provide.
- Students are able to access a wider range of facilities at larger institutions.
- Students seek the social aspect that can be provided by larger institutions.
- Students recognise that larger further education institutions provide an education that is more similar to higher education, and is therefore seen as better preparation for study at university.
- Students believe that they are more likely to receive specialist teaching at a sixth form college or further education college and are therefore more likely to achieve the outcomes they need for university.

## What would the sixth form closure mean for students?

### Current Year 13 and 12 students

Bridgnorth Endowed School is committed to providing students who have already embarked on their two year courses with high quality teaching until the end of those courses in July 2020.

### Current Year 11 students

Current Year 11 students wishing to pursue A level and Level 3 courses will need to apply for places with alternative post-16 providers.

We recognise that some of our students may be disappointed by this decision. Fortunately there exists a wealth of very high quality provision in the local area. I have held meetings with the Principals at King Edward VI College in Stourbridge, the Shrewsbury Colleges Group and at Kidderminster College. I am hugely impressed with what is on offer at these institutions for our young people and I am excited about how we may work with them in the future. I realise that some of our Year 11 students may have missed open evenings at these institutions, however all three Principals have offered their support in ensuring our young people receive the very best information, advice and guidance and have offered to work with us to ensure this happens. I look forward to discussing this with our Year 11 students in the near future.

## Who is being consulted regarding this change?

Bridgnorth Endowed School is consulting the following groups:

- Parents/carers of students at the school.
- Staff currently employed at the school and any due to take up a post in the next academic year.
- Students at the school.
- Feeder primaries.
- Local post-16 sixth form and further education providers.
- The local authority.
- The wider local community.

## Have your say

Before we make our final decision regarding sixth form closure we would like to hear your views. There will be a public consultation evening at 6pm on Thursday 29 November 2018 in the Old Hall, Bridgnorth Endowed School.

Trustees and governors are interested to know your thoughts on this important change to our status.

Please take time to respond to our consultation by sending an email to [consultation@bridgnorthendowed.co.uk](mailto:consultation@bridgnorthendowed.co.uk) putting 'Sixth Form Closure' or 'Reduction in PAN' in the subject line and indicate your interest (e.g. parent, student, staff, etc.).

The consultation will run from 19 November 2018 until close of business on 14 January 2019.

## Anticipated questions and answers

**Will all students who are already in the Sixth Form at Bridgnorth Endowed School be able to complete their courses?**

Yes, all current sixth form students at Bridgnorth Endowed School will be able to complete their chosen courses.

**Will students in Year 11 and below at Bridgnorth Endowed School who want to study 16-19 courses still be able to do so?**

Yes, there is sixth form provision in Bridgnorth and ample sixth form provision across Shropshire of a high quality and the transport links are excellent. We will continue to offer excellent information, advice and guidance to enable our students to make the right choices.

**In future, will students be able to access the same courses which have previously been offered at Bridgnorth Endowed School?**

Yes, all of the courses currently offered at Bridgnorth Endowed School are available elsewhere locally. There is sixth form provision in Bridgnorth offering a range of A level and vocational courses.

**How will the changes affect my child who is attending a primary school in the Bridgnorth area?**

The changes will not adversely affect primary school students that would normally choose Bridgnorth Endowed School for their secondary education. Resources currently used to maintain the sixth form will be targeted at continually improving the quality of education for students aged 11-16.

**Why is this change being proposed?**

The number of students choosing to remain in Bridgnorth for their 16-19 education has been decreasing steadily over a number of years. The number has reduced to such a level that Governors now consider that it is more sensible to use resources to continually improve the quality of provision at 11-16 for the benefit of a large number of students than trying to maintain a very expensive sixth form for a small number of students.