



Thursday 16th December 2015

Dear parents and carers,

Thank you to those of you who have submitted responses to the Admissions Consultation. It is extremely important to the Governors that we know your views. If you haven't had a chance, it is still open until January 15th.

I am aware that there is some confusion and concern about what the suggested criteria means for the future of the school. Therefore, I would like to invite parents to a meeting in January to discuss this in more detail. We will provide the date for this after the Christmas holidays.

One point I would like to clarify now is that the inclusivity of the school is of paramount importance to the Governors, and these criteria have been designed to protect that. Under the current criteria, it would be possible for only church-going families to be offered places, even before siblings. In the suggested criteria, **at least 40%** of the places would be allocated to non-church families (including families from a variety of world faiths and non-religious families).

To put this in context, this year St Mary's offered 30 places. 6 places were offered to siblings (both church and non-church), 15 places were offered to families in church categories and 9 places were offered to category 6 (non-church). If the school were to become more popular in the future, it could be possible under the current criteria for no places to be offered in category 6 if we received 30 applications for categories 1 to 5. Under the criteria we are suggesting, at least 12 places would be offered to non-church families (including non-church siblings). As Governors, we want to protect the places offered to families from other world faiths, or those who are not religious, by creating an 'Open' category, so that these families remain very much a part of our school.

The Governors are keen to include families from St Mary's church, but not at the detriment of the inclusive nature of the school as we greatly value the cultural diversity of our school community and very much want to preserve it.

If you have any questions about this, please do ask me or one of the other school Governors and we will happily discuss it with you. We are also working on an Arabic translation of this letter, which will be sent out to families in January. Please note that the criteria is still only a suggestion, and all your feedback will be taken very seriously by Governors in deciding how to proceed.

With all best wishes for Christmas and the New Year,

Jon Ward
Chair of Governors