

**Part A Minutes of the Meeting of the Admissions Committee of
The John Fisher School
Monday, 16 October 2023 (5.30pm)
At School**

Ms Mary Ryan (MR)	Foundation Governor, Co-Chair	Present	Apologies
Ms Shafi Nasser (SN)	Local Authority Governor, Co-Chair	Present	
Mr Robert Teague (RT/HT)	Head Teacher	Present	
Mr Andrew Theobald (AT)	Foundation Governor		Apologies
Dr Anita McGowan (AMG)	Foundation Governor	Present	

In Attendance:

Mrs Nadina Bedlow (NB) – Education Governance Clerk

Ms Kirsty Butterworth (KB) – Admissions Officer

Item	Minutes	Action No:
1	Welcome, Apologies for Absence and Quorum SN opened the meeting at 17.30 welcoming those present. Apologies were received from AT (personal/family commitments) and MR (prior commitments). The apologies were AGREED and ACCEPTED by the Committee. The meeting was declared quorate and commenced at 17.32	
2	Declaration of Interests No declarations were made in respect of any agenda item.	
3	Minutes of Emergency Admissions Committee Meeting – Tuesday, 29 November 2022 Minutes of the above meeting were AGREED to be an accurate reflection and would be signed by SN for retention by the school. Matters Arising: 2.1 to be considered under item 9. 2.2 complete. 2.3 complete. 2.4 complete. KB and RT confirmed that actions summarised in the previous minutes were closed including: i. Updating the Admissions Policy ii. Reviewing: SIF, Priest's Reference Form and guidance for parents. iii. Updates had been circulated to the Committee and approved by MR.	
4	Final Admissions Circulated to the Committee prior, KB presented the Committee with an executive summary of the final admissions received in 2023. KB explained the indicated preferences for children and how that information was communicated to the School.	



	KB went onto outline categories against preference, noting that 2023/24 had been challenging. The cohort was large with a diverse range of religions and denominations. KB noted the nominal reduction in first preference and would track the reasons which informed the change. KB resolved to: monitor and track trends to keep the Admissions Committee informed regarding the fluidity of movement. AMG expressed concerns that the percentage of first choices was down to 49% from 57%. The Committee discussed changes in perception, marketing, decrease in birth rate and the impact of new educational provisions in Croydon and neighbouring boroughs. AMG suggested convening a working party tasked with devising strategies to increase admission numbers for future years. KB advised the Committee that; applications for 2024 to date, had reached approximately 100. The number of EHCPs impacted places that could be offered. There were 16 consultations from Sutton and Merton (two declined and three accepted) with Croydon consultations pending. <i>Q. Why is that?</i> A. My impression is that Catherine is doing well. (KB) The current year had ten EHCPs with much of the cohort exhibiting significant SEN needs. KB concluded that 21% of the whole school had SEN needs. The HT noted that the number of EHCPs were increasing exponentially nationally. The HT also advised the Committee that schools were experiencing drops in numbers with the demographic dip in London being in the current Year 5. This was a significant reason why schools were under pressure, with more provision and less demand, lots of school age families had also left London post pandemic. Action: Share the final admissions with the FGB. (HT) Action: Recommendation for working party to be taken to FGB. (HT)	1 2
5	Applications	
5a	Out of Chronological Age Applications	
5b	To accept and agree applications before Sunday, 29 October 2023 Recorded Confidentially Under Part B minutes.	
6	Appeals	
6a	Review of two appeals upheld at Stage 1. KB verbally updated the Committee regarding three appeals made against refusal of admission in the last school year and two appeals that were upheld.	
6b	Review School's case and approve use of Template for Appeals Panel SN has drafted a proforma template to assist an Appeals Panel that was compliant with: i. Legislation ii. School Admissions Code iii. Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998	



	SN confirmed that the template summarised Appeal Panel's considerations including: i. Admission arrangements. ii. Application of facts. iii. Applicant's case. iv. How admission would prejudice education/resources. v. How the School is structured and resourced for Published Admission Numbers (PAN). vi. Provision the school has for: classrooms, learning groups, H&S, IT and catering. SN proposed that the template or similar be used by all governors presenting to the Appeals Panels. AMG requested the following amendments/inclusions were made to the template: i. Page numbers throughout. ii. P2, paragraph 3: include date of categorisation meeting. iii. P3, paragraph 5: remove detailing/confirmation of place on waiting list. iv. Clause 7: include table demonstrating PAN. (KB) v. Action: Supply paragraph in respect of carousel subjects and limitations of Science Block. (HT) Resolution: Subject to the above amendments/inclusions the Committee AGREED that all governors to use the template for Appeals in 2023/2024 for Entry into Yr. 7 The Committee discussed the reduction in carousel classes as a consequence of a reduction in PAN in addition to restrictions upon class sizes in the Science Block due to the presence of asbestos. <i>Q. Does asbestos limit us in any way?</i> A. Yes, it's certainly the case that doing anything with that building will be difficult and costly there are restrictions. (HT) <i>Q. What is the Net Capacity Assessment?</i> A. It is conducted by the council and confirms the square footage of each classroom and thus decides maximum capacities. (HT)	
6c	Confirm future process for fixing dates and availability for Appeal Hearings in 2023-2024. KB advised the Committee to assume there would be appeals and on being notified of an appeal in 2023/24 KB will request all governors to provide availability dates and on that basis an appeal hearing could be fixed. The Committee mooted the possibility of nominating an Appeals Link Governor. Action: Check the number of carousel subjects. (HT) Action: Liaise with to AS regarding net capacity assessment (excluding the 6th Form). (HT/KB/Sutton Local Authority) Action: Instruct condition report from the Archdiocese. (HT/KB) Action: Table (add as an agenda item) the template assessment form for Appeals Seeking Entry into Yr. 7 at the November FGB. (HT)	4 5 6 7



	Action: Upon notification, the Committee will send dates that they are available for an Appeal Panel during the last week in May beginning of June. (KB/ALL)	8
7	TSS24 applications The date for the Criteria (Categorisation) Meeting was confirmed as 25th November. Action: Send notification of Criteria (Categorisation) Meeting to all governors (excluding staff). (SN)	9
8	Fair Access Protocol (FAP) and Vulnerable Pupils Panel (VPP) referrals The Committee received an executive summary of the impact of FAP and VPP referrals on the School's Published Admissions Numbers (PAN) and other implications including: i. Sutton Local Authority had sent a significant number of fair access and vulnerable pupils taking the School over its PAN. ii. As a result; there was need for extra resource, which had financial and other implications. iii. Sutton Local Authority no longer provide funding for language lessons. iv. Contextually in comparison to other schools (not faith based or single sex) numbers could potentially be higher. v. KB advised the Committee that it had no recourse to reduce numbers, the update was for information only. vi. RT was satisfied that that Sutton Local Authority was managing the issue better than some other Local Authorities.	
9	Policy Documentation The Committee received an update by the HT;, in respect of recent changes to Archdiocesan Guidance on School Admissions which has necessitated a change to the School Admissions Policy.	
9a	Diocesan Guidance on School Admissions for Yrs. 7-11 The HT summarised the updates including: i. At the time of the Committee meeting; DC (Education Officer, RCAOS) had confirmed all changes to Admission Guidance were complete and reliable. ii. RT had reviewed the School Admissions Policy in line with Archdiocesan Guidance. iii. The key updates to the Archdiocesan Admissions Guidance were in relation to criteria. The School's draft Admissions Policy had been updated to reflect changes in guidance and other minor amendments. iv. Archdiocesan Guidance stated that degrees of practice should be removed and replaced with a Certificate of Practice (COP). The Committee discussed the oversubscription criteria in terms of Category A (Catholic) and Category B (other faiths/none). The Committee validated the need for categories due to the conditional funding from Sutton Local Authority for thirty additional places (for baptised boys).	
9b	6th Form Applications Recorded Confidentially Under Part B minutes.	
9c	Draft School Admissions Policy for Yrs. 7-11 The Committee reviewed the draft Admissions Policy requesting the following	



	amendments/inclusions: i. Remove reference to Admissions Authority and Admissions Committee and replace with Governing Board (GB). ii. Create an appendix for 6th form admissions, linked to the School Admissions policy and signposted more prominently. iii. Include expectations for 6th Form, contingent on what the Board decides. iv. Consistent capitalisation (appendix 6 p8 <i>Code of Practice</i> and <i>Instrument of Government, IoG</i>). v. Appendix 8, p8, penultimate paragraph to read: <i>“the FGB will consider any extenuating circumstances, each case will be reviewed individually and decisions made in line with government guidance.”</i> vi. Remove provision relating to student’s consent for entry into 6th form vii. Consistent use of the following: <i>candidates</i> and <i>applicants</i>. viii. Remove the minimum number of external places available under the 6th Form category, p5 final paragraph. ix. Include contextual information in terms of number – all pupils could not progress into 6th Form given the capacity. Action: Revise new School Admissions Policy by the end of October to present to November FGB. (HT) Action: Check dates for consultation on revised School Admissions Policy for Yrs. 7-11 and publish on website by December. (KB/HT) Action: Review 6th form provision, curriculum and entry requirements and present findings at November FGB with recommendation to convene a working party for 6th form admission. (HT)	10 11 12
10	Any Other Business None identified/raised.	
11	Confidential Items <i>The following items were identified to be recorded confidentially under Part B minutes.</i> <i>Item 5a: Out of Year Chronological Applications</i> <i>Item 5b: To accept and agree applications before Sunday, 29 October 2023</i> <i>Item 9b: 6th Form Admissions</i>	
12	Closure of Meeting The next meeting of the Full Governing Board would be held on Wednesday, 22 November 2023. The next meeting of the Admissions Committee was to be confirmed. <i>The meeting closed at 19:47 by SN.</i>	

Signed: _____ Print Name: _____

Date: _____



Action Points

Outstanding Actions and Actions arising from 2023-24

No.	Action	Who	By	Status
Meeting of 27 th September 2024:				
1	Share the final admissions numbers with the FGB in November.	HT	ASAP	Open
2	Recommendation for working party to be taken to FGB.	HT	November	Open
3	<i>Recorded confidentially under Part B minutes</i>			
4	Check the number of carousel subjects and provide to SN.	HT	ASAP	Open
5	Liaise with to AS regarding net capacity assessment (excluding the 6 th Form). (HT/KB/Sutton Local Authority)	HT/KB/Sutton Local Authority	ASAP	Open
6	Instruct condition report from the Archdiocese.	HT/KB	ASAP	Open
7	Table (add as an agenda item) the template assessment form for Appeals Seeking Entry into Yr. 7 at the November FGB. (HT)	HT	November	Open
8	Upon notification, the Committee will send dates that they are available for an Appeal Panel during the last week in May beginning of June.	KB/All	tbc	Open
9	Send notification of Criteria (Categorisation) Meeting to all governors (excluding staff).	SN	tbc	Open
10	Revise new School Admissions Policy by the end of October to present to November FGB. (HT)	HT	November	Open
11	Check dates for consultation on revised School Admissions Policy for Yrs. 7-11 and publish on website by December.	(KB/HT)	December	Open
12	Review 6 th form provision, curriculum and entry requirements and present findings at November FGB with recommendation to convene a working party for 6 th form admission. (HT)	HT	October	Open