

Executive Determination meeting 17<sup>th</sup> December 2012

Proposal to change age range of St Marys Catholic VA Lower School

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## Original proposal and consultation

Dunstable Road  
Caddington  
Dunstable  
Bedfordshire LU1 4BB

### HEADTEACHER

Mr S. Chiswell, BA Ed (Hons)

### ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER

Miss S. Nichol, BA, Cert.Ed.



Tel: (01582 602420)

Fax: (01582) 667191

Email: [stmaryscadd@cbc.beds.sch.uk](mailto:stmaryscadd@cbc.beds.sch.uk)

Website: [www.stmaryscatholiclower.co.uk](http://www.stmaryscatholiclower.co.uk)

## **CONSULTATION DOCUMENT ON A PROPOSAL TO EXTEND THE UPPER AGE RANGE OF ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC LOWER SCHOOL, DUNSTABLE ROAD, DUNSTABLE, BEDFORDSHIRE, LU1 4BB FROM 3 – 9 YEARS TO 3 – 11 YEARS**

### **PURPOSE OF THIS CONSULTATION DOCUMENT**

The purpose of this document is to ask for your views on a proposal to extend the upper age range of St. Mary's Catholic Lower School from 3 – 9 years to 3 – 11 years. Extending our age range would create a full primary school.

### **BACKGROUND**

St. Mary's Catholic Lower School provides well for its pupils. However, we are ambitious for our school and want to provide the best possible educational chances for children in the community we serve.

At present pupils leave St. Mary's at age 9 in the middle of their Key Stage 2 primary schooling. This can affect their curriculum understanding, school continuity, and educational assessment.

We believe that our children would benefit from the stability of a primary school setting that is organised to meet the specific learning needs of the upper Key Stage 2 child. National research and data support this view and consequently the vast majority of Local Authorities have converted to a primary / secondary model.

We also believe that children and families in Dunstable should have the same choice as those who live in Houghton Regis, who can already choose to send their children to a primary school until the age of 11. These families will have a greater choice of options from Sept 2013 with the expansion of 3 lower schools in the local area becoming primary schools and some local upper schools investigating converting to secondary schools.

St. Mary's Governing Body has therefore asked Central Bedfordshire Council to consider a request to change the school's age range to enable it to provide primary schooling for pupils up to age 11.

# Original proposal and consultation document

## PROPOSAL

The Governing Body has applied to change the age range of St. Mary's Catholic Lower School by extending it from a 3 – 9 years lower school to a 3 – 11 years full primary school.

It is proposed that there would be two stages of implementation starting in September 2013:

- September 2013 – Year 4 children to remain in current setting and move in to Year 5
- September 2014 – Year 5 children to remain in current setting and move in to Year 6

We have no plans to reintegrate pupils who are already in middle schools but will take children who have moved to the area from another school or who do not have a school provision, providing we do not exceed our admission number.

In applying to change our upper age range it would bring us in line with St. Vincent's Catholic Primary School and the Catholic Schools in Luton whom we work closely with.

## OBJECTIVES OF PROPOSAL

- to provide stability, consistency and continuity for children in their primary years, through our ethos, curriculum, teaching and learning organisation
- to facilitate the continuity of Catholic education and provide access and a smoother transition to secondary schools
- to raise standards and improve outcomes for young people particularly at age 11
- to ensure that particular attention is paid to groups of children who are either underperforming or exceeding in years 5 and 6
- to provide equal access for all pupils to primary school education regardless of faith
- to ensure our school is based around communities and its needs
- to provide specialist primary education for children in years 5 and 6
- to bring St. Mary's in line with St. Vincent's Primary School (the only other Catholic school for this age range in the local Authority)
- to make working at St. Mary's more attractive and help us recruit and retain good quality staff to improve the standard of education for our children

## **Original proposal and consultation document**

### **SCHOOL CAPACITY**

The current capacity of St. Mary's Catholic Lower School is 150 children from Reception – Year 4 and 26 part time nursery places for both morning and afternoon sessions. The proposed capacity is 210 children from Reception – Year 6 and to continue with the same provision for Nursery aged children.

The school has enough available classrooms to cater for an extended upper age range.

There would be no requirements for building work for the foreseeable future apart from refurbishing a set of toilets. The cost for this work has been budgeted for in the 2012 – 2013 budget.

### **SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities):**

Changing age range will have a positive impact for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities and for vulnerable learners which will build on the current good practice already established in our school. This is because:

- we have the expertise in early intervention, resources and teaching methodologies to support children who find learning hard
- we believe that our professional knowledge of how children learn will enable us to provide effective intervention
- we will continue with the good and supportive SEND including gifted and talented provision already in place and pupils will benefit from this for a further two years
- children with SEND receive very effective support and as a result make positive progress in our school

### **TRANSITION**

In implementing this proposal we would be fulfilling our mission as a Catholic school to provide the opportunities and continuity for all children to achieve in a Catholic setting. We would support transition from St. Mary's Catholic Lower School to any school place a parent chooses at any time. To clarify, if they chose to stay with us for all their years of primary education, we would support the transition at age 11 to the school of the parent's choice. If they chose to go to a middle school we would support this transition. If parents chose to go out of the authority, we would support that transition as well. This is all about our ambition to provide continuity of Catholic education and support the Deanery and the Council's aim of raising standards.

## **Original proposal and consultation document**

### **WHAT WOULD THIS MEAN FOR ME AS A PARENT OR CARER?**

Under the current age range at St Mary's, all pupils leave at age 9. Under the proposal, you would have the choice to keep your child at St Mary's for an additional two years, until age 11. He or she could then move up to a middle school or secondary school. If you would still prefer for your child to leave St Mary's at age 9 and move to a middle school, that choice would still be supported by the school.

### **WORKING TOGETHER WITH OTHER SCHOOLS**

St. Mary's Catholic Lower School is fully committed to working together with the schools of the local Learning Partnership and other Catholic schools in the Northampton Diocese. We are ready to work in partnership with St. Vincent's Catholic Primary School and other local primary schools to establish a shared vision based on providing the very best outcomes for our children and their families. We aim to provide a range of collaborative opportunities that will ensure continuity of provision for children and their families. We will work collectively in partnership to secure value for money by sharing suppliers, engaging in joint training and identifying shared priorities for school improvement.

### **EXTENDED SERVICES**

This proposal will give the opportunity for joint extended school provision reflecting the needs of the community and the aspirations of school leaders, including:-

- transition support for pupils, schools and families
- shared training for parents and staff
- use of combined clubs and a range of After School activities
- promotion of inter-school sport and other activities for the community
- commitment to wrap around care
- holiday activities
- workshops to support adult learning and encourage family learning
- support for vulnerable families and pupils eg Siblings group and Young Carers

### **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

If we are unsuccessful with this proposal the school will continue to operate as a Lower school for pupils aged 3 – 9 years.

## Original proposal and consultation document

### TIMELINE

The alteration of a school's age range must follow a set decision making process. The following table sets out the timetable to change the age range of St. Mary's Catholic Lower School.

<b>Action</b>	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>Completion date</b>
Informal consultation	6 <sup>th</sup> September 2012	18 <sup>th</sup> October 2012
Public Meeting	19 September 2012 at 7.00 pm at the school	
Publication <i>(Formal publication of the proposal)</i>	22 <sup>nd</sup> October 2012	
Representation <i>(opportunities for interested parties to make their views known)</i>	23 <sup>rd</sup> October 2012	3 <sup>rd</sup> December 2012
Decision made	Week beginning 17 <sup>th</sup> December 2012	
<b>Proposed implementation</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> September 2013</b>	

Attached to this proposal is a Consultation Response form.

# Original proposal and consultation document

## Consultation Response Form

Please read the consultation document and tell us what your views are. The questions on this form are provided to help you do so, but you do not have to respond to all of them. If you prefer not to use this form, you can also put your views in a letter.

Letters and forms should be sent to the address at the bottom of this form, or responses can be sent by e-mail to: [stmaryscadd@cbc.beds.sch.uk](mailto:stmaryscadd@cbc.beds.sch.uk)

All responses must be received by **Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2012**.

### Questions relating to the proposal

How much do you agree with the following statements? Please tick as appropriate.

1) I support the proposed changes to the age range at St. Mary's Catholic Lower School.

<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Don't know</b>

2) I support the timescale plan of the age change at St. Mary's Catholic Lower School.

<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Don't know</b>

## Original proposal and consultation document

Further comments:

( please continue on the reverse or on a separate sheet if necessary)

**Please return this form to:**

Mr. Steve Chiswell  
Headteacher  
St. Mary's Catholic Lower School  
Caddington  
Dunstable  
Dunstable Road  
Bedfordshire.  
LU1 4BB

**Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?**

Individual  Organisation (Please tell us which organisation).....

Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

.....

Postcode: .....

The following information will help us when considering your opinions and to make sure that we are getting views from all sections of the community. All the questions are optional, and you can give as little or as much information as you wish.

**Please tell us if you fall into any of the following categories (please select all that apply)**

Pupil (Please state at which school and in which Year Group) .....

Parent/carer of child/children (Please state which school/s).....

Parent/carer of pre-school child/children

School Governor (Please state which school/s) .....

School Staff (Please state which school/s) .....

Other (Please specify) .....

**Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?**  Yes  No

**Please tell us your ethnic group**



## Original proposal and consultation document

- WHITE British
- WHITE Irish
- WHITE Other (Please write in).....
- BLACK OR BLACK BRITISH Caribbean
- BLACK OR BLACK BRITISH African
- BLACK OR BLACK BRITISH Other (please write in).....
- MIXED White & Black Caribbean
- MIXED White & Black African
- MIXED White & Asian
- MIXED Other (please write in).....
- ASIAN Indian
- ASIAN Pakistani
- ASIAN Bangladeshi
- ASIAN Other (please write in).....
- CHINESE
- OTHER (please write in).....

Data Protection Act 1998 Please note that your personal details supplied on this form will be held and/or computerised by St. Mary's Catholic Lower School and/or Central Bedfordshire Council for the purpose of the consultation. The information collected may be disclosed to school staff and officers and members of the Council and its partners involved in this consultation. Summarised information from the forms may be published, but no individual details will be disclosed under these circumstances. Your personal details will be safeguarded and will not be divulged to any other individuals or organisations for any other purposes.

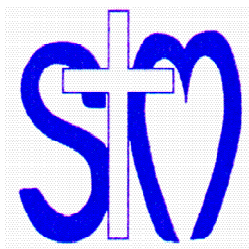
## Outcome of initial consultation

### HEADTEACHER

Mr S. Chiswell, BA Ed (Hons)

### ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER

Miss S. Nichol, BA, Cert. Ed



Dunstable Road  
Caddington  
Dunstable  
Bedfordshire LU1 4BB

Tel: (01582 602420)

Fax: (01582) 667191

### *St Mary's Catholic Lower School*

#### **REPORT ON THE CONSULTATION CONDUCTED WITH REGARD TO A PROPOSAL TO EXTEND THE UPPER AGE RANGE OF ST. MARY'S VOLUNTARY AIDED CATHOLIC LOWER SCHOOL, DUNSTABLE ROAD, DUNSTABLE, BEDFORDSHIRE, LU1 4BB FROM 3 – 9 YEARS TO 3 – 11 YEARS.**

In July 2012 after many discussions at Governing Body and Diocesan meetings it was agreed to submit a proposal to extend the upper age range of St. Mary's to become a primary school. The Governing Body of St. Mary's Catholic Lower School are passionate in their vision of realising a learning journey that is experienced in Catholic schools. We believe that our children should have the same choice as families in Houghton Regis who can choose to send their children to a Catholic primary school, namely St. Vincent's. The importance of providing this stability for our children remained at the centre of our discussions throughout.

During the consultation period the Governors and school staff have received a wide and encouraging range of comments. The overwhelming majority of comments support the proposal.

#### **PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT**

The purpose of this document is to provide information and report on the informal and formal consultation relating to extending the upper age range of St. Mary's Catholic Lower School from 3 – 9 years to 3 -11 years to create a primary school.

#### **OBJECTIVES OF PROPOSAL**

- To provide stability, consistency and continuity for children in their primary years, through our ethos, curriculum, teaching and learning organisation
- To facilitate the continuity of Catholic education by fulfilling qualification criteria for admissions to Catholic secondary schools. (JFK in Hemel, and Cardinal Newman in Luton)
- To provide a smoother transition to secondary schools with admissions from year 7
- To raise standards and improve outcomes for young people particularly at age 11
- To ensure that particular attention is paid to groups of children who are either underperforming or exceeding in years 5 and 6
- To provide equal access for all pupils to primary school education regardless of faith
- To ensure our school is based around communities and their needs
- To bring St. Mary's in line with St. Vincent's Primary School (the only other Catholic school for this age range in the local Authority)
- To make working at St. Mary's more attractive and help us recruit and retain good quality staff to improve the standard of education for our children

## **Outcome of initial consultation**

### **PROCESS OF CONSULTATION**

Our consultation has been extensive, parents were canvassed (in an informal way) for their thoughts and opinions during the academic year 2011 – 2012. In September 2012 the consultation document was published, meetings were held for parents of the school on 4 separate occasions, these were held at different times of the day to enable as many people as possible to attend. A public meeting was held on the 5<sup>th</sup> October. The following stakeholders were sent a copy of the consultation document:

- Parents/guardians of children currently attending St. Mary's Catholic Lower School
- The Catholic Diocese of Northampton
- The Parish of St. Mary's Catholic Church, Dunstable
- The Chairs of Governors of all schools in Central Bedfordshire (including academies)
- The Head teachers of all schools in Central Bedfordshire (including academies)
- Catholic Schools in Luton
- The Catholic Secondary School in Hemel Hempstead – John F Kennedy
- Hertfordshire County Council
- Luton Borough Council
- Central Bedfordshire County Council
- St. Vincent's Catholic Church
- Dunstable Town Council
- Caddington Parish Council
- Member of Parliament for Central Bedfordshire
- Downside Neighbourhood Centre
- Dunstable Library
- Pre-school provision in Dunstable
- All relevant Trade Unions for both Teaching and Support staff

The consultation document was also available on our school website and was publicised on 2 occasions in Central Essentials.

The consultation document contained a questionnaire which would provide us with stakeholder views on the proposal in particular regarding:

The proposed changes to the upper age range i.e. from 3 - 9 to 3 – 11.

The timescale plan for the change in age range, i.e. from September 2013.

On 6 September 2012 the consultation document was distributed to the community with a closing date of 18 October. Questionnaires were collated and analysed by members of the Governing Body and the Head teacher.

Within the consultation process 2 open meetings were held at St. Mary's, one on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> September and one on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> October, these meetings were attended by staff, parents, governors, a member of Northampton Diocese, local members of the community, staff and a governor from a middle school and a representative from Central Bedfordshire County Council.

## Outcome of initial consultation

### RESPONSES TO INFORMAL CONSULTATION

#### Raw Data Collected From the Consultation Document.

- 122 families of St Mary's children received consultation forms
  - 70% responded (85 out of 122)
  - 95% agreed with the proposal (81 out of 85)
  - 5% disagreed (4 out of 85)
- Approx 300 consultation documents were sent to interested parties
  - 44% responded (132 out of 300)
  - 95% agreed with the proposal (126 out of 132)
  - 5% disagreed (6 out of 132)

#### What some parents said.....

- I would like my son to stay at St Mary's school longer to get a better chance to carry on with his Catholic education
- Be easier for children to only have to start a new school twice rather than three times
- Excellent idea. Most other Boroughs already have this in place and I feel it will benefit pupils in the long run to stay in the same school until the end of Key Stage 2
- This would be brilliant as it's a worry to have to disrupt their education at age 9-11. Really hope it goes ahead.
- It can only benefit our children, school, church and community
- I want my children to stay in Catholic education system. Feel 3-tier system is unsettling and could hinder development. Not mature enough to move up
- The change will help my child to complete Key Stage 2 without having to change school
- I believe it's a brilliant idea for the children to be able to complete the level 2 at a lower/primary school
- This is the only Catholic school in the area. I would also prefer my children in two-tier education rather than three-tier education as I feel it is too young to change schools at the age of nine. This is an added pressure they do not need
- I currently have children in Middle School and 1 daughter in St Mary's but my daughter loves St Mary's and she has come on so much better and I'm really pleased with her progress at St Mary's and would love for her to be able to stay on longer
- As parents we feel the proposed plan will do nothing but benefit our children. We couldn't be happier with the prospect of being able to keep them in such a wonderful environment another 2 years
- I would like my son to stay at St Mary's school longer to get a better chance to carry on with his Catholic education

### RESPONSES TO POINTS RAISED THROUGHOUT THE CONSULTATION

Minutes were recorded at both public meetings. These include issues raised by interested parties. All points raised at our first public meeting were positive, our second public meeting was attended by a local middle school, and their comments are included in the minutes of this meeting.

**Through discussions with parents with children who have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) the ability for us as a school to provide for Years 5 and 6 children was high on the agenda. We are confident that the changing of the age range will have a positive impact for pupils with SEND for the reasons outlined below:**

- We have the expertise in early intervention, resources and teaching methodologies to support children who find learning hard

## Outcome of initial consultation

- We believe that our professional knowledge of how children learn will enable us to provide intervention from those practitioners who know our children best.
- We will continue with the good and supportive SEND provision already in place and pupils will benefit from this for a further two years
- Children with SEND receive very effective support
- We aim to support Gifted & Talented pupils within our schools and to consider the role played by feeder settings
- Our school benefits from a highly skilled, experienced Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator

### **A question was raised regarding the suitability of the building being able to house more students.**

The current capacity of St. Mary's Catholic Lower School is 210 plus 52 part time places for Nursery aged children, therefore with our projected numbers of no more than 210 plus 52 part time Nursery places there will be no need for capital work at the school. St. Mary's currently has 3 classrooms that are not used to their full potential. In the first instance one of these will be used for a Year 5 class and then the following year another would be used for a Year 6 class.

### **A question was raised concerning the number of parking spaces available to parents when dropping children off and whether the school site could cope with the extra cars and would the extra traffic put the safety of our children in jeopardy.**

The school site recently had major work completed to make the site safer for the community. This included new speed humps, a new path for our families to cross the road safely, new zebra crossings and the closure of a road at the end of the school day to make the site even safer for pedestrians. New parking places were also created. Parents are encouraged to use all car parks on the school site. The ends of the school day for the 3 schools on the campus are staggered ensuring the site does not have to cope with too large a number of cars at any one time.

### **The same stakeholder commented that the school would need to consider where Year 5 and 6 children would enter and leave school at the start and end of the school day, to relieve any congestion of children and adults.**

The SLT and governing body are aware that this aspect of the school will need to be well thought out and are currently considering a number of options to ensure that this is not an issue. The older pupils of the school will be coming to and leaving school independently which will also mean there will be no more adults than we currently have at school at one time.

### **We received stakeholder comments from the Catholic community via St. Mary's RC Church in Dunstable who were very supportive of the proposal.**

A number of Catholic parents have told us that they have chosen to send their children to Catholic schools further away, purely so that they will receive a full Catholic primary education, and qualify for admission to the nearest Catholic secondary schools. Therefore St. Mary's becoming a primary school would provide a more suitable alternative for them.

### **We have received both an informal and subsequently a formal written response from Senior Leadership Team and Governors at Streetfield Middle School who strongly disagreed with the proposal**

Streetfield Middle School created a booklet explaining their opposition to our proposal, which was used to canvas St Mary's and Streetfield parents. It was distributed outside our school gates. Despite this 94% of our parents still agreed with this proposal. We believe that Streetfield Middle intend to respond directly to the Council during Representations opposing our plans. We do not believe that these responses can represent the informed opinion of any community, since only three people

## **Outcome of initial consultation**

associated with Streetfield attended our public meeting to fully understand the proposal. The three attendees were the Head teacher, a Deputy, and their Chair of the Governors. A letter was subsequently received from the school outlining their concerns.

Among our respondents were parents with children at both St Mary's and Streetfield 82% (14 out of 17) of these parents agreed with the proposal.

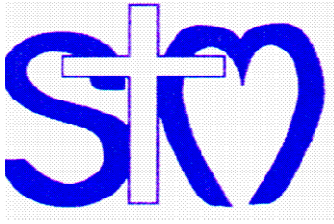
### **REVISIT AND REVIEW OF ORIGINAL PROPOSAL IN THE LIGHT OF THE CONSULTATION**

In light of the information received from the consultation we believe that progressing with our proposal to extend the age range at St. Mary's Catholic Lower School to become a primary school is the way forward for our families. The vast majority of parents are clearly in favour of the change and believe that their children will continue to make good progress if they remained at St. Mary's School to complete Key Stage 2. Parents also feel that by completing their primary education at one school their children will benefit both emotionally and academically. The transition to secondary school therefore should be smoother and their learning less likely to suffer from interruption. The proposal clearly outlines how the change of age range will be managed and strongly promotes the benefits to our children and community of St. Mary's Catholic Lower School becoming a primary school. The school has the capacity to enable this to happen. The strategies we use to support children with special educational needs and disabilities are effective as we have the expertise to support these children because of our primary based training and detailed knowledge of their individual needs, facilitating our drive to ensure that every child reaches his/her full potential. Our transition work will continue to ensure that there is a support network for children moving on to their next school. We will work closely with all of the receiving schools regardless of whether they are Catholic, middle or secondary schools. St Mary's will continue an active role in the 'Learning Partnership' as working together with other schools is vital in order to embrace new ideas, practices and partnerships. Schools should be based around communities and their needs and comments at the public meetings indicate clearly that parents need this kind of support beyond the time their children finish in Year 4. We shall continue to work very closely with our neighbouring schools to nurture close working relationships with our parents and families.

### **GOVERNING BODY STATEMENT**

We (the Governing Body of St. Mary's Catholic Lower School) propose to extend the upper age range from 3 – 9 years to 3 – 11 years, to create a full primary school, shaped by Catholic principles, to ensure each child is provided with a continuous and church based education structured around stability, consistency and continuity of learning. The impact of Catholic / Christian values on pupils and the school community is a strength and this would continue to be a strength if St. Mary's was to increase its age range. The Governing Body has confidence in the Head teacher and themselves to drive forward the proposed change. The leadership and management of St. Mary's Catholic Lower School know that good practice already exists in our school and we are very optimistic about the impact this practice will have on the upper Key Stage 2 teaching and learning. We feel strongly that children up to the end of Year 6 should have a Primary education. The management and delivery of the curriculum in a primary school, by highly qualified and skilled primary teachers, will meet the needs of all children. Vulnerable children will cope far better remaining in a primary school for two more years and with increased maturity will be able to adjust more readily and will be more able to adjust at the age of 11 than at the age of 9 to a larger school environment. This is what our parents want and we are committed to ensure that this happens for 2013.

## Statutory Notice



*St Mary's Catholic Lower  
School*

### **Proposal to extend the age range of St. Mary's Catholic Voluntary Aided Lower School from 3 to 9 years to 3 – 11 years to create a primary school.**

Notice is given in accordance with section 19(3) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 that The Governing Body of St. Mary's Catholic Voluntary Aided Lower School intends to make a prescribed alteration to St. Mary's Catholic Voluntary Aided Lower School, Dunstable Road, Caddington, Dunstable, Bedfordshire, LU1 4BB from 1 September 2013.

The proposal is to change the age range of St. Mary's Catholic Voluntary Aided Lower School by extending it from a 3 – 9 years lower school to a 3 – 11 years primary school.

This is to be implemented in two stages:

September 2013 – Year 4 children will be retained at the school and become a new year 5.

September 2014 – Year 5 children will be retained at the school and become a new year 6.

The current capacity of the school is 150 with 52 part time nursery places and when the proposals are implemented the proposed capacity will be 210 with 52 part time nursery places.

The current admission number for the school is 30 for year groups R – Y4 with 52 part time nursery places. The proposed admission number will remain the same. Total capacity for September 2013 is expected to be 180 with 52 part time places. Total capacity for 2014 is expected to be 210 with 52 part time nursery places.

This Notice is an extract from the complete proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be obtained from: The Information Manager, Central Bedfordshire Council, Room DC2, Watling House, High Street North, Dunstable, Beds, LU6 1LF. It can also be viewed on the Council's website at [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/schoolconsultations](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/schoolconsultations) and the school website <http://www.stmaryscatholiclower.co.uk/>

Within six weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by sending them to The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services, Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House, Chicksands, Shefford, Bedfordshire, SG17 5TQ.

Signed: Mr. Richard Neal  
Chairman of the Governors, St. Mary's Catholic Voluntary Aided Lower School

Publication Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2012

### **Explanatory notes**

It is proposed that extending the age range of St. Mary's Catholic Voluntary Aided Lower School from 3 – 9 years to 3 – 11 years to create a primary school will provide improved standards in years 5 and 6 and therefore at the end of Key Stage 2. National data shows that changing school may impact negatively on pupils' progress and may result in a lack of curriculum understanding,

## Statutory Notice

continuity, and assessment agreement. This proposal will remove the transition at the end of year 4. This proposal will also bring the school in line with the other Catholic school for this age range within the local authority.





## Prescribed Information

### PROPOSALS FOR PRESCRIBED ALTERATIONS OTHER THAN FOUNDATION PROPOSALS: Information to be included in a complete proposal

#### **Extract of Part 1 of Schedule 3 and Part 1 of Schedule 5 to The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools)(England) Regulations 2007 (as amended):**

##### **In respect of a Governing Body Proposal: School and governing body's details**

1. The name, address and category of the school for which the governing body are publishing the proposals.

St. Mary's Catholic Voluntary Aided Lower School, Dunstable Road, Caddington, Dunstable, Bedfordshire, LU1 4BB
--

##### **In respect of an LEA Proposal: School and local education authority details**

1. The name, address and category of the school .

N/A
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##### **Implementation and any proposed stages for implementation**

2. The date on which the proposals are planned to be implemented, and if they are to be implemented in stages, a description of what is planned for each stage, and the number of stages intended and the dates of each stage.

Implementation to take place in September 2013

- Two stages of implementation
- September 2013 – Year 4 children to remain in current setting and move in to Year 5
- September 2014 – Year 5 children to remain in current setting and move in to Year 6

We have no plans to reintegrate pupils who are already at other local middle schools but will take children who have moved to the area from another school or who do not have school provision, providing we do not exceed our admission number.

##### **Objections and comments**

3. A statement explaining the procedure for making representations, including—
- (a) the date prescribed in accordance with paragraph 29 of Schedule 3 (GB proposals)/Schedule 5 (LA proposals) of The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended), by which objections or comments should be sent to the local education authority; and
  - (b) the address of the authority to which objections or comments should be sent.

## Prescribed Information

(a) 03/12/2012

(b) The Deputy Chief Executive / Director of Children's Services, Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House, Chicksands, Shefford, Beds, SG17 5TQ.

### Alteration description

4. A description of the proposed alteration and in the case of special school proposals, a description of the current special needs provision.

The current upper age range would be extended from 9 to 11 years old (upper year would change from Year 4 to Year 6).

St. Mary's would change from a Lower School to a Primary School.

### School capacity

5.—(1) Where the alteration is an alteration falling within any of paragraphs 1 to 4, 8, 9 and 12-14 of Schedule 2 (GB proposals)/paragraphs 1-4, 7, 8, 18, 19 and 21 of Schedule 4(LA proposals) toThe School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended), the proposals must also include—

(a) details of the current capacity of the school and, where the proposals will alter the capacity of the school, the proposed capacity of the school after the alteration;

- The current capacity of the school is 30 per year group (Years R – 4) 150 plus 52 part time Nursery places
- The proposed capacity after the alteration will remain at 30 per year group (Years R – 6) but there will be 8 year groups including Nursery making our roll number 210 (plus 52 part time places)

(b) details of the current number of pupils admitted to the school in each relevant age group, and where this number is to change, the proposed number of pupils to be admitted in each relevant age group in the first school year in which the proposals will have been implemented;

- No capacity change per year group
- The current capacity of the school to remain at 30 per year group (Years R – 6) and also to remain at 52 part time places for Nursery

(c) where it is intended that proposals should be implemented in stages, the number of pupils to be admitted to the school in the first school year in which each stage will have been implemented;

- Stage1: No change to the expected number of admissions, increase in overall roll is by pupils in year 4 remaining for year 5. The first stage of the proposal will mean we could have 180 on roll excluding nursery (232 including 52 part time Nursery places). We will then have N - Yr 5, age 3 to 10 yrs

## Prescribed Information

- Stage2: No change to the expected number of admissions, increase in overall roll is by pupils in year 5 remaining for year 6. The second stage of the proposal will mean that the number on roll could be 210 excluding nursery (262 including 52 part time Nursery places). We will then have N-Yr6, age 3 to 11yrs

- (d) where the number of pupils in any relevant age group is lower than the indicated admission number for that relevant age group a statement to this effect and details of the indicated admission number in question.

Maximum projected number on roll							
	Sept 2013	Sept 2014	Sept 2015	Sept 2016	Sept 2017	Sept 2018	Sept 2019
N	52(part time)	52(part time)	52(part time)	52(part time)	52(part time)	52(part time)	52(part time)
R	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
1	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
2	27	30	30	30	30	30	30
3	30	27	30	30	30	30	30
4	27	30	27	30	30	30	30
5	25	27	30	27	30	30	30
6	0	25	27	30	30	30	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>262</b>

(2) Where the alteration is an alteration falling within any of paragraphs 1, 2, 9, 12 and 13 of Schedule 2 (GB proposals) / paragraphs 1, 2, 8, 18 and 19 of Schedule 4 (LA proposals) to the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended), a statement of the number of pupils at the school at the time of the publication of the proposals.

There are 137 pupils plus 26 part time Nursery pupils at the school at the time of the publication of the proposal.

### Implementation

6. Where the proposals relate to a foundation or voluntary controlled school a statement as to whether the proposals are to be implemented by the local education authority or by the governing body, and, if the proposals are to be implemented by both, a statement as to the extent to which they are to be implemented by each body.

N/A

### Additional Site

7.—(1) A statement as to whether any new or additional site will be required if proposals are implemented and if so the location of the site if the school is to occupy a split site.

N/A

## Prescribed Information

(2) Where proposals relate to a foundation or voluntary school a statement as to who will provide any additional site required, together with details of the tenure (freehold or leasehold) on which the site of the school will be held, and if the site is to be held on a lease, details of the proposed lease.

N/A

### Changes in boarding arrangements

8.—(1) Where the proposals are for the introduction or removal of boarding provision, or the alteration of existing boarding provision such as is mentioned in paragraph 8 or 21 of Schedule 2 (GB proposals)/7 or 14 of Schedule 4 to The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended) —

- (a) the number of pupils for whom it is intended that boarding provision will be made if the proposals are approved;

N/A

- (b) the arrangements for safeguarding the welfare of children at the school;

N/A

- (c) the current number of pupils for whom boarding provision can be made and a description of the boarding provision; and

N/A

- (d) except where the proposals are to introduce boarding provision, a description of the existing boarding provision.

N/A

(2) Where the proposals are for the removal of boarding provisions or an alteration to reduce boarding provision such as is mentioned in paragraph 8 or 21 of Schedule 2 (GB proposals)/7 or 14 of Schedule 4 (LA proposals) to The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended) —

- (a) the number of pupils for whom boarding provision will be removed if the proposals are approved; and

N/A

- (b) a statement as to the use to which the former boarding accommodation will be put if the proposals are approved.

N/A

## Prescribed Information

### Transfer to new site

9. Where the proposals are to transfer a school to a new site the following information—

- (a) the location of the proposed site (including details of whether the school is to occupy a single or split site), and including where appropriate the postal address;

N/A

- (b) the distance between the proposed and current site;

N/A

- (c) the reason for the choice of proposed site;

N/A

- (d) the accessibility of the proposed site or sites;

N/A

- (e) the proposed arrangements for transport of pupils to the school on its new site; and

N/A

- (f) a statement about other sustainable transport alternatives where pupils are not using transport provided, and how car use in the school area will be discouraged.

N/A

### Objectives

10. The objectives of the proposals.

#### Objectives

- To provide stability, consistency and continuity for children in their primary years, through our ethos, curriculum, teaching and learning organisation
- To facilitate the continuity of Catholic education by fulfilling qualification criteria for admissions to Catholic secondary schools. (JFK in Hemel, and Cardinal Newman in Luton)
- To provide a smoother transition to secondary schools with admissions from year 7
- To raise standards and improve outcomes for young people particularly at age 11
- To ensure that particular attention is paid to groups of children who are either underperforming or exceeding in years 5 and 6
- To provide equal access for all pupils to primary school education regardless of faith
- To ensure our school is based around communities and their needs
- To bring St. Mary's in line with St. Vincent's Primary School (the only other Catholic school for this age range in the local Authority)
- To make working at St. Mary's more attractive and help us recruit and retain good quality staff to improve the standard of education for our children

## Prescribed Information

### Principles

The need to raise standards and improve outcomes for young people.

- Local data shows that children achieve well in lower schools from a starting point which is below national levels
- Local data indicates that the number of students achieving 5+ GCSEs A\* - C is below national average
- Increasingly, as professionals, we believe our children would benefit from the stability of a primary school environment, its organisation and its ethos
- We believe that primary schools will also improve behaviour, supporting pupils for whom coping in Years 5 & 6 with the changes associated with transition, may put them at risk of exclusion

To ensure there is continuity of provision across the 0 – 19 age range so there is a 'one phase' approach to learning.

- Current key stage planning is geared around the structure used by the majority of schools in the UK. This means that the key stage boundaries align with the two tier system
- The need for transition between each tier, particularly in the middle of Key Stages can result in lack of curriculum understanding, continuity, assessment agreement and ownership of Key Stages
- Continuity of provision will provide curriculum continuity avoiding repetition and curriculum conflict
- Primary / secondary provision will reduce the number of times a child needs to move schools, it also makes transition and curriculum continuity easier because it sits at the end of a key stage, the natural transition for the vast majority of schools in the Country

Schools should be based around communities and their needs

- As shown in Appendix B, our parents are overwhelmingly supportive of this proposal, therefore we are meeting their needs
- By maintaining and extending lower school provision to age eleven and developing partnerships with good secondary education, St. Mary's will be better positioned to meet this principle
- By maintaining the excellent relationships between our school and our families
- By providing appropriately for the needs of the primary child through a primary curriculum delivery and a familiar environment that has knowledge of the individual child and their families
- By meeting the needs of parents and families in years 5 & 6 through the close working relationships that have been nurtured over the years
- The Catholic community needs provision of Catholic primary education to yr 6 to qualify for admission to Catholic secondary schools
- Our school works in close cooperation with our local church community, and this is an opportunity to extend this for an additional 2 years
- This proposal specifically meets the needs of local parents who prefer that their children stay in a smaller year group setting until age eleven
- We have been made aware that Catholic families are choosing not to send their children to St. Mary's because we don't currently provide Yrs 5 and 6. They are therefore choosing to send their children to other local Catholic schools and on occasion travelling further.

New models of leadership and governance for schools should be considered

- Work collectively in partnership between primary and secondary phases enabling staffing flexibility across schools
- Address shortages of Governors and explore the sharing of expertise and resources in this field
- Secure "Best Value" by sharing suppliers, engaging in joint training and identifying shared priorities for school improvement

That vision should reflect recent current reform

## Prescribed Information

- The curriculum is based on a primary / secondary model in line with the rest of the country
- Current primary and secondary curriculum and assessment initiative can be addressed effectively
- The 2006 EIA amendment to the education act places duties on local authorities to secure diversity in the provision of schools, and increase opportunities for parental choice. This proposal supports this amendment by increasing parental choice, and diversity of educational provision

### Effect on school standards and school improvements

#### Leadership and Management

St Mary's has strong and confident leadership and the professional capacity and skills to drive forward the proposed changes, through:

- Working closely with local schools in the Learning Partnership and Catholic schools in Luton and Houghton Regis
- Shared governor meetings that focus more strongly on strategic direction and to set high expectations for our schools
- Exploring more flexible approaches to school governance through sharing expertise
- Shared senior leadership that allows us to work together to agree a vision for our schools, raise standards and share targets for school and community improvement
- Collaborative work on curriculum initiatives for upper KS2, building on the good practice that already exists in years 3 and 4
- Sharing the expertise and experience of upper key stage 2 that already exists within our schools
- Working in partnership with St Vincent's and other local schools, who have already extended their age range to 11
- Sharing a range of bought in services

We also believe that a full primary school provides greater career development opportunities for new and existing staff than lower schools, and may be more attractive to new applicants.

#### Curriculum

We believe that curriculum delivery is paramount to enable all pupils to have opportunities to become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. This will be achieved through an engaging, challenging and purposeful primary curriculum that better meets the learning styles and needs of our pupils and we will address this in the following ways:

We acknowledge there will be a significant impact on our school in the delivery, resourcing and teaching of some specialist subject areas, and we appreciate that the curriculum for Years 5 and 6 will need careful planning. We will do this by:

- A current member of staff will be appointed as the Year 5 teacher and will prepare in the Spring and Summer terms with the full support of the senior leadership team
- Following the national curriculum that sets out clearly the core knowledge and understanding that all children should be expected to acquire in their later primary years
- Visits to other good/outstanding primary provision to see good practice, planning, teaching, learning and pastoral care
- Joint training and curriculum planning for Key Stage 2
- Working with local Primary Schools
- Curriculum leaders working together
- Sharing good practice, resources, facilities and expertise with partnership feeder schools

Teaching styles within upper Key Stage 2 will promote opportunities to further develop learning & thinking skills and independence through an enquiry based and reflective teaching style which will meet the needs of a range of learners. CPD will focus on innovative teaching, learning and in giving teachers the confidence to support all children to progress.

We will continue to update our own knowledge and understanding of assessment in line with new

## Prescribed Information

government legislation. We already benefit from the expertise of two members of staff who have experience of teaching and assessing upper Key Stage 2.

Target setting and monitoring will continue, as a whole school approach, as this has already proved successful. We will moderate with other providers of Year 5 and 6. We will continue to build upon high standards of APP to assess learning and meet individual needs through successful interventions. Pupils will be involved in their own self-assessment of progress and setting learning goals for the future.

Our school has a strong commitment to PSHCE within a Catholic environment and keeping children safe. We recognise the different challenges faced by upper KS 2 pupils and have strong links to local initiatives which will support their PSHE development e.g. SRE, Mental health.

### Parents and community

Ensuring that this school system works for our families by promoting the confidence of our parents and fully engaging with them and the community through:

- Making ourselves accountable to our stakeholders
- Knowledge of families and the community, meaning our school is well placed to address parental concerns
- Continuing to seek views and acting on this feedback at a wider community level
- Continuing the current very good practice that exists within our school

e.g. Parent/carer workshops on curriculum matters, open door policy which encourages good communication and supporting children at home

Our initial research shows that parents are in favour of primary schooling which will promote increased confidence within the local community that the education system is geared to local need and reflects parental wishes.

### Behaviour

Evidence from Ofsted reports, SIP reports and LA exclusion data show that behaviour is very well managed in our school. This is due to established behaviour management strategies that are successful for the following reasons:

- We have in depth knowledge of our children and families and we make it a priority to build excellent relationships, especially with our more vulnerable families
- We use a wide range of support mechanisms (including external agencies and small group work)
- We have a consistent approach to behaviour management that is known and understood by all
- We have positive effects on groups that tend to underperform; vulnerable learners, low achievers etc. because the school knows these children well.
- A familiar environment and favourable staffing ratio means that the school can continue to meet the needs of children, able to address behaviour management

### Transition

Transition is a major key to successful lifelong learning. In order to achieve successful transition for all, there needs to be effective communication between different settings.

Good transition is fundamental to the success of this proposal; we are fully committed to work with all future providers having agreed processes for transfer at age 11 so that the school journey becomes seamless. In order to achieve this seamless transition we will ensure that there is :

- A shared curriculum, teaching, support, expertise and delivery as a two way process
- The sharing of data, target setting and assessments where there is a mutual trust of judgements and information
- A commitment to joint working over transition periods including post transition
- Leadership of transition
- Pupil involvement in their planned transition



## Prescribed Information

- Pupils whose parents choose to transition at the end of year 6 to a secondary school, may only experience one transition event before the age of 19

### SEND

We feel that changing age range will have a positive impact for pupils with SEND and for vulnerable learners e.g. LAC, building on from the current good practice already established in our school.

- We believe that our professional knowledge of how children learn will enable us to provide effective intervention
- Our school benefits from a highly skilled, experienced SENCo, we will continue with the good and supportive SEND provision already in place and pupils will benefit from this for a further two years
- Excellent work with families is already established to support all vulnerable children, SEND and LAC
- Over the years, we have established excellent relationships with other professionals in order to support pupils with SEND and their families and will continue this for upper Key Stage 2 pupils
- We aim to maintain and share specialist staff already employed by our schools to support SEND
- We aim to support Gifted & Talented pupils within our schools and to consider the role played by feeder settings and transition schools
- The two way sharing of information at transition will support positive outcomes for pupils with SEND and vulnerable learners

### Extended Services

This proposal will provide the opportunity to develop extended school provision reflecting the needs of the community.

We will work to provide a range of extended services

- Transition support for pupils and families
- Shared training for parents and staff
- Clubs and a range of after school activities
- Promotion of inter school sports and other activities for the community
- Commitment to “wraparound care” (breakfast and after school clubs)
- Workshops to support adult learning and encourage family learning
- Support for vulnerable families and pupils
- Support for families in areas such as relationships and health and safety

### Consultation

11. Evidence of the consultation before the proposals were published including—

- (a) a list of persons who were consulted;
- (b) minutes of all public consultation meetings;
- (c) the views of the persons consulted;
- (d) a statement to the effect that all applicable statutory requirements in relation to the proposals to consult were complied with; and
- (e) copies of all consultation documents and a statement on how these documents were made available.

Informal consultation was carried out between 6 September and 18 October 2012

(a) The following persons were consulted-

- Parents/guardians of children currently attending St. Mary's Catholic Lower School
- The Catholic Diocese of Northampton

## Prescribed Information

- The Parish of St. Mary's Catholic Church, Dunstable
- The Chairs of Governors of all schools in Central Bedfordshire (including academies)
- The Head teachers of all schools in Central Bedfordshire (including academies)
- Catholic Schools in Luton
- The Catholic Secondary School in Hemel Hempstead – John F Kennedy
- Hertfordshire County Council
- Luton Borough Council
- Central Bedfordshire County Council
- St. Vincent's Catholic Church
- Dunstable Town Council
- Caddington Parish Council
- Member of Parliament for Central Bedfordshire
- Downside Neighbourhood Centre
- Dunstable Library
- Pre-school provision in Dunstable
- All relevant Trade Unions for both Teaching and Support staff

(b) A consultation meeting for parents at the school was held on 19 September 2012 and a public consultation meeting was held on 5 October 2012. The minutes of these minutes are attached at Appendix A(1) and A(2)

(c) The results of the informal consultation are attached at Appendix B.

(d) All applicable statutory requirements in relation to the proposals to consult were complied with.

(e) A copy of the consultation document is attached at Appendix C. This consultation document was made available to all people listed in section (a) and was also publicised via Central Bedfordshire Council's publication 'Central Essentials' which is emailed weekly to head teachers and chairs of governors within Central Bedfordshire.

### Project costs

**12.** A statement of the estimated total capital cost of the proposals and the breakdown of the costs that are to be met by the governing body, the local education authority, and any other party.

- The school's budget is secure, the initial financial cost to the school would be roughly £30,000 to renovate a set of toilets
- For September 2014 there will be a need to tarmac an area for an extra playground, at an estimated cost of £7,000

Both of these projects have been budgeted for by the Governing Body.

**13.** A copy of confirmation from the Secretary of State, local education authority and the Learning and Skills Council for England (as the case may be) that funds will be made available (including costs to cover any necessary site purchase).

N/A

## Prescribed Information

### Age range

14. Where the proposals relate to a change in age range, the current age range for the school.

The current age range is 3-9 across the school, including part time nursery provision.

### Early years provision

15. Where the proposals are to alter the lower age limit of a mainstream school so that it provides for pupils aged between 2 and 5—

- (a) details of the early years provision, including the number of full-time and part-time pupils, the number and length of sessions in each week, and the services for disabled children that will be offered;

N/A

- (b) how the school will integrate the early years provision with childcare services and how the proposals are consistent with the integration of early years provision for childcare;

N/A

- (c) evidence of parental demand for additional provision of early years provision;

N/A

- (d) assessment of capacity, quality and sustainability of provision in schools and in establishments other than schools who deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage within 3 miles of the school; and

N/A

- (e) reasons why such schools and establishments who have spare capacity cannot make provision for any forecast increase in the number of such provision.

N/A

### Changes to sixth form provision

16. (a) Where the proposals are to alter the upper age limit of the school so that the school provides sixth form education or additional sixth form education, a statement of how the proposals will—

- (i) improve the educational or training achievements;  
(ii) increase participation in education or training; and  
(iii) expand the range of educational or training opportunities for 16-19 year olds in the area;

N/A

## Prescribed Information

(b) A statement as to how the new places will fit within the 16-19 organisation in an area;

N/A

(c) Evidence —

(i) of the local collaboration in drawing up the proposals; and

(ii) that the proposals are likely to lead to higher standards and better progression at the school;

N/A

(d) The proposed number of sixth form places to be provided.

N/A

17. Where the proposals are to alter the upper age limit of the school so that the school ceases to provide sixth form education, a statement of the effect on the supply of 16-19 places in the area.

N/A

### Special educational needs

18. Where the proposals are to establish or change provision for special educational needs—

(a) a description of the proposed types of learning difficulties in respect of which education will be provided and, where provision for special educational needs already exists, the current type of provision;

N/A

(b) any additional specialist features will be provided;

N/A

(c) the proposed numbers of pupils for which the provision is to be made;

N/A

(d) details of how the provision will be funded;

N/A

(e) a statement as to whether the education will be provided for children with special educational needs who are not registered pupils at the school to which the proposals relate;

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N/A

- (f) a statement as to whether the expenses of the provision will be met from the school's delegated budget;

N/A

- (g) the location of the provision if it is not to be established on the existing site of the school;

N/A

- (h) where the provision will replace existing educational provision for children with special educational needs, a statement as to how the local education authority believes that the new provision is likely to lead to improvement in the standard, quality and range of the educational provision for such children; and

N/A

- (i) the number of places reserved for children with special educational needs, and where this number is to change, the proposed number of such places.

N/A

**19.** Where the proposals are to discontinue provision for special educational needs—

- (a) details of alternative provision for pupils for whom the provision is currently made;

N/A

- (b) details of the number of pupils for whom provision is made that is recognised by the local education authority as reserved for children with special educational needs during each of the 4 school years preceding the current school year;

N/A

- (c) details of provision made outside the area of the local education authority for pupils whose needs will not be able to be met in the area of the authority as a result of the discontinuance of the provision; and

N/A

- (d) a statement as to how the proposer believes that the proposals are likely to lead to improvement in the standard, quality and range of the educational provision for such children.

## Prescribed Information

N/A

**20.** Where the proposals will lead to alternative provision for children with special educational needs, as a result of the establishment, alteration or discontinuance of existing provision, the specific educational benefits that will flow from the proposals in terms of—

- (a) improved access to education and associated services including the curriculum, wider school activities, facilities and equipment with reference to the local education authority's Accessibility Strategy;
- (b) improved access to specialist staff, both educational and other professionals, including any external support and outreach services;
- (c) improved access to suitable accommodation; and
- (d) improved supply of suitable places.

N/A

### Sex of pupils

**21.** Where the proposals are to make an alteration to provide that a school which was an establishment which admitted pupils of one sex only becomes an establishment which admits pupils of both sexes—

- (a) details of the likely effect which the alteration will have on the balance of the provision of single-sex education in the area;

N/A

- (b) evidence of local demand for single-sex education; and

N/A

- (c) details of any transitional period which the body making the proposals wishes specified in a transitional exemption order (within the meaning of section 27 of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975).

N/A

**22.** Where the proposals are to make an alteration to a school to provide that a school which was an establishment which admitted pupils of both sexes becomes an establishment which admits pupils of one sex only—

- (a) details of the likely effect which the alteration will have on the balance of the provision of single-sex education in the area; and

N/A

- (b) evidence of local demand for single-sex education.

N/A

## Prescribed Information

### Extended services

23. If the proposed alterations affect the provision of the school's extended services, details of the current extended services the school is offering and details of any proposed change as a result of the alterations.

N/A

### Need or demand for additional places

24. If the proposals involve adding places—

- (a) a statement and supporting evidence of the need or demand for the particular places in the area;

In light of the information received from the consultation the school believes that the proposal to extend the age range at St. Mary's Catholic Lower School to become a primary school is the way forward for our families. The vast majority of parents are clearly in favour of the change and believe that their children will continue to make good progress if they remained at St. Mary's School to complete Key Stage 2. Parents also feel that by completing their primary education at one school their children will benefit both emotionally and academically. The transition to secondary school therefore should be smoother and their learning less likely to suffer from interruption.

- (b) where the school has a religious character, a statement and supporting evidence of the demand in the area for education in accordance with the tenets of the religion or religious denomination;

The Governing Body of St. Mary's Catholic Lower School are passionate in their vision of realising a learning journey that is experienced in Catholic schools. We believe that our children should have the same choice as families in the neighbouring town of Houghton Regis who can choose to send their children to a Catholic primary school, namely St. Vincent's. St. Mary's Catholic Lower School should become a full primary school, shaped by Catholic Christian principles, to ensure each child is provided with a continuous church based education structured around stability, consistency and continuity of learning. The impact of our school values on pupils and the school community is a strength and this would continue to be a strength if St. Mary's was to extend its age range. Parents have said that we should have the same choice as the catholic families who send their children to other Catholic schools in Houghton Regis and Luton.

The Diocese of Northampton are fully supporting the proposal for St. Mary's becoming a primary school, they are very excited about and look forward to the opportunities this will give the school and church to work together.

- (c) where the school adheres to a particular philosophy, evidence of the demand for education in accordance with the philosophy in question and any associated change to the admission arrangements for the school.

Please see the objectives of our proposal in section 10 and the evidence in Appendix B

25. If the proposals involve removing places—

- (a) a statement and supporting evidence of the reasons for the removal, including an assessment of the impact on parental choice; and

## Prescribed Information

N/A

(b) a statement on the local capacity to accommodate displaced pupils.

N/A

### Expansion of successful and popular schools

**25A.** (1) Proposals must include a statement of whether the proposer considers that the presumption for the expansion of successful and popular schools should apply, and where the governing body consider the presumption applies, evidence to support this.

(2) Sub-paragraph (1) applies to expansion proposals in respect of primary and secondary schools, (except for grammar schools), i.e. falling within:

(a) (for proposals published by the governing body) paragraph 1 of Part 1 to Schedule 2 or paragraph 12 of Part 2 to Schedule 2;

(b) (for proposals published by the LA) paragraph 1 of Part 1 to Schedule 4 or 18 of Part 4 to Schedule 4

of the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended).

N/A