The Proposal

The Governing Body of St Philip Howard Catholic Primary School, following discussions with the Local Authority and the Archdiocese of Southwark, is proposing to discontinue the school with effect from 31 August 2013.

Despite the huge progress made over the past few months, as recognised by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate, the decision to propose a consultation on closure has been made for a number of reasons.

The Reasons

Falling pupil numbers

The number of children entering our school each year is very small (our capacity currently stands at 185 pupils). The local authority has investigated the likely numbers in terms of birth rate and proposed housing developments and our low numbers are not expected to increase (see below for the trend). Similarly the proportion of Catholic children who both worship locally and attend the school is very small.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number on Roll (September of each school year)</th>
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<tr>
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<td>136</td>
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*with 12 leaving and 5 first choices the roll projected for 2013/14 is approx 87
Premises

Despite recent refurbishment of the classroom areas currently in use, the remainder of the school’s premises are in a poor state. Over the past few years the Archdiocese of Southwark have allocated large sums of money to make the building suitable for use as a school (providing new fire escapes and roofing). This said, substantial sums of money are required to continue to simply maintain the Grade II listed buildings.

The successful bid for the new school building via the Priority Schools Building Programme (PSBP) could not be realised given the low roll. As the buildings are to be funded through Private Finance Initiative (PFI) the school would need to be full to capacity to pay the necessary money back over the term of the programme.

Maintaining Academic Improvement

As mentioned above, during the last few months, huge progress has been made in St Philip Howard’s ability to provide quality education. Schools receive funding based on pupil numbers and the decline in pupil numbers results in a corresponding decline in funds available to the school. This means that it will be impossible to maintain and sustain the improvements recognised in recent monitoring visits by the HMI and local authority.
What does this mean for us?

The Governing Body, Local Authority and the Archdiocese of Southwark will work closely with parents and carers to provide support throughout the consultation period. Time will be alloted for each family to discuss the needs of their children and the family’s concerns.

Should the proposal go ahead, school places will be found for each child currently in our school.

What happens next?

A public consultation meeting will be held at the school on Wednesday 20 March 2013 at 7pm. This meeting is open to everyone and will be an opportunity for people to put forward their views and ask questions. There is also a response form attached to this document, which should be returned to the Chair of Governors of St Philip Howard Catholic Primary School by 26 April 2013.

Views expressed at the public consultation meeting and all written responses will be taken into consideration by the Governing Body when making a decision whether or not to issue a Public Notice proposing closure of the school. If a Public Notice is issued, the decision on whether the school should close will be made by Kent County Council’s Cabinet Member for Education Learning and Skills.
## Consultation timetable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consultation Period</td>
<td>11 March to 26 April 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff Meeting (with Unions)</td>
<td>12 March 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Meeting Date</td>
<td>20 March 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Governing Body decision on whether to issue a Public Notice</td>
<td>29 April 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Notice Period</td>
<td>3 May to 14 June 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Report to Kent County Council Education Cabinet meeting for a</td>
<td>21 June 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>recommendation regarding the closure of the school</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kent County Council Cabinet Member decision on closure</td>
<td>24 June 2013</td>
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</table>
Should you wish to respond to this consultation document via electronic mail, rather than using the form on the next page, please send your responses to:

SPHconsultation@st-philip.kent.sch.uk

Please include your name, address and the nature of your interest as well as any comments by 11am on Friday 26 April.
Response Form

Proposed closure of St Philip Howard Catholic Primary School

Do you agree with this proposal?  □ Yes  □ No

I am:  □ Parent  □ Carer of a primary aged child
      □ Member of staff  □ Governor
      □ Other interested party (please state below)

Name:  ____________________________________________

Address: __________________________________________

Comments: ________________________________________

Please return this form no later than 11am on Friday 26 April to:
Dr Mark Nash, Chair of Governors
St Philip Howard Catholic Primary School
41-43 Avenue Road, Herne Bay, Kent, CT6 8TF
SAINT PHILIP HOWARD CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

41-43 Avenue Road Herne Bay Kent CT6 8TF

A copy of this consultation document can also be found on the school website: www.st-philip.kent.sch.uk