

Prejudice to Efficient Education and Efficient Use of Resources

The Governing Body may refuse to comply with a parent's stated preference when it can demonstrate that compliance with the preference would prejudice the provision of effective and efficient education and the efficient use of resources.

Non-qualification: Where the admission of a non-qualified pupil, even where the school is not oversubscribed, would cause prejudice

The Governing Body believes that the duty to comply with parental preference does not apply to this case because:

Sir Roger Manwood's School is a Grammar School: established to educate the most academically able of students. Were the school to admit less able students it may tend toward lowering the pace of learning and limiting the depth of study for the rest of the class.

While the school has the facility to accommodate the needs of students with specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, such a facility would be diluted and directed away from those students for whom it is intended if the members of staff concerned were obliged to help lower ability children to keep up with the rest of the class.

Oversubscription: Where the admission of an additional pupil, even if qualified, would cause prejudice

The Governing Body believes that the duty to comply with parental preference does not apply to this case because:

a) The Planned Admission Number for the school is set at 150 by its Funding Agreement with the Department for Education.

It is stated in DfE Technical Note 4: "The capacity of an Academy is agreed with the Secretary of State and written into its Funding Agreement".

b) Several of the classes in which KS3 forms are taught are too small for classes of 30 students when compared to government guidelines for such rooms.

For example, based on room size, each of the school's IT rooms should accommodate, 20, 21, or 25 students. Only one of the school art rooms is of a size to accommodate 30, the others 29 and 15. Two Science labs should have 21 and 29 students in them, the others up to 30. The music room should have a maximum 25, and the drama studio 28. In addition, there are 4 general classrooms around the school site that are only big enough for 19, 21, 23, and 27. The school obviously tries not to timetable KS3 form classes into these smaller rooms but due to the high number of GCSE and A Level classes we have, we often have to. Similarly, if a student has additional needs and access to upper floors is not possible we again may need to use these rooms. In some of the smaller classrooms the only way to accommodate some pupils is to set up an exam desk in the rooms on those occasions. Movement is then restricted around these rooms and students often complain if they are assigned these desks.

The Science labs that are big enough to accommodate form classes have been designed to accommodate 30 pupils, with enough work areas for 15 pairs of students plus space for movement around the room. However, post-appeals we often have forms of 32, which has created problems, but we have managed. When carrying out science practicals, a higher number than 32 in a class would increase the risk of accidents to an unacceptable level. Firstly, practicals often involve movement

around the room, as well as working at a bench, and having more students in a room increases the chance of tripping. In addition to the reduced amount of space per pupil that adding extra pupils creates, there is also the concern that the supervision of additional pupils in these areas would increase the health and safety issues around doing practical activities in these rooms. To reduce the risk of an accident occurring, the staff in such rooms would have to avoid class practical work and instead perform demonstrations or computer simulations. Although the students in the class would still be taught the content of the Science curriculum it would mean that the practical skills required to perform well in GCSE and A Level assessments would not be able to be developed to the same extent and so could affect students' grades. Students are better prepared for GCSE and A Level exams, especially the practical requirements, when more experiments can be done as a class practical rather than demonstrations. The GCSE and A Level results are testament to the quality of the education students receive in KS3.

With the current size of the form classes at KS3 time for teacher-student interaction that happens on a 1 to 1 level is limited but effective. Addition of further students would restrict the availability of staff to support some students to access the curriculum and enable them and others to reach the highest standards that they are capable of. In practical and creative subjects there would be a significant impact on the ability to introduce novel techniques and machines due to health and safety considerations. In addition, Technology is taught in rooms that are designed and full to capacity when delivering the curriculum to maximum of 16 pupils. The GCSE and A Level results attest to the quality of the education students receive in KS3.

Going above 32 in a form reduces the time available to the teacher to provide instant, individualised feedback. This would increase the time spent marking and assessing their progress, providing feedback in a less effective manner and reducing opportunities to motivate and enrich the real time learning experience for each individual. The school believes that adding pupils to a class of 32 would have a harmful effect on the progress of every other pupil in the class, plus would add an unmanageable challenge to the teacher's workload.

c) The governors maintain that they have complied with the published 2023-2024 Determined Admission Arrangements for the admission to Sir Roger Manwood's School and admitting additional pupils would restrict the provision of safe and efficient education and the efficient use of resources in the ways outlined above.