Consultation on the proposed closure of St Matthew's Church of England Primary School

Proposal

The Governors of St Matthew's Church of England Primary School, together with Westminster City Council and with due regard to advice from the London Diocesan Board of Schools (LDBS) have spent much time in discussion to determine the best way forward for our school. The welfare and education of our pupils is key to providing them with a secure future.

Regrettably and reluctantly, and having considered amalgamation with another local school, the Governing Board has concluded that closure of the school and transfer of the children to other local schools will ensure that we offer the most sustainable and beneficial educational environment while continuing to positively support pupils and parents.

The Governors of St Matthew's Church of England Primary School are proposing to close the school on 31 March 2027. Given falling rolls and the critical financial position of the school, the proposal to consult on closure is supported by Westminster City Council as the maintaining authority for our school but we are keen to hear the views of our stakeholders, particularly our parents.

If the proposal goes ahead, St Matthew's Church of England Primary School will close on 31 March 2027.

Background

St Matthew's Church of England Primary School is a one-form entry primary school, with a Published Admission Number of 210; however, from the October 2026 Census Data, there were only 45 children on roll from Reception to Year 6. Schools in the City of Westminster receive around £7,000 for each pupil, so that means the school has around £1,197,000 (171x £7,000) less each year than if it were full.

Governors and the Executive Head Teacher have already undertaken significant changes to reduce costs and to try to balance the budget. For example, we have reduced the number of teachers and support staff at the school (in line with the falling roll), with some classes now being mixed age and two year groups being taught in one class.

Unfortunately, no pupils joined the Reception Class in September and, as 12 pupils will be leaving Year 6 in July 2027, this makes the school's financial problems even more serious. By 31 March 2027, the deficit is estimated to be over £448,537, and it is increasing every month.

Despite our best efforts, we have sadly concluded that St Matthew's Church of England Primary School is no longer financially sustainable. This is the collective view of Governors, Westminster City Council and the LDBS (the Church of England Diocese).

Table 1 - Reception roll number 2026/27 (October 2026 pupil census)

Published Admission Number – Reception	Total number of pupils on roll in Reception	Surplus places	Reception surplus capacity
30	0	30	100%

Table 2 - Whole school roll 2026/ 27 (October 2026 pupil census)

Published Admission Number – Reception to Year 6	Total number of pupils on roll	Surplus places	Whole school surplus capacity
30 per year group (210 total)	45	165	78.6%

Why are we proposing to close the school?

Despite the school's 'Good' Ofsted rating, our school does not have sufficient children to fill the school from September 2027 and we have significant vacancies across all year groups.

As our pupil numbers fall, our income falls, resulting in less money being provided to educate our children, pay salaries and manage the upkeep of our buildings.

The Governors are clear that now is the right time to consult on closing the school as it is no longer sustainable and will not be able to provide high-quality education for our children in the future.

Have other options been considered?

Yes, unfortunately there are no suitable local school partners to amalgamate with.

What would it mean for the children?

All children on roll would be offered places at other schools local to their home, all of which have spare places. This is the responsibility of the Local Authority which plans to work closely with the school and the Diocese to support families to move to other Church of England schools if that is their preference. The nearest alternative Church of England schools with a small number of vacancies are set out below. The school will work closely with families via 1:1 meetings to support you with your choice of alternative school placement.

School	Distance (straight-line)	Vacancies
Burdett-Coutts & Townshend Foundation CE Primary School	0.25 of a mile	36
St Peter's Eaton Square CE Primary School	0.7 of a mile	54
St Gabriel's CE Primary School	0.9 of a mile	15
St Barnabas CE Primary School	1 mile	66

How would the admissions process work?

A Local Authority Admissions Officer will assist you with information and support you to apply for alternative school places, taking into consideration any issues and concerns you have. You have the right to apply to other schools and to move your children at any time. The Local Authority's Admissions Team will also provide the school with a full list of vacancies at nearby primary schools to share with you so that you have all the information you need. The school will work closely with families via 1:1 meetings to support you with your choice of alternative school placement.

Children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities and Looked After Children

Families with children who have an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) will be directly assisted by the Council's Special Educational Needs (SEN) Service to support them through the transition, along with families with children who receive specialist support. EHCP applications that are in process will continue to be assessed with support from the plan coordinators.

Families of pupils receiving support for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, but who do not have an EHCP, will receive advice and guidance when considering changes to provision or settings. Specialist SEND and advisory staff and the school's SENDCo are available to provide support and advice to families.

Looked After Children will receive individual support from the Virtual School for Looked After Children to find a new school place.

The Local Authority and LDBS will work closely with school staff to ensure that each child's feelings are carefully considered, making as smooth and positive as possible the change of school, where the opportunities for a smooth transition, making new friends and trying different activities will be the focus.

What would it mean for my child to be part of a different and potentially larger school?

We know that for some of the children at St Matthew's School moving to a different and potentially bigger school might feel daunting. Even though the new school will feel different to your child(ren), we will make sure they get the right support to settle quickly. A new setting will, however, be able to provide wider opportunities for your children's education, which sadly now St Matthew's School is no longer able to offer.

We want to hear children's voices so that, if the proposal goes ahead, we can provide the best possible support to help them with the transition, so we will ask the school for help in gathering their thoughts and feelings.

What would it mean for the staff and the Executive Head Teacher?

The closure of the school will affect all staff. The Governing Board, as the employer, will provide all staff with support to have the confidence to apply for new roles. Our priority would be to ensure that permanent staff at risk of redundancy are supported fully throughout this transition, just as we would be supporting our children and families. Each of the LDBS and the Local Authority will work actively to try to secure positions for any members of staff wishing to remain in the local area.

The Executive Head Teacher would return to her substantive role as Head Teacher at Burdett-Coutts and Townshend Foundation CE Primary School, if the proposal goes ahead.

Would there be any changes to the school building?

The building and site are not owned by the school. The Diocese has the statutory responsibility for closed Church of England school sites and will work with the Secretary of State for Education to determine its future.

The Consultation Process

The Governing Board could not simply decide to consult on closure without the involvement of both LDBS and the Local Authority, and the Local Authority cannot simply decide to close a school without first seeking the views of parents, staff and other stakeholders. There is also a legal process which must be followed before changes can be made, and it is important that we hear your views before deciding whether or how to proceed, as this is part of that legal process.

We greatly value your thoughts and want to gather your views because you are at the centre of our school community. We are organising opportunities for parents, carers and other stakeholders to share their views at meetings at St Matthew's Church of England Primary School.
Parents' Consultation Meetings will be held at the school on:

- Tuesday 17th November 2026 from 09:00 - 10:00 and 17:15 - 18:15
- Wednesday 9th December 2026 from 15:30 - 16:30

Staff Meetings: An initial staff meeting will be held on Thursday 5th November 2026 at 15:45.

Information will also be published on the school website, publicised at the school, and shared via newsletters sent home with children over the next few weeks; It will also be available at the school office (available either by phone or in person) and at St Matthew's Church.

What happens next?

The Governor-led consultation period will take place over a six-week period, beginning on Friday 6th November 2026 and ending on Friday 18th December 2026. A Consultation Response Form can be found at the end of this document for you to share your feedback on the proposal. Completed forms should be returned to the consultation boxes in the school's reception area. The same form is also available on the school website and, when submitted, will be forwarded to the Governors.

Following the consultation process, the Governing Board will review your feedback and use it to make a recommendation to the Westminster City Council about whether to proceed with the school closure. If the Council decides to move forward with the proposal, they will publish a formal statutory notice in the Spring Term (January/February) 2027 which sets out the details of the final proposal. There will then be another consultation period of at least four weeks when representations can be made to the Council during the Spring Term 2027. This will be the final opportunity to make any comments on the proposal.

It is then anticipated that a final decision on whether to close the school will be made in the Spring Term (February/March) 2027.

How can I get more information on the proposal?

We understand that parents may have concerns and queries, and we will be happy to answer your queries, which can be posted in the consultation boxes in the school reception area. We respectfully ask that you direct any questions or feedback as outlined in this document, and not by questioning school staff, who themselves are being consulted in a similar way.

The Governors are committed to giving parents, children, and staff as much information as possible and will update you regularly; however, please note that we may not be able to answer some questions until after a decision is made.

This document, and other information, is also available on the school website.

If the Local Authority decides to publish a public statutory notice following a recommendation from the school's Governing Board, further details of this proposal will also be available in the Consultation sections of the council's website. Feedback from the statutory consultation will also be published on the council's website during the Spring Term.

How do I respond?

You can either complete the Informal Consultation Response Form on the following page and return it to the consultation box in your school's reception area, or you can complete it electronically and email it to: consultation@stmwschool.org.uk

CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM

Proposal to Close St Matthew's Church of England Primary School from 31 March 2027. We

welcome your views on this proposal.

Please fill in this form and return it to the school office no later than 12:00pm (midday) on Friday 18th December 2026.

You can also download the form online and email it to the relevant address given above, until 5:00pm on Friday 18th December 2026.

1) Do you agree with the proposal to close St Matthews Church of England Primary School? Please circle/ delete as appropriate: YES/ NO

2) Please tell us why you think this.

3) Do you have any other comments, issues, or questions? (Please feel free to use the back of this form if you need more space

I am a child	
I have child/ren attending	
I am a staff member	
Other (Please describe)	

Please note: If you are completing this form jointly, please tick each box that applies so that your views are included within each group you are part of.

Please return this form to St. Matthew's CE Primary School by 12:00pm (midday) on Friday 18th December 2026.

Your Name (Optional) _____

Accessibility statement: If you require this document in a different format or in a different language, please email consultation@stmwschool.org.uk

We will consider your request and get back to you in the next five working days.