

**ST PETER'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL
FULL GOVERNING BOARD INCLUDING ADMISSIONS
THURSDAY 13th JANUARY 2022 at 5.30pm
VIRTUAL MEETING VIA MS TEAMS**



MINUTES

GOVERNORS PRESENT: Clive Hough (Chair), Oliver Kneale, Andy McGlown (HT), Sarah Platt.

IN ATTENDANCE: Matt Roberts (SBM), Catherine White (Clerk), Chris Pollitt (DHT)

Meeting started at 5.35pm and finished at 6.11pm.

1 OPENING PRAYER

The Chair of Governors invited Sarah Platt to open the meeting with a prayer.

2 APOLOGIES

Apologies and reasons for absence were **received** and **accepted** from Pam Davis.

3 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of any other business.

4 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Governors were invited to **declare** any conflicts of interest.
No declarations were made.

Staff in attendance: Andy McGlown (HT), Chris Pollitt (SBM) Matt Roberts (SBM)

Andy McGlown joined the meeting at this point (5.36pm)

5 ADMISSIONS 2022

The SBM led this item. Supporting papers shared at the meeting had been circulated to Governors in advance for their review.

The SBM shared on screen the criteria for the ranking policy and provided a brief overview. Categories 2-4 were applications from Catholic families. Category 5 and lower were non-Catholic applicants including siblings of school or applicants attending a feeder primary.

The SBM shared at the meeting a categorised numerical breakdown of the admissions received for September 2022 to provide an overview and numbers of applicants from each school in each of the categories.

Category 0 were EHCP or statement of special needs, as these overrode the main admissions criteria. The breakdown did not determine the preference of the applicants. Feeder schools had been highlighted for ease of reference.

A total of 444 expressions of interest had been received from the Local Authority for St Peters as part of an applicant's three choices (1st, 2nd 3rd). The applications did not indicate how many were first, second or third choices. There were 218 supplementary faith forms received (26 new forms and 24 duplicates to Wigan Council). Therefore, from 444 applications only 218 provided faith evidence via the supplementary form process. LA indicated 228 applicants had put St Peter's as their 1st choice with 205 places available. No there were no late applications and no outstanding queries.

The SBM summarised the categories as follows:

Category	No	Summary
0	16	16 applications from Y6 pupils with an EHC plan or statement of special education needs. In 2021 there were seven applications of which two joined the school.
1	7	In 2021 there were six applications and five joined the school.
2	61	Catholic applicant with sibling at school, primarily from a feeder school.
3	120	Catholic applicant resident in one of the five parishes. In 2021 there were 117.
4	23	Other Catholic applicants who did not live in one of the five parishes.
After this point all applicants were deemed to be non-Catholic		
5	8	Applicants with a sibling at the school; two from feeder primary school; three confirmed to be non-Catholic and five with no information provided.
6	29	Applicants from feed primary schools
7	16	Applicants from other Christian faiths
8	0	None
9	164	Other applicants

Q: How many Looked After Children or previously looked after children (Category 1) would join St Peters if they are legally entitled to their first choice?

A: If named as first choices they will get a place, however they may have selected three choices as part of the process. The LA has to ensure they attend a good or better school, and their baptism status is irrelevant. It is the same principle for Category 0 who are entitled to their first choice which may be another school or a special school.

Deeper analysis of feeder primary

A more detailed summary table for the seven feeder schools was discussed.

It was **noted** if all the applications were first preference, the cutoff point would be the first applicant in category 4.

This translated to 174 places offered to feeder school applicants with 39 applicants in feeder schools not offered

Governors **noted** an obvious anomaly at St Cuthbert's which was a product of less catholic baptised as Catholic attending the school and a split in the catchment for the school between St Peters and St John Fisher.

The Chair summarised the ranking for 205 pupils would be extended to one applicant from Category 4.

Governors **noted** the potential number of Category 0 applicants and expressed concerns in how the school could facilitate this intake for one year group. It was discussed that there were various elements to EHC plans, all with a high threshold and significant need. While it was acknowledged the success of the SEND department and inclusive ethos of the school, the success of the depart had created challenges if applicants were choosing St Peters for SEND support. The Headteacher planned to raise the issue with the local authority with respect to three components:

- inference SEND department was a resource provision facility
- any sensible limitations on number of EHC plan pupils in any one year group
- what the LA could do to help facilities and accommodation in school. The teaching and staffing support could be provided through the money derived from the EHC plan but it would not support any changes to the school premises/buildings.

Governors reiterated they wanted to be an inclusive school but acknowledged there was a tipping point with the standard of facilities and accommodation to cope effectively if they had high numbers of EHC plan students. Governors clarified it was the same scenario for EHCP applicants as looked after children (Category 1), catholic baptism status was not a consideration. Consequently, it increased the pressure on the catholic category (4) and the partner catholic feeder schools (5) which applicants wanting to attend the same school as their peers.

Governors discussed the factors around the increase in applicants for category 0, including increase in plans at primary schools and whether there was an increasing trend in numbers of EHCP pupils in Year 6. It was acknowledged it could be a result of parental requests or misdiagnoses due slower development in communication and language due to COVID.

Q: How many first choices were there?

A: There were 228 first choices this year. This was higher than last year, but the number of first preferences was above 205.

Clerk Note (post meeting): There were 223 first preferences from last year (based on Wigan's figures provided on 03/12/20).

Governors **noted** any appeals would likely derive from Category 4 and 5, with normally stronger appeals from category 5. This includes applicants which did not provide faith evidence and have a sibling in school. Approximately 50% were successful.

Q: How were appeals dealt with?

A: They were heard in groups in around June. No decisions made until all appeals from all categories were heard as the process focuses on the individual stories and circumstances of the applicants.

Governors **agreed** to the ranking presented. This would be submitted to the LA.

6 ADMISSIONS 2023-24

The admission criteria prepared by the Archdiocese had been reviewed by Governors in advance of the meeting. It was the same as previous years with the updated wording for looked after children.

Governors **determined** their 2023-24 admission arrangements including **confirmation** of the PAN at 205. The arrangements would be published on the school website.

7 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of any other business.

8 CONFIDENTIALITY

Governors **noted** the confidential nature of their discussions and agreed there were no items deemed confidential for the purpose of the minutes.

The meeting closed at 6.11pm with a vote of thanks extended to the SBM for his work in preparing the ranking information and Admin colleague, Natasha Fellows for the detailed categorisation checks.