

MINUTES OF THE MEETING Cabinet Member Signing HELD ON Monday, 14th July, 2025, 2.30 - 2.40 pm

PRESENT:

Councillors: Zena Brabazon

ALSO ATTENDING:

11. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Cabinet Member referred to the filming at meetings notice.

RESOLVED:

The filming at meetings notice was noted

12. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none

13. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were none

14. URGENT BUSINESS

There was none

15. DEPUTATIONS / PETITIONS / QUESTIONS

There were none

16. DETERMINATION OF THE STATUTORY NOTICE PROPOSING THE CLOSURE OF ST PETER IN CHAINS RC INFANT SCHOOL AND ST GILDAS' JUNIOR SCHOOL

The Head of School Admissions, Education and School Organisation introduced the report.

Officers outlined the result of the statutory representation period on the proposal to close St Peter in Chains RC Infant school and St Gildas' Junior school to enable the Cabinet Member to make a final decision on the proposal to close St Peter in Chains RC Infant school and St Gildas' Junior school. Officers additionally outlined the results of the informal representation period which had been undertaken and that the Council had received a single objection to proposals.

It was explained that the report outlined the final stages for recommended closure. It was additionally stressed that it was considered by officers that the school was no longer viable

Following questions, the following points were raised:

- It was confirmed by officers that all statutory procedures regarding school closure had been followed.
- The Lead Member noted her thanks to officers for the hard work in developing the work for this decision.

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet Member for Children's, Schools and Families:.

1. Noted that only one objection was received during the 4-week representation period, despite the local authority having consulted widely with all relevant stakeholders.
2. Noted that the federated schools were in deficit, and the revenue budget to operate successfully in the future, whilst maintaining the delivery of a good quality of education for pupils, had been severely diminished by very low pupil numbers.
3. Noted that many families had already transferred their children to other local schools; St Peter in Chains and St Gildas' Catholic Infant and Junior Schools had 27 pupils on roll (as of the week ending 30 May 2025), 17 of whom were Year 6 pupils who would be transferring to secondary school in September 2025.
4. Agreed that, for the local authority to cease maintaining St Peter in Chains and St Gildas' Catholic Infant and Junior Schools from 31 August 2025, in order for transition planning to have commenced for any remaining pupils so they could be supported in securing another local school rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted

Reasons for the Decision

Following years of growth, the number of primary-aged children joining Haringey primary schools had been in steady decline since 2014, a trend that was observed across London. Primary pupil rolls in Haringey had reduced by over 2,000 in just five years: from 21,300 in 2019 to 19,100 in 2024 (January school census data), and pupil numbers were forecast to continue falling until at least 2021.

Both St Peter in Chains and St Gildas' Catholic Infant and Junior Schools were substantive two-form entry (FE) Voluntary Aided Catholic schools located at Oakington Way, London, N8 9EP. St Peter in Chains Infant School was federated with

St Gildas' Junior School. Both schools shared the same headteacher and governing body. Since 2019, the number of pupils on roll had dropped significantly at both schools. From April 2024, some year groups had been merged, and the governing body moved the infant school to the federation's junior school site on Oakington Way in September 2024.

School funding was primarily determined by the number of children on roll, and falling rolls equated to reduced funding. This meant that more and more schools were facing serious financial pressures after year-on-year declines in their roll, resulting in smaller one-form entry schools such as St Peter in Chains and St Gildas' Catholic Infant and Junior Schools falling into financial deficit. This was not just felt by Haringey schools—many primary schools across London and England ended 2023–24 in financial deficit.

The Council had a duty of care to ensure children in its schools were able to receive a good education and access the full curriculum. A school with a declining roll was challenged to do this effectively because of inevitable financial pressures from reduced funding. Reduced funding impacted the efficient running of schools, financial stability, and education standards.

It was a principle of the Council to protect Haringey's high quality of education, and this may have been compromised where the cost of teaching staff, equipment, and enrichment activities became unaffordable. The link between pupil numbers and school funding meant that it was not always feasible to keep a school operating to guarantee the standard of education families and pupils deserved.

It was known that schools in the local area and across Haringey had a significant surplus of places, including equivalent Catholic schools. Furthermore, current school roll projections across Planning Area 2, where St Peter in Chains and St Gildas' Catholic Infant and Junior Schools were located, did not indicate any future demographic growth.

Full consultation had been undertaken over a period of several months, including meetings with staff, governors, and parents, along with other interested stakeholders. The four-week pre-publication consultation ran from 24 February to 24 March 2025 and gathered views from stakeholders on options for the future of the school. A summary of the representations received from the pre-publication consultation was reported to Cabinet at the 11 February Cabinet meeting (Agenda item – St Peter in Chains Catholic Infant and St Gildas Catholic Junior School | Haringey Council).

On 22 April 2025, the Council's Cabinet agreed to publish a statutory notice, commencing the statutory representation period, which was the last opportunity for people and organisations to comment on the proposal. The Cabinet report and the minutes of the meeting could be found here: [Items at meetings – The future of St Peter in Chains and St Gildas' Catholic Infant and Junior Schools](#). Only one objection was received during the 28-day representation period, and this could be viewed together with the local authority officer response at Appendix 1.

Alternative Options Considered

The following alternative options had been previously considered by decision-makers at the 11 February 2025 Cabinet meeting and were not favoured:

- No change, i.e., continuation of the current strategy for school improvement without any further action to address falling local rolls
- Conversion to academy
- Federation
- Amalgamation resulting in the closure of St Peter in Chains and St Gildas' Catholic Infant and Junior Schools, with the displaced pupils being accommodated by another Catholic primary school
- Closure

CHAIR:

Signed by Chair

Date