

Notice of KEY Executive Decision

Subject Heading:	Implementation of the amalgamation of St Ursula's Catholic Infant and St Ursula's Catholic Junior schools
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Robert Benham: Deputy Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Education, Children & Families
SLT Lead:	Robert South, Director of Children's Services
Report Author and contact details:	Pooneeta Mahadeo School Organisation Manager pooneeta.mahadeo@havering.gov.uk Tel: 01708 431092
Policy context:	We believe all-through primary schools (infant and junior school aged children in one primary school), deliver better continuity of learning as the model for primary phase education in Havering. When the opportunity arises we will either amalgamate separate infant and junior schools into a single primary school or federate the schools.
Financial summary:	Implementation of this proposal has no capital funding implication. For revenue funding, the proposal will result in an annual reduction in Havering's allocation of Dedicated Schools Grant equal to one lump sum (currently £123,865). This reduction in the school's funding can be managed through the achievement of operational cost savings. There are no implications for the Council's General Fund.
Reason decision is Key	Significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards or electoral divisions in the area of the local authority.
Date notice given of intended decision:	March 2020

Key Executive Decision

Relevant OSC:	Children and Learning
Is it an urgent decision?	No
Is this decision exempt from being called-in?	Yes

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

Communities making Havering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Places making Havering	<input type="checkbox"/>
Opportunities making Havering	<input type="checkbox"/>
Connections making Havering	<input type="checkbox"/>

Place an X in the [] as appropriate

Key Executive Decision

Part A – Report seeking decision

DETAIL OF THE DECISION REQUESTED AND RECOMMENDED ACTION

To make a decision on the amalgamation proposal of St Ursula's Catholic Infant and St Ursula's Catholic Junior schools as set out in the Decision-maker guidance – Appendix 1

To approve the statutory proposal:

- (a) To lower the age range of St Ursula's Catholic Junior School to 2 - 11 years, thereby becoming a primary school;
- (b) The enlargement of the premises of the school from 1 September 2020

To discontinue St Ursula's Catholic Infant School on 31st August 2020.

AUTHORITY UNDER WHICH DECISION IS MADE

Part 3, Section 3.5.3, under paragraph (mm) School organisation, funding and governance of the Constitution gives the Assistant Director of Education Services the responsibility to:

(iii) Keep under review school organisation, including monitoring demographic and other social changes and to take all necessary action and make any determinations in relation to the proposals for the establishment, alteration, amalgamation or discontinuance of schools.

STATEMENT OF THE REASONS FOR THE DECISION

A non-key decision was made on 21/02/2020 to publish a statutory notice regarding the proposal to amalgamate St Ursula's Catholic Infant School and St Ursula's Catholic Junior School. A statutory notice that included details of the proposal was published in the Romford Recorder on 28 February 2020; notices were also fixed to the entrances of the schools and circulated to all interested parties. A Notice was also published on the Council's website with a link to further information about the proposal. The representation stage, from 28 February to 27 March 2020, complied with statutory requirements by inviting representations from all interested parties on the proposal.

No objections or comments were received during the representation period.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

None

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PRE-DECISION CONSULTATION

No responses were received within the 4 weeks representation period of the publication of the statutory notice.

NAME AND JOB TITLE OF STAFF MEMBER ADVISING THE DECISION-MAKER

Name: Pooneeta Mahadeo

Designation: School Organisation Manager

Signature: 

Date: 07/04/2020

Part B - Assessment of implications and risks

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The two schools are voluntary aided and therefore the Council's responsibility in terms of the proposed changes.

Under Regulation 5 of the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013/3110 an enlargement of the school premises which increases capacity by either (a) more than 30 pupils; or (b) by 25% or 200 pupils (whichever is the lesser), and any change in the age range needs to go through the statutory notice procedure. In this case the proposals required publication as St Ursula's Catholic Junior School will

- (a) Lower the age range of the school to 2 to 11 years, thereby becoming a primary school.
- (b) Enlarge its premises

It is also proposed to discontinue St Ursula's Catholic Infant school. Likewise the School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013/3109 require a statutory notice procedure which in the context of this amalgamation was combined with the enlargement proposals.

The Decision maker should carefully take into consideration the Decision Maker's guidance before deciding whether to implement the proposals.

Whilst any representations must be carefully considered there is no need to do so in this case because no representations have been made.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

There are no Capital funding implications of these proposals.

Revenue implications

If implemented, the proposal will result in a phased reduction in the funding allocated to the school up to a maximum of £123,865 after two years with a corresponding reduction in Havering's allocation of funding from the DfE from the Dedicated School Grant. The reason for the reduction is that the schools funding formula will allocate only one lump sum rather than two, all other funding factors being pupil led. The school will, however, be able to achieve operational savings in managing a single budget as a single primary school rather than as separate infant and junior schools. There are no implications for the Council's General Fund.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS (AND ACCOMMODATION IMPLICATIONS WHERE RELEVANT)

The human resources implications for the schools to be proposed for amalgamation will be managed by the schools themselves supported when required by HES HR.

EQUALITIES AND SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have due regard to:

- (i) The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (ii) The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;
- (iii) Foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

Note: 'Protected characteristics' are age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

The Council is committed to all of the above in the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and the employment of its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing for all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants.

An EqHIA has been carried out and the proposals in this report have been assessed as having a positive impact on groups with a protected characteristic – Appendix 2

HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The EqHIA indicates that the impact of this activity will have a positive impact on groups with a protected characteristic. No children would be displaced when both schools amalgamate. The proposal would give the opportunity to further improve educational standards by enabling planning as a coherent whole across the primary phase of the national curriculum, providing greater flexibility across and between key stages. The appointment of a headteacher would consolidate the savings to be realised and provide stability in the primary school for the foreseeable future. The single admission process will have a positive impact on the parental mental health.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 – Decision-maker guidance

Appendix 2 – EqHIA

Key Executive Decision

Part C – Record of decision

I have made this executive decision in accordance with authority delegated to me by the Leader of the Council and in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution.

Decision

Proposal agreed

Delete as applicable

Proposal NOT agreed because

Details of decision maker

Signed

Name:

Cabinet Portfolio held:

CMT Member title:

Head of Service title

Other manager title:

Date:

Lodging this notice

The signed decision notice must be delivered to the proper officer, Debra Marlow, Principal Committee Officer in Democratic Services, in the Town Hall.

For use by Committee Administration

This notice was lodged with me on _____

Signed _____