

Statutory Notice

Closure of St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School, Forest Hill Road, SE23 3LE

Notice is 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 the Governing body of St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School, Forest Hill Road, SE23 3LE in consultation with the London Borough of Southwark and the Education Commission for the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark has published proposals to discontinue St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School with effect from 1st September 2023.

Should the decision to close St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School be taken, all children attending St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School would be offered places at alternative schools in line with parental preferences and/or within the area for September 2023. The School, as at 8th September has 86 statutory aged children on roll and 8.6 Full Time equivalent nursery aged children.

The Governors of St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School are publishing the proposals. Southwark Council will decide whether to implement the proposals and close St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School.


The proposal is not related to any other school organisation proposals that have been or are about to be published.

This notice is an extract of the complete proposal. A copy of the complete proposal can be viewed on the school website at <http://www.stfrancescacabrini.co.uk/>, a paper copy of the proposal can be requested via email to: consult@stfcabrini.southwark.sch.uk.

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by emailing them to Vilma.edwards@southwark.gov.uk. Or in writing to:

Vilma Edwards, Business Support Coordinator and Personal Assistant to, Assistant Director,
Learning and Achievement
Children's and Adults' Services
Southwark Council, 160 Tooley Street
London SE1 2QH

Responses must be received by 5pm on October 20th 2022.

Signed 
Anna Strappelli, Chair of Governors
22nd September 2022

Proposal in Full

Statutory Proposal - To close St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School

The Governing body of St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School of Forest Hill Road, SE23 3LE, a voluntary aided school, publishes this proposal under section 15(2) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to close St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School with effect from 1st September 2023.

Category Information

1. Name, address and contact details of proposer:

St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School, Forest Hill Road, SE23
St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School School's phone number is 0207 8699 8862,
and email is consult@stfcabrini.southwark.sch.uk

St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School is a Voluntary Aided Roman Catholic primary school and was established by the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus who are the Trustees.

2. Implementation

St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School is proposed to be closed from the 1st September 2023 onwards.

3. Reason for closure

The school has seen falling pupil numbers over the past five years due to demographic changes and this has affected both classroom size and finances. This has happened at the same time as the Missionary Sisters, the Trustees, were reviewing their missions across the globe with a view to increasing education for children in areas where it is sorely lacking, for example, their missions in Eswatini, Ethiopia and Uganda. The decision of the Missionary Sisters to withdraw from St. Francesca Cabrini Primary School has happened simultaneously.

The falling pupil roll has resulted in reduced funding which the school receives based on pupil numbers. The school has a deficit in public funding of £190k in the 2022-23 financial year and from the start of the 2023-24 financial year the funding gap due to falling pupil numbers is anticipated to be approximately £600k incurring further debt every year thereafter, due to the number of vacant places if the school remains open.

The Governing Body believe that were St Francesca Cabrini school to remain open, the reduced resources would not enable children to continue to receive the high quality education they deserve and need. The closure of St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School is therefore considered necessary because it is no longer sustainable.

4. Pupil Numbers and Admissions

As at the 8th September 2022 there are 86 compulsory age pupils on roll and 8.6 Full Time Equivalent non-compulsory age, there are no boarding pupils on roll, the breakdown of the roll by age at 8 September 2022 is in the table below. Of this roll, 2 children have an EHCP and a further 19 are supported with SEND action plus.

Year	Nursery	R	1	2	3	4	5	6
Girls	2	2	3	3	4	8	3	17
Boys	7	5	3	7	5	2	9	15
Total	8.6 FTE	7	6	10	9	10	12	32

The school received a total of 34 applications of which only 16 were first preferences for places in Reception for September 2022. On 19th April national offer day, 17 children were offered places and

this has now reduced to 7 children taking up a place. This puts additional pressure on the lack of numbers as 34 children left Year 6 in July 2022.

It should be noted that this number partly reflects 70 pupils who left the school in the summer term since the Pre-Consultation process commenced in May 2022 with an additional 17 not returning to the school in September 2022 and all have obtained places in other schools.

5. Need for School Places in the Area

Both Southwark and Lewisham local authorities have stated that they have significant overcapacity across all year groups in their respective authority areas. Demand for reception places in the area has reduced dramatically in the last 5 years, Southwark LA took action in 2018/19 to reduce this excess by formally reducing the published admission number at twelve schools.

St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School is situated in the local authority planning area 3, Peckham and Nunhead, which comprises 13 other schools (14 in total), demand has decreased substantially due to consistently falling birth rates and a variety of socio-economic factors that have impacted on the demand for school places along with the fall in baptisms. The school is also situated on the immediate border with Lewisham.

Using data provided by Southwark Education Local Authority, although vacancy levels are generally high across the borough, the number of vacancies within two miles of the school is low. It would be unlikely to be able to accommodate all children into schools within a two mile distance. However, many of the current children on roll already live beyond that two mile distance so the two mile radius of the school may not be directly relevant in their circumstances as they may wish and be able to secure alternative places closer to their home.

6.a) Details of the schools at which pupils at the school to be discontinued will be offered places

The table below shows for schools within 1 mile of the school, Reception year figures, overall school capacity, vacancies and a percentage of vacancies.

School	Distance	PAN	YR 2021	PAN Total	YR-6 2021	School type
Fairlawn Primary School (LEWISHAM)	0.14 miles	60	61	420	388	Community
Horniman Primary (LEWISHAM)	0.44 miles	30	30	210	200	Community
Dalmain Primary School (LEWISHAM)	0.58 miles	60	57	420	322	Community
Goodrich Primary School (Southwark)	0.63 miles	90	84	630	502	Community
Stillness Junior School (LEWISHAM)	0.63 miles	90	89	180	176	Community
Stillness Infants School (LEWISHAM)	0.63 miles	90	90	360	295	Community
St William of York RC (LEWISHAM)	0.70 miles	30	30	210	172	VA RC
Ivydale Primary School (Southwark)	0.79 miles	90	89	540	475	Community
St George's CE Academy (LEWISHAM)	0.80 miles	30	26	210	184	Academy
St Anthony's RC Primary School (Southwark)	0.80 miles	60	49	420	373	VA RC
Turnham Academy (LEWISHAM)	0.84 miles	30	30	270	268	Academy
Perrymount Primary School (LEWISHAM)	0.89 miles	30	28	210	173	Community
Eliot Bank Primary School (LEWISHAM)	0.90 miles	60	60	420	347	Community
Kilmorie Primary School (LEWISHAM)	0.93 miles	90	90	630	537	Community
Beecroft Primary (LEWISHAM)	0.94 miles	60	59	420	366	Community
Holy Trinity CE Primary (LEWISHAM)	0.95 miles	30	24	210	159	VA CE
Total		840	807	5760	4937	4% vacancy YR
Southwark total		240	222	1590	1350	8% vacancy YR

Although the detail of places in schools further than 1 mile is not yet available to the school, 87 children have already left and joined other schools leaving 54 children in Years R to 5 to be accommodated.

A coordinated admissions process will be delivered by Southwark with Lewisham for all families with a child still on roll at St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School to enable them to apply for an alternative school of preference for September 2023. Parents also have the option to apply to schools which are further away as there are some families that travel from outside of the immediate area to enable their children to attend St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School. The School Admissions Team at Southwark LA will provide information and contact details for schools; they can be contacted at the following email address: schooladmissions@southwark.gov.uk

6.b) Interim Arrangements

Governors were concerned that parents that applied to join the school in September 2022 were informed as early as possible so they were aware of what was being considered by the governing body of the school - Southwark LA said that they would do this at the appropriate time but it could not be done before the statutory notice was published. There are no other arrangements known about.

6.c) In case of Special Schools - Children with Special Educational Needs

There is no SEND specialist reserved provision at the school - this section therefore does not apply. There will be 2 children with EHCPs – transition arrangements for these children into alternative schools will be managed by caseworkers on the Southwark's and Lewisham's local authorities Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) teams to ensure appropriate placements are made

7. Details of any measures proposed to increase the number of school places available in consequence of the proposed discontinuance.

The governing body are unaware of any such proposals as Southwark Education Authority has given no indication that there is any need for additional places to be provided in order to accommodate the children displaced by the closure of St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School.

8. Impact on the community

The decision to propose to close St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School has been taken to protect the education of children attending the school, and to ensure that should the school close, they can have a managed transition to other local schools. Southwark Council and the Education Commission for the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark will work in partnership with Lewisham Council and the school as they move through this statutory process.

The Governors of St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School as well as Southwark Council and the Education Commission for the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark acknowledge that the closure of the school will have an impact on the community, and be deeply felt by many families/local residents due to the significant community links and emotional ties developed and held by generations at St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School.

However, given the significant level of capacity at high quality schools in the locality and across Southwark as a whole, families will be able to access alternative school places in the wider community. The closure of St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School may enable some of the surrounding schools with low rolls to strengthen their intake and as a result, to become more financially viable.

No mitigation will be required because of the availability of alternative school places at other schools in the local community.

9. Rural primary schools

The school Primary School is not in an area that has been classified as "rural", nor has it been designated as such by an order made for the purposes of section 15.

10. Balance of denominational provision

The governing body of the school has worked closely with the Education Commission for the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark who have confirmed that the demand for places in denominational schools has decreased substantially across the Archdiocese of Southwark. And, this decline in baptisms is in line with the decline in the demand for places at the school.

The number of baptisms has been falling and detail (as provided by the Archdiocese of Southwark) parish by parish is attached for Southwark as Annex 1 and Lewisham as Annex 2. This shows overall a reduction from 2015 of 965 to 438 in 2019, note that due to COVID government restrictions were placed on church services. At the same time there were a total of 865 places as the Published Admission Number in RC primary schools in 2019.

The parish of Forest Hill has two Catholic primary schools St Francesca Cabrini (PAN 30) and St William of York (PAN 30) which is in the borough of Lewisham. The parish baptism figures are very low, 13 for the 60 available places.

Exact details of the preferences expressed of other schools is not available to the school but there is no indication that St Francesca Cabrini School is significantly different to other schools in the borough. Reducing provision in this area will mean that the remaining the other Voluntary Aided Roman Catholic schools and academies will potentially stay viable and ensure a future for this group of schools within the educational landscape in the Archdiocese of Southwark.

11. Maintained nursery schools

St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School has a nursery class that has 26 Full Time Equivalent Places. It currently only has 8.6 full time equivalent pupils attending and all are aware of this proposal. There is ample nursery provision of good quality locally both in the Southwark and Lewisham Local Authority areas.

12. Sixth form provision

St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School is a 4-11 primary school, it does not include sixth form provision, this section therefore does not apply.

13. Special Educational Needs Provision

There is no special educational needs provision reserved for SEND pupils at St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School and no specialist provision is proposed for discontinuation.

14 Travel - Details of length and journeys to alternative provision.

Southwark Local Authority's Admissions Booklet 2022/23 link below gives details of other primary schools in the borough, with a map on page 80

<https://www.southwark.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-admissions/primary-admissions/applying-for-a-primary-school-place>

St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School is on the immediate boundary line with Lewisham Education Authority and Annex 3 shows the proximity of their schools. The CYP Committee Report of November 2021

<https://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s91237/05%20School%20Place%20Planning%20Report%20CYP%20251121.pdf>

showed that Lewisham was experiencing the same issues as Southwark in over capacity and were seeking further measures for its reduction.

The statutory walking distance is outlined to be 2 miles for children up to 8 years old and 3 miles for 8 and above and every parent will be able to make a preference for an alternative school inside or outside this area.

The commuting distance of children, currently attending St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School is not likely to be substantively affected as they transition into alternative schools. The Heat Map in Annexe 4 shows the place of residence of its pupils in Spring 2022 and that parents were often travelling some distance, relatively, and when the school roll was considerably higher than it is currently.

It is, therefore, not expected that journeys to and from alternative schools provided will be lengthier than at present due to availability but longer journeys may occur as a result of parental preference for schools outside of the local area. There are 16 schools within 1 mile of the school and even more that are within 2 and 3 miles as demonstrated by Annexe 3 for Lewisham and the link to Southwark's primary schools details in Section 14 above.

15 Travel - How the proposed arrangements will mitigate against increased car use.

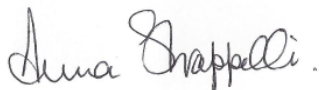
As can be seen from Annexe 4 some parents use vehicles, buses or walk to the school. As outlined above, in the main the pupils displaced by the school closure may not all be unduly inconvenienced by lengthier travel, as there is provision within a reasonable distance of St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School. This would help to mitigate against any increase in car use, as no more car journeys will be necessary than at present. However, of course there may be those who live close to the school and walk, who will may have to make alternative arrangements.

Making objections to or comments on these proposals

Within four weeks from the date of publication of these proposals, by 5 pm on 20th October 2022 any person may object to or make comments on the proposals or, request a paper copy of the proposal by emailing vilma.edwards@southwark.gov.uk

or by post to:

Vilma Edwards, Business Support Coordinator and Personal Assistant to,
Assistant Director, Learning and Achievement
Children's Services
Southwark Council
160 Tooley Street
London SE1 2QH



Signed Anna Strappelli
Chair of Governors, St Francesca Cabrini Catholic Primary School
22nd September 2022

ANNEXE 1 SOUTHWARK Local Authority Catholic Infant & Primary Schools

Parish	School	Baptisms					PAN
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	
Bermondsey (Dockhead)	St Joseph's (George Row)	22	28	17	21	16	45
Borough	Saint Joseph's	6	19	9	4	4	30
Camberwell	St Joseph's Infants	84	89	57	67	31	60
Dulwich	St Anthony's	63	60	66	50	37	60
Forest Hill	St Francesca Cabrini	27	36	37	36	13	60
Peckham	St Francis	32	6	9	13	4	60
Peckham Rye	St James the Great	24	20	22	16	7	30
Rotherhithe	St Joseph's (Gomm Road)	43	47	38	47	22	30
Southwark	St George's Cathedral	84	58	45	55	22	*30
Surrey Docks	St John's	20	2	11	5	6	30
Walworth	English Martyrs	15	24	17	15	15	60
Totals		420	389	328	329	177	495

Southwark LA – Parishes without Catholic Primary Schools

Parish	Nearest Schools	Baptisms				
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Bermondsey (Mellor St)	Saint Joseph's Borough & St Joseph's (George Row)	42	32	33	9	5
Dulwich Wood Park	St Joseph's Infant (Croydon LA)	35	24	18	22	2
Kennington Park	St Joseph's Infants	13	10	13	19	10
Nunhead	St James the Great	24	18	28	16	1
South Bermondsey	St Joseph's (Gomm Road)	31	14	13	21	2
Waterloo	St George's Cathedral	3	3	2	8	5
Totals		148	101	107	95	25

Source Archdiocese of Southwark

ANNEXE 2 LEWISHAM Local Authority Catholic Infant & Primary Schools

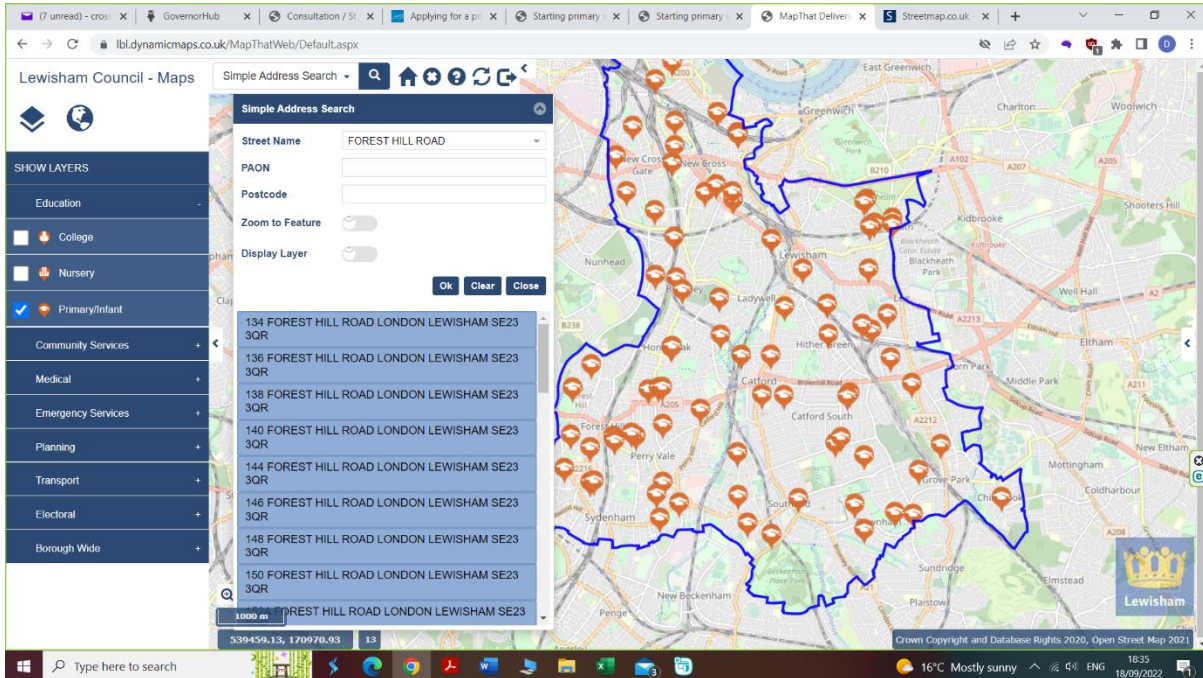
Parish	School	Baptisms					PAN
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	
Beckenham Hill	St Augustine's	27	14	14	10	8	30
Blackheath	St Matthew Academy	60	60	54	50	40	60
Brockley	St Mary Magdalen's	18	27	36	n/a	n/a	0**
Catford	Holy Cross	37	23	21	38	15	30
Deptford	St Joseph's	45	45	34	39	20	30
Downham	Good Shepherd	32	19	14	21	8	30
Forest Hill	St William of York	27	36	37	36	13	30
Lee	St Winifred's	27	21	27	21	14	60*
Lewisham	St Saviour's	61	55	70	71	32	30
Sydenham	Our Lady & St Philip Neri	35	23	36	29	18	60*
Totals		369	323	343	315	168	360

Lewisham LA – Parishes without Catholic Primary Schools

Parish	Nearest School	Baptisms				
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Brockley ***	St Francesca Cabrini (Southwark LA)	n/a	n/a	n/a	25	6
Sydenham Kirkdale	Our Lady & St Philip Neri	8	7	8	1	2

Source Archdiocese of Southwark

ANNEXE 3 - Proximity of Lewisham LA Schools to St Francesca Cabrini Catholic School



ANNEXE 4 Heat Map of Parental addresses of children attending Spring 2022

