



## **Proposed closure of St Andrew's Church of England High School**

### **Pre-publication Consultation Outcomes Report**

#### **1 Proposal**

- 1.1 The proposal is to close St Andrew's school in August 2020 following completion of Year 11 GCSE examination. The reason for the proposed closure is because the school is no longer considered viable both in terms of its ability to deliver a full and balanced curriculum and financial sustainability

#### **2. Consultation outcomes report**

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Executive Director - Children, Families and Education, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Learning, the School Governors, and the School's Leadership Team with the outcomes from the pre-publication consultation on the proposed closure of St Andrew's Church of England (CofE) High School in August 2020.
- 2.2 This report is based on the responses received during the pre-publication consultation period when we sought views and engage with those that will be directly affected by the proposed closure of St Andrew's CofE High School. Those with an interest also had the opportunity to suggest options for consideration on the proposed closure of the school.

#### **3. Background**

- 3.1 St Andrew's Church of England (CofE) High School is a voluntary aided mainstream school for boys and girls. The school is part of the educational provision of the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education and the London Borough of Croydon. The school is situated in Warrington Rd, Croydon, CR0 4BH.
- 3.2 The Governing Board at St Andrew's CofE High School, with the support of the Diocese and Croydon Council agreed that there would be no Year 7 admission to the school in September 2019 and only pupils in Years 10 and 11 in September 2018 would remain to complete their examination courses in 2019 and 2020. The Office of the Schools Adjudicator approved the proposed variation to the school's admission arrangements.
- 3.3 In December 2018, the Chair of the Governing Board of St Andrew's requested that the council commence the statutory process for the proposed closure of St Andrew's School following a review of the financial viability of the school.

#### **4. Decision making**

- 4.1 The Leader of the council has delegated authority to the Executive Director - Children, Families & Education, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for



Children, Young People & Learning to consider the outcomes of the consultation on the proposed closure of St Andrew's to decide whether to proceed to the next stage of the process - representation period.

- 4.2 Subject to approval, this consultation will be followed by the publication of the statutory notice, starting a 4 week representation period when any person can send objections or comments to Croydon Council on the proposal.
- 4.3 The council's cabinet is the final decision maker for the proposed closure of St Andrew's CofE High School and must make a decision within a period of two months of the end of the representation period.

## 5. Consultation

- 5.1 The process for decision making regarding proposed school closures is set out in the Department for Education's statutory guidance 'Opening and Closing Maintained Schools' April 2016. The statutory process consists of:
  - Pre-publication consultation
  - Publication of statutory notice
  - Representation / formal consultation
  - Decision by council's cabinet on the school closure proposal

## 6. Pre- Publication consultation

- 6.1 The pre-publication consultation ran from 15 March 2019 to 26 April 2019, during this time anyone with an interest was invited to respond to the proposal to close St Andrew's CofE School.

## 7. Communication and Consultation activities

- 7.1 A consultation document including a questionnaire was used as a basis of informing stakeholders, including parents/carers and local residents about the educational rationale for the proposed closure of the school and inviting feedback on the proposal.
- 7.2 Stakeholders were given the opportunity to express their views in writing via a questionnaire, both electronically and via the hard copy attached to the consultation document, by email and post.
- 7.3 Different modes and methods of communication were used to inform and facilitate feedback from stakeholders about/on the proposal. Communication activities included the circulation of the consultation document, including a questionnaire via;
  - The following websites:
    - ✓ Croydon Council
    - ✓ St Andrew's CofE High School
    - ✓ 'Get Involved'



- Schools Bulletin:
  - ✓ Bulletin sent to all schools within Croydon
- Social Media/Applications:
  - ✓ Twitter
  - ✓ Facebook
  - ✓ 'Your Croydon'
- Hard copy of consultation document, including the questionnaire was available from the cand the School.

## 8. Equality and Diversity Monitoring

- 8.1 As part of the consultation process, respondents were asked to complete an equality and diversity questionnaire, looking at Gender, Age, Ethnicity and Disability. The information collected will help identify any special requirements and promote equality and diversity.

### Equalities Impact Assessment

- 8.2 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) will be undertaken as part of the Education Estates Strategy report which will be going to cabinet in September 2019. The Equality analysis will enable the council to better understand the potential impact of the proposed closure of the school on the community.

## 9. Summary of responses

- 9.1 A total number of 145 responses were received during the pre-publication consultation period; of which 48 were from a Croydon Christian group - St Mark's secondary school - regarding a proposal for St Mark's school on the St Andrew's site. The Diocese has since responded to the group, as below:
- 9.2 *“Several responses to the pre-public consultation on closure of St Andrew’s referred to a preference for the site to be used for ‘St Mark’s Secondary School’. Croydon Christians had canvassed local opinion on this idea for a new school towards the end of the pre-public consultation, unaware of the Diocesan Board of Education’s own backing of a feasibility study into the expansion of Archbishop Tenison’s School onto the St Andrew’s site. The Archbishop Tenison’s expansion proposals have since been shared with families at the school. The Diocesan Board of Education and Archbishop Tenison’s have since met with a representative of Croydon Christians, who understand and support the expansion of Archbishop Tenison’s should this proposal go forward. The group would continue to look for future opportunities, e.g. through the free schools programme, to establish further schools with a Christian character in Croydon and South London should the opportunities arise.”*
- 9.3 The Southwark Diocesan Board of Education was in discussion with the Governors of Archbishop Tenison’s about the possibility of the school



expanding onto St Andrew's site. The Governors of Archbishop Tenison's decided not to go ahead with the proposed expansion of the school onto the St Andrew's site. The Diocesan Board is mindful of the strong support from Croydon Christians/the St Mark's group, in continuing to look for alternatives for church school places using the site.

- 9.4 Of the remaining 97 respondents;
- 23 support the proposed change, of which:
    - 11 support the proposed change but only to allow for a new Christian school to open on the St Andrew's site
  - 61 do not support the proposed change, of which
    - 13 do not support the proposed change but expressed support for another school to be opened on the site.
  - 11 were not sure
  - 2 was not affected/did not wish to answer the questions
- 9.5 The majority of respondents support another Christian school opening on the St Andrew's site.
- 9.6 The majority of respondents are local residents.
- 9.7 The top thematic issues raised by respondents and council's/Diocese response are outlined in the table below:

Key issue	Number of respondents	council / diocese response
Lack of church school places/reduce s parental preference	68	<p>The Diocesan Board of Education is in agreement with respondents in their view that closure threatens the number and proportionality of church school places. For this reason, the Diocese is exploring options to retain the use of St Andrew's site for educational purpose to safeguard the number of proportionality of Church of England school places in Croydon.</p> <p>The Diocesan Board recognises that without a plan for maintaining Church of England places, the closure would present a reduction in parent choice in Croydon. Hence they are exploring options for retaining Church of England school places in Croydon.</p>
The school used to be a good school so shouldn't be closed	20	It is acknowledged that St Andrew's used to be a good school, however over the years, despite best efforts the school has been facing a decline in pupil numbers which has impacted on the curriculum offer and funding. The school was



		rated as requiring improvement following an Ofsted inspection in November 2016 and the most recent Ofsted report, published in March 2019, stated the school has been rated as inadequate.
Concerns/suspicions in regard to what the land will be used for – particularly housing	9	St Andrew's site has multiple ownership. The usage of the land is to be determined by the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education who are currently exploring options to continue using the site/building for educational purposes to retain proportionality of Church school places.
St Andrews school should not be closed as other schools are operating over capacity	8	All secondary schools in Croydon are their own admission authority and responsible for their admission arrangements / class size. Pupil forecasts indicate that there is sufficiency of school places. We recognise that popular schools might be oversubscribed due to parental choice. Parental choice is affected by a number of factors, such as, school performance, location, and local perceptions. The latest pupil forecasts for the secondary educational phase is published in Appendix 1 of the latest Education Estates Strategy cabinet report which can be accessed via the following web-link: <a href="https://democracy.croydon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=183&amp;MId=1551">https://democracy.croydon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=183&amp;MId=1551</a>
If the council is building new secondary schools, why is St. Andrew's being closed?	3	Croydon is not responsible for introducing new schools. The Education Act 2011 changed the arrangements for establishing new schools and introduced the academy or free school presumption. This means that where a local authority thinks a new school needs to be established, the local authority is under a duty to seek proposals to establish an academy / free school, or a bidder can propose to open a free school directly through central government. New free secondary schools that have been recently established and/or being built have been through the central government route.
Natural progression from The Minster	2	In the most recent Year 7 intakes very few pupils from The Minster Junior School took up places at St Andrew's, which the Diocesan Board believes is linked to increasingly negative views of the school over the last five years.



9.8 A detailed analysis of the responses can be found below in Annex A.

9.9 Top 3 points made in support of the proposed closure of St Andrew's

- 'I support the closure but only if a new Christian school is to take it over'
- 'Reopen the school with quality teaching staff and a strong head. No to academy status'
- 'Because St Andrews has gone downhill so much and a new school would give more options to parents, including me.'

## 10. Next Steps

10.1 The Executive Director, Children, Families & Education and Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Learning will consider the outcome from the consultation and decide whether to proceed to the next stage of the process - publication a statutory notice, starting the formal consultation (representation) period on the proposed closure of St Andrew's CoE High School.

10.2 Subject to approval, the publication of statutory notice which will kick start the four week formal consultation (representation) process which is due to will on Thursday 20 June and end on 18 July 2019.

10.2 The council's cabinet is the final decision maker on the proposed closure of St Andrew's CofE High School and must make a decision within a period of two months of the end of the representation period.

10.3 A detailed analysis of the responses can be found below in Annex A.





## Annex A

### Summary of responses

A total number of 145 responses, including those from St Mark's group, were received during the pre-publication consultation period of which 142 responded via the online questionnaire on Get Involved and 3 responded in writing via email.

**Please tell us whether you support/do not support the proposed closure of St Andrew's Church of England High School.**

Response	Number	%
I support the proposed closure of St. Andrew's.	12	8
I support the proposed closure of St. Andrew's but expressed this is to allow for a new school to open on site.	13	9
I do not support the proposed closure of St. Andrew's	48	33
I do not support the proposed closure of St. Andrew's but expressed support for another school to be opened on the site.	58	40
Not sure	12	8
I am not affected by/do not want to answer	2	1

### **Reasons for not supporting:**

Not enough church places

- 'There are not enough Church School places in the borough of Croydon'
- 'The community at large would benefit from the Christian ethos'
- 'Croydon is the largest borough in London and has a high population of faith families. Data in the public arena shows that Archbishop Tenisons is heavily oversubscribed year after year and many faith families are disappointed year after year. If St Andrews closes this will only place extra burden on Tenisons'
- Losing a faith school, would only leave one CoE secondary school in Croydon. Why not look for an academy trust to take over the school. Why did Croydon Council approve Coombe Woods and Ark Blake if there was a surplus of places'

Historically had a good reputation

- 'Was once a great school'
- A historically good school should be kept open'

Reduces parental choice

- 'Closing St Andrews takes away choice'
- 'With all the flats going up in Croydon, there is definitely no infrastructure, to support all the people of Croydon'
- 'St Andrews is conveniently sited for transport links and access to central Croydon. It is in a residential area of family homes with potential students'
- 'There are many new homes under construction and planned for Croydon, ergo there will be a need for more school places'



- 'It is important to keep the green space around the school to help combat air pollution and also to preserve wildlife'
- 'It is inexcusable that a state school should close due to mismanagement.'
- 'Quality local school places are needed for local children'
- 'Because there is a shortage of school places in CROYDON particularly in this part of the borough'
- 'I think that this school has a great ethos by its Christian beliefs and has a more caring approach to individual children who otherwise may get overlooked in a different school'
- 'Closing the school is not the solution to the problem. The school needs to be improved'
- 'My child is at present at the Minster School, and St Andrews would be the natural progression'
- 'I feel St Andrews being CE school and if it were to become an extension/spin off from the Minster school will keep and maintain the student numbers and it will also continue to monitor pupils that need that extra help staying on the right path if needed'
- 'It is important to have a broad spectrum of Education available to parents and children'

#### Reasons for supporting:

- 'Because St Andrews has gone downhill so much and a new school would give more options to parents, including me.'
- 'I support the closure but only if a new Christian school is to take it over'
- 'Reopen the school with quality teaching staff and a strong head. No to academy status'
- 'We need a new Christian secondary school. Run by those qualified to do so'

#### Please tell us who you are.

Please tick all that apply\*

\*109 respondents gave 141 responses

Response	Number	%
Member of staff at St Andrew's school	0	0
Member of staff at another school	9	6
School Governor at St Andrew's school	0	0
School Governor at another school	0	0
Parent/carer of a child/children at St Andrew's school	3	2
Parent/carer of child/ren at another school	32	23
Pupil at St Andrew's school	0	0
Local resident	64	45
Prefer not to say	10	7
Other (Please specify)	23	16