

MATTERS TO BE SPECIFIED IN SECTION 15 PROPOSALS TO DISCONTINUE A SCHOOL

Extract of Schedule 4 to The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools)(England) Regulations 2007 (as amended):

Contact details

1. The name of the LA or governing body publishing the proposals, and a contact address, and the name of the school it is proposed that should be discontinued.

Wirral Council, Town Hall, Brighton Street, Wallasey, Wirral, CH44 8ED

Implementation

2. The date when it is planned that the proposals will be implemented, or, where the proposals are to be implemented in stages, information about each stage and the date on which each stage is planned to be implemented.

31st August 2010

Consultation

3. A statement to the effect that all applicable statutory requirements to consult in relation to the proposals were complied with.

All applicable statutory requirements to consult in relation to the proposals have been complied with. Public consultations were originally held during January to March 2007, including a consultation meeting at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School on 7th March 2007. More recently, a consultation was held in November 2008 to January 2009, including a consultation meeting at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School on 3rd December 2008. All statutory consultees were consulted in accordance with the relevant DCSF guidance and statutory requirements.

4. Evidence of the consultation before the proposals were published including:

- a) a list of persons and/or parties who were consulted;
- b) minutes of all public consultation meetings;
- c) the views of the persons consulted; and
- d) copies of all consultation documents and a statement of how these were made available.

The Council has been reviewing Wirral primary school provision on an area by area basis since Autumn 2004. The review of the Leasowe small planning area, in which Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School is situated, began in October 2006 with pre-consultation meetings involving headteachers and chairs of governors of all the schools in the area, as well as Diocesan Authorities and ward members. A number of options for change arose, and were approved for formal consultation by Cabinet. Leaflets and comments forms were provided to all parents, and at schools and local libraries. A dedicated website was established, including a feedback form, and the consultation was advertised in the press. Public meetings were held during Spring term 2007 at each of the schools named in the options.

The outcome of this consultation was described in the 20th June 2007 report to Cabinet. At this time, Cabinet's decision was that the Anglican Diocese of Chester and Catholic Diocese of Shrewsbury should be given all necessary support with regard to the proposal. Discussions between the Authority and the two Diocesan bodies proceeded over the following year.

A common view between the two Diocese on how to proceed having been reached, due to the time elapsed since the original consultation, a further consultation document was produced by the two Dioceses, and a further consultation meeting was held in December 2008. The consultation document was sent via the schools to parents/carers of pupils attending Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School, Leasowe Primary School, Leasowe Early Years Centre and Castleway Primary School, as well as to the headteachers of primary schools in the North and South Wallasey and Moreton planning areas and all statutory consultees. The consultation leaflet is attached as [Appendix A](#).

The consultation closed on 16th January 2009. During this period 94 responses were received. The breakdown by school and respondent type is as follows.

School	Total	Parent	Staff	Governor
Castleway	1	1	0	0
Leasowe	42	24	15	3
Leasowe EYC	1	1	0	0
Our Lady of Lourdes	49	30	15	5
Sacred Heart	1	0	0	1

The anonymised responses are attached as [Appendix B](#).

The consultation meeting on 3rd December 2008 was attended by 33 persons, including two ward councillors, 9 parents, 17 staff members and 7 governors (some also parents or staff).

The points raised by consultees are summarized as follows:

- Size and surplus places
- Impact on other schools, especially Leasowe Primary School
- Concerns about the consultation process
- Concerns about religious issues
- Concerns about traffic and road safety
- Removal of choice

The outcome of the additional consultation period was reported to Cabinet on 19th March 2009. Cabinet's decision was that approval should be given for the two Diocesan bodies to submit an application to the Secretary of State in order to seek a waiver of the requirement to hold a competition in this case, and that this being received, statutory notices should be published in relation to this proposal. The waiver request was submitted on 7th April 2009. Approval was received on 17th July 2009. The opening date in the approval was originally given as 1st September 2009, however the delay in receiving Secretary of State approval did not allow sufficient time to open the new school by September 2009, and consequently this proposal is being published to close the predecessor school at the next natural break in the Academic year in September 2010.

Objectives

5. The objectives of the proposal.

To discontinue Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School.

Standards and Diversity

6. A statement and supporting evidence indicating how the proposals will impact on the standards, diversity and quality of education in the area.

The proposal is linked to the establishment of a Joint Faith Church of England and Catholic Aided primary school of the same size on the same site. This will increase diversity of education in the area.

Provision for 16-19 year olds

7. Where the school proposed to be discontinued provides sixth form education, how the proposals will impact on:

- a) the educational or training achievements;
- b) participation in education or training; and
- c) the range of educational or training opportunities,

for 16-19 year olds in the area.

N/A

Need for places

8. A statement and supporting evidence about the need for places in the area including whether there is sufficient capacity to accommodate displaced pupils.

The proposal is linked to the establishment of a Joint Faith Aided school of the same size on the same site. Former pupils of the Catholic Aided school are expected to transfer to the new Joint Faith school, although parents may choose to apply to transfer to alternative schools in the area, subject to the availability of places and the Key Stage 1 Infant Class size limit.

9. Where the school has a religious character, a statement about the impact of the proposed closure on the balance of denominational provision in the area and the impact on parental choice.

The establishment of a Joint Faith Aided school of the same size on the same site will not reduce denominational provision in the area. Parental choice for a Church of England school will be increased, as there is no such school in the area served at present.

Current School Information

10. Information as to the numbers, age range, sex and special educational needs of pupils (distinguishing between boarding and day pupils) for whom provision is made at the school.

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School has 175 day only places for boys and girls aged 4 to 11, and a 52 place (26 FTE) nursery. In January 2009 it was attended by 104 pupils plus 29 F1 children. There is no LA designated SEN base or class.

Displaced Pupils

11. Details of the schools or FE colleges which pupils at the school for

whom provision is to be discontinued will be offered places, including:

- a) any interim arrangements;
- b) where the school included provision that is recognised by the LA as reserved for children with special educational needs, the alternative provision to be made for pupils in the school's reserved provision; and
- c) in the case of special schools, alternative provision made by LAs other than the authority which maintains the school.

It is proposed that pupils on roll at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School at 31st August 2010 will transfer to the newly established Joint Faith Voluntary Aided school, Gardenside, Moreton, Wirral, CH46 2RP on the 1st September 2010 or the nearest practicable date thereafter. Pupils may transfer to any local primary school, subject to availability of places and the admission arrangements published in the Authority's information booklets for parents. Parents of pupils who are due to be admitted to Foundation 2 in 2010, and who have already completed a parental preference form for Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School will automatically be considered as a preference for the new Joint Faith Aided School at Gardenside, Moreton, Wirral, CH46 2RP. These parents will also be given an opportunity to complete a new parental preference form.

12. Details of any other measures proposed to be taken to increase the number of school or FE college places available in consequence of the proposed discontinuance.

No other measures to increase places are proposed.

Impact on the Community

13. A statement and supporting evidence about the impact on the community and any measures proposed to mitigate any adverse impact.

The proposal is linked to the establishment of a Joint Faith Voluntary Aided school on the same site and will no adverse impact on the community.

14. Details of extended services the school offered and what it is proposed for these services once the school has discontinued.

The proposal is linked to the establishment of a Joint Faith Voluntary Aided school on the same site and will no adverse impact on the extended services.

Travel

15. Details of the length and journeys to alternative provision.

The proposal is linked to the establishment of a Church of England Voluntary Controlled school on the same site. Existing pupils are guaranteed a place in the new school.

16. The proposed arrangements for travel of displaced pupils to other schools including how they will help to work against increased car use.

Applications for free transport to alternative primary schools will be considered under the guidance in the Authority's Information booklets for parents. There will be no impact on travel as pupils are guaranteed a place at the new school on the same site.

Related Proposals

17. A statement as to whether in the opinion of the LA or governing body, the proposals are related to any other proposals which may have been, are, or are about to be published.

The proposal is linked to a proposal by the Diocese of Chester and Diocese of Shrewsbury to establish a Joint Church of England and Catholic Aided school on the existing site.

Rural Primary Schools

18. Where proposals relate to a rural primary school designated as such by an order made for the purposes of section 15, a statement that the LA or the governing body (as the case may be) considered:

- a) the likely effect of discontinuance of the school on the local community;
- b) the availability, and likely cost to the LA, of transport to other schools;
- c) any increase in the use of motor vehicles which is likely to result from the discontinuance of the school, and the likely effects of any such increase; and
- d) any alternatives to the discontinuance of the school,

as required by section 15(4)

N/A

Maintained nursery schools

19. Where proposals relate to the discontinuance of a maintained nursery school, a statement setting out:

- a) the consideration that has been given to developing the school into a children's centre and the grounds for not doing so;
- b) the LA's assessment of the quality and quantity of alternative provision compared to the school proposed to be discontinued and the proposed arrangements to ensure the expertise and specialism continues to be available; and
- c) the accessibility and convenience of replacement provision for local parents.

N/A

Special educational provision

20. Where existing provision that is recognised by the LA as reserved for pupils with special educational needs is being discontinued, a statement as to how the LA or the governing body believes the proposal is likely to lead to improvements in the standard, quality and/or range of the educational provision for these children.

N/A