



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE

Wednesday 15 December 2021 at 6.00 pm

Venue: Microsoft Teams

Present:

- Mr K Bannister (KB) Trustee
- Mr P Nagle (~~PN~~) ~~Trustee~~, Chair of Trustees
- Ms L Smart (LS) Trustee
- Mr C Wakefield (CWA) Executive Principal
- Mrs C Whitaker (CDW) Trustee

In attendance:

- Mrs R Clark (RCL) Joint Head of Academy
- Mrs K Redmond (KR) Clerk (Governance Professional) to Trustees

Apologies:

None

This group was quorate for the purpose of resolutions

Item	Topic	Minute
1.	Welcome and apologies for absence	Noted.
2.	Election of Chair and Vice-Chair	a) For the role of Chair, KB nominated PN, seconded by CDW and AGREED unanimously. b) For the role of Vice-Chair CDW nominated KB, seconded by PN and AGREED unanimously.
3.	Minutes of the meeting held on 6 January 2021	The minutes of the meeting held on 6 January 2021 were AGREED.
4.	Matters Arising	Trustees NOTED that RCL had kept them fully briefed throughout the year regarding admission appeals and that this is an agenda item for this meeting.
5.	Declaration of Business Interests	There were no new declarations of business interests and no Trustee recorded any conflict of interest with the items on the agenda or the receipt or giving of any gifts or hospitality since the last meeting.
6.	Terms of Reference	Trustees APPROVED the draft Terms of Reference subject to wording being added for termly mid-year admission reports including Education and Health Care Plan (EHCPs).

7.	Appeals Hearing Outcomes 2020 to date	<p>Trustees NOTED the circulated report and in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there had been a further appeal hearing today for two Year 8 applications bringing the total to 59 to date • the appeal success rate at Year 7 is 25% • the cost of appeals to date is £9,735 which the academy incurs whether successful or not at appeal; this does not include RCL's cover costs • the academy has been inundated with appeals since its popularity increased • the number of SEND applications has increased as public perception is that the academy excels in this area • the academy has been allocated three additional appeal dates for Year 6 into 7 for the summer; there were five last year and RCL is expecting more to follow for 2022. <p>PN questioned whether there were any particular themes for those being successful on appeal.</p> <p>RCL advised that the appeal panel is generally different on each occasion and therefore decisions depend on the panel's judgement on the day.</p> <p>CDW questioned whether the academy would receive a refund if an appeal was unsuccessful.</p> <p>RCL confirmed that the academy would not receive a refund but is continuing to object to this with the local authority. RCL has refused to pay the fee if the hearing is cancelled the day before it is scheduled.</p> <p>KB questioned if the 12 successful appeals were in catchment.</p> <p>RCL confirmed that all of the successful appeals were and the most successful ones tend to be in catchment. There have been a number of appeals from the Hatfield Peverel area with siblings in the school but that area is now classed as out of catchment by the local authority due to the increased number of applicants living closer to Maldon.</p> <p>Trustees thanked RCL for the professional manner in which she had managed the appeals process whilst recognising that they took an enormous amount of preparation and time.</p>
8.	To receive a report on the applications process for September 2022 and to consider any specific queries	<p>Trustees NOTED the detailed report circulated by RCL.</p> <p>RCL confirmed that the academy's published admission criteria was used to determine rankings and outlined the admissions criteria. The total number of applications for admission in September 2022 was 585.</p>

		<p>Trustees AGREED that the Published Admission Number (PAN) for September 2022 is 295 as the academy is at capacity. Education and Health Care Plans (EHCP) and appeal applications may increase this number. The local authority will be informed of this decision.</p> <p>KB questioned the lack of wording regarding a guarantee of a place.</p> <p>RCL advised that the academy cannot guarantee any place until the admission's criteria is applied. Preferences are requested by parents and carers; out of catchment with siblings are unlikely to receive a place under criteria 5 and those are most likely to appeal.</p> <p>Trustees NOTED the National Offer Day Allocation 2021 regarding the number of applicants who received a place at the academy and that the allocation was slightly under PAN at 289 but in addition to that there were 13 EHCPs.</p> <p>Trustees considered each of the ranking queries in turn and AGREED the correct criteria for each one as the rationale was outlined which was recorded on the summary document by the Clerk.</p> <p>Trustees thanked RCL for her clear and concise report.</p>
9.	To approve the ranking process by the school	Trustees AGREED that the ranking process had been conducted according to protocol and in accordance with the published Admissions Policy. It was NOTED that this takes applications to those within category 4.
10.	To approve the applications for admission to be offered	The Local Authority, as admissions co-ordinator, will offer places initially up to and including applicant 295 on the verified list.
11.	To approve the Admission Policies and Admission (College) Policies for 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25	The Admission Policies and Admission (College) Policies for 2022-23 and 2023-24 were APPROVED noting there had been an amendment to the appeal section to clarify that appeals had to go through the local authority with clear procedures.
12.	To approve the Admission Policy and Admission (College) Policy for 2024-25	The Admission and Admission (College) Policies for 2024-25 were APPROVED unanimously.
13.	Any Other Business	<p>Year 7 EHCP and Individual Pupil Resource Agreement (IPRA) applications</p> <p>Trustees NOTED the information within the circulated report and that the predicted total for 2022/23 was 14 with ten EHCPs and four IPRA's. The exact number will not be confirmed until September 2022.</p>

		<p>KB questioned whether the academy asks local primary schools to act quickly on admission matters.</p> <p>RCL confirmed that during the Year 6 into 7 Open Evening she outlined the local authority guidance on the admission process and advised parents and carers that they must adhere to the deadline to have every opportunity to be allocated one of their preferences.</p> <p>CWA advised that the academy works closely with the primary schools and there is an effective transition programme in place. There is a lack of communication by the local authority's SEND team which causes difficulties. RCL advised that there are also difficulties caused by lack of SEND diagnosis from the primary school which can cause a delay in the assistance required for additional needs once at the academy.</p> <p>KB queried the availability of the catchment area map.</p> <p>RCL advised that the local authority no longer uses catchment maps and instead use their website for parents and carers to enter their postcode to be advised on what their secondary and primary catchment areas are.</p> <p>Trustees thanked RCL for ensuring a proper and fair process and for her informative report. RCL advised she and CWA discuss every application to ensure all statutory requirements regarding admissions are adhered to.</p> <p>CWA thanked Trustees for their support for this very important process and it was very much appreciated.</p>
14.	Confirmation of confidential items	None.
15.	Date of next meeting	To be confirmed.

Meeting closed at 7.15 pm

Actions

Date of Meeting/ Item number	Topic	Minute
n/a		