

**St Pius X Catholic Primary School
Gatehouse Avenue, Bristol BS13 9AB**

SECTION 15 OF THE EDUCATION AND INSPECTIONS ACT 2006 (AS AMENDED BY THE EDUCATION ACT 2011) and the SCHOOL ORGANISATION (ESTABLISHMENTS AND DISCONTINUANCE OF SCHOOLS) REGULATIONS 2013

Proposal to close St Pius X Catholic Primary School on 31st August 2021.

1. Contact Details

This information is the Full Proposal published by the Governing Body of St Pius X Catholic, to close St Pius X Catholic Primary School, Gatehouse Avenue, Bristol BA13 9AB.

2. Implementation

The proposal is to discontinue St Pius X Catholic Primary School with effect from 31 August 2021. The proposal is not related to any other school organisation proposal.

3. Reason for closure

St Pius X is a one form entry Catholic Primary school under the authority of Bristol City Council and in the trusteeship of the Diocese of Clifton as a designated Catholic School. For a significant number of years St Pius X has faced educational challenges, resulting in the school moving between providing an “Inadequate” provision of education and “Requires Improvement”. It has currently been in Special Measures for a period of 2 years. (Ofsted Rating June 2018)

The school has consistently admitted fewer pupils than the capacity which has had a significant impact on the school’s financial situation meaning a deficit budget has had to be set for the last 3 years. During this time the City Council and the Diocese of Clifton has provided both substantial financial support as well as advisory and educational support.

From an analysis of pupil places across the area and projected numbers of pupils in future, it is apparent that there is a surplus of pupil places within the immediate area and this will continue for the foreseeable future. This means that even should St Pius X come out of special measures the number of pupils would remain low and this would result in the school continuing to have significant financial issues for the long term. Current reception figures stand at eleven pupils. Regrettably therefore, this makes the school unsustainable and unable to provide at least a good quality Catholic education.

Over a number of years, the Governors have worked closely with the Clifton Diocese and Bristol City Council to carefully consider a number of options to improve the long-term viability of the school, none of which have proved effective for the long term.

Owing to the school's financial situation and low numbers of pupils, the school is not viable to be taken on within a Multi-academy Trust, which has been an option consistently explored by the Diocese of Clifton.

4. Pupil Numbers and Admission

St Pius X School is a Catholic Primary Voluntary Aided School for children aged 4 – 11 and offers up to 30 reception places each year, with a total capacity for 210 pupils across all year groups. Although numbers of pupils at the school have fluctuated for many years, they have been consistently well below the capacity. At the last school pupil census there were 92 pupils on roll, with 15 of these due to leave the school at the end of the current academic year.

5. Displaced Pupils

There is sufficient capacity within the local school system to offer suitable alternative provision now and into the future. Any pupil displaced as a result of a school closure would be given support and assistance by the Council to obtain a suitable place at another school.

6. Impact on the community

The Bishop and Trustees have been reassured that pupils currently attending St Pius X and future pupils in the area can be accommodated in local schools.

Whilst the Bishop recognises the school has had a long history within the community and is saddened to propose withdrawal of Catholic Education within the area it is felt that it is in the community's best interest to proceed to closure.

7. Rural Primary Schools

The school is not designated as a rural primary school under the Designation of Rural Primary Schools (England) Order 2016.

8. Special Educational Needs Provision

The school is not recognised by the local authority as reserved for pupils with special educational needs. Should the proposal be implemented, the Council would work with any pupils who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or may have been identified with additional needs to ensure their needs are met in the most appropriate setting.

9. Balance of denominational provision

Currently very few Catholic children attend the school. The proposed closure would not remove the choice of denominational provision from the area. St Bernadette, School of Christ the King and Holy Cross Primary Schools also serve the parishes of South Bristol. The Clifton Diocese has been involved in all discussions at each stage of the process and is supportive of the proposal.

10. Maintained Nursery Schools

Not applicable

11. Sixth form provision

Not applicable

12. Travel

The vast majority of pupils will continue to be able to walk to school. When required travel support will remain available in line with the LA's Home to School Transport Policy. Details of this can be found by visiting www.bristol.gov.uk/schools-learning-early-years/school-travel

13. Procedure for making representations (objections and comments)

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal (until 15th January), any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by sending them to Eleanor Nye, Chair of Governors, St Pius X C of E Primary School, Gatehouse Avenue, Bristol BA13 9AB or e.nye@st-piusx.bristol.sch.uk

Date of publication: 18 December 2020