

**Minutes of CAST Board meeting held on Friday 7th October 2022
at Plymouth CAST Office from 10am**

Attendees:	Ruth O'Donovan (RO)	-	Foundation Director (Chair)
	Andy Nicholls (AN)	-	Foundation Director
	Jacqui Vaughan (JV)	-	Foundation Director
	Ann Harris (AH)	-	Foundation Director
	Deacon Nick Johnson (NJ)	-	Foundation Director
	Steve Hole (SH)	-	Foundation Director
	Graham Briscoe (GB)	-	Co-opted Director
	Alison Nettleship (ALN)	-	Co-opted Director
In Attendance:	Zoe Batten (ZB)	-	CEO
	Laura Fox (LF)	-	CFO
	Rose Colpus-Fricker (RCF)	-	COO
	Kevin Butlin (KB)	-	DoE
	Helen Brown (HB)	-	DSC
	Leah Paiano (LP)	-	Clerk

The meeting began at 10am with an Ofsted presentation led by Kevin Butlin. See presentation slides.

GB highlighted the responsibility for a voluntary role.

SH asked if all LCBs were full. RO confirmed recruitment is a national problem.

1. Welcome and Opening Prayer	Decision/Action
Opening prayer by RO	
RO welcomed SH to the Board and those present introduced themselves and SH gave a snapshot of his experience.	
2. Apologies and Confirmation of Quorum	
Apologies from SA. Quorum met.	
3. Declaration of Interest	
NJ – wife works for Trust	
JV – a number of CAST schools being funded by her Trust.	
Nothing further declared.	
4.1 Minutes of previous meeting of 22nd July 2022 and 9th September.	
Minutes approved as an accurate record.	Minutes from 22 nd July and 9 th September 2022 approved
4.2 Actions	
Status updated on Actions Summary.	
GB asked for assurance that the new statutory guidance on school uniform has been considered, in support of our parent body and in	

light of the cost of living crisis. KB will update the information. School day is included on the website.

GB highlighted that parent admissions appeals have changed.

5. **Chairs Business**

- **CAST Email Addresses**

Thanks to those who are using them. LP to remove private emails.

LP to remove personal emails from Board group.

- **Director Vacancies**

Two vacancies. Difficulty in attracting Foundation Directors, an ongoing focus for the Board.

Q. (For Leah if you can answer - or the Chair) Does the Board have an optimum size as I feel extremely anxious about our capacity to fulfil the work in such a big academy trust when we have a smaller governance group than the single comprehensive school where I sit as a governor?

Small Board, recruitment is an issue but there is no set figure, but the minimum is three. The Board discussed the optimum number, two vacancies mean 11 Directors.

GB can have independent Directors.

- **Link Director Allocation**

Three schools to allocate. NJ – Wool/Dorchester EHT but only has one school.

- **A&R Associate Member Update**

GB exploring another external member. RCF confirmed a letter of thanks has been drafted and GB will approve.

- **AGM Update – 16th December 2022**

RO is away. AN will Chair AGM and Board meeting. AN to attend pre-planning. Canon Paul Cummins is invited.

- **Governance Review – verbal update**

NLG unable to carry out due to capacity. Have asked to delay to January as RO is away.

Amendment to agenda – Item 9, Health and Safety Update

9. **PS joined the meeting at 11am to deliver the H&S update alongside GB.**

GB apologised for being unable to attend last H&S meeting. A&R is due to meet as meeting was cancelled.

PS provided an update:

Compliance 95% across the Trust. Extremely pleasing. Next focus is to ensure Heads of Schools have the necessary training and support.

VATB increased (Violent, Aggressive or Threatening Behaviour). Worrying. Actively trying to resolve, data is submitted monthly to SELT. Potentially under reported, diligent reporting is required.

Staff absence with HR. Insight into lost time across the Trust. New payroll system and reporting will support going forward. 18 000 days of absence includes weekends and holiday days. Early days in this process.

Schools at 98% compliance, legionella risks are managed but looking to close off old piping but requires funding. Focus for next 12 months.

H&S Committee well received, RCF formation sub-committee on well-being. Positive process.

AN thanked PS for his report. Action tracker – four red actions. Missed completion date or imminent? Not passed date, at the time of the report dates were imminent.

GB pleased at this report, shows the journey that H&S has had in CAST. Achieved on top of Covid and thanked PS. SH agreed with the transformation and enthusiasm is credit worthy.

NJ data on absence is approximately 10 000 when removing weekends and holidays, comparisons with norms.

PS left the meeting at 11.15am

6. CEO Update

- Q. In the link director listing, there is no contact details for Alyson Tyler - please could they be added.

KB to share Alyson Tyler email with LP.

KB to share email with LP.

- Q. As we are a Diocese wide Academy, has consideration been given to the Board meeting across our organisational footprint and not always in Plymouth?

Diocese-wide academy has been considered, an issue with finding facilities RO will discuss with ZB and return to the Board.

- Q. CEO Report - Governance
Are we safest in the coming storm as a single 'mega-academy' or should we be having eggs in more than one basket, and do we plan to do anything about our name and brand?

Attended a national conference recently, national picture of education is very challenging, we are considering the same as everyone else. Recruitment of leaders, teachers, financial

implications, support vulnerable families. ZB provided an excerpt from a DfE March 2022 paper which compared MATs stability with LA maintained schools. White Paper also reports on this, delivering capacity with more than 10 schools, a trajectory to have 7500 pupils or at least 10 schools.

Definitely safer as a large group of schools. Don't want to be inward looking, use a range of external partners, QA process and effectively use to the maximum benefit of schools.

Name/branding – Plymouth CAST as part of Plymouth Diocese. Set up as a Trust within the Diocese footprint. Something for the Board to reflect on. AN Diocese will have a view, Members job to approve a name change. Plymouth CAST does not feel inclusive to eg Dorset schools. Catholicity identifies us most. 250 miles wide and 35 schools big. GB analysis of the names of other Catholic MATS, could be helpful as a starting point. HB conference next week with all DSCs. SH made sense originally, united us under the Diocese. CAST. Task and Finish Group to bring to December Board and potentially AGM as part of the conversation.

ZB to set up a Task and Finish Group on branding and bring to December Board meeting and potentially AGM.

SH one aspect, if everything changes, cost involved. AH Good work and reputation could be lost with a name change. Working party with ZB.

- Q. CEO Report. Link directors will need visibility of how the schedule of accountability is being reshaped ahead of rollout to LCB's. When will this happen?

Work is taking place, meetings in October, draft plans for spring and summer. Need to consider how it connects with SoDA, Ofsted and lines of accountability.

Will aim to bring the draft work to December Board, or definitely to Feb Board, will see it before it goes to LCBs consultation. Will send out information and then receive feedback at Chairs' Forums in spring term and make any tweaks. AH and ZB will lead training during summer term. For implementation in September 2023.

HB aligning with Ofsted, oversight with Bishop's Conference and expectations for RE and Catholic Life, areas of oversight for accountability. AH small LCBs, four key roles must be done.

- Q. The nga report identifies that recruiting staff is an issue for 53% of respondents.
What is our plan to improve the likelihood of appointing senior staff?

Strategy is growing our own, EH model, underneath thinking about structures to support, strong leadership presence to support staff and parents. Good step up for staff. Growing the next generation of leaders in a supported way.

NPQs – SL and LBC. Lead provider for CoE program and external provider, Best Practice. Two core programs, free for next academic year. Apprenticeship Levy to upskill teachers, focus on coaching, internal SI Team Hubs support leadership development.

NJ depends on proportion and number of Catholic teachers you start with.

Work closely with other partners, SW Lead at CES to target 6th Form students to consider a career in teaching, supporting with placements, CEO Catholic Group, founding group to link in with Catholic universities. Link with Catholic universities in Ireland also.

Q. Cost of living crisis- how many of our schools open to provide breakfast? Could we encourage schools to do this? It's relatively cheap to offer and provides basic nutrition and a warm place for children to start the day?

22 schools are open for paid breakfast clubs, relatively cheap to offer, schemes to explore to support funding. LF waiting list to get onto charitable schemes, some schools divert PP money to support PP children, need to demonstrate that all breakfast and after school clubs are not funded by Govt income. AH great way to start the day, make a difference. HB must be reasonable or free to encourage children.

NJ suggested bigger schools supporting smaller schools, weakest member should be the priority. Move to GAG pooling is the very essence. First step has been taken to pool reserves for capital works, intent to widen, operate flexibly, each school will get a fair deal. Finance system is not built to work in that way. LF GAG pooling is for Govt money, great direction, to operate universal breakfast club don't have agreement from the Board to operate at that level. Income generated at school level stays with the school. That would require further agreement and mapping out at Board level.

RCF breakfast clubs are set up as a childcare solution not in response to cost-of-living crisis.

Q. The CAST Leadership Conferences are a positive initiative. What percentage of eligible staff attend? How are staff who do not attend 'encouraged' to attend next time?

Two conferences covering range of matters, Day 1 HTs and EHTs – 31 of 34 schools represented. Absences were accepted for various reasons. SIOs will follow up on key messages. Day 2 – 5 people didn't attend which is 7 schools. Slides will be shared and essential to catch up.

Feedback shows they were valued, and staff enjoyed the opportunity to come together. Next day is in March.

The Board discussed the merits of Directors attending these conferences and thought there should opportunities for Directors and HTs to join, creating a Team CAST.

- Q. The Trust film sounds great. Presumably, as important members of the CAST team, representative LCB governors and Directors will make an appearance?

Film produced was centred around staff and children, on websites, come to our school, work in our school. Recruitment strategy to have a film on Trust and school websites on role of Directors and Governors, considering for the spring term.

- Q. In The COO report. As you know I believe that we should as an employer pay as a minimum the Real Living wage - now £10.90 per hour. It is not clear to me whether the numbers quoted by Rose 555 employees below the living wage is after the NJC pay agreement of £1925 p.a. I would like to know what the cost to CAST would be on top of this award of paying as a minimum the £10.90 per hour (as it was suggested in the finance minutes I would). Given the fact that money is tight I would accept that we cannot afford to back pay the RLW but believe it is right for us to offer that rate now.
- Q. The 2022-2023 budget is based on the NJC recommendation of a lump sum payment of £1925 per full time employee. With the NJC pay award, we still have 555 contracts that pay below the UK Real Living Wage. What would be the cost of moving these contracts to the Living Wage? Could we use some of our reserve to make this significant change to the salary of our lowest paid employees and then approve the 2022-2023 budget as proposed?

Actual costs have not been calculated to date, on the basis that it would be significantly labour-intensive owing to the fact that the 555 contracts are variable in terms of hours per week, and weeks per year. With variances from 0.5 HPW to 37 HPW and 45.2 WPY to 52.143 WPY.

However, to give a flavour of the impact upon pay, using the assumption of a 1.0 FTE contract (being 37 HPW *52.143WPY)

SCP	No.	NJC	FTE 1.0 NJC	RLW	FTE 1.0 RLW
1.0	302.0			10.9	
0	0	10.50	6,117,781.76	0	6,350,840.11
2.0	121.0			10.9	
0	0	10.60	2,474,508.64	0	2,544,541.90
3.0	132.0			10.9	
0	0	10.79	2,747,850.59	0	2,775,863.89
		Totals	11,340,140.98		11,671,245.90
		Diff	-331,104.92		

Furthermore, the actual costs have not been calculated to date, as in addition to the Trust HR and finance colleagues believe that this would require the design of a new pay scale to ensure that the pay differentials for the Trust's portfolio of 'Job Evaluated' Job Descriptions is maintained.

Pre-pay award, the implantation of the £10.90 per hour Real Living Wage would wipe out spinal points 1-8 (Grades A, B, C and most of the spinal points of Grade D).

Post pay award, it would wipe out spinal points 1-3 (Grades A, B and the first spinal point of Grade C). By this we mean that all the roles at these grades would be paid at the same hourly rate, whereas our harmonised pay scale reflects a differential in the hourly rate according to the value of the spinal point on the pay scale to which the role has been mapped. E.g. a Nursery Practitioner would be paid the same as a Nursery Apprentice, whereas there is currently a three grade differential between these roles on the harmonised pay scale.

Whilst our pre-harmonised job roles are allocated to a given spinal point on our current three pay scales, set at the various levels previously allocated by the Local Authorities, the subsequent pay awards and National Minimum Wage changes have meant that several of the lower spinal points across the Trust's current three pay scales are now all paid at the same rate. This has caused retention issues across the Trust. By using the NJC pay scale as the model for the Trust's harmonised pay scale and newly developed pay bandings, this scenario has been redressed. It would not be desirable for the Trust to return to such a scenario, nor do we believe it would be supported by the Trade Unions who are supportive of our Harmonisation proposal.

As mentioned, post pay award, this would impact upon all spinal points above point 3, which, if we are to continue in the spirit of the Trust's harmonisation activities, would require a new pay scale to be developed, from a choice of 2. Both options make the assumption that we are working with the post-pay award pay scale values.

1. The first option would be to apply the percentage uplift which would need to be applied to the spinal point 1 hourly rate to bring it to £10.90 per hour (3.7595%) to all spinal points on the Trust's pay scale.
2. The second option would be to only apply the percentage uplift which would need to be applied to the spinal point 1 hourly rate to bring it to £10.90 per hour to spinal points 1-3. It would then be necessary to remove spinal points 4 & 5 from the Trust's pay scale and remap staff who would have been on spinal points 4 & 5 to spinal point 6, because they would now fall below the adjusted and increased value of spinal point 3.

We can work to cost this but would need to know which option is preferred. We would also need agree a time frame with the Board to present this work, which would be a sizeable additional project for our HR team who are already working through a workload bulge due to the ongoing harmonisation and payroll projects and will also be inducting a new team member to replace a more experienced leaver on top of business as usual activities.

The Board discussed the difficulties faced using the current budgeting and payroll systems. Financial modelling is compromised with what we have currently. Area of concern to navigate is the Orchard Nursery, to ensure ongoing financial viability.

RCF some colleagues would be paid at same rate regardless of experience. Amount of tension currently and staff are looking forward to Harmonisation. Central Team staff would also be impacted.

NJ Need to do Harmonisation first. AH When can we address this? Set a target date. AN Next budget cycle could assess the impact. New payroll system, impact of Harmonisation. LF Harmonisation budgeting should now be sound, can test in next couple of months. AH Need to have a commitment. LF Harmonisation gets the Trust back to NJC.

RO Next budget cycle? Suggested timescale: Team roll out Harmonisation, GAG funding first look in January, budgeting in May. Harmonisation pay rates would be going through. Board approved this timescale.

Board approved target date of May to revisit RLW.

- Q. COO - How will capital projects take into consideration the application of climate improvement aspirations? For example, will environmental impact/benefit be part of any/all proposals?

All identified capital works 22/23 will be re-phased to prioritise projects to reduce utility costs or carbon emissions. VFM and climate improvement aspirations will be considered for each project.

- Q. Payroll. I assume all tenders are from organisations experienced in payroll management and already demonstrating competence and the transition is simply one of connecting with our data? Are there any risks that payroll might fail or any other risks the board should be aware of?

Yes, all experienced and put through by Schools Buying Club. Data connection yes. Acknowledge there is always a risk, each tender was asked to present risks, evaluate as part of the tender, all reports are downloaded from current provider to provide history of payroll data and will also provide information to run an emergency pay run should it fail. Can make a mirror pay run if required with provision already set up in terms of staff bank details and pay slips.

- Q. Wage settlement. In a fixed cash settlement as opposed to a percentage, different grades of staff can get closer and parity reduced for the senior person which makes the role less attractive. Is this an issue for any employees?

The Trust's harmonised pay scale, which is modelled on the NJC pay scale, has incremental salary spinal points which retain the pre-pay award differential but are all increased by £1925. No spinal point grade on our harmonised pay scale gets closer due to the pay award.

- Q. DoE Data Report. What happens as a result of the data reported? How are improvement objectives set, monitored and achieved and what resources are brought into play for struggling schools?

Trust data is reviewed during summer holidays, consider SI issues/trends, unpick at school level. The SI Team will probe further. Reading and Writing action plans, complement SIPs, data feeds into HTPM and appraisal, introduced target setting on Insight system, data windows can produce reports that show targets against projections. Disparity will be picked up and investigated. Work on targets, projections, and actuals.

Whole Trust initiatives, Maths data below national, discuss reasons and barriers such as subject knowledge, implementation lag, quality of ongoing assessment and data reviews. Looking at causal links. Writing outcomes, in line with national, looking at link between GPaS outcomes and overall writing outcomes. Sharing good practice across schools – maths leads across schools. Leadership – lot of coaching work in schools, working alongside subject leaders, focussing on T&L, superb feedback from subject leaders. Leadership capacity can be an issue in enabling to sustain SI.

Safeguarding

SG reviews to start after half term to allow a start in schools on SI and data. One focus of SELT is ways to maintain focus on SG but relieve leaders.

RE and Catholic Life

7. HB Meeting with KB and JS was purposeful, to ensure links. Pleased to be invited to provide Catholic Life of HT appraisal. Offered to carry out short training for SIOs and what to look for.

8. Catholic Life framework has been reviewed. Regarding DCIs, external inspectors would be required due to size of the Trust. Governor training on inspection changes. Good take up. Essential to have an understanding of key areas of framework.

School levy - working more closely with the Trust, working with Danielle to obtain exact numbers of children in schools. Cost is not going to rise this year. LF moving to three-year agreement. HB favourable for our children. LF highlighted the submission to ESFA before end of academic year. HB gave thanks for the access to Insight.

NJ questioned his role as lead director in RE and Catholic life. He is not involved in Diocesan discussions. What does the Board think is his role in this area. AH felt it is the same as her brief, meet with KB and ZB, challenge on KBs work and the impact. NJ meet with HB and team, learn about what they are doing in school and the impact, and bring back to Board. HB agreed but also meet with ZB and KB, more outward facing as well. KB agreed, NJ and HB meet and then challenge what they see in schools and the impact. .

LP to send the Lead Director role info to NJ

Education and Standards

- **Board to approve AH as Chair**

The Board approved AH as Chair.

AH approved as
Chair of E&S.

- **Update from Chair of E&S**

Summary and minutes are addressing the questions asked at the meeting. AH asked for questions.

10. GB highlighted the benefit of diagrams in reports.

KB reporting cycle deals with exceptions, priority schools, focussed report within it. DoE report this time, set of questions and issues.

AN Maths across the Board was disappointing. Power Maths is good, expectations will be better as embedding. Vary across schools but where most established is having the biggest impact. Leadership of HT and Maths Lead.

Meeting paused at 12.55pm.

Meeting resumed 1.17pm. HB left the meeting.

Finance and Resources

- **Update from Chair of F&R**

Healthy but need to rework due to NJC. Recommend Year One budget and NJC recommendations. Meeting again on 20th October to discuss Years 2 and 3. Payroll implementation date changed due to risk.

- **Management Accounts to August 2022**

11. Q. 11.2 Accounts. Is there a lag between us taking an SEN pupil and funding for necessary support being paid depending on EHCP assessment?

No, don't refuse to take pupils. Funding will be retrospectively paid when the EHCP banding is agreed. SEND Lead carried out SEND funding training, showing the difference in LA funding.

Draft, favourable position, written before final accruals submitted, some schools haven't spent all sports premium and will need to repay ESFA, two years of grants rolling over number of smaller schools found it difficult to spend. Overall shape is favourable, good buffer into unprecedented times, had significant amount of income that was not anticipated including Supplementary Grants to support pay rises.

Overall – some schools have delivered to the budget requirements, three schools delivering unfavourably, further unpicking of budgets. Some schools have difficulty in recruiting, secondaries especially, this has created a saving. Pastoral worker now appointed in Cornwall, but only recruited this week.

Unknown – auditors supporting with, LA Govt schemes, triannual pension valuations, further deficit repayment, notice received contributions from 2021/22, not going to be good news but will be in a position to contribute, if asked.

The Board discussed issues encountered with the current payroll provider and may be mentioned in statutory audit. Internal Audit have been asked to look at payroll given the challenges and changes.

Trying to close Trial Balance today which would be two weeks earlier than last year.

- **Updated 2022-23 Budget**

Q. 11.3 Budget. Is there any explanation for the wide variation in percentage staff costs - 73.9% to 86.9%, excluding the obvious outliers?

Secondary schools operate at a lower staff cost to primaries; reality is there can be lots of reasons in local context. High staffing costs can relate to high pupil numbers, number of children in each classroom is the biggest driver of staffing costs.

For re-approval. Three-year budget approved in July included the late increase in teacher pay but didn't have confirmation for support staff. Budget has been submitted so are compliant with Academies Handbook. NJC made a final pay offer which was greater than we had assumed, Finance Team recalculated 22/23 budget, need to discuss as a Board, to support NJC pay award, impact on 22/23 budget.

One year budget reworked, substantial piece of work in the summer, no further funding anticipated, SBMs will be focussing on Year 2 and Year 3 budgets. F&R meeting on 20th October 2022. General principles applied – didn't change resourcing, some schools are not delivering against Trust objectives.

Trust approved position, surplus in excess of £900 000, reduced by £200 000. Board to understand several more buoyant schools had surpluses, recommend this budget but recognise that some schools will not be able to meet long term absence or maternity. Advise F&R when schools are operating outside of the agreed parameters.

Few more ambers and reds, schools are higher on the staffing and are tipping into not being able to deliver the 2%. Secondaries are combined.

LF asked for questions. Negative position if utilities were not a fixed.

NJC pay increase – approved
Year One budget – approved

AN asked if Year 2 and 3 work is carried out and report back to the Board in December. The Board approved.

The Board approved the NJC pay increase of £1925 and the Year One budget. Years 2 and 3 to be brought to the December Board meeting.

- **F&R Terms of Reference**

AN provided an update on the changes. The Board approved.

Audit and Risk

- **Update from Chair of A&R**

Had to cancel the meeting. Papers have been issued. Francis Clark controls assurance report – very positive.

Health and Safety Committee – H&S advisors come in every three years. Across the SW, recommending internal review of schools each year, Board should be aware formal audit is once every three years, the Trust is looking at how to carry out internal audit of H&S every year. RCF implementing a system of internal personnel review using audit checklists and Trust monitoring form (HS1), triangulates with Governor visits, SBM visits and HT accountability.

12. Risk Register Update

Risk Register – reviewed by SELT, identified four areas of risk. Controls had changed on three, risk is increasing:

Staff recruitment, IT systems, Governance failure, Audit compliance.

Governance and Management

- **Link Reports**
- **Lead Reports**

RO reminded Directors to submit Link and Lead Director reports to LP.

- **Governance Lead Updates**

Schedule of Accountability being reviewed. Training for Governors on roles during the summer term.

Terms of Reference circulated.

13. AH produced a guidance note on how to remove a Governor. Decision doesn't rest with the Chair but for 2/3 of the LCB. Will circulate. RO thanked AH.

Small LCBs to focus on four key roles, AH to circulate.

Two training sessions – Chairs and New Governors and Diocese training in November.

- **GDPR Director Lead Role – for approval**

F&R Terms of Reference approved.

AH to circulate guidance note on how to remove a Governor.

Q. 13.4 Can you confirm when training will be provided for the Board re new Data Protection requirements?

The Board discussed the GDPR Lead Role and felt that the role was too big, held the Director to account if there was a data breach and places a legal duty on the Director. SH gave an example of a recent case.

RCF a starting point, professional external DPO, annual GDPR audit, clearing outstanding actions, GDPR Lead Governor should have this focus and be reflected at Trust level.

The Board discussed where HR sits within the Trust. RCF to revisit the lead role description. DECEMBER BOARD.

Training video from DPO – RCF will make available. Training also available online using SSS.

Policy Review

- **Freedom of Information – for approval**

RCF raised with DPO, confirmed timetables were the same for schools or the central team. 20 working days excluding school holidays, as we are one legal entity. Only applies to FOI requests and not SAR.

RCF asked for approval. NJ SAR on week one of summer holidays, have to do within 20 days. RCF SAR clause can extend due to extenuating circumstances. RCF talked about the difference between SAR and FOI, could genuinely extend if SAR received in the holidays. The Board approved.

14. • Admissions Policy 2024/25 – for discussion

RCF outlined the timescales. Proposing one Trust-wide policy which would be modelled on the Devon County Council policy and personalised for each school. New development by DCC, document contains a map. No designated catchment area, map does not need to be included.

Support template of DCC – approved.

Following a discussion, the Board agreed on not including maps.

23/24 Admissions queries from RCF’s paper:

Query 1: Is it possible for children from the pre-school were given priority No. 7 i.e. before everyone else? It has an impact on the number of children wanting a place in the pre-school.

RCF took advice and confirmed that this would require full consultation and this can be done for 24/25. The Board discussed how this would help to protect pupil numbers and would be in the best interest of the child. The Board approved the consultation for the relevant schools.

AH to circulate four keys roles for small LCBs.

GDPR Lead Director role to be brought to the December Board.

RCF to share DPO training video.

The Board approved the Freedom of Information Policy.

The Board approved the use of the DCC Admissions Policy template and not to include a map.

Query 2: Regarding the secondary schools admission policies, I am surprised that as far as I can see there is no reference to the sex of the child. Indeed in both cases it has a priority for siblings defined as sister or brother. I am slightly concerned that with the advent of self identification of sex that we are leaving the door open for children of the wrong biological sex to apply.

The Board approved the consultation process for pre-school children to be given priority number 7.

RCF sought advice from the DCC Admissions advisor who confirmed that single sex schools can distinguish between sex.

Q. 14.2 CAST Admission Policy - Gender reassignment

If a child cannot get a certificate of re-assignment until they are over 18, how can DofE guidance be complied with? Have we had pupils with a desire to be reassigned and if so, how has it been managed? Given the recent high-profile case of an erroneous surgical reassignment, would we be attempting to be accepting of all children without attempting firm definition?

Section 3.4 of DfE guidance Equality Act Advice allows for this.

The Board discussed the risks and the needs of children, the impact on them, families, and the school, along with the support provided by schools and external agencies.

Case by case basis – who makes the decision? If a decision was to be 'no' there would be a legal challenge. KB have to admit to school they choose, safeguarding processes would support.

ZB pointed out that younger generations are more accepting of their peers and friends. Lots of charities out there to offer support to families and young people. Need to ensure that school staff are adequately trained and are using the correct terminology.

The Board agreed that the policy did not need to be amended, the Trust can accept children, SELT would make the decision.

The Board agreed the Admissions Policy did not need to be amended and SELT would consider any application to move school based on gender identity.

RCF policy is legally compliant. GB suggested adding links to the website to reflect their understanding, but this would need Diocese support.

Additional oversubscription criteria for secondary schools for pupils who have attended CAST primary schools, used to be included. Reintroduce for 24/25? The Board agreed.

The Board agreed to reintroduce oversubscription criteria for those who have attended CAST primary schools.

St Boniface closure of 6th form, admissions variation. Post 16 education is delivered at ND. Be removed. SH natural to expect boys to continue, NJ shop around at 16. RCF no post 16 education at St B. AN explained that the funding arrangement issues.

Q. 14.2 Proposed oversubscription admission criteria 4 must also be subject to criteria 3. What criteria will a parent use to demonstrate regularity of attendance?

RCF confirmed that the policy does specify child attends church on at least a monthly basis and for a minimum period of two years immediately prior to application.

Advised a faith-based criteria for those who regularly attend but are not baptised. Include as a criteria? The Board approved this.

Under current criteria three or above current criteria five? The Board approved above criteria five. SH highlighted the issue with not having a consistent priest and how families would be able to evidence that.

- In many places, we still say LCB and LGB, can we be consistent e.g in the proposed admissions policy?

Meeting closed at 3.25pm

The Board approved including those who regularly attend but are not baptised above current criteria five.

Future Board Meeting Dates

All meetings to commence at 10.30am at The CAST Offices, Plymouth.

Friday	9 th December 2022	10.30am
Friday	10 th March 2023	10.30am
Friday	19 th May 2023	10.30am
Friday	21 st July 2023	10.30am