



## **LEAD MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND INCLUSION, SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY**

**DECISIONS** to be made by the Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability,  
Councillor Nick Bennett

**TUESDAY, 21 MARCH 2017**

**12 NOON (OR AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL, WHICHEVER IS THE LATER)**

**COMMITTEE ROOM, COUNTY HALL, LEWES**

### **AGENDA**

- 1 Decisions made by the Lead Cabinet Member on 28 February 2017 *(Pages 3 - 4)*
- 2 Disclosures of interests  
Disclosure by all Members present of personal interests in matters on the Agenda, the nature of any interest and whether the Member regards the interest as prejudicial under the terms of the Code of Conduct
- 3 Urgent items  
Notification of items which the Lead Member considers to be urgent and propose to take at the end of the appropriate part of the Agenda
- 4 St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant and Junior schools Amalgamation *(Pages 5 - 34)*  
Report by Director of Children's Services
- 5 Shinewater Primary School, Eastbourne change of age range *(Pages 35 - 38)*  
Report by Director of Children's Services
- 6 Any urgent items previously notified under agenda item 3

PHILIP BAKER  
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13 March 2017

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## LEAD MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND INCLUSION, SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY

MINUTES of a meeting of the Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability held at County Hall, Lewes on 28 February 2017.

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Councillor Field spoke on item 6 (see minute 29)

Councillor Shuttleworth spoke on items 5 and 6 (see minutes 28 and 29)

### 25 DECISIONS MADE BY THE LEAD CABINET MEMBER ON 16 JANUARY 2017

25.1 Councillor Bennett approved as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2017.

### 26 REPORTS

26.1 Copies of the reports referred to below are contained in the Minute book.

### 27 SCHOOL AGE RANGE CHANGE - TELSCOMBE CLIFFS PRIMARY SCHOOL

27.1 The Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability considered a report by the Director of Children's Services which sought approval to lower the age range at Telscombe Cliffs Community Primary School.

27.2 RESOLVED to authorise the change of age range at Telscombe Cliffs Community Primary School from 4-11 to 2-11 with effect from 1 April 2017.

#### Reasons

27.3 Lowering the age range will help to build on work already done by the school and nursery provider, ensuring a fully integrated Early Years Foundation Stage to help secure good outcomes for all children.

### 28 APPROVAL OF THE DSG (DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT) FOR 2017/18

28.1 The Lead Member considered a report by the Director of Children's Services which sought approval for the allocation of the Dedicated Schools Grant for 2017/18, including the inter block transfers between the Schools Block, High Needs Block and Early Years Block.

28.2 RESOLVED to approve the allocation of the DSG budget for 2017/18, including the following inter block transfers:

- £4.3m inter block transfer from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block; and
- £22,800 inter block transfer from the Schools Block to the Early Years Block.

#### Reasons

28.3 The pressures in the High Needs Block are significant and the additional funding is required to support the following areas:

- £600k to support school top up funding where there has been an increase in demand on top of increases in the band funding for children with EHCP's.

- £1.3m to support the increase in requests for new and on-going placements with Post 16 providers.
- £2.4m to support the increase in demand for on-going placements post-19 within high cost independent special schools.

28.4 To maintain the Council's commitment to the most vulnerable two year olds, an inter block transfer of £22,800 is requested for approval by Lead Member. This is to enable continued support to Band A children with an additional £0.80 per hour.

## 29 ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2018/19

29.1 The Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability considered a report by the Director of Children's Services which sought approval for admission arrangements for the 2018/19 school year.

29.2 RESOLVED: (1) to agree the proposed admission arrangements for the 2017/18 school year, including the following changes to the existing arrangements:

- To make a change to the community area for Eastbourne primary schools so that the Polegate and Willingdon area outside the borough boundary becomes a separate community area as detailed in paragraphs 2.1 – 2.5 below;
- To change the definition of 'Looked After Children' in the County Council's admission arrangements to include children accommodated under section 20 of the Children Act 1989; and
- Approve an application being made to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator for an in-year variation to enlarge the community area for Iford & Kingston CE Primary School to encompass the community area currently served by Rodmell CE Primary School in the event that a decision is taken by Cabinet in September 2017 to close Rodmell CE Primary School on 31 August 2018.

(2) agree the following:

- The admission priorities as set out in Appendix 1 of the report
- The admission numbers as set out in Appendix 3 of the report
- The co-ordinated schemes as set out in Appendix 4 of the report.

### Reasons

29.3 East Sussex County Council has a statutory duty to determine its admission arrangements and consult on any proposed changes. Following consultation, it is the responsibility of the Lead Member to determine the admission arrangements for the school year 2018/19.

Report to: **Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability**

Date: **21 March 2017**

By: **Director of Children's Services**

Title of report: **St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant and Junior Schools amalgamation**

Purpose of report: **To seek Lead Member approval to amalgamate St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant School and St Thomas a Becket Catholic Junior School to create an all-through primary school.**

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## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Lead Member is recommended to approve the closure of St Thomas a Becket Catholic Junior School on 31 August 2017 and to alter the upper age limit of St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant School from 4 - 7 to 4 - 11 with effect from 1 September 2017 in order to create an all-through primary school.**

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## **1 Background**

1.1 The Governing Body of St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant and Junior Schools recently consulted on a proposal to amalgamate the two schools to create an all-through primary school with effect from 1 September 2017. Such a change would align the new school with Diocesan policy regarding all-through primary schools. The governing body believes that the longer-term future for Catholic education in the area can best be achieved through amalgamating the two schools into one all-through primary school, operating on the same site. All the children from ages 4-11 in the two existing schools would be part of one school.

1.2 The proposal is in line with the East Sussex County Council's School Organisation Policy which supports the amalgamation of infant and junior schools to form all-through primary schools.

## **2 Supporting information**

2.1 The governing body consulted with interested parties between 7 November and 16 December 2016. In all, 55 responses were received during the consultation, of which 48 (87%) were in support of the proposal and 7 (13%) were against it.

2.2 On 6 January 2017, the Governing Body agreed to publish statutory notices in relation to the proposal. The statutory notice was published on 27 January 2017 in the Eastbourne Herald and at the main entrances to the school. The notice and full proposal was also available on the school's website.

2.3 Publication of the notice was followed by a four-week period of representation, when comments or objections could be made to the Governing Body. By the end of the representation period, no comments or objections had been received.

2.4 The Governing Body met on 1 March 2017 to consider the outcome of the representation period and make a recommendation to the Lead Member. The Governing Body believes the proposal to amalgamate St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant and Junior schools is in accordance with the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton and East Sussex County Council's policies and has support locally. In light of these factors, the Governing Body recommends that the proposed amalgamation of the two schools is approved. A copy of the Governing Body report is attached at Appendix A. The report includes a copy of the consultation document, the outcome of the consultation and copies of the statutory notice and full proposal.

### **3. Factors to be considered by the decision maker and types of decision**

3.1 Proposed changes to the organisation of maintained schools have to follow a prescribed process established in Sections 15 and 19(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (as amended by the Education Act 2011) and the School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 and the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013.

3.2 The process set out above complied with these requirements.

3.3 The regulations set out a number of factors to which the Lead Member should have regard before making a final decision on the proposal. These are set out in Appendix B.

### **4. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations**

4.1 In conclusion, the proposal to amalgamate St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant and Junior Schools would align the new school with Diocesan policy regarding all-through primary schools. The governing body believes that the longer-term future for Catholic education in the area can best be achieved through amalgamating the two schools into one all-through primary school, operating on the same site. The proposal is in line with East Sussex County Council's School Organisation Policy which supports the amalgamation of infant and junior schools.

4.2 For these reasons, the Lead Member is recommended to approve the closure of St Thomas a Becket Catholic Junior School on 31 August 2017 and to alter the upper age limit at St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant School from 4-7 to 4-11 with effect from 1 September 2017 in order to establish an all-through primary school.

#### **STUART GALLIMORE**

##### **Director of Children's Services**

Contact Officer: Gary Langford, Place Planning Manager

Tel. No. 01273 481758

Email: gary.langford@eastsussex.gov.uk

#### BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Guidance for Decision Makers published by the DfE in April 2016

#### LOCAL MEMBER

Councillor Pat Rodohan



Appendix A

# St Thomas a Becket Federation of Catholic Infant and Junior Schools

Mrs. R. P. Turner  
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<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Proposed amalgamation of St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant School and St Thomas a Becket Catholic Junior School, Eastbourne.
<b>DATE OF REPORT:</b>	1 March 2017
<b>REPORT FROM:</b>	<b>John McManus, Chair of Governors</b> , for and on behalf of the Governing Body of the St Thomas a Becket Federation of Catholic Infant and Junior Schools, Eastbourne.
<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>Cllr Nick Bennett, ESCC Cabinet Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Needs and Disability</b>  cc  Marie Ryan, Director of Education, Diocese of Arundel & Brighton Education Service, and  Gary Langford, ESCC Place Planning Manager, Children’s Services Department

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 The reasons the Governing Body is proposing the amalgamation of St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant School and St Thomas a Becket Catholic Junior School, Eastbourne, were set out in their consultation document (Appendix 1). In brief, Governors believe such a change will:
- enable an agreed whole school vision and set of Catholic values to contribute to the driving up of standards and the promotion of continuity
  - lead to sustained improvement in educational standards in all Key Stages
  - provide increased opportunities to build on and share expertise across Key Stages, centralising resources and supporting an enriched curriculum
  - align the school with Diocesan policy regarding all-through primary schools.

- 1.2 Governors agreed that a Statutory Notice concerning the proposal should be published.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to inform the Cabinet Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Needs and Disability of the responses to the Statutory Notice and to recommend that the proposal be approved.

## **2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member confirms the proposal contained in the Statutory Notice to amalgamate St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant and Junior Schools, Eastbourne, from 1 September 2017.

## **3. CONTEXT / BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Cabinet Member of the outcomes of the Statutory Notice process in respect of the proposed amalgamation of the St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant and Junior Schools, Eastbourne, from September 2017. The reasons for the proposal and the outcomes of informal consultation during the autumn term are contained in the attached consultation document (Appendix 1) and the outcomes of informal consultation as described in Appendix 2.
- 3.2 Information relating to the possible impact on County Council business of next May's County Council elections was received after the publication of the consultation document on 7 November 2016. Attendees at the combined consultation meetings on 27 November 2016 were advised that changes to the published timetable would be necessary to accommodate County Council business in the run-up to the May elections. Several timetable changes were agreed at a governors' meeting held on 6 January 2017, and these were published as part of the Statutory Notice and the full proposal information on 27 January 2017.
- 3.3 The Statutory Notice (Appendix 3) was published on 27 January 2017 and the closing date for receipt of representations was 24 February 2017. The full proposal information (Appendix 4) was available on the Schools' website and in hard copy by request.
- 3.4 There were NO requests received for the full proposal information during the Notice Period and NO comments on or objections to the proposal were received.



3.5 Since September 2014 there has been one Head Teacher. The two schools, as a hard federation since 2010, have been operating under one Governing Body within the trusteeship of the Catholic Diocese of Arundel and Brighton, and have been working closely together to plan for the primary school.

#### **4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

4.1 The alternative option would be for the two schools to continue to operate as separate infant and junior schools. East Sussex County Council's policy of promoting the amalgamation of separate infant and junior schools is based on sound educational and organisational reasons and the rationale for the amalgamation has been supported throughout the consultation, and would align the new school with Diocesan policy regarding all-through primary schools.

#### **5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION**

5.1 Consultation on changes to school organisation must follow the processes set out in sections 15 and 19 (1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) as amended. The Act and associated regulations require that any proposal to close a school must go out to statutory consultation before any statutory notices can be published. There is also a requirement for statutory consultation on a proposal to alter the age range of a voluntary school by three years or more. Accordingly a combined public consultation was carried out from 7 November 2016 to 16 December 2016 on the proposal to close St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infants and the proposal to extend the age range of St Thomas a Becket Catholic Juniors.

5.2 Following the consultation and the outcome of the recent Ofsted inspection of the Infant School (November 2016) which judged the school as 'Good' the Governing Body, in approaching the publication of the Statutory Notice, decided that it would be more appropriate for the Junior School to close and the Infant School to extend its age range from 4-7 years to 4-11 years from 1 September 2017. This is a change from what was consulted on but it does not alter the overall objective of the proposal as it is considered a technical change, not a material change.

5.3 As a 'Voluntary Aided' school, the Governing Body will continue to be the admissions authority and the employer of staff.

5.4 The required Statutory Notice period, including the provision of full proposal information has now been completed.

## 6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The Governing Body's proposal to amalgamate the St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant and Junior Schools is in accordance with the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton and East Sussex County Council's policies and has been supported locally.
- 6.2 In light of these factors, the Cabinet Member is recommended to approve the proposal to amalgamate the two schools from September 2017.

## 7. FINANCIAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

### Financial Implications

- 7.1 The schools are funded through the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and will continue to be funded mainly based on pupil numbers, which would remain unchanged: however, there would be a change in the lump sum payable to the Primary School (one element of £142k) rather than two lump sums payable to both the infant and junior schools (£284k in total). This is protected to 85% of the total lump sum in the first full year £241k, and 70% of £241k in the second year £169k, subject to DfE approval. From April 2020 to March 2021 the school will receive one lump sum of £142k. The school would also have some staff savings, e.g. by only employing one Head Teacher rather than two. Also allowing more teaching and learning resources to be shared across the Primary School will lead to reduced bureaucracy, which would offset some of the reduction in budget.

### Legal Implications

- 7.2 The Education and Inspections Act 2006, as amended, provides that the Local Authority is the decision maker on any proposals to close a school and to alter the upper age limit of a school. The Cabinet Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Needs and Disability will act as the decision maker in these proposals. The decision must be made within two months of the end of the representation period. The exact process by which a decision-maker carries out their decision-making process is not prescribed, however it must have regard to the statutory 'Decision-Makers' Guidance' published by the DfE in April 2016.

The Guidance states that the decision-maker will need to be satisfied that the appropriate representation period has been carried out and that the proposer has had regard to the responses received. The decision-maker must consider all the views submitted, including all support for, objections to, and comments on the proposals.

In issuing the decision the decision-maker can:

- reject the proposal

- approve the proposal with modification
- approve the proposal with modifications, having consulted the Governing Body
- approve the proposal – with or without – modification subject to certain prescribed conditions being met.

#### Equalities Implications

- 7.3 There are no equalities implications arising from this proposal. The great majority of children already transfer from the infant school to the junior school and this will continue in the new primary school without the need for a 7+ admissions exercise.

#### School Transport

- 7.4 There should be no impact on school travel. The Governing Body is not proposing to change the current catchment area boundaries and the County Council's transport policy will continue to operate in the same way it does currently.

#### Sustainability Implications

- 7.5 There are no sustainability implications arising from this proposal.

#### Any Other Significant Implications

- 7.6 None

***Signed: John McManus***

Chair of Governors

## SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

### **APPENDICES:**

1. Consultation document on the proposed amalgamation of St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant and Junior Schools, Eastbourne
2. Outcomes of Informal Consultation
  - For Staff / Professional Associations / Unions
  - For Parents / Carers
  - Consultation Results
3. Statutory Notice for the proposed amalgamation of St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant School and St Thomas a Becket Catholic Junior School
4. Full proposal information for the proposed amalgamation of St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant School and St Thomas a Becket Catholic Junior School.

### **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:**

1. Decision Makers' Guidance, Department for Education, April 2016.

# Consultation on the proposed amalgamation of St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant and Junior Schools, Eastbourne

A consultation document produced by the schools' governing body

My fellow governors and I hope you will take time to read this document carefully. We feel it is really important to hear from parents, governors, staff, and other local people about the proposals we are making before we decide whether to make a change.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

**John McManus**

Chair of Governors

## **What this consultation is about**

This consultation document is about a proposal to amalgamate the existing St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant and Junior Schools and create a single all-through Catholic primary school.

## **Overview**

While primary education in this country is arranged for the most part in all-through 4 - 11 primary schools, the town of Eastbourne contains a mix of separate 4 - 7 infant and 7 -11 junior schools, and all-through 4 – 11 primary schools. The governing body of St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant and Junior Schools, within the trusteeship of the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton and in partnership with East Sussex County Council, have agreed to consult all interested parties on whether to amalgamate the two schools to form a new St Thomas a Becket Catholic Primary School with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2017. Such a change would align the new school with Diocesan policy regarding all-through primary schools. The governing body believe that the longer-term future for Catholic education in the area can best be achieved through amalgamating our two schools into one all-through primary school, operating on the same site. This would mean that all the children from ages 4 – 11 in the two existing schools would be part of one school.

## **We are considering the following proposal**

The proposal is to expand the age range of St Thomas a Becket Catholic Junior School to cater for children ages 4 – 11. The proposal is to “close” (in name only) St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant School. This would allow children currently attending St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant School to transfer automatically to St Thomas a Becket Catholic Junior School when it expands its age range. The expanded junior school would cater for 444 pupils<sup>1</sup>. St Thomas a Becket Catholic Junior School is proposing to change its name to St Thomas a Becket Catholic Primary School to reflect the change in age range.

In reality, parents / carers and staff would see very little difference between how the two schools currently work and how a single school would work in future. We are not proposing to build a new school; instead the two existing buildings would continue to be used with, as is now the case, a single Headteacher and a single governing body.

The main difference for parents / carers if a single school were established would be to remove the need for them to apply for places in the Junior School at the end of Year 2. Instead, once children are admitted to the school, they would be guaranteed a place there until they go to secondary school.

There would also be no difference for children already attending the two schools. They would all be guaranteed a place in the replacement primary school, and there would be no disruption to their

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<sup>1</sup> The infant school has an additional class of 30 pupils in its current Y2 to accommodate a ‘bulge year’.

education. The end result would be a school which caters for children aged 4 – 11 on the same site, which retains the existing high standards of Catholicity, teaching, learning and governance.

## More information

### St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant School:

St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant School is currently graded as 'Requiring Improvement' by OFSTED. The school caters for pupils aged between 4 and 7 and has a capacity of 180 pupils. There are currently 210 on roll, including the 30 pupils\* who make up the additional Y2 class. The table below shows the current school numbers:-

School	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Total
St Thomas a Becket Infant	60	60	90 <sup>2</sup>	210

### St Thomas a Becket Catholic Junior School:

St Thomas a Becket Catholic Junior School is currently rated by OFSTED as a 'Good' school. The school caters for pupils aged between 7+ and 11 and has a capacity of 264 pupils. There are currently 264 on roll. The table below shows the current school numbers:-

School	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Total
St Thomas a Becket Junior	66	66	66	66	264

## Proposal: Why amalgamating St Thomas a Becket Infant and St Thomas a Becket Junior Schools is an option

St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant and Junior Schools share the same site and in September 2010 a hard federation of the two schools was established with a shared governing body and with the aim of closer working together. Currently there can be no guarantee that a pupil enrolled at St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant School will automatically transfer and have a place at St Thomas a Becket Catholic Junior School. This may go against parents' /carers' expectations. A solution could be to amalgamate St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant and Junior Schools to form a primary school operating on the site of the two existing schools. This would give a 4 – 11 school where a child would be guaranteed a place at the same school throughout their full primary education.

If the schools are amalgamated this could provide the following educational benefits:

- There will no longer be a Y3 admission round with the pupils on roll in Y2 having an automatic right of entry into Y3, thereby removing any uncertainty about transfer to a 'new' school at the end of Key Stage 1
- Continuity of experience for children – in teaching and learning, pupil care and development - under a single Headteacher and staff
- Shared Catholic vision and consistent values across the school
- Greater ability to track pupil progress between key stages
- Consistent engagement with parents / carers across the primary phase, with no need to transfer information at the end of Key Stage 1
- A more coherent delivery of the National Curriculum from Foundation Stage through to the end of Key Stage 2

<sup>2</sup> These numbers include the additional class going through the school. In normal circumstances pupils on roll in Y2 would number 60.

- Easier sharing of good practice across the whole school
- Expertise within the whole school can be better targeted across the full age range
- Professional development opportunities for staff within an all-school environment, including the appointment of curriculum co-ordinators to the senior leadership team with time to oversee the consistent and effective development of teaching of subjects across the 4 – 11 age range
- Greater flexibility in organising classes, deploying teaching and support staff, and using curriculum resources, including buildings, more effectively
- Greater opportunities for staff recruitment.

## Staffing

The current Infant school would “close” (in name only) but staff would continue in their job as the school becomes an all-through primary school. The proposed changes may present opportunities for staff who would have greater opportunities for professional development and would be able to work in and gain greater understanding and experience of the full range of the primary school year groups. The governing body would still be the employer and the change to become one primary school would not constitute a break in service or affect staff terms and conditions in any way.

The governors know the process of bringing two schools together into one can be unsettling for the school community. Trade unions and professional associations of teaching and support staff will be fully consulted on our proposals. Diocesan and ESCC officers would work closely with school staff throughout the transition.

## Buildings

There are no plans to change the existing school buildings following the proposed amalgamation of the two schools. As part of the proposal to create an all-through primary school however, the diocese and county council would have to ensure the premises have sufficient capacity to make sure all existing and future pupils could be accommodated. This is, however, a legal technicality.

## Finance

School budgets are largely based on pupil numbers. However, as well as other factors that make up East Sussex’s funding formula is a lump sum for all East Sussex primary schools regardless of their size. St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant and Junior Schools currently each receive lump sum funding as separate schools. Should the amalgamation proceed the ‘new all-through School’ would eventually receive one lump sum. Funding protection will be applied for two years to enable the school to achieve the economies of scale from being one larger primary school.<sup>3</sup>

Assuming there will be no changes to current financial arrangements governing school amalgamations and the proposal to amalgamate the two schools takes place on 1 September 2017:

- in the year of the amalgamation the two schools keep their lump sums 2 x £142K
- in the year after the amalgamation April 2018 to March 2019 – the school will get 85% of the combined lump sum = £241K
- in the second year after the amalgamation April 2019 – March 2020 – the school will get 70% of £241K = £169K, subject to DfE approval
- From April 2020 to March 2021 the school will get 1 lump sum £142K.

<sup>3</sup> The financial arrangements governing school amalgamations are set out in the Schools Revenue Funding 2016 to 2017 Operational Guide, July 2015. A web link to the guidance is set out here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-funding-arrangements-2016-to-2017>



It is important to balance the financial implications of amalgamation with the practical benefits as set out on pages 3 and 4. The amalgamation of the two schools would lead to reduced bureaucracy with one single budget instead of two and allow for a greater proportion of available funding to be spent directly on teaching and learning.

## School Transport

There should be no impact on school transport. There is no proposal to change the current catchment area boundaries and the county council's transport policy will continue to operate in the same way it does currently.

## Next steps

Regulations mean that if a proposal is made to close a school, change an age range or increase the capacity above a certain point, such a proposal must be published in a statutory notice. There are five stages to the statutory process which must be followed:

### 1. Consultation

The issuing of this document marks the beginning of the period of consultation during which the views of any interested parties are sought. These views will be considered before any move to the next stage of the process happens.

### 2. Publication

Dependent upon the outcome of this consultation, a decision on whether to publish a statutory notice must be made by the Governing Body. Should the Governing Body decide to do so a Statutory Notice will be published at the two schools, on the school website and in a local newspaper stating governors' intention to recommend the amalgamation of the two schools.

### 3. Representation

Following publication of statutory notices 'representations' can be made on the proposals – this is another opportunity for anyone with an interest to submit their views before a final decision is made. In this instance representation would be for a four-week period.

### 4. Decision

All representations will be reviewed by the Governing Body who will make a recommendation on the proposal to the Local Authority before the Local Authority takes a final decision. A decision must be made within two months of the end of the representation period.

### 5. Implementation

If the proposal is approved then changes would be implemented from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2017.

## Timetable

<b>Consultation opens</b>	<b>7 November 2016</b>
<b>Consultation Meeting</b>	22 November 2016 Staff/Governors at 4.00pm Parents / carers and members of the public at 6.00pm
<b>Consultation closes</b>	16 December 2016 at 9.00am
<b>Christmas holiday</b>	22 December 2016 – 2 January 2017
<b>Decision: Governing Body</b>	6 February 2017
<b>February holiday</b>	13 – 17 February 2017

Publication of the Statutory Notice	Friday 17 March 2017
Spring holiday	4 – 17 April 2017
Closing date for responses to the Statutory Notice	Friday 14 April 2017
Governors' meet to make a recommendation to the Local Authority	27 April 2017 at 5.00pm
Final decision by Local Authority	22 May 2017
May holiday	29 May – 2 June 2017
End of term 6	21 July 2017
Possible implementation of any changes	Closure of one school – 31 August 2017 Opening of new school – 1 September 2017

## How can I give my views?

The Governing Body's proposals will be the basis of a period of public consultation for the six weeks from 7<sup>th</sup> November to 16 December 2016. There are a number of ways to give us your views on this proposal:

- at the public consultation meeting being held in the Junior School on Tuesday 22 November 2016 where there will be an opportunity to ask questions (for staff and governors at 4pm - 6pm and from 6pm for parents / carers and members of the public).
- by emailing [office@stthomasabecket.e-sussex.sch.uk](mailto:office@stthomasabecket.e-sussex.sch.uk)
- by completing and returning the questionnaire in this document, or writing separately to: John McManus, Chair of Governors, C/o St Thomas a Becket Catholic Junior School, 7, Tutts Barn Lane, Eastbourne BN22 8XT
- by handing your completed response form in at St Thomas a Becket Infant School / St Thomas a Becket Junior School offices.

no later than 9.00am on Friday 16 December 2016

**Please note that it is not possible to enter into individual correspondence.**

**Thank you.**

The governing body will consider all consultation responses before choosing to:

- continue with the proposal – we would publish statutory notices for the proposal on 17 March 2017, after which a further period of consultation (the representation period) would follow, or
- stop the process – in this case the separate infant and junior schools would remain as a federation under a single governing body. The end of the four-week representation period is 14 April 2017.

**It is important to note that this is not a referendum, but all the views expressed during the consultation period, together with other sources of information, will be used to inform the decision.**

## Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant and Thomas a Becket Catholic Junior Schools

Reply slip – please send by 9.00am on 16 December to John McManus, Chair of Governors,  
C/o St Thomas a Becket Catholic Junior School, 7, Tutts Barn Lane, Eastbourne BN22 8XT or by email  
to: [office@stthomasabecket.e-sussex.sch.uk](mailto:office@stthomasabecket.e-sussex.sch.uk)

We need to know some basic information so that your views can be accurately reported back to the schools' governing body. Please tick those boxes that apply.

Are you a	St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant School	St Thomas a Becket Catholic Junior School
Parent/carer		
Member of staff		
Governor		
Other		

Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Given the information contained in this document, do you agree or disagree with the following proposal?

***To amalgamate the existing St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant and Junior Schools and create a single all-through, 4 - 11 Catholic primary school. The school would provide 60 places per year group [Reception – Y2] and 66 places per year group [Y3 – Y6].***

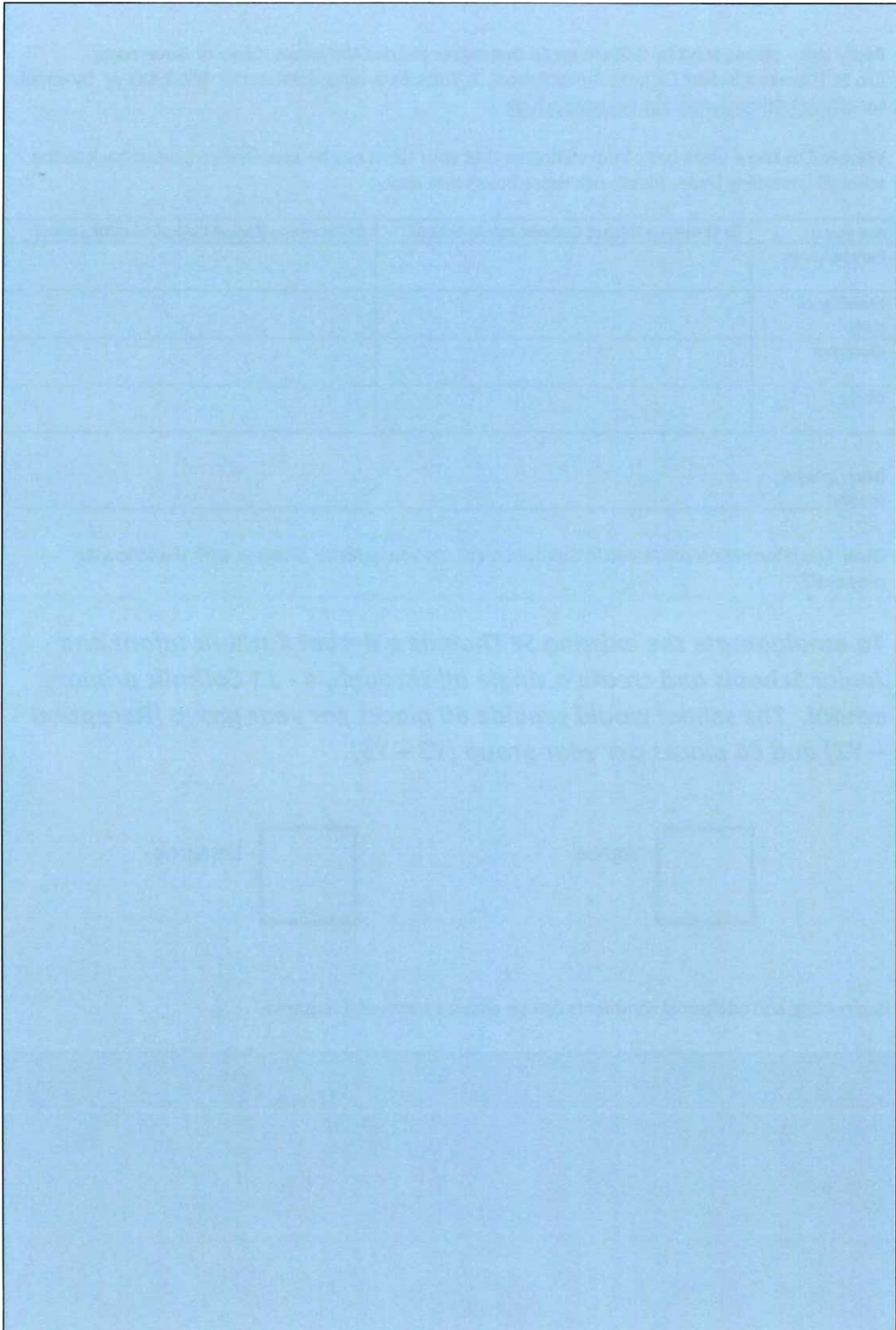
Agree

Disagree

Supporting and additional comments can be entered overleaf if required.

Name: (please print)	Date:
Address:	
Postcode:	

**Please provide any supporting / additional documentation below:**



## Proposed Amalgamation of the St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant and Junior Schools

**Consultation Meeting**  
**Tuesday 22 November 2016**  
**4.00 – 4.50pm**

		Numbers Attending
✓	For Staff / Prof Associations/ Unions	18
	For Parents / Carers / Others	

**Governors Present:** John McManus, CoG; Joanna Calladine-Evans; Dominic McIlhargey; Sherry Farmer; Tracey O'Neill; Rita King; Ilona Hollands; Augustine Anunta; Rachel Turner, HT.

**Also present:** Lyn Duggan, ESCC Personnel; 2x NAS/UWT representatives (with apologies from the reps of other unions/professional associations); Father Barry Anderson; Geoff Taylor, Consultant

In welcoming and introducing attendees, the CoG indicated that

- Changes may need to be made to the consultation timetable to cope with County Council elections. This will be worked on once there is clarity on the period of councillors' 'purdah'.
- Diocesan proposals for more Multi Academy Trusts will impact on the organisation of Catholic schools in the area when plans for the coastal strip between Brighton and Hasting become clearer.

A series of slides was then presented by the HT, Augustine Anunta and Rita King.

### Summary of comments / observations made:

With the recent demise of parish capitation, Father Barry Anderson confirmed that it was his understanding that the diocese will consider applications for a diocesan allowance based on a rate of £10 per child if project proposals are good enough.

Responding to a question concerning a possible restructuring of the senior leadership team, the HT confirmed that there was good leadership capacity at the moment, but changes may need to be made to suit workload and circumstances.



## Proposed Amalgamation of the St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant and Junior Schools

**Consultation Meeting  
Tuesday 22 November 2016  
6.00 – 7.15pm**

		<b>Numbers Attending</b>
	<b>For Staff / Prof Associations/ Unions</b>	
✓	<b>For Parents / Carers / Others</b>	<b>6</b>

**Governors Present:** John McManus, CoG; Joanna Calladine-Evans; Dominic McIlhargey; Sherry Farmer; Tracey O’Neill; Rita King; Ilona Hollands; Augustine Anunta; Rachel Turner, HT.

**Also present:** Marie Ryan, Director of Education, DAB; Gary Langford, Place Planning Manager, ESCC; Fathers Barry Anderson & Raglan Hay-Will; Geoff Taylor, Consultant.

In welcoming and introducing attendees, the CoG indicated that

- Changes may need to be made to the consultation timetable to cope with County Council elections. This will be worked on once there is clarity on when the period of councillors’ ‘purdah’ begins
- Diocesan proposals for more Multi Academy Trusts will impact on the organisation of Catholic schools in the area when plans for the coastal strip between Brighton and Hasting become clearer.

A series of slides was then presented by the HT, Augustine Anunta and Rita King.

### **Summary of comments / observations made:**

Despite in principle agreeing with the amalgamation proposal, concern was expressed by one parent that a single admission round (for 4-year olds, with no need for parents/carers to apply for their children’s entry to the junior school at 7) will see a decline in the numbers of families attending church and, ultimately, the number of young people put forward for confirmation. School governors, the school and parishes within the deanery will need to unite to consider how best to improve church attendance if such a decline becomes evident to ensure children’s Catholic education is supported outside school.

The high percentage of EAFL families was referred to and the suggestion made to invite those with limited understanding of English to attend smaller sessions where the proposal and rationale to amalgamate the infant and junior schools can be explained, perhaps in rather less detail, and with an interpreter / someone present who can help those without English as a first language.

The loss in lump sum funding, while not ideal, is a relatively low proportion of the school's overall budget share and savings from less duplication of administrative costs should certainly outweigh most, if not all, of this. It was suggested that Augustine Anunta's additional 'finance' slides be posted on the school's website alongside the HT's slides. It was felt parents would better understand how the school proposes to manage the transitional funding arrangements, moving from two to a single lump sum by March 2021, if the percentage of lump sum funding in relation to the school's overall budget share is shown somewhere.

A perception was shared by one parent that more Catholic parents / carers are likely to apply for places for their children as the school improves. The school has always made clear that it was established in 1974 to serve the deanery and, for this reason, the school's admissions policy needs to treat applications from Catholic families living on the outskirts of the deanery and those living closer to the school equally. It was felt that the current admissions policy discriminates against families on the outer margins and a request was made to review the admissions policy to make it fair for all Catholic families applying for places for their children wherever they live in the deanery.

#### **End-note**

The school might also wish to consider putting a note together for parents/carers applying for places for their children in September 2017 explaining that the school is going through a formal consultation process which will result in the establishment of an all-through primary school, effective from September 2017, should the proposal be accepted. The letter will need to make clear that while its intention is to alert parents/carers to the current consultation process it should not be seen as anticipating whether applications for places for 2017 will be successful. The admissions timetable will continue to apply and parents won't hear the result of their application until 16 April 2017. There might also be a case for sending all applicants a copy of the consultation document, or directing them to the school's website to access a copy.



## Proposed Amalgamation of the St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant and Junior Schools

### Consultation Results

	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
	Infant	Junior	Infant & Junior	Infant	Junior	Infant & Junior
Parent/carer	24	14	5	1	5	1
Governor						
Staff	1	3				
Other			1			
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>

**Total number of responses received: 55**

**Total number in support of the amalgamation: 48**

**Total number not in support of the amalgamation: 7**

#### Comments received where the respondent is in support of the amalgamation

It was not an easy experience for our family, particularly for my son (who was only 6 years old during the time he was in Year 2). He was accepted at St Thomas a Becket Infant School, made friends and was really enjoying his classmates' company, but when I applied for Year 3 placement he was not accepted, but instead given another school for juniors. For me, as a parent, I tried to understand the criteria for this decision but for a 6-year old child it was a traumatic, heart-breaking experience for him to be separated from his friends. It was not easy for him to accept the reality and also the fact that he was the only one in his class given another placement, but luckily I applied to be on the waiting list. That is why I strongly believe that the amalgamation of the infant and junior schools should happen to secure the peace of mind of parents and children. Once they have been accepted in the infants they will not be sent to another school in Year 3. It will prevent the bad experience I had with my child. [JO]

I am agreed because I would like my daughter to be guaranteed her school place from Reception to year 6. But I would like to know how the school is going to keep the same level of education and benefits to the students without the same level of funding, especially from 2019 when this funding will be reduced by half of the current funding. For me, the education of my daughter is very important, also the improvement of the school and staff. I think the school will need to cover these with similar standards as currently you do, and money is necessary to do it. Thanks for any information you can give us. [JZ]

I believe it would be the correct decision to amalgamate the schools as I feel the school should be one unit. Having come from a one unit Catholic school I feel it is beneficial to both children and staff to have consistency. I don't think it is a good thing that primary school children should have to apply to continue their education in a school they have already made friends with and become settled in. I think it is good for the staff to be able to fulfil and progress where they can in a building and school they already work at. [HP]

I feel this move makes great sense as the schools share the same grounds – it does not make sense that they are two separate entities in the authority's eyes. Also the running of both schools with one headteacher – it makes sense that they 'are one' especially as it seems to work very well to me. Only downside, as stated, is the funding – if it can be made up elsewhere, and as long as pupils are not disadvantaged due to this fact, then I am all up for the merging. [MC-S]

It makes perfect sense for the two schools to be combined. No reservations at all from our part. We will be able to utilise funding better. As a combined school we can share the total amount. Thank you for all the good work you do for our children. May it continue that way and best wishes with the new vision and plans. [ML-T]

I am looking forward to making stronger links between Y2 and Y3 as at the moment it feels quite separate. If the school applies for additional grants then I request that (they) are given enough time out of class to complete all the paperwork. [AC]

While in principle agreeing to the amalgamation:

- School admissions policy – ....I have strong feelings on the need for the policy to be changed and this *[will]* certainly become essential if amalgamation happens, as it is likely that *[the number of]* Catholic applicants to the school will increase as the school improves and the need for reapplication at junior level is removed.... The school has always stated that it was set up in 1974 to serve our Deanery and for this purpose it needs to *[give]* equal rights to places for Catholics living on the outskirts of the Deanery. When I petitioned before I also spoke with Simon Parr *[DAB Catholic Education Service]* and he stated that it was not possible to do a lottery style approach to places. However this approach, I believe, is used when applicants live in the same block of flats, proving that it is possible. I would be pleased to receive confirmation that this *[a review of the school admissions policy which addresses the issue of equality of opportunity for those Catholic families living on the outskirts of the Deanery]* will be brought to the next meeting of the Admissions sub-committee and following discussions a summary *[the sharing]* of any decision made (changes or no changes?). Please also add this feedback/information to the current amalgamation consultation process as it is relevant to that also. [SF]
- The loss of £142K funding in three years' time, whilst obviously not ideal, is a low percentage of the overall budget and the savings and less duplication of administrative costs, etc. will certainly outweigh most if not all of this. All

those being consulted would benefit from knowing the actual percentage of the school's income it correlates to and *[a projection of likely]* savings that will occur once amalgamated. [SF]

- The consultation should endeavour to capture the ears of our EAFL families by offering another date for them to be consulted directly, or perhaps approach known families who can provide valuable feedback to the rest of their community. [SF]
- Church Attendance – I believe it is highly likely that a larger percentage of families, once they have secured a place at the school for their child at reception as a church-going Catholic, will cease regular church attendance. The governors, the School and the Parishes within our deanery will need to unite and consider how best to improve church attendance if this does happen to ensure that the child's Catholic education is supported external to school life. [SF]

I note that the eventual loss of £142K would be gradual, over 2 years. I presume that the amalgamation would lead to some savings, but a question that some may have is along the lines of "Does anybody know how the reduction of 2 lump sums of £142K to one lump sum of £142K will be apparent in the running of the school?" [BA]

#### Comments received where the respondent is not in support of the amalgamation

My decision is mainly because of the funding the school will get if it becomes a primary school and that will be increasingly reduced. [RT]

I have chosen not to agree with this proposal primarily because of the reduced funding that would be available to the school. I also do not agree with there being one headteacher who cannot possibly undertake the same tasks as two headteachers in situ. I do however believe that this amalgamation will occur irrespective of dissenting views. [CG]

GT – 19/12/2017



**AMALGAMATION OF ST THOMAS A BECKET CATHOLIC INFANT SCHOOL AND  
ST THOMAS A BECKET CATHOLIC JUNIOR SCHOOL**

**Part 1: Closure of St Thomas a Becket Catholic Junior School**

Notice is hereby given in accordance with section 15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (as amended by the Education Act 2011) and the School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 that the governing body of St Thomas a Becket Catholic Junior School, within the trusteeship of the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton, proposes to discontinue St Thomas a Becket Catholic Junior School, Tutts Barn Lane, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN22 8XT with effect from 31 August 2017.

The proposal is linked to the proposal in Part 2 below to alter the upper age limit at St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant School to create one all-through primary school. The primary school would be a maintained Voluntary Aided school.

**Part 2: Alteration of the upper age limit at St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant School**

Notice is hereby given in accordance with section 19(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (as amended by the Education Act 2011) and the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 that the governing body of St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant School, within the trusteeship of the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton, proposes to make a prescribed alteration to St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant School, Tutts Barn Lane, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN22 8XT by altering the upper age limit from 4-7 to 4-11 with effect from 1 September 2017.

The governing body will continue to be the admissions authority. The admission number for the primary school's reception year intake in the first year in which the proposals are implemented is 60.

The primary school's pupil capacity will be 444 which is equivalent to the places currently available at St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant School and St Thomas a Becket Catholic Junior School. The primary school will operate on the existing school site from 1 September 2017, under a single governing body and headteacher.

On the date of the last pupil census (October 2016) St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant School had 209 pupils on roll and St Thomas a Becket Catholic Junior School had 266 pupils on roll.

All pupils currently in attendance at both schools will be given a place in the primary school. No pupils would be displaced by the proposal.

East Sussex County Council will determine the proposal.

The notice is an extract from the complete proposal. A copy of the complete proposal can be viewed at: [www.stthomasbecketcatholicschool.co.uk](http://www.stthomasbecketcatholicschool.co.uk)

Alternatively you can request a printed copy of the complete proposal from the address below or by telephone on 01323 737221

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to, or comment on the proposal, by sending their representations to: John McManus, Chair of Governors, St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant and Junior Schools, Tutts Barn Lane, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN22 8XT or by emailing: [office@stthomasbecket.e-sussex.sch.uk](mailto:office@stthomasbecket.e-sussex.sch.uk)

Signed

Joh McManus  
Chair of Governors,  
St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant and Junior Schools  
Date: 27 January 2017



**PROPOSED AMALGAMATION OF ST THOMAS A BECKET CATHOLIC INFANT SCHOOL AND ST THOMAS A BECKET CATHOLIC JUNIOR SCHOOL**

**Sections 15 and 19(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (as amended by the Education Act 2011) and the School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 and the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013**

**1. Contact Details**

This proposal is published by the Governing Body of St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant and Junior schools, Tutts Barn Lane, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN22 8XT.

**2. Proposal and implementation**

The proposal is to discontinue St Thomas a Becket Catholic Junior School with effect from 31 August 2017 and alter the upper age limit of St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant School from 4-7 to 4-11 with effect from 1 September 2017 to create one all-through primary school. The primary school would be a maintained Voluntary Aided school.

The proposal is not related to any other school organisation proposal.

**3. Reason for the proposal**

While primary education in this country is arranged for the most part in all-through 4-11 primary schools, the town of Eastbourne contains a mix of separate 4-7 infant and 7-11 junior schools, and all-through 4-11 primary schools. The governing body of St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant and Junior Schools, within the trusteeship of the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton, proposes to amalgamate the two schools to form a new St Thomas a Becket Catholic Primary School with effect from 1 September 2017. Such a change would align the new school with Diocesan policy regarding all-through primary schools. The governing body believes that the longer-term future for Catholic education in the area can best be achieved through amalgamating our two schools into one all-through primary school, operating on the same site. This would mean that all the children from ages 4-11 in the two existing schools would be part of one school.

**4. Pupil numbers and admissions**

The governing body will continue to be the admissions authority. The admission number for the primary school's reception year intake in the first year in which the proposals are implemented is 60.

The primary school's pupil capacity will be 444 which is equivalent to the places currently available at St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant School and St Thomas a Becket Catholic Junior School. The primary school will operate on the existing school site from 1 September 2017, under a single governing body and headteacher.

On the date of the last pupil census (October 2016) St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant School had 209 pupils on roll and St Thomas a Becket Catholic Junior School had 266 pupils on roll.

All pupils currently in attendance at both schools will be given a place in the primary school. No pupils would be displaced by the proposal.

**5. Impact on staff, parents and carers, other schools and the local community**

Staff and parents and carers would see very little difference between how the two schools currently work and how a single school would work in future. The Governing Body is not proposing to build a new school; instead the two existing buildings would continue to be used with, as is now the case, a single headteacher and a single governing body.

The main difference for parents and carers if a single school were established would be to remove the need for them to apply for places in the Junior School at the end of Year 2. Instead, once

children are admitted to the school, they would have a place there until the end of Year 6 when they transfer to secondary school.

The primary school would continue to operate on the same site, retaining the existing high standards of Catholicity, teaching, learning and governance. The primary school would provide the same number of places as currently provided by the two existing schools (the infant school currently has a bulge class in Year 2 which will move into the junior school in September 2017). It is therefore believed that the proposal would have little impact on other schools or the local community.

#### **6. School travel**

There should be no impact on school travel. The Governing Body is not proposing to change the current catchment area boundaries and the county council's transport policy will continue to operate in the same way it does currently.

#### **7. Consultation**

The Governing Body consulted with interested parties between 7 November and 16 December 2016. By the close of the consultation period 55 responses had been received, of which 48 (87%) were in support of the proposal to amalgamate the two schools and 7 (13%) were against it.

An analysis of the consultation responses, together with a copy of the consultation document, can be found on the school's website at: [www.stthomasbecketcatholicschool.co.uk](http://www.stthomasbecketcatholicschool.co.uk)

On 8 November 2016 St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant School was inspected by Ofsted and was found to be a good school. On this basis the Governing Body has taken the decision to propose the closure of the junior school and alter the age range of the infant school rather than close the infant school and alter the age range of the junior school. This is a change from what was consulted on but it does not alter the overall objective of the proposal as it is considered a technical change, not a material change.

#### **8. Making comments or objections**

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to, or comment on the proposal, by sending their representations to: John McManus, Chair of Governors, St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant and Junior Schools, Tutts Barn Lane, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN22 8XT or by emailing: [office@stthomasbecket.e-sussex.sch.uk](mailto:office@stthomasbecket.e-sussex.sch.uk)



**The Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability should have regard to the following factors before reaching a final decision on the proposal to amalgamate St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant and Junior Schools.**

1	Did the published notice comply with statutory requirements	The notice complied with statutory requirements as set out in 3.1 of the report.
2	Are the proposals related to other published proposals	The proposal to amalgamate St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant School and St Thomas a Becket Catholic Junior School is not related to other published proposals.
3	Was consultation carried out prior to the publication of notices	The governing body undertook a period of consultation between 7 November and 16 December 2016.
4	Have any particular comments or objections been raised during the representation period which could directly affect the proposals	No comments or objections were received during the representation period.
5	The effect on education standards and diversity of provision	There will be no effect on education standards and diversity of provision. The new primary school would continue to operate on the same site, retaining the existing high standards of Catholicity, teaching, learning and governance.
6	The impact on pupil numbers and admissions	<p>The Governing Body will continue to be the admissions authority. The admission number for the new primary school's reception year intake in the first year in which the proposals are implemented is 60.</p> <p>The primary school's pupil capacity will be 444 which is equivalent to the places currently available at St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant School and St Thomas a Becket Catholic Junior School. The primary school will operate on the existing school site from 1 September 2017, under a single governing body and headteacher.</p> <p>At the time of the last published school census (October 2016) St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant School had 209 pupils on roll and St Thomas a Becket Catholic Junior School had 266 pupil on roll.</p> <p>All pupils attending the schools on the day of implementation will automatically be given a place at the new primary school. No pupils will be displaced by the proposal.</p>
7	The impact on staff, parents and carers, other local schools and the local community	<p>Staff and parents and carers would see very little difference between how the infant and junior schools currently work and how a single primary school would operate in the future. The Governing Body is not proposing to build a new school; instead the two existing buildings would continue to be used in the same way with a single headteacher and a single governing body as is now the case.</p> <p>The main difference for parents and carers would be to remove the need for them to apply for a Year 3 place for their child(ren) in the junior school. Instead, once children are admitted to the school in Year R they would have a place at the school until the end of Year 6 when they transfer to secondary school.</p>
8	School travel	There should be no impact on school travel. The Governing Body is not proposing to change the current catchment area boundaries and the Council's transport policy will operate in the same way it does currently.
9	Equalities implications	There are no equalities implications arising from the proposal. The great majority of pupils already transfer from the infant school to the junior school and this would continue in the new primary school without the need for a 7+ admissions exercise.
10	Other factors	On 8 November 2016 St Thomas a Becket Catholic Infant School was inspected by Ofsted and was found to be a good school. On this basis the Governing Body published proposals to close the junior school and alter the age range of the infant school rather than close the infant school and alter the age range of the junior school. This was a change from what was initially consulted on but it does not change the overall objective of the proposal as it is considered a technical change, not a material change.



# Agenda Item 5

Report to: **Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability**

Date: **21 March 2017**

By: **Director of Children's Services**

Title of report: **Shinewater Primary School, Eastbourne change of age range**

Purpose of report: **To seek Lead Member approval to lower the age range at Shinewater Primary School to enable the governing body of the school to provide nursery provision for two year olds within current provision.**

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## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Lead Member is recommended to authorise the change of age range at Shinewater Primary School from 3 to 11 to 2 to 11 with effect from 1 April 2017**

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### **1 Background**

1.1 Shinewater Primary School currently runs early years provision for 3 and 4 year olds. The governing body of the school wishes to support vulnerable families in their care by lowering their age range from 3 to 11 to 2 to 11.

1.2 The aim of the proposal is to continue to integrate, fully, nursery provision into the Early Years Foundation Stage within the school. The governing body wishes to ensure that the nursery continues to support the local area and to offer high quality early education delivered by experienced and well-trained staff across the Early Years Foundation Stage. The aim is to build on the work already done by the school to secure good outcomes for all children in the future.

### **2 Supporting information**

2.1 The governing body consulted between 7 November and 2 December 2016 on the proposal to lower the school's age range. The governing body consulted with staff, families of children at the school, the local community and other interested parties. No responses were received during the consultation period.

2.2 On 16 January 2017, the Lead Member considered the outcome of the consultation and approved the publication of statutory notices in relation to the proposal. The statutory notice was published on 3 February 2017 in the Eastbourne Herald. The notice was also posted on the entrances to the school. The notice and full proposal was available on the Local Authority's website.

2.3 Publication of the notice was followed by a four-week period of representation, when comments or objections could be made to the Local Authority. At the end of the representation period, no comments or objections had been received.

### **3. Factors to be considered by the decision maker and types of decision**

3.1 Proposed changes to the organisation of maintained schools have to follow a prescribed process established by the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013.

3.2 The process set out above complied with these requirements.

3.3 The regulations set out a number of factors to which the Lead Member should have regard before making a final decision on the proposed changes. These are set out in Appendix A.

#### **4. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations**

4.1 The proposal to lower the age range at Shinewater Primary School will help the school to support vulnerable families in their care and build on work already done by the school, ensuring a fully integrated Early Years Foundation Stage to help secure good outcomes for all children.

4.2 For this reason, the Lead Member is recommended to authorise the change of age range at Shinewater Primary School from 3 to 11 to 2 to 11 with effect from 1 April 2017

#### **STUART GALLIMORE**

##### **Director of Children's Services**

Contact Officer: Jane Spice, EYEE Manager

Tel. No. 01323 747425

Email: [jane.spice@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:jane.spice@eastsussex.gov.uk)

#### **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Lead Member report and minute from 16 January 2017:

<http://esmoderngov01v/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=456&MId=3089&Ver=4>

#### **LOCAL MEMBER**

Councillor Alan Shuttleworth

## APPENDIX A

**The Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability should have regard to the following factors before reaching a final decision on the proposed change of age range at Shinewater Primary School.**

1	Did the published notice comply with statutory requirements	The notice complied with statutory requirements as set out in 3.1 of the report.
2	Are the proposals related to other published proposals	The proposal to lower the age range at Shinewater Primary School is not related to other published proposals.
3	Was consultation carried out prior to the publication of notices	The governing body of the school undertook a period of consultation between 7 <sup>th</sup> November and 2 <sup>nd</sup> December 2016 on a proposal to lower the school's age range from 3-11 to 2-11 to allow them to take two year olds in the nursery provision.
4	Have any particular comments or objections been raised during the representation period which could directly affect the proposals	No comments or objections were received during the representation period.
5	The effect on education standards and diversity of provision in the local area.	The Local Authority does not believe the proposal will have an impact on education standards and diversity of provision in the local area as it is about enabling the school to support the most vulnerable families in its local community to secure good outcomes for all children.
6	The demand for places	The proposal would, in the first instance, provide four places for two year old children in the local community giving families greater access to early years provision. The remaining places will be available to three and four year olds.
7	The impact on school size, premises and funding	The proposal does not require a change to the premises and as such will not require funding. The school will remain at its current size.
8	National curriculum	Shinewater Primary school will deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage for children aged 2-5 years.
9	Equal opportunities issues	The Local Authority does not believe there are equality impacts arising from the proposed changes.  The proposal will have a positive impact by creating opportunities for children and families to access early years provision within their local area that meets their needs.
10	Community cohesion	The Local Authority believes that the proposal will enhance community cohesion by enabling more local children and their families to access early years provision at the school.
11	Travel and accessibility	The Local Authority does not believe the proposal will have any impact on travel and accessibility as the nursery provision will remain in its current location.

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