

**Admission Appeal Defence Statement
Secondary School – The Rochester Grammar School
Admission Appeal for Year 7 in September 2024**

Please be advised that each parent who lodges an appeal will have a personalised defence statement forwarded to them as part of their case papers.

Pupils Name:
Date of Birth:
Published Admission Number: 205
Number of Applications received: 751 (643 from grammar assessed girls)
How many places were offered on national offer day and what is the position today: Offer Day: 235 Current:

Places Offered – (Please catalog oversubscription criteria)	Numbers
1. Looked after children	
2. Pupils eligible for pupil premium funding	
3. Sibling who at the time of admissions attends RGS	
4. Children who attend any Thinking Schools Academy Trust primary school	
5. Children of staff employed by the academy	
6. Child’s health reasons	
7. Children who live closest to the school	
Total number of pupils offered a place	235
Rank position of last child offered a place (for criterion 7 above)	
Rank position of this appellant	

Under which criteria was this child considered for admission;
Distance of last child allocated a place (N/A if not applicable);

Grammar Assessment:	
Headteacher/Medway Review:	
Medway Test Information	
Mathematics	
Extended Writing	
Verbal Reasoning	
Total Score	

Up to and including the 2019-20 intake the RGS PAN was 175. In 2017-18 and 2018-19 we did viability studies of rooming, capacity, size of site and staffing and agreed to accept an additional 30 students over our PAN, allowing more students to access the school. As part of the government expansion programme in 2018, RGS was successful in a bid to build a new sports hall, 2 new Art/DT rooms and to convert 2 classrooms into science labs. As part of this bid RGS increased its PAN to 205 permanently from September 2020. In September 2020, the school agreed to accept an additional 30 students over PAN (235). Since September 2021 the school has accepted 205 students into Year 7. For September 2024, the school has agreed to accept an additional 30 students over PAN (235).

Having 8 groups in Year 7 with 30 students in each would be the maximum capacity and admitting more students would cause detriment to learning. This is something that we would want to avoid as RGS is a school that prides itself on giving its learners the best learning community.

From the school's perspective, 30 in a class is our absolute maximum for several key reasons. Firstly we have many classrooms in the school which are not large enough to hold a class of 30: B16, B59, several languages' classrooms, some English classrooms and all of our S Block rooms (7 classrooms) can only hold 25 and that is not a comfortable learning environment. This poses capacity and rooming challenges.

In some cases, e.g. Creative and Expressive subjects (e.g. Design and Technology and Food Technology which is delivered to all Yr7 students), 30 students would pose us with a big issue in regards to Health and Safety. The specialist classrooms for these subjects can only support smaller classes for Health and Safety. We have calculated that we can sustain smaller class sizes as we have the budget and staffing to accommodate splitting the year group into smaller groups. Any more than this would mean that an extra class will be needed which would cause financial restraint for the school – this, in itself, could mean that we have to reduce our curriculum offer as we do not have the budget to employ more specialist staff, nor do we have the number of specialist rooms needed for extra groups. Reducing the curriculum offer would obviously hinder the breadth of subjects that we could offer which is not conducive to students' holistic learning.

Our staffing model for September 2024 is designed for 8 teaching groups in Year 7. If more students were admitted to RGS this year that increased the teaching groups, we would not have the staffing capacity to timetable this.

We do not have the staffing capacity within the pastoral team, or classrooms, to create an extra form tutor group.

It is also important to note that funding for Year 7s is lagged which means we do not receive the funding until the year after. This does have a significant impact on our educational resources for one year which can cause detriment to learning. We have budgeted to manage this based on accepting 235 next year.

Increased numbers of students mean interventions have had to increase. Class sizes are increasing at all levels across the school which has a detrimental effect on the interventions and support available within lessons.

We have one SENCO in the school and she also is the academic support for our Additional Educational Needs students. In total we have 90 students on the SEND register which the SENCO works with and she supports AEN students on an ad hoc basis. She does also have a teaching role so is a resource which is already stretched. We only have one member of non-teaching pastoral support staff and will have no TAs in the school.

Increased numbers of students mean we have to monitor and manage the number of students trying to access the hall at break as they enter to purchase snacks. At lunchtime we have to operate two sittings and this reduces the amount of time students are able to stay seated in the hall to eat their food. Due to the lack of indoor communal space and a shortage of space for seating during lunchtime we already have to put seating on the stage.

Assemblies are very difficult as a whole year group does not fit in certain areas. We run 3 whole school assembly sittings a week and where we have taken over PAN in other years we are at maximum capacity to sit all students in the Hall. If more students are admitted on appeal, this could compromise the health and safety of students in this space.

Increased numbers also have an impact during exam sessions. When we have full mocks or external exams we have to re-room classes. This is becoming more and more difficult as not all rooms can be used or hold 30 students.

Going beyond our temporarily increased PAN would mean that we would have to significantly increase the capacity of the pastoral teams, something that we cannot financially afford to do. Also, access to the Pastoral Team will become more limited if we have more than our expected number of students and we want our pastoral leads to really know their children and their families.

We do not have the resources or finance to accommodate more students. Admitting more students on appeal would be putting the school into a very difficult financial position, rooming position and health and safety position.

Students on roll (1177): 29 February 2024

Year 7	203
Year 8	202
Year 9	190
Year 10	226
Year 11	168
Year 12	84
Year 13	104

Completed by: Mrs C Brinklow, Principal

Date: 29 February 2024