



St. Francesca Cabrini Primary School

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Future of St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School

The governors, following concerns about the viability of the school and in the light of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus leaving London and the UK, entered into a Pre-Consultation on the future of St Francesca Cabrini which is part of a statutory process. The school had already been experiencing a falling demand for places which, until recently, had a capacity of 420 pupils plus a nursery class. This has dropped to a projected 120 in September 2022 with only 11 new children joining the school in the Reception Class.

The school governing body had previously been looking at the possible options and had entered into discussions both with the Archdiocese of Southwark and Southwark Council, the detail of which was set out in the Pre-Consultation Documentation.

The governing body held two public parents meetings at which 38 attended and received 30 responses to its questionnaire, of which the vast majority were against the closure of the school.

Following the Pre-Consultation, the governing body considered all the responses and what was said by both parents, staff and Southwark Council at the public meetings. It came to the regretful conclusion that, given the circumstances regarding falling numbers of children requiring primary places, both in Southwark and Lewisham and the vacant places in other schools, the school was not financially viable and this would impact negatively on the educational experience the school can offer in the future. And, even with the excellent results achieved by pupils in the recent statutory tests, the school with the projected lack of resources would not be able to provide the best learning experiences to enable children to thrive in the future.

It was also noted that parents had already started to transfer their children even though the Missionary Sisters had given a public undertaking to support the school financially until August 2023. This would ensure adequate resources for all the children to continue at the school until then. And, importantly, that the current Year 5 children who will be, as Year 6, sitting their Key Stage 2 SATS next summer, can do so with confidence before they transfer to their new secondary schools in September 2023.

The final decision on the closure is that of Southwark Council, who will be entering into its own consultation as part of the process in order to make its decision in December 2022.

The governing body do recognise the impact this will have on the pupils, current and future, parents, staff and the community but have always put the child at the heart of carrying out their roles and responsibilities for over 100 years.

This proposal is made with heavy hearts and in response to an unprecedented and unfortunate set of circumstances that have come together, however, governors feel certain that the children will thrive and prosper in their new schools who will be able to adequately provide the support and educational development they deserve and must have.

With sad regret

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anna Shappelli'. The signature is written in a cursive style.

Chair of Governors
20th July 2022