

**Admission Appeal Defense Statement
Secondary School – The Victory Academy
Admission Appeal for Year 7 in September 2025**

Published Admission Number: 240
Number of Applications received: 240
How many places were offered on national offer day: 240

Places Offered – (Please catalog oversubscription criteria)	Numbers
EHCP	7
Looked After	3
Sibling	52
TSAT Primary School	16
Children of Staff	0
Medical	0
Distance	162
Local Authority Allocation	0
Total number of pupils offered a place;	240

Distance of last child allocated a place (N/A if not applicable); The details of the last children allocated are: 4782.40

<p>Currently (2024/2025) in each year group the numbers are as follows 2024;</p> <p><i>Year 7 – 210/210, Year 8 – 212/210, Year 9 – 210/210, Year 10 – 210/210, Year 11 – 225/240</i></p> <p>In September 2025, our Year 7 PAN has increased from 210 to 240. To support this increase we have re-purposed space which is currently allocated for Sixth Form study. In September 2025, the Sixth Form study space will be moving into a new purpose-built building. Therefore, our defense rests on total student numbers and that his, having done all we can to meet parental choice, prevents us from going over PAN due to the compromising impact on health, wellbeing, safety and quality of provision.</p> <p><i>Total student numbers (including Sixth Form):</i> 2023/2024 – 1189 2024/2025 - 1224</p> <p>The school operates a waiting list for student applications in year groups that are at the PAN. As soon as a place is available, we offer the place based on the over subscription criteria stated in our policy. We believe this is the fairest way to fill any places from this list according to our fair and transparent criteria.</p> <p>Paragraph 3.2(b) of the Schools Admission Appeals Code poses the question “in light of current school organisation and structure, what effect an additional admission would have”. The school cannot admit more than 240 students into Year 7 for the following reasons:</p>

Quality of provision

- In admitting above our PAN this effectively reduces the quality of provision the school is able to offer both in regards to classroom education and additional support for those who need it especially those with additional educational needs.
- An extra child would prejudice the education of those already there as they may have to take it in turns to use equipment; therefore, reducing the time the existing students have to use such equipment. An extra pupil may mean relying on absent pupils to teach groups which would be unacceptable. For example, IT classrooms have a maximum of 30 computers/desks in each and cannot accommodate additional power/data points without full rewiring which is a significant financial cost. Admitting additional students would mean that students would have to take turns which impact on the quality of provision.
- As an additional child moves up through the year groups, further problems would be caused as certain GCSE option groups are limited by size. Therefore, additional students would reduce the choice available to existing students and therefore prejudice them.
- The school is made up of a single square building with a courtyard in the centre. Newly built/converted classrooms have had to be constructed/renovated within the original footprint/building restrictions. This has resulted in a number of rooms including maths, humanities, and some computer rooms failing to meet the space requirements of new build classrooms (49m² instead of the recommended minimum of 53m²). Space is very limited and the majority of these classrooms have been converted to fit 15 double desks for students and 1 teacher area/desk only. Therefore, we do not have sufficient space or furniture necessary to host over 30 in a class. A figure of 240 gives 8 classes of 30 students (with the exception of DT where for safety reasons we have classes of no more than 19 students). Any more than 240 students in Year 7 would make accommodating students in classrooms highly challenging and prejudice the quality of education. Without further additional buildings the school cannot accommodate further increases in its PAN.
- Accepting pupils above PAN would require revision of the school's curriculum model to increase the number of class sets in year 7 to accommodate more pupils. This would require additional classroom spaces which we do not have, and additional staff recruitment which would impact financial costings.
- Intake of pupils above 240 in Year 7 impacts on school funding as funding for additional students is lagged and we therefore would not receive funding until 2026/27 academic year. This means we would be educating the student and incurring additional staffing and resourcing costs with no additional funding for Year 7.

Health, Wellbeing and Safety

- Pressure on effectively managing food collection, movement around the school and safeguarding welfare in regards to toilet capacity would be substantial above our published numbers. This could prevent our ability to safeguard the welfare of students on a day-to-day basis whilst meeting their basic needs.
- Specialist spaces such as science labs and DT workshops have a set number of fixed benches which cannot be increased. The design also provided for close supervision of the use of tools/equipment. We therefore cannot increase class

sizes beyond our current maximum without compromising health and safety. The school had plans to expand its specialist teaching spaces in science by converting classrooms to lab space, but this is now having to be a phased approach over several years due to funding.

- At present we do not have enough Performing Arts and P.E. changing rooms and are already repurposing classrooms with blackout blinds to allow space for changing lessons. Admitting students above PAN increases numbers of students in changing rooms at once, which then means we would no longer be compliant with square footage per child health and safety recommendations set out by the association of P.E. It would also pose a challenge from a security perspective with several classes sharing spaces and leaving bags/personal possessions in a shared area.
- Additional students above agreed PAN impacts class sizes and subsequently adds to staff marking load, and staff stress and wellbeing.
- Transport to the school on local roads and on site is at / overcapacity and any further admission would place an exceptional and unmanageable strain on local road networks and the ability for students to arrive safely and on time to school.

Bullying Statement

The Victory Academy has a clear anti-bullying policy in common with all schools in Medway. However, this does not mean that instances of bullying cannot take place. In line with all schools we have procedures for dealing with all allegations of bullying, and we use our pastoral team to investigate and resolve these as best we can. Our response is robust and we would expect you to experience the same response here as you would elsewhere.

In summary, whilst the school is sympathetic to the family's request for a place, it believes that the original decision not to offer a place was the correct one. This is in order that there is no prejudice to both the efficient use of resources and the education of the other children who have been allocated places.

Completed by: Mr O Owen _____ Headteacher _____ Date: 01/03/2025