

By:	Patrick Leeson, Corporate Director for Education, Learning and Skills
To:	Education Cabinet Committee, 19 March 2013
Subject	St Philip Howard RC Primary School, Herne Bay
Classification:	Unrestricted

Summary:	This report informs Members of the decision taken by the governors of St. Philip Howard RC (Aided) Primary school, Herne bay, to consult on closure of the school by the 31 August 2013.
Recommendations:	The Education Committee is asked to note the information and the proposed timetable for consultation, including the timing of the Cabinet Member decision on closure.

1. Introduction

1.1 Following an extraordinary general meeting of the St. Philip Howard RC Primary School Governing Body on the 25 February 2013, the governors took the decision to go out to consultation on closure of the school.

1.2 This decision was taken following a number of meetings with the Local Authority and the Archdiocese of Southwark and detailed consideration of the pupil projections for Herne Bay as well as the number of applications for Year R places for September 2013.

2. Background

2.1 St. Philip Howard (Aided) Catholic Primary School is a 1FE Aided primary school in Herne Bay. The majority of pupils come from Herne Bay and around 40% of pupils are Catholic. The PAN is 210 and currently the number of pupils on roll is 91 with 12 pupils in Year 6 who will be moving into Secondary education in September 2013. There are 5 first preferences for Year R in September 2013. The school is on the government list for Priority School Building funding but this has been at risk from the start due to the lack of sustainability resulting from the impact of current and projected pupil numbers. The school is projecting a budget deficit of £63,000 with further demands amounting to several thousands on the budget due to infrastructure needs.

2.2 The school went into Special Measures following inspection in May 2012. Working with the Diocese of Southwark, an Executive Headteacher and Head of School (seconded) were secured and the school has had extensive support from the Local Authority. The school has faced immense difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff and has experienced high levels of pupil turnover.

2.3 The two most recent HMI visits have reported reasonable progress and positive developments in the school's teaching environment due to financial support from the LA and the efforts of the Executive Headteacher, Head of School and Governing Body.

3. Proposal

3.1 The Governing Body of St. Philip Howard School will commence consultation according to the timetable set out in 3.2. The Local Authority and the Archdiocese will be consultees.

3.2 The timetable for consultation and decision would be:

Consultation Period	11 March to 26 April 2013
Public Meeting Date	tbc
Governing Body decision to issue a Public Notice	29 April 2013
Public Notice period	3 May to 14 June 2013
ECC following the Public Notice period re recommendation for closure	21 June 2013
Cabinet Member decision on closure	24 June 2013
Appeal period	24 June to 22 July 2013
Implementation	31 August 2013

4. Equality Impact Assessment

4.1 An Equality Impact Assessment will be completed by the Governing Body of St. Philip Howard RC primary School.

5. Member Opinion

5.1 All local members have been informed of the St. Philip Howard Governing Body's proposal.

6. Area Education Officer Opinion

6.1 Marisa White, the Area Education Officer for East Kent has been party to discussions with the school and the Archdiocese of Southwark that has led to the current proposal by the Governing Body of the school to consult on closure.

8. Recommendations

8.1 The Education Committee is asked to note the information and the proposed timetable for consultation, including the timing of the Cabinet Member decision on closure.

9. Background Documents

None

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