

Provision of primary school places in the St Margarets and Central and East Twickenham areas

A message from the Director of Education, Children's and Cultural Services

September 2010

Dear parent or carer,

You will recall from my previous letters in February and July that the Council is working with the schools concerned to identify different options to provide additional primary school places in St Margarets and Central and East Twickenham.

Following St Mary's Governors' consultation before the summer break, the strength of feeling among parents was that the majority did not wish to see the school giving up its site at Richmond Road. In recognition of that response and of the need to provide additional places in the area, the Governors and the Diocese of London subsequently asked us whether the Amyand House (St John's Hospital) site could be incorporated into St Mary's, so that the school could be expanded to three-form entry over three sites, from September 2012 onwards.

We can see strong advantages of that plan for the local community, as the school:

- is popular and successful
- has a very sound management structure in place, which would enable the school to continue to provide an excellent education, but for an extra 210 children. (The alternative – of creating a new one-form entry school at Amyand House – would mean that a new management structure would have to be created from scratch.)
- would have sufficient classrooms across the three sites to enable it to accommodate from Year 3 the 'bulge' classes currently going through Orleans Infant and an extra class in Reception, as and when required, as part of a shared form of entry with Orleans.

As a Church of England school, St Mary's wishes to ensure that it is an inclusive provision for the local community. It currently admits 16 of its 60 children per year as 'Foundation' applicants, where their religious commitment is taken into account as an admissions criterion. The school already has an impressive record and reputation for being inclusive and committed to serving the local community – as Governors demonstrated when they agreed to accommodate an extra Reception class at short notice in 2009. The Governors have given a commitment that, if the proposal to expand the school to three-form entry goes ahead, the school will retain the same ratio of Foundation and non-Foundation places, meaning that there would be 24 Foundation places and 66 places for the wider community.

In the medium to long term, we (i.e. the local authority) view the conversion of both Orleans Infants and St Stephens into two-form entry primary schools as the most appropriate solution to provide additional permanent primary places should further government funding become available. Together with the Diocese of London, we will continue to make the case to ministers for extra funding. If those proposals were implemented, it would create a seventh Reception class across the area and therefore remove the need for 'bulge' classes. We are therefore consulting with the Governing Bodies on these proposals.



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In order to provide sufficient primary school places overall, we are proposing the following options:

St Mary's to be expanded from two- to three-form entry by adding ten classrooms (that would be created at Amyand House) to its current provision at Amyand Park Road and Richmond Road. The Governors are considering several options as to how the year groups would be distributed across the three sites.

Orleans Infant to be converted into a two-form entry community primary school, i.e. serving children up to the age of 11. This would require the agreement of the Governing Body, the building of four extra classrooms, and the remodelling and extension of other buildings within the school's existing site.

St Stephen's to be converted into a two-form entry voluntary-aided primary school, i.e. serving children up to the age of 11. This would require the agreement of the Governing Body, the building of two extra classrooms, and the remodelling and extension of other buildings within the school's existing site.

These proposals would enable parents to know that, whichever local school their child entered in Reception class, the child would stay within that school until they transferred to secondary school.

Before final decisions would be taken on these proposals, they would be subject to the publication of statutory proposals and full consultation with parents and other local people.

Finally, I would like to thank the headteachers and governing bodies of the three schools concerned who are working so hard with us to resolve the school places issue within St Margarets and Central and East Twickenham.

Yours sincerely



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