

Proposal to close St Teresa's Catholic Infant School

St Teresa's Catholic Infant School, Everton Road, Southport PR8 4BT

Notice is hereby given in accordance with Section 15(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 that Sefton Council intends to discontinue St Teresa's Catholic Infant School, Everton Road, Southport PR8 4BT on 31st August 2022.

Pupils presently attending St Teresa's Catholic Infant School will, if their parents wish, transfer automatically to Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School at the closure of their school or, in appropriate cases be offered places at other Catholic Primary Schools in accordance with parental preference. Admissions may also be sought at other schools where places are available.

This notice is an extract from the complete proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be obtained from School Organisation Team, Sefton Council, Town Hall, Oriel Road, Bootle L20 7AE or at www.sefton.gov.uk/stteresas

Within four weeks of the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to or make comments on this proposal by sending them to the School Organisation Team, Sefton Council, Town Hall, Oriel Road, Bootle L20 7AE.

The last date for representations is 5pm on 30th March 2022.

Signed:

D Johnson, Chief Executive and Authorised Officer of Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council

Publication Date: 2nd March 2022

Contact Details

Sefton Council, Town Hall, Oriol Road, Bootle L20 7AE is publishing the proposal to discontinue St Teresa's Catholic Infant School, Everton Road, Southport PR8 4BT.

Implementation Date

St Teresa's Catholic Infant School will be closed with effect from 31st August 2022.

Reason for closure

Pupil numbers have been falling for several years at St Teresa's and this trend is likely to continue for the foreseeable future. The school had 83.3% surplus places in October 2021.

A consultation was originally carried out in 2019 on the proposal to close St Teresa's Catholic Infant School and expand the provision at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School. The consultation ran from 21st October to 6th December 2019.

A range of comments were made during the consultation process but there were very few responses in favour of the proposal to close St Teresa's Catholic Infants School and expand Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School. There was a great deal of passion from parents and staff of St Teresa's for the school to remain open either as a school in its' own right or as part of Our Lady of Lourdes. There was also a great deal of passion from parents and staff of Our Lady of Lourdes who felt that the proposal would be detrimental to their school and would put jobs, finances and school standards at risk.

Given the significant level of opposition from staff, parents, and governors for the proposal to close St Teresa's and extend provision at Our Lady of Lourdes, the recommendation was that the proposal be changed to the closure of St Teresa's Catholic Infant School.

At the Cabinet meeting held on the 5th March 2020, Members agreed to allow St Teresa's Governors' further time to provide an alternative financial proposal based on a half form entry from Reception to Year 2. This was presented to Cabinet on 30 July 2020 by the Governing Body who appealed to Cabinet to allow the school to remain open and to operate under a Licensed Deficit Budget Agreement. The Governing Body explained that they had been working hard to develop a robust financial plan but the situation with COVID 19 had meant that they had been unable to promote themselves as much as they would have liked. Members agreed to allow the Governing Body more time to provide a financial plan that provided assurance that the school was viable going forward.

The Local Authority has held termly monitoring meetings to review the financial plan submitted to Members with the Governors and Leadership Team of the school.

The Governing Body came forward in October 2021 and having exhausted all options to address the pupil numbers and financial situation requested that the Council considered beginning formal consultation to close St Teresa's Catholic Infant School. This was approved by Cabinet on 4th November 2021 and stage one of the consultation process took place from 22nd November until 17th December 2021.

Pupil numbers and admissions

St Teresa's Catholic Infant School has a planned admission number (PAN) of 30. The following table shows pupil numbers at the school since January 2010.

Year	Rec	Y1	Y2	Total
January 2010	30	30	29	89
January 2011	30	30	28	88
January 2012	30	30	29	89
January 2013	30	30	29	89
January 2014	27	29	31	87
January 2015	30	28	26	84
January 2016	30	31	30	91
January 2017	26	29	28	83
January 2018	20	21	25	66
January 2019	18	17	22	57
January 2020	17	13	18	48
January 2021	6	7	11	24
October 2021	2	6	7	15

Source: School Census Returns

The school also has a nursery and there were 5 pupils on roll as at October 2021 School Census.

Births in the Southport area have reduced by 25.6% since 2009/10.

Birth Year	Entry into Reception	Births in Southport
2008/09	2013/14	898
2009/10	2014/15	942
2010/11	2015/16	917
2011/12	2016/17	903
2012/13	2017/18	893
2013/14	2018/19	878
2014/15	2019/20	856
2015/16	2020/21	817
2016/17	2021/22	848
2017/18	2022/23	801
2018/19	2023/24	722
2019/20	2024/25	701

Displaced pupils

Pupils presently attending St Teresa's Catholic Infant School will, if their parents wish, transfer automatically to Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School at the closure of their school or, in appropriate cases be offered places at other Catholic Primary Schools in accordance with parental preference. Admission may also be sought at other schools where places are available. The school has no existing

specialist provision that is recognised by the local authority as reserved for pupils with special educational needs, and the school is not a special school.

Impact on the community

This proposal will remove 90 infant places. St Teresa's is the sister school of Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary and is already part of the Our Lady of Lourdes community as pupils from St Teresa's move into KS2 at Our Lady of Lourdes. This should minimise the impact on the community.

The building is owned by the Archdiocese of Liverpool and no decision has been made about what will happen to this once the school has closed. It will be their responsibility to decide how the building will be used in future.

Balance of denominational provision

The closure of St Teresa's Catholic Infant School would mean that 90 infant places would be removed from the Catholic sector. There are three other Catholic primary schools in the Southport area with a total 420 infant places between them including Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary, St Patrick's Catholic Primary and Holy Family Catholic Primary. There are sufficient places available at Our Lady of Lourdes to accommodate pupils who will be displaced by this proposal. This includes those pupils whose parents have expressed a preference for a place in Reception in September 2022.

Travel

Where a primary pupil needs to travel more than 2 miles to their nearest qualifying school or is eligible under the extended rights criteria for low income families, the Local Authority has a duty to provide free transport usually by way of a travel pass which will mitigate against increased car use.

Any new application for home to school transport will be assessed using the standard national home to school distance and income eligibility criteria taking into account that St Teresa's should no longer be considered as a qualifying school for the purposes of transport. Pupils with SEND who have an education health and care plan will have their transport needs individually assessed.

Procedure for responses

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The last date for representations is 5pm on 30th March 2022.