



Dear Consultee

Thursday 26 September 2019

Consultation on a proposal to 'amalgamate' Ss Alban & Stephen Catholic Infant School and Ss Alban & Stephen Catholic Junior School from September 2020

What is the proposal?

We are consulting you on the proposal to 'amalgamate' these two schools. Technically, this means that the legal proposal is:

The closure of Ss Alban & Stephen Catholic Infant School on 31 August 2020 and the extension of the age range of Ss Alban & Stephen Catholic Junior School from 7 to 11 years to 4 to 11 years from 1 September 2020.

This proposal, if enacted, would create one primary school for both Infant and Junior pupils. The school would also have a new name, Ss Alban & Stephen Catholic Primary School. The two schools currently admit up to 60 pupils in each year group and it is proposed that the primary school will also admit 60 reception aged pupils each year from September 2020.

Why is this being proposed?

The schools are located next to each other geographically and they share a common religion. Historically, the Infant school has been a feeder school for the Junior school. We formed a federated body on 1 January 2019 to oversee both schools. Having two leadership structures and twin specialist roles at the existing schools is not necessarily the best use of resources available to the schools. Amalgamation is therefore considered a natural step by the federated governing body and will be a more efficient method of teaching. The sharing of resources and a common curriculum will enhance the standards and continuity of education at the school.

Furthermore, as a single school, the vision and values are under a single leadership team. We believe that the proposal will give the successor school and its governing body greater flexibility and more influence when it comes to developing a self-improving culture. One of the key benefits of the amalgamation is the impact it can have on transition of pupils from year 2 to year 3. In one single school there would not be the regress of achievement from the end of Key Stage 1 teacher assessments and the beginning of Key Stage 2. Progress can be maintained, and meaningful work completed to ease the transition into Year 3. This enables progress to be more sustained throughout the school ensuring that there is good achievement throughout the whole school. The curriculum can be planned to sequentially build upon knowledge and skills acquired in previous years. In a primary school teachers can use, share and develop their skills to work across a wider age range thus raising expectations of what can be achieved.

An amalgamation of the two schools is favoured in order that there can be a consistent approach to each child's early education under the leadership and management of one head teacher and one staffing structure. Both schools are currently regarded as 'Outstanding' by Ofsted and we are proposing to extend the age range of the Junior school. The governing body feel that it is in the best interests of the local community, staff and children to initiate the process of 'amalgamation' of the two schools.

How would the primary school work?

The current buildings will continue to be used as they are now. The proposed new primary school would have a single governing body, head teacher and one staffing structure, ensuring flexibility throughout the new school.

What will the impact be on staff at the two schools?

It is proposed that all staff currently employed in the Infant school will be transferred to posts in the new primary school. This will be subject to Governing Body approval.

What will happen about uniforms?

The primary and Junior schools will continue to use the same school uniforms.

Have your say

The governing body believes that 'amalgamation' of Ss Alban & Stephen Catholic Infant School and Ss Alban & Stephen Catholic Junior School will have a positive impact for its existing pupils, staff and local community.

You are invited to attend one of our events, where we will be answering questions in relation to the above proposal. Come along to find out more about the proposal and ask any questions.

Meetings open to parents and members of the public:

- **Wednesday 2 October 2019: 18:30 – 20:00 – Ss Alban & Stephen Catholic Junior School**
- **Wednesday 9 October 2019: 09:00 – 10:30 – Ss Alban & Stephen Catholic Infant School**

Briefings for staff took place at both schools on Wednesday 25th September.

You have until 25 October 2019 to let us know your views on this proposal. The easiest way you can do this is by providing your feedback by email to the governors, whose email address is: governors@ssasinfants.herts.sch.uk.

Alternatively, you can provide your comments in writing to either of the school offices, marked for the attention of The Chair of Governors, Dr David Miveld. You can tell us if you agree or disagree with the proposal and leave your comments.

If you do not have access to the internet you can visit your local library where free access is available to all Hertfordshire residents. Should you need help understanding this information you can contact either of the school offices on 01727 866668 or 01727 854643 and a member of staff will contact you to answer any queries you may have.

Your comments must be received by 25 October 2019. We will not be able to acknowledge or respond individually to your comments but they will be taken into account, as explained below.

How the decision will be taken

This is a consultation and no decision has been made yet. All responses received will be reviewed before a decision is made on whether or not to publish a statutory notice.

Should a statutory notice be published, there will be a four week representation period where any person or organisation can submit comments on the proposal to the LA to be taken into account by the decision-maker. Following this, all comments will be taken into consideration before a decision is made by the Local Authority on the amalgamation.

The following timetable outlines the decision-making process.

Process	Date
Public consultation (4 weeks)	30 September 2019 – 25 October 2019
Statutory notice period (4 weeks)	4 November 2019- 29 November 2019
Education, Libraries & Localism Panel*	5 February 2020
Cabinet*	24 February 2020
Implementation (following Cabinet decision)	1 September 2020

Yours faithfully



Dr David Miveld
Chair of Governors