



BRADGATE
Education Partnership

Stronger Together

WVA OPERATIONAL CAPACITY REQUEST:

Trust Board

DATE: November 2025

PRODUCED BY:
Simon Cotton

Ambitious
Collaborative
Ethical



WVA OPERATIONAL CAPACITY (WITH IMMEDIATE EFFECT)

Year 9 Operational Capacity (220 students from current 229)

The school proposes reducing Year 9's operational capacity from 229 to 220 students due to multiple intersecting pressures. The cohort presents significant behavioural challenges with high suspension rates, elevated negative behaviour points, and frequent lateness, all requiring intensive pastoral support.

Design Technology classes already exceed safety guidelines at 23 students per class (maximum recommended is 20), and the school cannot add capacity without additional staff.

While EHCP numbers align with national averages at 1.7%, the 21% of students requiring SEND support exceeds the 14.2% national average, creating substantial staffing demands—particularly problematic as the school has been unable to recruit Teaching Assistants despite advertising since the academic year began – This impacts on the schools ability to effectively support these students. The SENDCO's recent arrival and current absence due to surgery further strains provision, and the recent admission of two permanently excluded students has already impacted both pastoral and academic capacity.

Year 10 Operational Capacity (200 students from current 204)

Year 10's proposed capacity of 200 students reflects even more acute pressures than Year 9. The cohort faces similar behavioural challenges including high suspensions, persistent low-level disruption, and lateness issues requiring ongoing intervention. Most significantly, 90 (44%) students are on the SEN register—a substantially higher proportion than the 14.2% national average—alongside 5 students with EHCPs. This concentration of additional needs creates exceptional demands on Teaching Assistant provision, differentiated curriculum planning, and pastoral support at a time when recruitment remains unsuccessful and the SENDCO position is compromised. The combination of staffing constraints, inability to fill essential support roles, and the intensity of behavioural and SEND needs makes the current cohort size unsustainable for maintaining educational quality and statutory compliance.

Simon Cotton
Director of Education
1st December 2025

Approved by Trust Board 10/12/25

