

Barton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Minutes of the Extraordinary Full Governing Body meeting held remotely on 27th June 2024 at 6.00 p.m.

Present

Mrs Julie Martin – Headteacher	JM	p	Mrs Sarah Penrose	SP	p
Mrs Louise Bowes	LB	na	Rev Priscilla Slusar	PS	p
Mr Andy Higgins	AHi	p	Mrs Katie Slusar-Fletcher	KSF	p
Mrs Catherine Martin – Vice Chair	CM	p	Mrs Anne Ugur	AU	p
Mrs Caroline Parsons – Chair	CP	p	Mrs Alice Hedges – Staff Governor	AHe	aa
Vacancies:					
Foundation Governor x 2 LE Governor x 1 Parent Governor x 1					

p – present, aa – apologies accepted, na – apologies not received/accepted

In attendance: Ms W Guest – Clerk.	WG
--	----

Abbreviations used.

FGB: Full Governing Body, **LA:** Local Authority, **PAN:** Published Admissions Number, **SFA:** Schools Financial Adviser

Documents issued for the EFGB meeting.

Projected numbers 2023/24, 2024/25, 2025/26.

Item	The meeting began at 6.04pm	
1	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>1.1. Apologies for absence Apologies were received from AHe. Consent for absence was granted. KSF and LB had notified the Chair that they would be late to the meeting, however LB did not attend. Consent for absence could therefore not be given.</p> <p>1.2. Quorum. The quorum for the meeting on 27.06.24 was 5. The meeting was quorate throughout.</p>	
2	<p>PUBLISHED ADMISSIONS NUMBER (PAN)</p> <p>The extraordinary FGB had been convened to discuss the increasing number of pupils on roll and the YR PAN.</p> <p>The Chair provided the following background:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The YR PAN is currently 20 and has been so for a long time without causing any issues. • The Admissions Policy (including the YR PAN) is reviewed by FGB every September to set the requirements for admissions two years ahead (i.e. in September 2024, a decision will be taken for the 2026/27 academic year). • In previous discussions about reducing the PAN, the following concerns had been raised: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. that Barton would be seen as a shrinking school by the Diocese, LA and local community, and this could deter potential families for applying for places 2. that the LA Admissions Team would not advise Barton of any further applications once the YR PAN had been reached 	

Barton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Minutes of the Extraordinary Full Governing Body meeting held remotely on 27th June 2024 at 6.00 p.m.

3. that a large PAN protected against differing sizes of YR intakes, balancing out smaller and larger cohorts

- The **statutory maximum class size for EYFS/KS1 is 30 pupils**. (There is no statutory limit for a KS2 class).
- At the start of the 2023/24 academic year, there were 25 pupils in a mixed YR/Y1 class, but there has been an influx of in-year applications which resulted in the class expanding to 30 pupils by the beginning of the Summer Term. Two families have since moved into the village, both with YR pupils, and as the YR PAN had not been met, these pupils had to be admitted, taking the **EYFS/Y1 class to 32**. Advice was sought from the LA who confirmed that an exception to the statutory class size could be made for the last few weeks of the academic year. TAs are being diverted from other classes to provide additional support.

KSF arrived at 6.06pm

Governors were advised that the Chair, Headteacher and School Business Manager had recently met with the LA Area Education Officer, LA Education Capital Projects Officer, Peter Smith Associates and the Chair of Barton Playgroup to discuss pupil numbers and future playgroup provision after the Playgroup Leaders retire in July 2025. The meeting went on to discuss the school's capacity, PAN and management of class and cohort sizes.

At the meeting, the Area Education Officer confirmed the following:

- **Barton's overall capacity of 120** is based on a 4-class structure with 30 pupils per class. It is possible to exceed the published capacity, as long as the square meterage is sufficient to accommodate additional pupils.
- It is important to ensure that **sufficient places are available to meet the YR PAN**. This is so that YR pupils can be admitted throughout the academic year and will avoid the issues that have been experienced this half-term.
- The **LA Admissions Team will always notify schools of any applications that they receive even if the PAN has been reached**. Schools are able to over-admit if they have the capacity to do so.

The Area Education Officer advised that the **YR PAN should be reduced to either 15 or to 17:**

- a **PAN of 15** would ensure that EYFS/KS1 classes never exceed 30 pupils
- a **PAN of 17** would ensure that the 7 year groups in school do not exceed the overall capacity of 120 pupils ($7 \times 19 = 119$).

Governors noted that having two consecutive year groups of 17 pupils would be manageable in KS2. There are currently 34 pupils in the mixed Y5/Y6 class. In KS1, a PAN of 17 could be managed by splitting the Y1 cohort across two classes (as has been the case in the past).

The usual **procedure for changing the YR PAN** is via a consultation which needs to take place 2 years in advance of the proposed implementation. The PAN for 2024/25 and 2025/26 has already been set at 20. Therefore, in September, governors will need to start a consultation for reducing the PAN for 2026/27 if it is agreed to do so.

However, the Area Education Officer advised that there is a procedure within the School Admissions Code which enables schools to apply for an **emergency reduction in the PAN**. Submissions are made to the Schools Adjudicator who usually decides within a week of receiving the request.

Governors were therefore asked to make a decision on the following issues:

1. **Whether to make an application to the Schools Adjudicator for an emergency reduction in the YR PAN for 2024/25?**
2. **And if so, what the PAN should be reduced to?**

Barton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Minutes of the Extraordinary Full Governing Body meeting held remotely on 27th June 2024 at 6.00 p.m.

Q: Looking at the numbers for YR in September, does this mean that school will need to keep 6 empty places in order to meet the YR PAN? Yes, the YR intake is currently 14 and if this does not increase over the summer, it will be necessary to reserve 6 places if the YR PAN is kept at 20. Although it is possible to go over the 120 capacity and admit pupils further up the school (if classroom sizes permit), it still seems a waste to keep a large number of empty places which will impact on school's funding.

Q: The class sizes feel quite small for next year – are there concerns about how this will be funded? Yes, it will be very challenging to fund the 5-class structure, and it is only possible to do so due to the carry-forward from the last financial year. The current pupil numbers do not neatly fit into a 4-class structure, so the only other option would be to retain 4 classes, but have some with 3 mixed year groups. This felt impractical not only for pupils' teaching and learning, but also for staff wellbeing and would have meant splitting 3 cohorts. The 5-class structure still requires the Y1 cohort to be split across two classes, but this has happened in the past and it is the only year group to be affected in this way. The Class Teacher has spoken to parents of children who will be in the EYFS/Y1 class next year, and will follow through with parents whose children will be in the Y1/Y2 class. If there are no more admissions over the summer, there will be 22 pupils in EYFS/Y1 class and 24 pupils in the Y1/Y2 class.

Q: If the YR PAN was reduced to 17 next year, there would be a maximum of 28 pupils in the EYFS/Y1 class – is this viable? Yes. The per pupil funding that school receives ideally requires 30 pupils per class to cover teaching staff costs, but 28 is possible.

Q: Is there an argument that by reducing the YR PAN, parents might see that Barton is “full” after the first round of admissions has been completed and numbers are published? This could then deter potential families from applying, particularly if they have multiple siblings? It is unclear how many families would check the published numbers and whether they would be deterred. Reducing the PAN allows school to take more control over numbers and choose to over-admit where it is possible to do so.

Q: Would it be viable to take an alternative approach and try to boost numbers so that a 5-class structure could be maintained for 2 years (or longer)? To maintain a 5-class structure, an additional 30 pupils would be needed and there is no space to accommodate them within our existing facilities. We have pushed the LA for additional funding for another classroom, but there is no money available, and this is not a viable approach while there are spaces at other local primary schools.

Q: What would be the benefit of reducing the YR PAN in 2025/26 as there will still be a problem with mixing the large year groups in UKS2? If the YR PAN was reduced to 15 for 2024/25 and 2025/26, it would be possible to have a discrete YR/Y1 class, a Y2/Y3 class and then split the Y5 cohort into a Y4/Y5 and a Y5/Y6 class (as it will not be possible to have a Y5/Y6 class of 37 pupils). This would avoid the need for a 5-class structure and would therefore be more financially viable.

Q: Is there a downside to a PAN of 15 if it helps with numbers for the next two years? It might be concerning to the LA, Diocese and local community as it represents a 25% reduction, although sometimes the YR intake does not reach 15, and it is still possible to over-admit. It would not be viable to sustain a PAN of 15 in the long-term as this would overly restrict numbers and put additional pressure on finances.

Q: Is there a maximum number of times you can change the PAN? There needs to be a rationale for why the PAN needs to be altered, and it is unlikely that the LA/Diocese would take a favourable view if it is changed too often or without sufficient explanation.

Q: Could something be added to the school website to encourage prospective

Barton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

**Minutes of the Extraordinary Full Governing Body meeting held remotely
on 27th June 2024 at 6.00 p.m.**

	<p>families to contact school and come to visit to talk through the admissions process so that we do not discourage potential applications? Yes, we could certainly revamp our admissions page to reinforce the message that we are a welcoming school and will try to accommodate admissions requests wherever possible. We could also give more information about the range of villages that our children come from so that parents are aware that families see us as a school of choice in the local area.</p> <p>Q: Could we justify the reduction in PAN by explaining to the local community that we are victims of our own success and now need to manage our numbers more carefully? Yes, this would be a positive way of handling the situation, and would ensure that we are prioritising our pupils' experience at school.</p> <p>Q: It is clear that a lot of thought has been given to reducing the PAN, but which of the two options from the LA would be school's preference? If we were able to start from scratch, a PAN of 17 makes sense. This would mean splitting the Y1 cohort as discussed above, but parents are aware of this issue, and there would be no need to split the cohort again as they move further up the school. However, there is an issue for 2025/26 where the numbers still do not neatly fit into 4 classes. Reducing the PAN to 15 could potentially solve this problem, and then the PAN could be 17 for 2026/27 onwards when the large two cohorts (currently Y4 and Y5) have transitioned to secondary.</p> <p>Q: Do we know if other families are applying for a September 2024 start? The Admissions Team have a list of applications and we have already confirmed that we will accept 4 new pupils (who will be in Y3, Y5 and Y6), but more families are enquiring all the time, and we have noticed that new applications are on the Admissions Portal waiting to be processed. We are trying to contact Admissions for clarification so that we can plan for next year.</p> <p>Governors discussed the benefits and risks of reducing the YR PAN to 15 for 2024/25 and 2025/26, noting that whilst it would solve the difficulties with fitting pupil numbers into a viable class structure, it could result in increased financial pressures in a few years' time once the large UKS2 cohorts have moved to secondary school unless there are sufficient numbers of in-year applications to mitigate the small YR PAN.</p> <p>Governors also noted that the SFA had agreed that we should use the carry-forward to fund a fifth class this year, but had stressed the challenges that this will represent to avoid being in a deficit budget for the next financial year.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>Governors agreed that a YR PAN of 17 was the most sensible long-term option for a 4-class structure, and that the PAN should be reduced to 17 when the 2026/27 Admissions Policy is due for review.</p> <p>However, in light of the financial pressures of creating a 5-class structure and to ensure that pupil numbers fit back into a 4-class structure in 2025/26, it was agreed that the Governing Body should apply for an emergency reduction in the YR PAN to 15 for the next two academic years (2024/25 and 2025/26).</p> </div>	<p>FGB Autumn 1</p> <p>JM/CP</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>3.1. Governor resignation Governors were informed that Suliman Boulos had decided to resign his position of Parent Governor as he is finding it difficult to fit the governor meetings around his work commitments. He has asked that his apologies are sent to FGB.</p> <p>Parent Governor elections will be held before Autumn half-term, and the Chair and Clerk will draw up a timetable early in the new academic year.</p>	<p>WG/CP</p>

Barton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

**Minutes of the Extraordinary Full Governing Body meeting held remotely
on 27th June 2024 at 6.00 p.m.**

	<p>3.2. Staffing</p> <p>Governors were advised that one of the teachers has handed in her resignation last week to leave at the end of the Summer Term. She has recently completed a Forest School Training qualification (which she self-funded), and has been approached by another school to lead their Forest School.</p> <p>Teachers are required to give notice by May half-term if they want to leave at the end of the Summer Term, so governors will need to give their permission for the teacher to be released early.</p> <p>The teacher is employed for 1.5 days: 1 day to teach Y4 and 0.5 days to provide PPA cover in YR/Y1.</p> <p>Q: Can the teacher's hours be covered in the Autumn Term if she is released early? The newly appointed Y3/Y4 teacher will be full-time, but an alternative solution will need to be found for PPA cover. There will also be a gap for Music leadership with responsibility for choir and driving the music curriculum within school.</p> <p>Governors were informed that recruitment is still ongoing for the Y5 Class Teacher position tomorrow. Once this position has been filled, it will clearer what the requirements for ECT release will be, which will impact on the requirements for providing classroom cover.</p> <p>Governors were advised that they could require the teacher to stay until October half-term to serve out her contractual notice, but agreed that this was not in line with the Barton's ethos, and would not be in pupils' best interests for staffing to change early in the academic year.</p> <div data-bbox="252 1149 1294 1335" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"><p>Governors agreed to accept the teacher's resignation and to release her at the end of the Summer Term.</p><p>Governors wished to pass on their thanks to the teacher for her hard work and particular commitment to Music provision within school.</p></div> <p>Governors were advised that this resignation should remain confidential until it was made public to the school community at the end of next week.</p>	<p>JM</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING – WEDNESDAY 10th JULY 2024 at 6.30 pm</p> <p>The meeting ended at 7.04pm</p>	