

HOLY GHOST CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Response to Statutory Consultation on Change of Admission Arrangements for 2019 Intake

The Statutory Consultation on the Change of Admission Arrangements was conducted in accordance with the Admissions Code incorporating advice from Wandsworth Council and the Diocese of Southwark. The consultation commenced on 1st December 2017 and closed on 31st January 2018. Eight responses were received by the Clerk to Governors and were reviewed by governors at an Extraordinary Meeting of the Full Governing Body on 7th February 2018.

The key points highlighted by respondents and the governors' responses are as follows:

- **Desire to retain existing admission arrangements.**
Governors highlighted the changes being considered have been ruled by the OSA, are supported by the Diocese of Southwark and Wandsworth Council, and also apply to two schools in neighbouring parishes; governors have been instructed to make these changes.
- **Questions and issues regarding the priority of siblings.**
Governors reiterated their wish to protect the siblings of children attending the school and whose parents are practising Catholics.
- **Concerns were raised regarding the practice of other parish churches in recording attendance.**
Governors are not at liberty to tell other parish churches how to manage recording attendance and must rely on the professional judgement of the appropriate Parish Priest.
- **Request for an additional tick box relating to Mass attendance, allowing the Priest to confirm 'Regular weekly attendance but for less than 3 years'.**
Governors agreed clarity is important and decided an additional statement and tick boxes should be added to the front and back of the Supplementary Information Form.
- **Issues regarding the communication timeline of the changes to the current Admissions Policy.**
Governors noted the duration of Statutory Consultation process had been longer than required.
- **Issues regarding the breadth of the Statutory Consultation.**
Governors highlighted the consultation was broad and in line with advice from Wandsworth Council. It included: the local Roman Catholic community, the school's website, Wandsworth Council's website, all Local Authority schools, neighbouring Local Authority schools and local nurseries.
- **One respondent believed the school should reflect the community.**
Governors noted the school was founded to serve the local community, and as a Catholic school gives priority to baptised, practising Catholic families. The school welcomes applications from children of all faiths and none, applying its admissions criteria to ensure fair access, as it is usually oversubscribed. In addition, the school is fully integrated into the local community beyond its links to the Parish - and works closely with the local community schools, nurseries and the local authority.

Conclusion

The changes being considered have been ruled by the OSA, are supported by the Diocese of Southwark and Wandsworth Council, and also apply to two schools in neighbouring parishes. Governors have been instructed to make these changes and must act lawfully. Therefore, subject to some minor amendments for clarity, governors ratified the school's Admissions Policy 2019-20 and Supplementary Information Form, Reception Class September 2019.