

## **REPORT**

### **FORMAL CONSULTATION**

#### **PROPOSAL TO AMALGAMATE HOLY TRINITY CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY AND FENSTANTON PRIMARY**

**January 2025**

#### **Introduction**

The governors of both Holy Trinity, Church of England Primary and Fenstanton Primary in consultation with the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education (SDBE), are proposing the amalgamation of the two schools to form one new school from **September 2025**.

This proposal would see the discontinuation of Fenstanton's DfE number and a new Church of England, 1 form entry, primary school created, using the current Holy Trinity DfE number.

#### **Why are we proposing to amalgamate Holy Trinity and Fenstanton?**

In September 2024, in response to falling pupil numbers across Lambeth, the council published plans to reduce the surplus places by proposing the closure of both Holy Trinity and Fenstanton. In response to this closure proposal, school leaders and governors submitted an alternative proposal to Lambeth which outlined a desire for the two schools to work together and combine as one amalgamated school. It was agreed by cabinet, on the 4 November, that this proposal would be considered if formally proposed by governors.

This proposal is driven by the united desire of the leaders and governors of both Holy Trinity and Fenstanton to ensure that this distinct local community is not left without a school that understands and is dedicated to serving the community. Both schools are popular and serve the community well, and despite the challenges of falling rolls, have agreed that working together they can provide a sustainable local education offer long into the future. Through this consultation, Governors are committed to being clear and transparent, to listening to and acting on the views and concerns of those affected and providing reassurance where possible. Although amalgamating two schools is a challenging prospect, they are committed to making a truly unified school that can satisfy the needs of the community.

#### **Pre-publication consultation outcome (Stage 1)**

#### **Methodology and Engagement**

1. It is a statutory requirement for the proposer (in this case the governing bodies of both schools) to consult any parties they think appropriate before publishing statutory proposals. Several events and methods to consult all stakeholders on the proposals have been undertaken and are outlined in this report.
2. During the process governors have been committed to an approach which is transparent, maintains open lines of communication and has a demonstrable focus on listening to the views of both school communities.
3. The governors recognised that the proposals and the consultation process may be destabilising for parents, pupils and staff at Holy Trinity and Fenstanton and for this reason they made the decision to inform communities prior to the consultation launch date. Since that communication, governors have worked closely with the school leadership teams, the local authority (LA) and the SDBE on an ongoing basis to provide support as needed.

4. Governors acknowledge and appreciate the ongoing dedication of the staff teams in both schools to the education and well-being of the pupils, as well as to the well-being of parents, staff colleagues, and the wider community. The senior teams have continued to provide visible and resilient leadership.
5. The process included a statutory element of consultation that lasted for 6 weeks to allow the widest possible opportunity for views/comments to be made by parents, carers, local residents and other stakeholders. The purpose of the consultation was for governors to seek the views of and engage with those that could potentially be affected by the proposed amalgamation of Holy Trinity and Fenstanton. It was also an opportunity for interested parties to suggest other options for consideration on the proposal.
6. In addition to this the SDBE and Lambeth LA (on behalf of the governing body) sought the views of:
  - *All schools/admission authorities in the local area, governing bodies and academy trusts (via the Headteacher and the Chair of Governors)*
  - *Lambeth Councillors and MPs*
  - *The Catholic Diocese*
  - *Appropriate Trade Unions*
7. Consultation was undertaken by:
  - *Placing a page on both school websites containing the consultation documents*
  - *Setting up a dedicated platform that allowed people to respond to the consultation questions*
  - *Setting up an email address to allow parents, carers and stakeholders to feed back on the pre-consultation proposals*
  - *Distribution of a paper form for stakeholders' responses*
  - *Four consultation meetings for staff, parents/carers, the community and stakeholders held in person at the schools on 5 and 12 December 2024*
8. To ensure the consultation material was accessible to everyone, the documents were available in both electronic and paper form and translated at the request of individuals.
9. An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken to identify the potential impacts of the proposal on groups with protected characteristics, and any appropriate mitigation.
10. Governors are conscious that while many staff and parents understand the drivers behind the proposal, there is also understandably a great deal of emotion connected to schools and their place in the community. Throughout this process we have endeavoured to respond to concerns in a compassionate and transparent way.

#### 11. Consultation Questions

Question	Answer option
Please tell us whether you support/do not support the proposed amalgamation between Holy Trinity and Fenstanton. (Please tick)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I do not support the proposal</li> <li>• I support the proposal</li> </ul>
If you support the proposal to close, please outline why. (Please tick)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved sustainability of the school system in area</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports recruitment challenges experienced by other local schools</li> <li>• More efficient use of our school estate</li> </ul>
If you DO NOT support the proposal to amalgamate the schools, please outline why. (Please tick)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effect on child's education</li> <li>• Well-being of child(ren)</li> <li>• Effect on employment</li> <li>• Distance to new school</li> <li>• Effect on local community</li> </ul>
If the schools amalgamated and the site chosen was NOT your current site, would you move to the new site or find an alternative school?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I would prefer my site but would move to the new site if there was no other option.</li> <li>• I would happily move to the new site.</li> <li>• I would not move sites and would choose another school.</li> </ul>
<p>About You</p> <p>We want to receive comments from the broadest range of people possible to reflect the opinion of our community. In order to enable us to assess the degree to which this has been successful, it would be helpful if you could take a moment to complete the section below. The Governing Body will ensure that any data provided will be protected against loss or misuse. Your information will not be retained or shared with any other parties and will be destroyed in line with relevant destruction policies and processes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Member of staff at Holy Trinity Primary School</li> <li>• Member of staff at Fenstanton Primary School</li> <li>• School Governor at Holy Trinity Primary School</li> <li>• School Governor at Fenstanton Primary School</li> <li>• Parent/carer of a child/children at Holy Trinity Primary School</li> <li>• Parent/carer of child/children at Fenstanton Primary School</li> <li>• Staff member at another school</li> <li>• Governor at another school</li> <li>• Parent/carer at another school</li> <li>• Local resident</li> <li>• Council member</li> <li>• Prefer not to say</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul>
Gender (please tick)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Woman</li> <li>• Man</li> <li>• Non-binary</li> <li>• Prefer not to say</li> </ul>
Age (please tick)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under 19</li> <li>• 19-25</li> <li>• 26-34</li> <li>• 35-44</li> <li>• 45-54</li> <li>• 55-64</li> <li>• 65+</li> </ul>
Which of the following best describes your ethnic background? (please tick)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• White British</li> <li>• White Irish</li> <li>• White European</li> <li>• Other white</li> <li>• Mixed white and black Caribbean</li> <li>• Mixed white and black African</li> <li>• Mixed white and Asian</li> <li>• Other mixed background</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asian or Asian British: Indian</li> <li>• Asian or Asian British: Pakistani</li> <li>• Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi</li> <li>• Asian or Asian British: Chinese</li> <li>• Other Asian or Asian British Background</li> <li>• Black or Black British: Caribbean</li> <li>• Black or Black British: African</li> <li>• Other Black/Black British</li> <li>• Arabic</li> <li>• Prefer not to say</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul>
Do you consider yourself to have a disability? (please tick)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes</li> <li>• No</li> <li>• Maybe</li> </ul>
If 9 is "yes" please specify your disability (please tick)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobility</li> <li>• Visual impairment</li> <li>• Hearing impairment</li> <li>• Mental Health</li> <li>• Learning disability</li> <li>• Prefer not to say</li> </ul>

12. At the conclusion of the statutory consultation outlined above, the governing body reviewed the feedback they received. No alternative proposals were put forward by stakeholders and the response to the proposal was overwhelmingly positive. The Governing Boards of both schools met on the 22 January 2025 and, after careful consideration of the feedback and comments received, agreed to publish formal statutory notices – stage 2 of the process.

## Responses

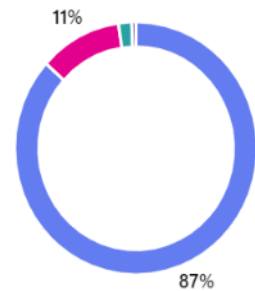
13. The governing body held four meetings for staff and parents. In addition to responses gathered at these meetings, there were 174 written responses to the consultation. The responses were from a range of stakeholders with the majority coming from parents/carers from both schools and staff from both schools. Other respondents were local residents, governors and parents/carers from other local schools, council members and prospective parents.

14. 87% (150) of responses agree with the proposal to amalgamate the schools. Of those who support the proposal there were, 33 local residents, 22 members of staff at Fenstanton, 7 members of staff at Holy Trinity, 24 parents/carers from Holy Trinity, 28 parents/carers from Fenstanton, 1 council member, 2 governors at another local school, 3 parents/carers at another local school, and 14 'other'.

15. The responses not supportive of the proposal were made up of 3 parents/carers at Holy Trinity, 4 parents/carers from Fenstanton, 8 local residents and 4 respondents chose 'prefer not to say'.

1. Please tell us whether you support/do not support the proposed amalgamation of Holy Trinity and Fenstanton (please tick)

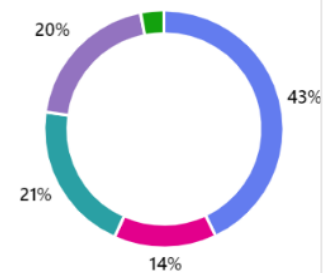
● I support the proposed amalgamation of the schools.	150
● I do not support the proposed amalgamation of the schools.	19
● I am unsure	3
● I am not impacted by the proposal	1



16. Reasons respondents gave in support of the proposal were largely based on securing a stronger school system for the pupils in Lambeth and ensuring pupils from Holy Trinity and Fenstanton

2. If you support the proposal to amalgamate please outline why.

● Improved sustainability of the school system in area	136
● Supports recruitment challenges experienced by other local schools	44
● More efficient use of our school estate	65
● Improved educational offer for pupils	62
● Other	10

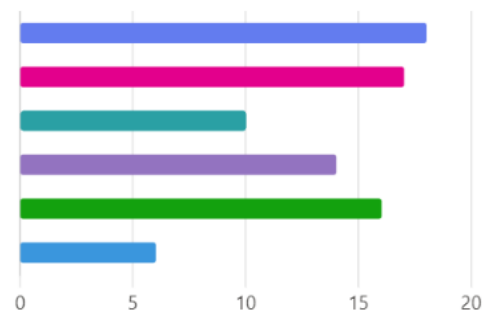


receive high quality education.

17. Reasons respondents gave for not being in support of the proposal were largely based on the impact on the education of pupils within the schools and the impact on their wellbeing. Responses also recognised that both schools are loved within their community.

3. If you DO NOT support the proposal to amalgamate please outline why.

● Effect on child's education	18
● Well-being of child(ren)	17
● Effect on employment	10
● Distance to new school	14
● Effect on local community	16
● Other	6



18. As part of the consultation, governors sought suggestions from stakeholders and gave a commitment to respond to all issues raised and ideas put forward. Throughout the consultation a number of issues were raised, including:

- *If governors and LA knew pupil numbers were reducing, why wasn't something done years ago to prevent the closure of school and the need to amalgamate? (3 respondents)*
- *Depending on the site chosen parents will have to travel further to take children to school. (3 respondents)*
- *Why does the date need to be 2025 and not 2026 as previously proposed by Lambeth? (1 respondent)*
- *How does the redundancy procedure work and when can staff have support from HR? Will unions be available to support staff through this? (5 respondents)*
- *Will staff be given the opportunity for interview skills training if they face the prospect of redundancy, and when will this start? (6 respondents)*
- *Will the consultation be accessible for all? (2 respondents)*
- *Is this a financially driven proposal? If so, why can't the LA change the way it funds schools? (5 respondents)*
- *Will every child get a place in the new school? (4 respondents)*
- *How will SEND pupils be supported? (6 respondents)*
- *What support will be available to parents whose children will be affected by this proposal? (4 respondents)*
- *If Lambeth are the decision maker, what do they need to see to determine a viable proposal? (3 respondents)*

#### **Governors' responses to issues raised**

19. Governors reviewed and considered all responses and grouped these into general themes, the responses to themes are set out in the table below.

<b>CONCERNS</b>	<b>GOVERNORS' RESPONSE</b>
<b>Effect on children's education</b>	<p>We appreciate these proposals will raise concerns and some anxiety regarding the effect on the education of children from both Holy Trinity Primary and Fenstanton Primary and therefore we have planned support to minimise this impact. It should be noted that the key driver for governors has been the education of our pupils and the desire to ensure that a strong school remains in the area for local pupils. Ensuring the pupils secure a strong education in a local school is paramount and the current proposal put forward by Lambeth is to close both schools.</p> <p>If a decision is made to amalgamate the schools into one new school, there will be no need for a separate admissions process, all pupils will automatically get a place within the new school. Transition work will begin very early in the process to ensure a smooth process which has the least disruption for pupils.</p>
<b>Effect on children's wellbeing</b>	<p>Governors are sensitive to the impact of these proposals on children's well-being and the schools will work closely with the LA and the SDBE to develop a package of support. School and community psychology services will be engaged to work with both schools to collectively plan any support offered and decide how information is shared, and this will be informed by the needs of children and their families. Families and children will also be supported through any transitions to a new site if required.</p> <p>Governors are confident that leaders and staff at both schools know every child in their school and are very sensitive to their individual needs. Work has already begun in helping children to understand how the proposal may impact them. The schools have already begun working together to establish relationships and routines which will make any transition easier to manage.</p>
<b>Distance to new school</b>	<p>In any amalgamation one site must be chosen and governors recognise that this means travel time may increase for some families. Governors have spent time reviewing the addresses of pupils when making the decision about which site to use and have decided that the preferred site for the new school is the current Fenstanton site (Abbots Park, London SW2 3PW).</p>

<p><b>Effect on employment</b></p>	<p>Governors recognise this is a distressing time for staff and have worked with the leadership team at the school to provide ongoing HR and pastoral support for staff regarding employment throughout this process.</p> <p>While governors are commitment to reducing any need for redundancies, we also recognise this may be necessary during the process of amalgamation. Support will be provided by the school's HR provider and the SDBE and will include one to one meetings with staff upon request, workshops on CV writing and interviewing, and redundancy and redeployment options if appropriate. Governors are committed to working alongside trade union representatives to ensure the best outcome for all staff.</p>
<p><b>Effect on local community</b></p>	<p>Whilst we understand that this proposal will inevitably impact on the local community, it has been put forward in the wider interests of all children and families in Lambeth and the pupils currently attending both schools.</p> <p>Governors recognise the need to have 'due regard' to the duties set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the Public Sector Equality Duty, 'PSED') in determining these proposals. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken as part of the consultation process to identify the equality implications of this proposal and any appropriate mitigation, which we are seeking views on as part of this consultation. This document is available in Appendix 2 of these papers.</p>
<p><b>Responses to other issues and question raised not covered by the above themes.</b></p>	
<p><b>SEND support</b></p>	<p>The Head of SEND and Inclusion in Lambeth will work closely with the SENDCo in both schools to support all children with an EHCP and their families to manage the transition. We will also consider the wider SEND pupil cohort when managing transitions and address any concerns parents may have.</p> <p>Individual discussions with families who have a child with an EHCP have already taken place; support for these families will continue throughout the next phase of the consultation and through any transition.</p>
<p><b>Why can't the LA change the funding for the school?</b></p>	<p>The allocation of funding to schools falls outside the school's and LA's power to change. School funding is based on pupil numbers and overall school budgets have been impacted by falling rolls across London. This decline in funding makes it increasingly difficult to provide adequate resources for the school, ultimately impacting their ability to provide a high quality education offer for pupils.</p>
<p><b>How will the consultation be made accessible for all?</b></p>	<p>Governors have and will continue to translate all relevant material into the languages which are spoken by the school community upon request and will pay attention to those parents and carers with additional needs to ensure their voices are heard throughout all stages of the consultation.</p> <p>There will be different forms of engagement, including questionnaires and a face-to-face QA session at which we will have interpreters if needed.</p>
<p><b>Why wasn't action taken sooner if pupil numbers were falling?</b></p>	<p>Lambeth began to see a reduction in pupil numbers after numbers peaked in 2018 and since then early years and primary school numbers have decreased by over 7%. Pupil numbers are forecast to continue declining in the immediate vicinity in the next five years.</p> <p>Impacted in part by these trends, the East planning area has seen a decline in pupils joining all schools in recent years and this has included Holy Trinity and Fenstanton. This reduction has been a concern for governors and leaders and a range of actions have been put in place to mitigate the impact on the school in the areas of curriculum, finances and marketing/communication.</p>

	When governors identified through their longer-term forecasting that pupil numbers might fall to a critical level, they were proactive in contacting both the Diocese and the LA to seek help in identifying wider solutions. Both schools reduced their PAN some time ago and have been quick to respond to all requests made by the LA.
<b>The new school is proposed to be a Church of England school. Does my family need to go to church to attend and is the curriculum different to a non-faith school?</b>	<p>No, Church of England (C of E) schools welcome children of all faiths or no faith at all. They are inclusive and aim to serve the whole community, reflecting Christian values while respecting and celebrating diverse beliefs. Both Fenstanton and Holy Trinity share a strong ethos based on core values, this will not change in the new school. All pupils, regardless of faith, background or belief will be welcomed and supported to flourish.</p> <p>All maintained schools (community schools, foundation schools, and voluntary-controlled/voluntary-aided schools) in England are required to teach the National Curriculum and this also includes the teaching of RE. The RE curriculum in Church of England schools delves deeper into Christian theology, traditions, and practices than in non-faith schools. However, students also learn about other major world religions and beliefs to foster understanding and tolerance. The rest of the curriculum will be based around the national curriculum and will be designed by taking the best parts from both schools' current curriculums.</p>

20. The Governors considered all suggestions put forward throughout the consultation and assessed the viability of each, the responses to these are outlined below.

<b>Responses to alternative suggestions raised.</b>	
<b>Why can't the school/s advertise and increase fundraising to make up the shortfall of funding so both schools can remain open?</b>	<p>While governors appreciate that an increased advertising drive may increase numbers on roll by a very small amount, the lack of overall pupil numbers across the borough has led to a surplus in many schools, which means additional advertising is unlikely to have a sufficient impact on pupil numbers.</p> <p>Lambeth's Pupil Place Planning strategy aims to reduce pupil places across the borough in order to ensure capacity meets the reduced need, this means the LA proposed a closure of both schools.</p>
<b>Can the schools remain open for 5 years so all pupils can finish at their current site?</b>	<p>This option would not be approved by the LA and therefore was not given consideration. Governors also recognise the additional financial pressure this would place on both schools which are already facing significant financial challenges. This is not considered a viable option.</p>

21. At the conclusion of the statutory consultation outlined above, the Governing body reviewed the feedback they received. No viable alternative proposals were put forward and there was significant support for this proposal. The Governing Boards of both schools met on the 22 January 2025 and after careful consideration of the feedback and comments received, agreed to publish formal closure notices – stage 2 of the process.

## **STATUTORY NOTICE**

### **Proposal to amalgamate the Student Body of Holy Trinity, Church of England, Primary School and Fenstanton Primary School, from 1 September 2025.**

Holy Trinity, Church of England, Primary School is located in Upper Tulse Hill, Lambeth, London SW2 2RL and Fenstanton is located in Abbots Park, London, SW2 3PW. The number of children in each year group



in the amalgamated school will be 30. All pupils attending Fenstanton Primary School will be offered a place at the new school (under Holy Trinity's DfE number) and Fenstanton Primary School will discontinue.

Notice is given in accordance with section 15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (as amended by the Education Act 2011) and the School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013. After careful consideration, the Governing Bodies Propose the amalgamation of Holy Trinity, Church of England, Primary School with Fenstanton Primary School.

Should the decision to amalgamate the two schools be agreed, all children attending Fenstanton Primary School would be offered a place at Holy Trinity, Church of England, Primary School. The new, amalgamated school will be located on the current **Fenstanton** site in Abbots Park.

The Governors of Holy Trinity and Fenstanton are publishing the proposals. Lambeth Council will decide whether to implement the proposals and agree to the amalgamation and thereby agree to the discontinuation of Fenstanton Primary School. The proposal is not related to any other school organisation proposals that have been or are about to be published.

### **Why are we proposing to amalgamate the two schools?**

This proposal is primarily driven by the ambition to ensure strong and sustainable schools in the area that will provide the highest quality education for pupils. With falling pupil numbers impacting on primary schools across Lambeth, the forecast for the long-term sustainability of current primary school places is of major concern.

This proposal is published on 31 January 2025. The closing date for receipt of responses to the representation period is 28 February 2025. The Council's Cabinet will meet after the end of the representation period, in March 2025, to take the final decision on whether to amalgamate the students of Holy Trinity and Fenstanton.

**This Notice is an extract from the complete proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be viewed on the school websites ([holytrinityceprimary.org.uk](http://holytrinityceprimary.org.uk) or [fenstantonprimary.co.uk](http://fenstantonprimary.co.uk)). If you require a paper copy of this, please contact either school office.**

### Equality Impact Assessment

Governors recognise the need to have 'due regard' to the duties set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the Public Sector Equality Duty, 'PSED') in determining these proposals. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken as part of the consultation process to identify the equality implications of this proposal and any appropriate mitigation which we are seeking views on as part of this consultation.

### **Background information**

1. Across London over the last 12 years the school age pupil population has grown by over 10%. At its peak in 2018, the primary school population had grown by over 20%, from circa 15,600 in 2010 to 19,800. However, since 2018, early years and primary school numbers have decreased by over 7%. During the same period, school capacity has increased by almost 40%. This capacity increase alongside a reduction in pupil numbers, has left many schools unable to fill their places.
2. This trend has also been seen in Lambeth and since 2018 factors such as affordability, Brexit and Covid plus a decline in birth rate has meant fewer children are going to school in Lambeth. The

council has been working to address the decline in pupil numbers and has already removed 975 places (roughly 33 classes) from primary schools across the borough (between 2016 and 2025 from 3,650 to 2,675). Despite the removal of places, the scale of the problem exists.

Town Centre Planning Area	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
North	8%	9%	10%	11%	14%	15%	15%
West	16%	20%	21%	23%	23%	20%	20%
East	14%	18%	19%	24%	26%	28%	29%
Southwest	6%	7%	9%	10%	11%	10%	8%
Southeast	5%	7%	10%	13%	18%	19%	21%
<b>Total Vacancies</b>	10%	12%	14%	17%	19%	19%	19%

- As part of the council's latest attempt to address the number of surplus places across the borough, a proposal was made to close both Holy Trinity and Fenstanton Primary schools.

### Holy Trinity

- Holy Trinity Church of England, Voluntary Aided, Primary School is a two form-entry, primary school, located in the London Borough of Lambeth. The school is part of the educational provision of the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education and the London Borough of Lambeth.
- Up to 2021/22, the Published Admission Number (PAN) was 60. The LA asked the school to consider a reduction in PAN due to the drop in overall pupil numbers in the area which had resulted in the school not being able to fill the 60 reception places each year. After careful consideration the governors agreed to a reduction to support Lambeth. Since then, at the request of Lambeth, a further reduction in PAN to 15 had been agreed by governors to take effect in September 25.
- Holy Trinity is in the East planning area. In January 2024, 218 Reception places (approximately equivalent to 7.5 classes or 32.3%) in primary schools in the East planning area were vacant.
- In October 2024, Holy Trinity had 180 pupils on roll from Reception to Year 6 out of a possible 330 total PAN. Based on the physical size of the school, in October 2024 Holy Trinity was 57% empty, with 240 spaces for additional pupils

Holy Trinity CE Primary School																	
Total roll in each year group as at January each year from 2011/12 to 2023/24																	
Year	PAN	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Cohort size	YR/PAN	Roll YR-6	Total PAN	Vacancies	Capacity	Spaces		
2011/12	60	61	61	60	57	58	50	55	-	102%	402	420	18	4%	420	18	4%
2012/13	60	57	58	60	58	56	52	49	-	95%	390	420	30	7%	420	30	7%
2013/14	60	57	60	59	60	60	52	51	-15.0%	95%	399	420	21	5%	420	21	5%
2014/15	60	60	57	53	56	60	60	55	-3.5%	100%	401	420	19	5%	420	19	5%
2015/16	60	41	56	55	54	57	59	60	+25.0%	68%	382	420	38	9%	420	38	9%
2016/17	60	35	39	52	58	57	57	58	-6.5%	58%	356	420	64	15%	420	64	15%
2017/18	60	49	35	37	51	55	55	57	-6.6%	82%	339	420	81	19%	420	81	19%
2018/19	60	41	48	34	40	50	53	59	+3.5%	68%	325	420	95	23%	420	95	23%
2019/20	60	38	42	50	36	39	52	58	+1.8%	63%	315	420	105	25%	420	105	25%
2020/21	60	25	36	38	48	34	37	52	-13.3%	42%	270	420	150	36%	420	150	36%
2021/22	60	30	29	33	37	48	36	36	-12.2%	50%	249	420	171	41%	420	171	41%
2022/23	30	22	29	30	36	40	49	36	+2.9%	73%	242	390	148	38%	420	178	42%
2023/24	30	17	23	29	28	34	39	48	-2.0%	57%	218	360	142	39%	420	202	48%

## Fenstanton Primary School

8. Fenstanton is a three form- entry community primary school located in the London Borough of Lambeth. The school is part of the educational provision of the London Borough of Lambeth and is part of the Gipsy Hill Federation.
9. The Published Admission Number (PAN) was 90 up to 2019/20 and this was gradually reduced to 45 in 2022/23. The school agreed to further reduce the PAN to 30 for September 2024.
10. Fenstanton is in the Southeast planning area. In January 2024, 114 Reception places (approximately equivalent to 4 classes or 16.2%) in primary schools in the Southeast planning area were vacant.
11. In October 2024, Fenstanton had 226 pupils on roll in Reception to Year 6 out of a possible 450 total PAN. Based on the physical size of the school, in October 2024, Fenstanton was 50% empty, with 224 spaces for additional pupils.

Year	PAN	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Cohort size	YR/PAN	Roll YR-6	Total PAN	Vacancies	Capacity	Spaces		
2011/12	90	87	82	84	81	90	77	71	-	97%	572	630	58	9%	630	58	9%
2012/13	90	86	85	74	85	71	85	72	-	96%	558	630	72	11%	630	72	11%
2013/14	90	83	86	90	81	85	71	84	+21.7%	92%	580	630	50	8%	630	50	8%
2014/15	90	82	82	89	87	86	80	73	-14.1%	91%	579	630	51	8%	630	51	8%
2015/16	90	80	78	84	87	87	75	83	-5.7%	89%	574	630	56	9%	630	56	9%
2016/17	90	78	80	74	81	83	87	80	-5.9%	87%	563	630	67	11%	630	67	11%
2017/18	90	69	76	75	69	77	88	88	+1.1%	77%	542	630	88	14%	630	88	14%
2018/19	90	57	66	74	76	69	78	85	-1.2%	63%	505	630	125	20%	630	125	20%
2019/20	90	47	54	63	65	78	59	78	-6.0%	52%	444	630	186	30%	630	186	30%
2020/21	60	43	41	49	56	59	72	57	-30.5%	72%	377	600	223	37%	630	253	40%
2021/22	60	38	45	40	54	49	56	73	-8.8%	63%	355	570	215	38%	630	275	44%
2022/23	45	43	37	43	35	58	48	59	-24.4%	96%	323	525	202	38%	630	307	49%
2023/24	45	21	40	35	39	31	58	47	-31.9%	47%	271	480	209	44%	630	359	57%

## Rationale for Amalgamation

12. This proposal is driven by the desire of the headteachers and governors of both schools to ensure that this community has a local education offer long into the future on a site that has the flexibility to be developed and utilised in the short term and will secure school space in the long term.
13. Both schools are geographically close, just 0.6 miles apart and serve predominantly the same community.
14. There is a huge commitment from each school, supported by the SDBE, to find a better educational solution for this community that is at risk of being fragmented and dismantled. Both schools are beacons of support and community identity which together could secure education in the area. Both have strong, well established outside providers offering a range of additional services including Speech and Language provision, child mental health provision, foodbanks and support for families facing financial hardship.
15. Both schools have staff teams representative of the communities they serve, and this staff profile is hugely important when offering stability and security. A priority for governors is to retain highly skilled professionals within Lambeth schools.
16. Many parents have already expressed concerns about any transition for their children as the result of a closure. An amalgamation would allow a carefully managed process of transition supported by staff

of both schools to ensure that all pupils and particularly SEND pupils have minimal disruption to their education.

17. This is a bold, innovative proposal with the scope to develop an outstanding community hub providing opportunities for all including pupils, staff and families. Both schools have a strong sense of service, and their ethos, mission and values are complementary with diversity and inclusion at their core. Both schools endeavour to provide a stimulating and nurturing environment for their pupils and one which values empowerment, advocacy, kindness, confidence and has high expectations for all.
18. Initial feedback via surveys, from communities in both schools, overwhelmingly favoured an amalgamation forming a new C of E school, rather than closure.
19. Holy Trinity Parish Church is very supportive of the proposed amalgamation and the church has had a long association with Fenstanton.

### Financial

20. School funding is dependent on pupil numbers. Vacant school places have an immediate impact for schools through reduced budgets which in turn can affect the overall sustainability and quality of education standards at the school. Both schools have seen a substantial decline in funding due to reduced pupil numbers. By amalgamating the two schools, this proposal aims to create a strong school that continues to be financially viable long into the future.
21. Holy Trinity has been very effective already in reducing a large deficit budget that accumulated as a result of major restructuring to support their reduced PAN.

### Alternative options considered and rejected

22. No change: Doing nothing is not a realistic option in the current climate. If no change is made the schools are highly likely to see a continual decline in pupil numbers, placing further pressure on their already challenging financial position. Further staff restructures are not possible due to the impact on the ability of each school to provide a broad and effective curriculum and maintain the safety of pupils with such limited resources.
23. Alternative Amalgamations: Consideration was given to alternative amalgamations for both schools. The council explored an amalgamation between Jubilee Primary School and Fenstanton Primary School however, this proved to be an unviable option due to issues relating to serious youth violence linked to postal districts. For Holy Trinity, the option of amalgamation with the nearest Church of England School, Christ Church, was not deemed viable by the Multi Academy Trust to which they belong.
24. Closure: Lambeth's initial proposal was to close both Holy Trinity and Fenstanton. The closure of two schools serving the same community would have far-reaching negative consequences, including the displacement of vulnerable pupils and families. The table below clearly shows that the numbers of disadvantaged pupils attending these two schools far exceeds that of all but one other nearby school and is significantly above national deprivation averages.

School	Distance from Holy Trinity	Distance from Fenstanton	Disadvantage intake (PP)
Streatham Wells	0.7 miles (requires crossing South Circular)	0.3 miles (requires crossing South Circular)	23%

<b>Hitherfield</b>	1.2 miles	0.8 miles	22%
<b>Richard Atkins</b>	0.4 miles	0.8 miles	37%
<b>Rosendale</b>	1.2 miles	0.9 miles	21%
<b>Jubilee</b>	0.6 miles	0.8 miles	56%
<b>Holy Trinity</b>	N/A	0.6 miles	55%
<b>Fenstanton</b>	0.6 miles	N/A	56%

\*This data is taken from the most up to date DfE dashboard and may be inaccurate based on current school data.

25. Disadvantaged pupils often face more challenges such as poverty, food insecurity and trauma. Closing the only two schools in the area with high numbers of vulnerable pupils and displacing these communities to schools with entirely different intakes will deepen educational inequalities and exacerbate disadvantage and marginalisation.
26. The closure of both schools would lead to the loss of valuable community assets. Both schools are central to their local communities, offering more than just education. They serve as community hubs for extracurricular activities and local events as well as providing support for vulnerable families. The closure of both schools would remove these vital assets from the community, affecting the social fabric of the area.

#### **Admissions**

27. All children attending each school will have a place at the amalgamated school meaning no children will be displaced. Provision can be made to accommodate all pupils that are on roll of both schools as the current combined numbers do not exceed the overall school capacity of 280. All pupils can be accommodated on either site.
28. The combined number of pupils in both schools is currently 380. The building capacity of Holy Trinity is 420 pupils and Fenstanton has capacity for 630 pupils. Either site could therefore accommodate all current pupils.
29. Holy Trinity admissions criteria currently has 50% foundation places (offered first to families of Christian Churches). Governors propose to reduce this to 25% or fewer foundation places to ensure future intakes would continue to welcome children from the whole community.

#### **SEND**

30. Currently 24% of pupils attending Fenstanton are registered as SEND and Holy Trinity has 25% of pupils registered as SEND, with 8% of pupils having an Education Health Care Plan. These figures are significantly above both the national and Lambeth figures for SEND and reinforce the need to maintain a school in the local area.
31. This proposal recognises the need to provide additional support for pupils with SEND throughout any transition period. The Head of SEND and Inclusion in Lambeth will work closely with the SENDCo in each school to support all children with an EHCP and their families to put in place any additional support children may need throughout the process.

#### **Transition planning**

32. The school and community Educational Psychology Service will work with both schools to manage the impact of this proposal on staff, pupils and their families. Should this proposal progress, they will support the school to develop a transition plan for children as they move to the new school. These conversations and this work will be carefully planned and managed sensitively in discussion with the headteachers and senior leadership teams.
33. Given the cost-of-living crisis, there is a commitment to ensure any change in uniform does not come at additional costs for families. This would be managed into any transition planning.

#### **Site and travel**

34. The location of the new site will be the current Fenstanton site. The decision on which site the new school would be located was based on a thorough audit process which looked at a range of factors, including
  - Age and condition of building
  - Cost to repair or bring up to standard
  - Cost to maintain, including cost of utilities
  - The efficiencies of the site, including CO2 emissions
  - Accessibility
  - Distance to pupil population home addresses
  - Geographical distance to other schools.
  - Adaptability of the site
  - Views and preferences of key stakeholders including parents, governors, and the LA.

#### **Impact on Staff**

35. We know that staff will be anxious about the implications of any decision and their wellbeing is important to us. We offer our reassurance that governors, the SDBE, council officers and school leaders are here to support staff as we navigate this process together.
36. Governors anticipate that staff redundancies will be minimal, as staff will be needed in the new school. However, it is expected that some staff will want to consider their options depending upon their individual circumstances. All staff will be supported throughout this process and governors are very clear that regardless of the decision reached, we do not want to lose the experience, skills, and talent of education staff in Lambeth.
37. Governors will continue to offer support to all staff through the Lambeth Community Educational Psychology Service to work through and manage the anxieties and emotions which will inevitably be felt given any proposal that seeks to change the current make up of our schools.
38. To supplement the support outlined above, all staff have access to the council's employee assistance programme and further support through the SDBE.

#### **Impact on quality of education**

39. While both schools were judged "requires improvement" overall at their last Ofsted inspections in the summer term of 2023, significant work has been done to secure sustained and substantial improvements in the quality of education. Both schools were judged to have good personal development and behaviour and attitudes, and the breadth of curriculum was highlighted as a strength in both schools. Ensuring high quality education for pupils is an ongoing and key priority and

additional resources from the LA and SDBE will be deployed throughout the implementation stage and into the first year of amalgamation.

**How to share your views**

The governors of Holy Trinity, Church of England Primary and Fenstanton Primary will begin consulting on the 31 January 2025 to get views on the outlined proposals. This will close on the 28 February 2025.

**You can give your views via:**

- *Online survey: we would encourage you to complete the online survey as the most efficient and secure way to give your views.*



[Scan or click this link](#)

- *Hard copies can be available on request by contacting Holy Trinity - 0208 6749051 OR Fenstanton – 0208 6743311*
- *You can also give your views by attending the consultation event at the schools during the process. Dates for these will be confirmed by leaders in each school.*

Who we will consult

The governing bodies are consulting with pupils, parents and carers, staff, other local schools and trade unions. We are also consulting with other groups as well as the wider local community.

Proposed Consultation Timeline

Activity	Timeline
Pre-publication consultations	Complete
Review period for consultation feedback and to decide whether to publish statutory proposals for these changes.	Complete
Statutory Notice and representation stage	31 January – 28 February 2025
Decision	17 March 2025