

Statutory Proposal to amalgamate Guardian Angels and St Anne's Catholic Primary Schools

Proposals to combine St Anne's Catholic Primary School and Guardian Angels Catholic Primary School from 1 September 2020.

The proposals will have the effect of combining St Anne's Catholic Primary School and Guardian Angels Catholic Primary School in order to provide a combined Catholic Primary School. No pupils will be displaced and all the pupils attending the schools at the time of implementation could transfer to the current St Anne's school site. The current St Anne's school entrance will provide the main entrance to the new school, and the point of measurement for distances for new applicants for the 2020/21 academic year. Children with siblings at St Anne's or Guardian Angels Schools, and those living in either parish, would be given priority for new admissions to the new amalgamated school.

Part 1 Guardian Angels Catholic Primary School

Notice is given in accordance with section 15(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 that Tower Hamlets Council, Tower Hamlets Town Hall, Mulberry Place intends to discontinue Guardian Angels Catholic Primary School on 31 August 2020.

Part 2 St Anne's Catholic Primary School

Notice is given in accordance with section 19(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 that Tower Hamlets Council intends to make the following prescribed change to St Anne's Catholic Primary School to extend the provision at St Anne's Catholic Primary School to accommodate Guardian Angels pupils and maintain an annual intake of 60 pupils.

1. Contact details

Name and address of Local Authority publishing the proposal:

Tower Hamlets Council, Town Hall, Mulberry Place, 5 Clove Crescent, London, E14 2BG

Name, address and category of schools proposed to be amalgamated:

St Anne's Catholic Primary School, Underwood Rd, Whitechapel, London E1 5AW.
Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School.

Guardian Angels Catholic Primary School, Whitman Rd, Globe Town, London E3 4RB.
Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School.

2. Implementation

Date on which it is proposed to amalgamate the schools:

1 September 2020

It is proposed to implement the amalgamation as follows:

St Anne's Catholic Primary School will expand to 2 Forms of Entry from 1 Sep 2020
Guardian Angels Catholic Primary School will close from 31st August 2020.

All children attending Guardian Angels School will be offered a place at St Anne's School from 1st September 2020. Children currently attending St Anne's School will continue to do so.

3. Reason for amalgamation

The proposal arises due to a fall in pupil numbers and the associated impact on the educational and financial viability of Guardian Angels School. The School is being recommended for closure due to underlying sustainability issues relating to its considerable and unrecoverable budget deficit, very low pupil numbers, and admission patterns that has seen a substantial decline in applications over the previous eight year period. The School's position is further exacerbated by it being in Ofsted category of 'Requiring Improvement' since its inspection in September 2018.

A six school week period of public consultation, including meetings with staff, governors, and parents, along with other interested parties has been undertaken from 4th November to 13th December 2019. The consultation documents and responses to which can be viewed here:

<https://www.stannesschool.org.uk/consultation-information-1/>

<https://www.guardianangelsprimary.org.uk/informal-consultation-documents-proposed-school-am/>

4. Pupil numbers and admissions

The numbers for whom provision is currently made at the school:

Guardian Angels School. This school is a co-educational mainstream Catholic Primary School for pupils aged 5 to 11. The school has a Published Admission Number (PAN) of 30 for each year group, giving a total of 210. As at October 2019 the school had 170 pupils on roll, and only 15 reception children. At January 2020 there were 5 first choice applicants for reception places in September 2020.

St Anne's School. This is a co-educational mainstream Catholic Primary School for pupils aged 5-11 with Nursery provision for children from 2 years old. The school currently has a PAN of 50 for each year group, which will increase to 60. As at October 2019 the school had 207 pupils on roll, and 35 reception children. At January 2020 there were 16 first choice applicants for reception places, and a further 16 overall applicants for September 2020.

The admissions criteria for the amalgamated school will be amended to confirm that the PAN will become 60. That new applicants with siblings at Guardian Angels or St Anne's will be given priority, and that Catholic children born in Guardian Angels or St Anne's Parish will be given priority.

5. Displaced pupils due to amalgamation.

No children will be displaced because all have places at the amalgamated St Anne's Catholic Primary School from September 2020.

There are currently 144 pupils on roll at Guardian Angels School

There are currently 210 pupils on roll at St Anne's School: with a further 24 children attending Nursery provision.

Provision has been made to accommodate all pupils from both schools at St Anne's Catholic School. The Local Authority recognises that the home to school travel distances for Guardian Angels children will increase. Any pupil whose journey from home to school increases to more than 2 miles (Infants) and more than 3 miles (juniors) will be entitled to travel support under the Local Authority scheme.

During the informal consultation, it was indicated that some families have preferences for other local schools and may live closer to other schools. Some schools in the surrounding areas have vacancies in some year groups, parents who wish will be supported to apply for them, and the Local Authority will endeavour to meet parental preferences for school places, where possible.

Current pupil projections and plans indicate there are sufficient places for future cohorts following the closure of Guardian Angels Catholic Primary School. The local authority will monitor the projected need for future school places and propose changes, if required, to ensure sufficient places are available.

6. Impact on the community of the amalgamation

Guardian Angels school site will close from September 2020.

Guardian Angels School has been linked with Guardian Angels Church over many generations. It is seen as the linked school for the local Catholic community. The proportion of Guardian Angels families attending the church has fallen over recent years, and is now approximately 40%

Many of the local Catholic community have attended the school and will be disappointed that it is no longer a financially viable school. To ameliorate this consideration will be given to some form of memorial plaque so that the memory of many staff, children and parents is retained.

7. Rural Primary Schools

Not applicable

8. Balance of denominational provision

The LA is under an obligation to consider the impact on the balance of denominational provision in the area before it determines the outcome of school closure proposals. As there are other Catholic Schools, as well as other faith schools in Tower Hamlets and surrounding areas, and St Anne's is being expanded to 2 forms of entry, the proposed amalgamation will have minimal impact on the balance of denominational school provision.

There has been a significant decline in the number of applications for children from Catholic schools to Catholic Primary Schools over recent years and this mirrors the decline in the borough's Christian population as evidenced by the last national census, where Tower Hamlets had the lowest proportion of Christian residents nationally: 30 per cent compared with a national average of 59 per cent.

The proportion of children applying for places at Catholic Schools over the last 6 years has been between 8 and 10 %. The proposed changes in PAN numbers (a reduction of 10 overall) would ensure there remained capacity for up to 10% of the Tower Hamlets population to have places in Catholic Schools.

9. Maintained nursery schools

Guardian Angels Catholic Primary School does not offer Nursery provision; this will be available for parents in the amalgamated St Anne's Catholic Primary School

10. Sixth form provision

Not applicable

11. Special Educational Needs provision

The school does not provide educational provision recognised by the local authority as being reserved for children with special educational needs. There are 26 pupils on roll at Guardian Angels School who have been identified as having special educational needs, of whom there are 4 pupils with an Education Health and Care Plan. There are 46 pupils on roll at St Anne's School who have been identified as having special educational needs, of which there are 9 pupils with an Education Health and Care Plan St Anne's Catholic Primary School site has fully accessible buildings, the Guardian Angels School site does not.

12. Travel

The distance for most children currently attending Guardian Angels School will increase.

The table below shows the distances Guardian Angels children would have to travel and how many would meet the Local Authority eligibility requirements for travel support.

| Reception to Year 2 | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| Distance to school | Guardian Angels | St Anne's |
| Less than 2 miles | 50 | 26 |
| Greater than 2 miles | 5 | 29 |

| Year 3 - Year 5 | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| Distance to school | Guardian Angels | St Anne's |
| Less than 3 miles | 80 | 72 |
| Greater than 3 miles | 4 | 12 |

Eligibility for Local Authority support with home to school transport will be determined in line with the local authority's home to school transport policy, which can be accessed via this link: [School Travel Support](#).

As part of the consultation response governors and the Local Authority are considering exceptional short term travel support.

13. Procedure for making representations (objections and comments)

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by:

Email: school.organisation@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Post: School Organisation and Place Planning Manager
Pupil Services and School Sufficiency
Tower Hamlets Children's Services
Town Hall
Mulberry Place
5 Clove Crescent
E14 5BG

Closing date for responses is March 5th 2020

We will not be able to consider any responses received after this date. All responses received during the representation period will be published on the Council's website in mid-March 2020. The website address is:

<https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Home.aspx>