

Minutes of an extra-ordinary meeting of the Trust Board for Queen Elizabeth Grammar School, Penrith, held on Wednesday 8th February 2023 at 7.00pm via Teams.

Present

Ms M Robson (Chair)
Miss R McMann (Clerk)
Mr C Pyle

Mr D Marchant (Head, Ex-officio)
Mr N Ruddick
Mr M Pannone
Mr N Page

SLT present: Mr R Dawson and Mrs Rourke.

Visitors: Nathan Jeremiah, advisor from (EPI) and representatives from the two MATS making their presentations.

6 Governors in attendance

Quorum per article 114 – 4 Governors
(one half of the governors holding office rounded up to the nearest whole number)

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were accepted for Rev Sargent (holiday)

2. Declaration of Interest in Agenda Items

Staff members declared an interest, as this is to look at potential MATS. It is noted that SLT, with the exception of Mr Marchant, do not have voting rights.

3. Agree Shortlisted Trusts

Thanks were extended to Nathan Jeremiah for the information he had collated and circulated prior to the meeting. He outlined the process that has been followed thus far:

- Timeline as set out by the Regional Director;
- Longlist produced of 34 potential MATS;
- Middle list produced from this of 7 potential MATS, further narrowed down to 4 to send expressions of interest to;
- Two MATS to choose from as a result of the expressions of interests.

It was unanimously agreed to invite the two MATS to make presentations to the Board on 15th February. Nathan Jeremiah will produce a timetable for the evening and build in some time for reflection afterwards, though it is expected that the final decision will be made in an additional meeting to be held during the half-term.

4. Admissions Policy

Firstly, Mr Marchant was pleased to report that the DfE Advisory Board had approved the significant change in the policy to increase numbers to 1065 students.

He also wished to propose to the Board of Trustees that:

- Increase the PAN to 160 (this happens in practice and is more of a housekeeping point)
- A change in test provider. It is noted that this is required as the current provider will no longer be offering this service. Additionally, Mr Marchant explained that he wishes to introduce a minimum pass mark for each area of the test as well as the overall pass mark in order to get the breadth and broad attainment.
- The criteria to be changed in response to a perception by some people of Penrith who feel that children in the community are pushed out by out of catchment children. Alongside this, Mr Marchant has also expressed his desire to build on improving social mobility.

It is proposed that after the children on EHCPs and the first 20% (32 students) who are awarded a place based solely on ability that the following oversubscription criteria is applied in the order as below:

- Children Looked After
- Sibling
- Identify pupil premium (10 pupils)
- Children of permanent members of staff
- In-catchment (according to aggregate rank score)
- Out of catchment.

Additionally, Mr Marchant wishes to raise the Sixth Form entry to ensure that all have a grade 5 in Maths and English as well as a grade average of 4.8.

The response to the consultation had been circulated and Mr Marchant reassured the Trustees that any misconceptions had been addressed. Overall he concluded that the aim of the policy is to find the right balance that links with the values and ethos of the school, as well as being part of the community.

There was a lengthy discussion on this and the main points were as follows:

- Equally passionate views that the school should be one of academic excellence.
- The catchment boundaries outlined by the Council do not represent the community and feel that people further away have not been treated equally.
- Have to think about what is best for the school – it seems a bit like it is geography versus capability.

- This is very technical and communication on this is key. The language must express the balance.
- With regards to the above, put some wording into the introduction of the policy. **This was agreed.**
- Re-state in the oversubscription criteria that the test must have been passed. **This amendment was agreed.**

There was a wide ranging discussion regarding catchment boundaries. The aims of the new policy and the language used to promote the changes. Mr Marchant agreed with the trust board that these changes need to be reviewed regularly to check they are meeting their stated aims and tweaked for future years if appropriate.

Mrs Robson proposed that the Trustees adopt the policy with the proposed changes, placing trust in Mr Marchant's assurances on the basis that this will be monitored and tweaks made if necessary once it has had a chance to run.

A vote was taken with 5 votes in favour, 1 vote against and 0 abstentions. Therefore, the policy can be adopted.

5. Any Other Business

As per the action point from the meeting on 25th January, Mr Marchant made Trustees aware that the school is first aid compliant with two staff having completed their 3 day training.

With regards to the vision statement there was a small error in using the old tag line. The vision statement will gradually be replaced in literature about the school and from September 2023 will make a big thing of it.

One of the parents standing for election has withdrawn from the process.

Mr Marchant requested that two Trustees volunteer to form a committee, as there have been a number of parents who have appealed against suspensions that have been made. Joining Mrs Robson will be Mr Pannone and Mr Ruddick. It was agreed that they will meet next week and then respond to parents as per the deadline.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm