

**Report to:** Cabinet

**Date of meeting:** 19 September 2017

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

**Title:** Proposed closure of Rodmell CE Primary School

**Purpose:** Final decision on the proposed closure of Rodmell CE Primary School

---

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Cabinet is recommended to approve the closure of Rodmell CE Primary School on 31 August 2018 or sooner if at such time as no children remain on roll at the School.**

---

### **1. Background**

1.1 On 27 June 2017 Cabinet approved the publication of statutory notices in relation to a proposal to close Rodmell CE Primary School on 31 August 2018. A copy of the Cabinet report can be found by following the link: <https://Cabinet 27 June 2017>

1.2 The proposal for closure is being made following a decision by the governing board of Rodmell CE Primary School in January 2017 that the school can no longer provide a sustainable future for its children and that the school should move to closure by 31 August 2018.

1.3 Significant concern remains about the long term sustainability of the school in terms of its financial stability, securing good outcomes for pupils and the absence of demand for places from within its community area and supports the governing board's decision to move to closure. This view is shared by the Diocese of Chichester (the diocese).

1.4 The statutory notice was published in the Sussex Express on 14 July 2017. A copy of the notice as published can be viewed in Appendix A. The notice was also posted at the entrances to the school. The notice, together with a full copy of the proposal was sent to the school's governing board, the diocese, the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton and the Department for Education. The notice and full proposal was also posted on the council's website.

1.5 Publication of the statutory notice triggered a four week period of representation, when comments or objections could be made to the Council in writing. The representation period closed on 11 August 2017.

1.6 No representations were received during the consultation period, and there is no new information or evidence since the notice of proposal was published.

### **2. Pupil numbers**

2.1 Pupil numbers at the school have continued to decline, due in part to the ongoing uncertainty about the future of the school. At the time of writing this report there are only three children in attendance at the school.

### **3. Equality Impact Assessment**

3.1 Cabinet is required to have 'due regard' to the duties set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the Public Sector Equality Duty, 'PSED') in determining these proposals. An Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) has been carried out to identify the equality implications of this proposal and to identify any appropriate mitigations. A copy of the EQIA is appended at Appendix

B. Members must read the EQIA and take its findings into consideration when determining these proposals.

#### **4. Statutory process**

4.1 Closure proposals must be made 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) Regulations 2013. The process complied with these requirements.

4.2 The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013 set out a number of factors that Cabinet must have regard to before making a final decision on the proposal to close the school. A detailed consideration of these factors is set out in Appendix C.

4.3 When deciding a proposal for the closure of a primary school, the decision maker must consider section 15(4) of the Education and Inspection Act 2006 relating to the closure of rural primary schools and the impact it will have on the local community, education standards and the likely cost of transport to other schools.

4.4 The Council can confirm that as of September 2017 Rodmell CE Primary School was designated as a rural primary school under the Designation of Rural Primary Schools (England) Order. The School is not considered sustainable in terms of its financial stability, securing good outcomes for pupils and the absence of demand for places from within its community area. It is not considered that there will be a significant impact on school journey times for displaced pupils as no children remaining at the school live in the Rodmell community area. It is likely that children's journey times will be shorter in the future as children will be able to attend a school closer to their home address.

#### **5. Conclusion and reason for recommendations**

5.1 The governing board has been unable to find an alternative partnership model to deliver a sustainable future for its children. As a result, the governing board has agreed that the school should move to closure by 31 August 2018. Pupil numbers at the school have continued to decline, with only three children currently on roll

5.2 It is not considered that the school is sustainable in the long term, will be financially stable or will secure good outcomes for pupils, particularly given the absence of demand for places from within its community area. It is therefore recommended that Cabinet supports the governing board's decision to move to closure. This view is shared by the diocese.

5.3 No comments or objections were received during the representation period following the publication of notices.

5.4 For the reasons set out above Cabinet is recommended to approve the closure of Rodmell CE Primary School on 31 August 2018 or sooner at such time as no children remain on roll at the School.

#### **STUART GALLIMORE**

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

Contact Officer: Fiona Wright, Assistant Director: Education and ISEND

Tel. No. 01273 481112

Email: [Fiona.wright@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:Fiona.wright@eastsussex.gov.uk)

#### LOCAL MEMBER

Councillor Sarah Osborne

#### Appendices

Appendix A Copy of statutory notice

Appendix B Equality Impact Assessment Update

Appendix C Factors to be considered by Cabinet before determining the proposal

**Copy of statutory notice****EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL AS LOCAL AUTHORITY****Closure of Rodmell Church of England Primary 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) Regulations 2013 that East Sussex County Council, County Hall, St Anne's Crescent, Lewes BN7 1UE, intends to discontinue the following Voluntary Aided school with effect from 31 August 2018:

Rodmell Church of England Primary School, Rodmell, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 3HF

All children attending Rodmell Church of England Primary School at the time of closure would be offered places at alternative schools in the area. The school currently has 13 children on roll.

Free transport would be provided for eligible pupils provided they meet the criteria. The criteria can be found on the East Sussex website at:

<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/educationandlearning/schools/transport/free/>

East Sussex County Council is publishing the proposal. The Council will implement the proposal.

The proposal is not related to any other school organisation proposal which has been or is about to be published.

This notice is an extract of the complete proposal. A copy of the complete proposal can be viewed at: <https://consultation.eastsussex.gov.uk/>

Alternatively you can request a printed copy of the complete proposal from the address below or telephone 01273 481758.

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to, or make comment upon the proposal, by sending their representations to: Stuart Gallimore, Director of Children's Services (FAO: Gary Langford, Place Planning Manager), East Sussex County Council, 4th Floor St Mark's House, 14 Upperton Road, Eastbourne BN21 1EP, or by emailing: [school.consultations@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:school.consultations@eastsussex.gov.uk)

**Stuart Gallimore, Director of Children's Services,  
East Sussex County Council**

14 July 2017

Explanatory Notes

**East Sussex  
County Council**



## Equality Impact Assessment Update

Name of the project, policy, service or strategy to be updated
<b>Proposed closure of Rodmell CE Primary School Update</b>

File ref:	Rodmell	Issue No:	1
Date of Issue:	August 2017	Review date:	

.....

Managers(s) and section or service responsible for completing the updated assessment	
Name	Gary Langford, Place Planning Manager
Section/service	Standards & Learning Effectiveness Service, Children's Services Department
Date	August 2017

## **Part 1      The Public Sector Equality Duty and Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA)**

**1.1**      The Council must have due regard to its Public Sector Equality Duty when making all decisions at member and officer level. An EqIA is the best method by which the Council can determine the impact of a proposal on equalities, particularly for major decisions. However, the level of analysis should be proportionate to the relevance of the duty to the service or decision.

**1.2**      This is one of two forms that the County Council uses for Equality Impact Assessments, both of which are available on the intranet. This form is designed for any proposal, strategy or policy. The other form looks at services or projects.

### **1.3      The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)**

The public sector duty is set out at Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. It requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have “due regard” to the need to

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. (See below for “protected characteristics”.)

These are sometimes called equality aims.

### **1.4      A “protected characteristic” is defined in the Act as:**

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race (including ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality);
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation.

Marriage and civil partnership are also a protected characteristic for the purposes of the duty to eliminate discrimination.

The previous public sector equalities duties only covered race, disability and gender.

### **1.5      East Sussex County Council also considers the following additional groups/factors when carrying out analysis:**

- Carers – A carer spends a significant proportion of their life providing unpaid support to family or potentially friends. This could be caring for a relative, partner or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or substance misuse problems. [Carers at the Heart of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Families and Communities, 2008.]
- Literacy/Numeracy Skills.
- Part time workers.
- Rurality.

### **1.6      Advancing equality (the second of the equality aims) involves:**

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristic.
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people including steps to take account of disabled people’s disabilities.
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

NB Please note that, for disabled persons, the Council must have regard to the possible need for steps that amount to positive discrimination, to “level the playing field” with non-disabled persons, e.g. in accessing services through dedicated car parking spaces.

## **1.6 Guidance on Compliance with The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) for officers and decision makers:**

1.6.1 To comply with the duty, the Council must have “due regard” to the three equality aims set out above. This means the PSED must be considered as a factor to consider alongside other relevant factors such as budgetary, economic and practical factors.

1.6.2 What regard is “due” in any given case will depend on the circumstances. A proposal which, if implemented, would have particularly negative or widespread effects on (say) women, or the elderly, or people of a particular ethnic group would require officers and members to give considerable regard to the equalities aims. A proposal which had limited differential or discriminatory effect will probably require less regard.

1.6.3 *Some key points to note :*

- The duty is regarded by the Courts as being very important.
- Officers and members must be aware of the duty and give it conscious consideration: e.g. by considering open-mindedly the EqIA and its findings when making a decision. When members are taking a decision, this duty can't be delegated by the members, e.g. to an officer.
- EqIAs must be evidence based.
- There must be an assessment of the practical impact of decisions on equalities, measures to avoid or mitigate negative impact and their effectiveness.
- There must be compliance with the duty when proposals are being formulated by officers and by members in taking decisions: the Council can't rely on an EqIA produced after the decision is made.
- The duty is ongoing: EqIA's should be developed over time and there should be evidence of monitoring impact after the decision.
- The duty is not, however, to achieve the three equality aims but to consider them – the duty does not stop tough decisions sometimes being made.
- The decision maker may take into account other countervailing (i.e. opposing) factors that may objectively justify taking a decision which has negative impact on equalities (for instance, cost factors)

1.6.4 In addition to the Act, the Council is required to comply with any statutory Code of Practice issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission. New Codes of Practice under the new Act have yet to be published. However, Codes of Practice issued under the previous legislation remain relevant and the Equality and Human Rights Commission has also published guidance on the new public sector equality duty.



## Part 2 - Scope of original EqIA and reasons for revision

### 2.1 What is being assessed?

- a) **Name of the project, policy, service or strategy.**  
Proposed closure of Rodmell CE Primary School with effect from 31 August 2018
- b) **What is the name of the original EqIA?**  
Recommendation to halt the closure of Rodmell CE Primary School
- c) **What date was it completed?**  
May 2016
- d) **What project, policy, service or strategy was covered in the original EqIA?**  
Proposed closure of Rodmell CE Primary School
- e) **What was the scope of the original EqIA?**  
Assessing the implications of closing the school as part of the wider Lewes Area Review of primary school places

### 2.2 Reasons for the revision

The governing body of Rodmell CE Primary School believes that the school can no longer provide a sustainable future for its children and that the school should move to closure.

### 2.3 Scope of the update

The update will cover any changes which might impact on those affected by the proposal

### 2.4 Has there been any change to who is affected by this revised EqIA?

No

### 2.5 Main differences between original EqIA and the update

Since Cabinet took the decision on 19 July 2016 to halt the proposed closure of Rodmell CE Primary School and allow the governing body further time to submit a firm and viable proposal that would ensure a sustainable future model for the school, pupil numbers at the school have continued to decline.

At the January 2017 School Census there were 38 children on roll at the school. By the May 2017 School Census the number had fallen to 18. At the time of writing there are only three children in attendance at the school.

On 19 January 2017 the Chair of Governors, informed the Director of Children's Services, the Diocese of Chichester (the diocese), staff and parents/carers that, having been unable to find a viable alternative partnership model for the school, the governing body had reached the decision that the school can no longer provide a sustainable future for its children and that the school should move to closure.

## Part 3 - Consideration of additional data and research

### 3.1 List any examples of additional quantitative and qualitative data or any consultation information available for the update

Please mark the relevant boxes below with an 'X'

<b>Census</b>	<b>X</b>	School Census October 2016 and January 2017
<b>Consultation</b>	<b>X</b>	Representation period following the publication of statutory notices on 14 July 2017
<b>Complaints</b>		
<b>ESiF</b>		
<b>Other</b>	<b>X</b>	Letter from Chair of Governors of 19 January 2017 confirming the Governing Body decision to move to closure.
<b>Staff survey</b>		

### 3.2 Have you carried out any additional consultation or research to complete this update? (If No, go to part 4.)

Statutory notices were published on 14 July 2017. A four week period of representation followed when interested parties could comment or object to the proposal. The representation period ended on 11 August 2017.

### 3.2 What does the consultation, research and/or data indicate about the negative impact of the project, policy, service or strategy update?

No comments or objections were received during the representation period and there is no new information or evidence since the notice was published.

### 3.4 What does the consultation, research and/or data indicate about the positive impact of the project or update?

n/a



## Part 4 – Changes to assessment of impact

### 4.1 From the evidence available, does the update affect or have the potential to affect equality groups differently?

Please mark the relevant boxes below with an 'X'

	Yes	No	No change
<p><b>Age</b></p> <p>The proposal will impact any children on roll at the school on the date of closure.</p> <p>The proposal will disproportionately affect children of primary school age at the school. No change from original EqIA.</p>			X
<p><b>Disability</b></p> <p>The SEN data for Rodmell CE Primary School shows that the percentage of SEN pupils at the school is 28.9% (11 out of 38). This is significantly higher in comparison to the % average in East Sussex primary schools of 12.1% (Source January 2017 School Census)</p> <p>The data indicates that Rodmell CE Primary School continues to be significantly overrepresented by pupils with this characteristic. No change from original EqIA.</p>			X
<p><b>Ethnicity</b></p> <p>The vast majority of pupils (97.4%) attending Rodmell CE Primary School are of White British Heritage. This compares with 91.7% of the population across East Sussex. Of the 38 pupils attending Rodmell CE Primary School where ethnicity is known, 2.6% (1 pupil) are from ethnic minority backgrounds. (Source January 2017 School Census and 2011 Census)</p> <p>Data for Rodmell CE Primary School indicates that the percentage of pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL) is 0.0% (years 1-6). This is considerably lower than figure of 6.2% in East Sussex primary schools.</p> <p>We do not believe that people with the protected characteristic will be more affected by the proposal than those in the general population who do not share that protected characteristic. No change from original EqIA.</p>			X
<p><b>Gender/transgender</b></p> <p>The percentage of pupils attending the school who are male is 57.9% and female 42.1%. This compares to the East Sussex primary school figures of male 51.7% and female 48.3%. (Source January 2017 School Census and 2011 Census)</p> <p>Boys continue to be significantly overrepresented at the school and are likely to be more affected by the proposal. No change from original EqIA.</p>			X
<p><b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b></p> <p>Not relevant to the proposal</p>			X
<p><b>Maternity and Pregnancy</b></p> <p>Not relevant to the proposal</p>			X

<p><b>Religion, belief</b> Rodmell CE Primary School continues to be a Voluntary Aided School but also a local community school and therefore accepts pupils of all faiths or no faith. The proposal will predominantly affect children whose families have chosen to send their children to a denominational school. No change from original EqIA.</p>			<b>X</b>
<p><b>Sexual orientation</b> Not relevant to the proposal</p>			<b>X</b>
<p><b>Others (please state e.g. carers/rurality etc):</b>  23.6% of all pupils in East Sussex maintained schools are Disadvantaged.  27.1% of Rodmell CE Primary School pupils are Disadvantaged (Ever 6 FSM, Looked after or adopted from care). The data therefore indicates that there is an overrepresentation of Disadvantaged pupils at Rodmell CE Primary School. No change from original EqIA. (Source January 2016 School Census and 2011 Census)</p>			<b>X</b>

**4.2 If yes, do any of the differences amount to?** Please duplicate this box for each equality group that you identify will have a changed impact.

	<b>Reason, evidence, comment</b>
<b>Barriers, negative impact or unlawful discrimination</b>	N/A
<b>Neutral Impact</b>	N/A
<b>Positive impact</b>	N/A

a) If there is a negative impact, can it be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group over another or for another legitimate reason?

**4.3 Specify measures that can be taken to remove or minimise the disproportionate or negative effect identified in Section 3. If none were identified in Section 3; identify how disproportionate impact or adverse effect could be avoided in future.**

All Local Authorities have a statutory duty to ensure there are sufficient school places to meet demand. The Council regularly reviews its pupil forecasts and if necessary takes action to address any shortfalls in places in line with its statutory responsibilities. If Rodmell CE Primary School closes on 31 August 2018 the local authority will work with other schools in the area to ensure that every pupil at the school will be offered a place at an alternative school.

Rodmell CE Primary School is a mainstream school. There is no specific provision on the site that is recognised by the local authority as reserved for pupils with SEN. All mainstream schools are required to meet the individual needs of all their pupils including those with SEN and disability.

Should the proposal to close Rodmell CE Primary School be approved the local authority would work closely with receiving schools to ensure appropriate transition arrangements would be made so that any potential adverse impacts on pupils affected would be mitigated.

The local authority and affected schools have a duty to support appropriate transition arrangements and the Council would take all practical steps to ease the transition for pupils, most especially for vulnerable learners and those with SEN. Were Rodmell CE Primary School to close the local authority is confident that teaching staff at other schools would manage the transition of any pupils to their new school. These circumstances are not unusual in that schools regularly manage in-year admissions, though it is recognised that there will be a number of pupils making the transition at any one time, including a number of pupils with SEN. Therefore additional support will be in place if necessary for the transition arrangements as detailed below.

Should the proposal be implemented the local authority would work with pupils, their parents and the relevant schools to make appropriate transition arrangements for pupils. Relevant families would be consulted about any specific potential impacts on individuals; for instance, because of loss of support networks or the need to replicate reasonable adjustments made to accommodate disabled children, and we would ensure that appropriate individual arrangements are made where this is necessary to avoid potential adverse impacts. Transfer to a larger school could potentially provide more flexibility of resource to support pupil's needs.

The local authority will closely monitor the transition of the pupils to their new schools through regular monitoring arrangements already in place.

All schools have to report on the outcomes of all pupils by gender, including those with SEN, those who are Ever6FSM. The local authority will continue to monitor regularly the outcomes at all schools for these pupils.

#### **4.4 How will any amended project, policy, service or strategy be implemented, including any necessary training?**

Subject to Cabinet approval on 19 September 2017, Rodmell CE Primary School will close on 31 August 2018. The local authority will support the governing body through the closure process and work closely with parents and local schools as outlined above to support transition arrangements.

## **Part 5 - Conclusions and recommendations**

**5.1 Does the project, policy, service or strategy comply with equalities legislation?**

Yes

**5.2 What are the main areas requiring further attention?**

n/a

**5.3 Summary of recommendations for improvement**

n/a

**5.4 Is there a plan in place to carry out regular checks on the effects of the project, policy, service or strategy?**

(Give details)

n/a

**5.5 When will the updated project, policy, service or strategy be reviewed?**

n/a

## Factors which the decision maker should consider before determining the proposal

### 1. Did the publication of the statutory notice comply with the requirements of 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) Regulations 2013?

1.1 The statutory notice complied with the requirements set out above.

### 2. Is the proposal related to other published proposals?

2.1 The proposal to close Rodmell CE Primary School is not related to other published proposals.

### 3. Is conditional approval being sought for the proposal?

3.1 When determining the proposal, the decision maker can:

- Reject the proposal;
- Approve the proposal without modification;
- Approve the proposal with such modifications as the decision maker thinks desirable, after consulting with the governing body
- Approve the proposal – with or without modification – subject to certain conditions being met

3.2 In this instance, Cabinet is recommended to approve the proposal without modification i.e. to close Rodmell CE Primary School with effect from 31 August 2018.

### 4. Was a statutory consultation carried out prior to the publication of statutory notices?

4.1 A six week period of local consultation was carried out between 15 April and 27 May 2016 (please refer to section 5 below).

### 5. Reason for closure

5.1 In October 2014 the Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability (formerly the Lead Member for Learning and School Effectiveness) (“the Lead Member”) agreed that a review of primary schools should be undertaken in the Lewes area. This was in the context of the Council’s principles for planning the provision of education places in East Sussex as set out in the ‘*Education Commissioning Plan 2014 – 2018*’ and the Council’s strategy for school improvement ‘*Excellence for All*’. The Council has a duty to ensure there is sufficient provision to meet the predicted demand for places and to also look more widely at the organisation of schools to make sure they are well placed to deliver a high quality education to their local communities. The Lead Member report is available at:

<https://democracy.eastsussex.gov.uk/CeListDocuments.aspx?Committeeld=156&MeetingId=1319&DF=06%2f10%2f2014&Ver=2>

5.2 The Area Review raised significant concerns about the long term sustainability of the School in terms of the risks to its financial stability, securing good outcomes for pupils and the absence of demand for places from within its community area. For these reasons and having considered alternative options including federation, amalgamation and academisation, approval was sought from the Lead Member on 21 March 2016 to consult on a proposal to close the School. The Lead Member agreed that the Council should consult on the closure of the School but instructed the Council to fully consider any proposals coming from the School or from other

consultees around federation or amalgamation which would lead to a sustainable solution. The Lead Member report can be viewed at:

<https://democracy.eastsussex.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=456&MId=2867&Ver=4>

5.3 The Diocese of Chichester (“the Diocese”) shared the Council’s concerns and agreed that the Council should consult on closure of the School.

5.4 The consultation period commenced on 15 April 2016 and finished on 27 May 2016. The Council consulted with the governing body, pupils, parents and carers, staff, other local schools and trade unions. The Council also consulted with a wide range of other groups including the parish council, the district council, the local MP, the Church of England and Catholic dioceses and the wider local community.

5.5 It was apparent from the level of response received during the consultation that parents and carers, pupils, staff, the governing body and the local community were overwhelmingly against the School closing.

5.6 Although the Council remained very concerned about the long term sustainability of the School it agreed that the governors of the school should be given more time to explore partnership solutions with other schools, including a possible federation with Iford and Kingston CE Primary School.

5.7 As a result, on 19 July 2016 the Council’s Cabinet agreed to halt the proposed closure of the School and allow the governing body further time to submit a firm and viable proposal that would ensure a sustainable future model for the School. The proposal was to be submitted in time for review by the Council during Term 5 of the 2016/17 academic year. The Cabinet report is available at:

<https://democracy.eastsussex.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=133&MId=2604&Ver=4>

5.8 Having been unable to find a viable partnership model for the School, the Chair of Governors informed the Director of Children’s Services, the Diocese, staff and parents and carers on 19 January 2017 that the governing body had reached the decision that the school can no longer provide a sustainable future for its children and that the school should move to closure by 31 August 2018.

5.9 The Council remains concerned about the long term sustainability of the School for the reasons set out above and supports the governing body’s decision to move to closure. This view is shared by the Diocese.

## **6. Pupil numbers and admissions**

6.1 The School is a co-educational Voluntary Aided primary school for children aged 4-11. The School is a mainstream school. There is no specific provision on the site that is recognised by the Council as reserved for pupils with SEN.

6.2 At the time of writing there are only three children in attendance at the School. No children live in the Rodmell community area.

## **7. Displaced pupils**

7.1 There are sufficient places across primary schools in the surrounding area to accommodate every child that requires a place at an alternative school.

7.2 Should closure of the School be approved, arrangements would be made for parents/carers to apply for a place at an alternative school in their local area. Parents/carers would be asked to complete an admissions application form and to name up to three schools they would like their child/ren to attend. Parents/carers would be offered a school place for their child/ren, either at one of their preferred schools named on the application form, or if this is not possible, at the nearest school to the child’s home where a place is available. It should be noted that parents have a right to express a preference for a school, not to choose which school their child/ren attend.

7.3 The Council will try to meet parents/carers preferences wherever possible but cannot guarantee to do so. The allocation of places will be made in line with the admissions policy as set out in the school admissions booklet which is available on the East Sussex website.  
<https://new.eastsussex.gov.uk/educationandlearning/schools/admissions/>

## **8. Impact on the Community**

8.1 It is not considered that there would be a significant impact on the local community as no children remaining at the School live in the Rodmell community area.

8.2 In-area demand for places at the School has been low for a number of years. This is evidenced by an average birth rate of only 2 per annum over the last ten years. In-area demand is insufficient to sustain the school in the future.

8.3 The Diocese has no plans for the site at this stage and will not consider the future of the site until such time as the School's future is determined in order to remain impartial during the consultation. If the decision is taken to close the School and the School site is sold, the Diocese proceeds would go into an education foundation account to be invested and used for education purposes in the Diocese and it would be for the trustees to decide whether the money would be reinvested in the local area to support children who have been displaced from the School.

## **9. Rural Primary Schools**

9.1 Section 15(4) of the Education and Inspection Act 2006 relating to the closure of rural primary schools. The Council can confirm that as of September 2016, Rodmell CE Primary School was designated as a rural primary school under the Designation of Rural Primary Schools (England) Order.

## **10. Balance of denominational provision**

10.1 The School is a Church of England Voluntary Aided school. It is not believed that the proposal will have a negative impact on the balance of denominational provision and associated parental choice in the area should the School close on 31 August 2018. It is predicted that there would be places available at alternative Church schools in the wider area in the 2018/19 academic year to accommodate children currently on roll at the School should parental preference be for a faith place.

10.2 The church schools in the wider area are:

Iford & Kingston CE Primary School – Voluntary Controlled  
Southover CE Primary School, Lewes – Voluntary Controlled  
South Malling CE Primary School, Lewes – Voluntary Controlled  
St Pancras Catholic Primary School, Lewes – Voluntary Aided  
Annecy Catholic Primary School, Seaford – Voluntary Aided  
Our Lady of Lourdes RC School, Rottingdean – Voluntary Aided  
St Margaret's CE Primary School, Rottingdean – Voluntary Aided

## **11. Maintained Nursery**

11.1 The School does not have a maintained nursery and therefore no consideration needs to be given under this section.

## **12. Sixth Form Provision**

12.1 The School does not have a Sixth form and therefore no consideration needs to be given under this section.

## **13. Special Educational Needs Provision**

13.1 The School is a mainstream school. There is no specific provision on the site that is recognised by the Council as reserved for pupils with SEN. All mainstream schools are required to



meet the individual needs of all their pupils including those with SEN and disability. All schools in the area want all children to thrive and have access to a range of support to help with their needs. This would be the case for children moving from the School and all schools would be expected to provide the same level of care as that provided at the School.

13.2 Should the proposal to close the School be approved, the Council would work closely with receiving schools to ensure appropriate transition arrangements would be made so that any potential adverse impacts on affected pupils would be mitigated.

13.3 The Council and affected schools have a duty to support appropriate transition arrangements and the Council would take all practical steps to ease the transition for pupils, most especially for vulnerable learners and those with SEN. Were the School to close the Council is confident that teaching staff at other schools would manage the transition of any pupils to their new school. These circumstances are not unusual in that schools regularly manage in-year admissions, including learners with SEN.

13.4 The Council would closely monitor the transition of the pupils to their new schools through regular monitoring arrangements already in place.

13.5 All schools have to report on the outcomes of all pupils, including those with SEN. The Council would continue to monitor regularly the outcomes at all schools for these pupils.

#### **14. Travel**

14.1 It is not considered that there will be a significant impact on school journey times should the School close on 31 August 2018. No children remaining at the school live in the Rodmell community area. It is likely that children's journey times will be shorter in the future as children will be able to attend a school closer to their home address.

14.2 It is envisaged that displaced pupils will continue to be transported to school under arrangement made by their parents and that, given it is anticipated that displaced pupils will attend schools closer to their homes, there will be no increased use of cars.

14.3 Free transport would be provided for eligible pupils provided they meet the criteria. The criteria can be found on the East Sussex website at:  
<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/educationandlearning/schools/transport/free/>