

**Holy Trinity CE Primary School, Sunningdale Minutes from the Admissions
Committee Meeting held on 26th September 2017**

Present: Mrs S Sleigh (Chair), Mr R Pelly, Mrs P'O Brien, Mrs J Griffith, Rev J Hutchinson, Mrs B Moss, Mrs S Lawson (clerk)

In Attendance: n/a

Apologies: Mrs S Hynard

Revised Admissions Arrangements 2019/20 - Discussion

SS explained that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss whether to include Social and Medical as oversubscription criteria for the 2019/20 Admissions Arrangements, as recommended by the Oxford Diocese. SS said the recommendation is particularly strong where the schools' Local Authority includes Social and Medical criteria, which is the case for RBWM.

SS gave some examples of where the criteria had been used. JH expressed concern over numbers as this would be a criterion heavily used in city settings and also wondered if the criteria would be exploited by parents. The Committee thought that applications under the Social and Medical criteria would be rare due to the need for applications to be fully supported by documentary evidence from a professional.

SS showed which schools (VA, academies and free schools, ie. schools with their own admission authority) in the area use the criteria already or as part of agreed future arrangements and highlighted that Holy Trinity School is now in the minority in not adopting the recommendation.

BM provided numbers for pupils admitted under Social and Medical criteria in RBWM Community and VC schools (ie. those schools using the RBWM Co-ordinated Admissions scheme) as a whole. These were 3 in 2015 and 15 in 2017. POB said that part of the higher number in 2017 may be accounted for by Services families based around Alexander First School.

SS asked whether the school thought they could manage queries and applications falling under the Social and Medical criteria? POB affirmed they could and that proper applications with full supporting documentation would be brought to the Admissions Committee for a decision. JG thought this might prove extra work at first but felt sure that once the Committee had worked on some applications with some precedence set, this would become easier.

The Committee discussed whether if used, the Social and Medical Criteria should be restricted to catchment children or placed at number three in the list of criteria so as not to disadvantage catchment children. Committee decided that this would risk excluding genuine cases, including one of the examples discussed and that catchment children are all accommodated in most admission years.

Revised Admissions Arrangements 2019/20 - Decision

The committee noted that most other schools had adopted the criteria, that it would be applicable only in very rare, difficult circumstances and agreed that its inclusion would be consistent with the Christian ethos of the school. The Committee therefore decided to include Social and Medical Criteria, not restricted by catchment, as number two in the oversubscription criteria for Admissions Arrangements 2019/20. The Committee preferred the stronger wording from RBWM policy rather than the Diocesan recommendation. This wording includes a statement about right of appeal as follows:

‘There will be no right of appeal to officers against refusal of a decision in this category, but all parents will have the usual right of appeal to an independent appeal panel after allocations’. SL queries whether this statement would be true of Diocesan arranged appeals.

Next Steps

SS to consult Christine Jones, Diocesan Advisor, about the appeal wording above.

SS to produce a new draft of the 2019/20 Admissions Arrangements, Policy and Guidance Notes.

SS to distribute to all Governors for review and feedback.

SS to send a final draft to the Diocese for review and feedback.

AOB

There was no other business.

Appendix 1 - RBWM Primary Age Schools (VA, Academies and Free schools)

		Social/Medical Included?	Policy date	Position in Criteria
1.	Braywick Court Free School	No		(has pupil premium criteria)
2.	Burchetts Green CE Infant School	Yes	2017/18	
3.	Cheapside CE Primary School	Yes	2017/18	No 2 but within catchment only
4.	Clewer Green CE First School	No	2017/18	(Has both staff and church criteria)
5.	Cookham Dean CE Primary School	Yes		
6.	Datchet St. Mary's CE Primary School	Yes	2018/19	No 2
7.	Eton Porny C of E First School	Yes	2019/19	No 2
8.	Holy Trinity CE Sunningdale	No		
9.	Holyport CE Primary School	Yes	2017/18	No 2
10.	Knowl Hill CE Primary School	Yes	2017/18	No 2
11.	Lowbrook Academy	No		Can't see later policies on their website
12.	The Royal School	Yes	2017/18	No 3
13.	St. Luke's CE Primary School	Yes	2017/18	No 2
14.	St. Michael's CE Primary School	Yes	2017/18	No 2 but within catchment only
15.	Trinity St. Stephen's First School	Yes	2017/18	No 2
16.	White Waltham CE Academy	Yes	2017/18	No 2

Appendix 2 - Examples from Diocese

1) Family who had child in a school and child died. Parents were part of school community and a memorial was erected in school grounds in memory of child. Family then apply for sibling of 'said child' – for obvious reasons they were very emotionally attached to 'said school' and important to them that their child attends this particular school. The leadership team and staff at school were very sad to be unable to make exception for this child.

2) Single mother with epilepsy. Not able to drive. Lived just outside catchment area but 'said school' was much closer in distance than the school in their catchment. Doctors advised that mother would be unable to walk the distance safely to the other school and that she would only be able to cope with walk to 'said school'. (note that this criteria does not just apply to the child but also can support a parent or guardian of the applicant).

3) An appellant who was homeless with two children. Because of domestic abuse the local authority had found them accommodation in the said school's catchment. Child A was given a place in year 1 earlier on in the year. Along came child 2 who needed a place in Reception September 17, however by this time the LA had found them a permanent home on the fringes of the catchment. This was to be their 'forever home' as it were. Both children had issues surrounding the abuse but the school did not have a social and medical criterion, which would have been so useful in this case. Whilst the school agreed that both children should attend their school and were supporting the family very generously, without this criterion they had to refuse the application. A child, classed as homeless and moving several times does not necessarily adjust or settle well in schools and it will certainly have an adverse affect on their education.

In all these cases, Christine said that the schools certainly regretted not having the criterion and would be putting it in their policies from now on.