

**FULL STATUTORY PROPOSALS  
SAINT GEORGE CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY AIDED COLLEGE SOUTHAMPTON  
NOTICE IN RELATION FOR PRESCRIBED ALTERATIONS –  
PROPOSALS TO CHANGE FROM SINGLE-SEX TO MIXED-SEX ADMISSIONS**

**1. School and governing body's details**

Saint George Catholic Voluntary Aided College Southampton  
Leaside Way  
Swaythling  
Southampton  
SO16 3DQ  
A voluntary aided secondary school for boys aged 11-16

**2. Implementation and any proposed stages for implementation**

To admit girls and boys to Saint George Catholic Voluntary Aided College Southampton into Year 7 from September 2013, and into every Year 7 cohort annually thereafter until each year group is mixed-sex from September 2017.

**3. Objections and comments**

(a) These proposals were published on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2012. The notice states that any person may object to or make comments on the proposals within six weeks from this date (ending on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2012)

(b) The notice states that objections or comments should be sent to:

Saint George Catholic VA College Consultation,  
School Organisation Team,  
Children's Services & Learning,  
Southampton City Council,  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Southbrook Rise,  
Millbrook Road East,  
Southampton,  
SO15 1YG.

Email comments can be sent to [CSL.Infrastructure@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:CSL.Infrastructure@southampton.gov.uk) (with Saint George Catholic VA College Consultation in the subject heading).

**4. Alteration description**

To alter Saint George Catholic Voluntary Aided College Southampton from a single-sex boys' school to a mixed-sex school, by admitting both boys and girls into Year 7 from 2013, and every year thereafter until the whole school has mixed-sex year groups from September 2017. Saint George did start out as a mixed-sex school for boys and girls when it first opened in 1958, so this alteration will see the college revert to its original status.

**5. School capacity**

Not Applicable.

**6. Implementation**

The proposals are to be implemented by the Governing body of Saint George Catholic Voluntary Aided College Southampton.

## FULL STATUTORY PROPOSALS

### 7. Additional Site

Not Applicable

### 8. Changes in boarding arrangements

Not Applicable

### 9. Transfer to new site

Not Applicable

### 10. Objectives

The objectives of the proposals are to create a mixed-sex Voluntary Aided Catholic secondary school within the city of Southampton to serve the wishes of our Catholic community. The proposals were born out of the views of parents who over a number of years have sought a non-fee paying Catholic secondary school for both their sons and daughters to attend. To achieve that in current circumstances, parents would have to pay to send their child to a private school. Our objective is to therefore revert our school to its original status, and thus create a school that meets the needs of our Catholic community. Having carried out a formal consultation with the local and wider community, this change in status at Saint George Catholic Voluntary Aided College would meet their needs. The summary of results, attached at Appendix 1 shows 72% of all responses returned in consultation were in favour of Saint George becoming co-educational from 2013. Of those responses, 81% were from Catholics who responded favouring Saint George becoming co-educational.

### 11. Consultation

- (a) A list of persons consulted;
1. The Governing Body of Saint George - The proposals have been discussed by the Governing body at their regular governing body meetings, and a specific consultation meeting was held on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2011 for governors to solely discuss proposals. A draft outline report on these proposals was first submitted to the governors for discussion in March 2011. The Governing Body reviewed the results of the consultation on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2011, and decided to proceed with the proposals as a consequence of the results and views submitted (see Appendix 4 for the minutes of this meeting).
  2. The Catholic Diocese – as a diocesan school, meetings were held with the Education Department of Portsmouth Roman Catholic Diocese. Informal discussions and consultations were undertaken with the local and wider community to ascertain the need and level of support for a mixed Catholic school. Meetings took place on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2011, 5<sup>th</sup> April 2011, 28<sup>th</sup> April 2011, 9<sup>th</sup> May 2011, 1<sup>st</sup> July 2011, 20<sup>th</sup> July 2011, 26<sup>th</sup> August 2011, 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011, 17<sup>th</sup> November 2011 and 8<sup>th</sup> December 2011. A formal outline plan of our proposals was submitted to the Diocesan Trustees Schools Committee on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2011. The Committee supported the governing body in formally consulting on the proposals in the autumn term of 2011 prior to the publication of statutory notices in January 2012.
  3. Families of pupils, teachers and other staff at Saint George – All current parents were sent a letter explaining the proposals and the consultation, as well as a response form to submit their views on the proposals. They were also all invited to a public consultation meeting held at the college on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2011. A staff meeting was held for all staff at the college in order to inform them of the proposals on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2011, and those who were unable to attend were written to informing them of the proposals. Staff Trade Union Representatives were invited to this meeting and the three main teaching unions (NUT, NASUWT and ATL) were notified of our consultation. All staff were given a response form to register their views. Copies of the response form as well as more information was made available on the college website. Regular announcements were made in staff

## FULL STATUTORY PROPOSALS

- briefings for staff. Pupils themselves were consulted with every year group attending an assembly on the proposals across the week commencing 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2011, and every pupil completed a secret ballot in tutor time giving their views on the proposal. The college website was also advertised to pupils as somewhere to get more information.
4. LA – meetings were held with Southampton LA prior to formal consultation on the proposals on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2011, 15<sup>th</sup> February 2011 and 21<sup>st</sup> July 2011 (at which a member of the governing body was also present on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2011). Members of the LA were also invited to a public consultation meeting held at Saint George on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2011. A notice was also published electronically to all council staff on 21<sup>st</sup> September, inviting everyone to the public meeting. Hampshire LA were also notified of our consultation.
  5. Governing bodies, teachers and other staff at any other school – The Headteacher of Saint George, on behalf of the governing body, informed all other secondary Headteachers in the city of the consultation process in September 2011. The Headteacher had announced the governing body's intention to propose a change in status with the Headteachers in the city's Catholic cluster at their meetings held throughout 2010 and 2011 (both primary and secondary). A poster advertising the public consultation meeting was sent to every primary and junior school in the city, where everyone was welcome to attend including governing bodies and staff.
  6. Families of pupils at any other school who may be affected, including where appropriate families of pupils at feeder primary schools – meetings and drop-in sessions were held at all six of our Catholic feeder schools (Springhill Primary on 14<sup>th</sup> September at 3.30pm, Holy Family Primary on 19<sup>th</sup> September at 3.25pm, St Patrick's Primary on 20<sup>th</sup> September at 2.30pm, St Swithun Wells Primary on 27<sup>th</sup> September at both 2.30pm and 7.30pm, St Anthony's Primary on 11<sup>th</sup> October at 3.30pm and St Peter's Primary on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> October at 2.30pm, all arranged with the Headteachers of each of those schools). Every parent at those six schools was written to, to inform them of the consultation and to invite them to both the meeting to be held at their child's school, as well as the public consultation meeting to be held at Saint George. The invitation to our public meeting was also extended to all primary and junior schools in the city, with a poster advertising the meeting being sent to every such school. The school website was also advertised to parents as a place to find further information. Information was also made available at the Saint George College Open Evening on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2011, and the Saint George College Open Mornings on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2011 and Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2011. One visit was also made to Swaythling Primary School on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2011 from 3.30pm at the request of their Headteacher to inform parents there of the proposals.
  7. Trustees of the Saint George – Saint George is in the Trusteeship of the Diocese of Portsmouth. Trustees were given a draft outline of the proposals on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2011, prior to formal consultation in the autumn term. The Trustees supported the consultation. Trustees were then presented with all consultation results on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2011, alongside a report detailing the main findings of the consultation. Having considered the outcome of the consultation, the Trustees agreed to support the governing body in the publication of statutory notices for the college's proposals to become a co-educational school.
  8. MPs – The local MP and all Southampton City Councillors were sent a copy of the consultation documents, and were all personally invited to the public consultation meeting on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2011.
  9. Faith Groups – Saint George Catholic VA College's six central Catholic parishes were contacted, with members of the leadership team speaking at one parish, and the others preferring consultation documents being sent to them by post. The public consultation meeting was advertised to each Catholic parish, through their newsletter, website or by being announced in church. The Church of England was also contacted through the CofE Diocesan Director of Education in the Portsmouth Diocese.

## FULL STATUTORY PROPOSALS

10. Any other interested party – The Polish community within Southampton were also informed at a Saturday morning school, held at St Edmund’s Church in the city centre. The public consultation meeting was also advertised at the main city library in Southampton. The local newspaper *The Daily Echo* and *BBC Solent* were also advised of the details of the public consultation meeting.

(b) See Appendix 3 to read the minutes of the public consultation meeting held on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2011.

(c) See Appendix 2 to read the views of the persons consulted.

(d) All applicable statutory requirements in relation to the proposals to consult were complied with.

(e) Consultation documents consisted of a professionally printed pamphlet giving a background to the college as well as the consultation (the pamphlet was designed for the whole community including those who might not be familiar with the college, hence some description of the college being included). Documents were made available on the college website at [www.stgeorgecollege.co.uk](http://www.stgeorgecollege.co.uk), and this was advertised in all correspondence, for example, in presentations at primary schools and at the public meeting, in letters to current parents and councillors and so on. The response form was adapted on the college website to enable people to email their responses rather than post them should they so wish, and a special email address was set up for this purpose – [consultation@st-george.southampton.sch.uk](mailto:consultation@st-george.southampton.sch.uk). The local newspaper *The Daily Echo* also published an article on our consultation process on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2011. Copies of all consultation documents are in Appendix 5.

### 12. Project costs

In the short term the PAN of Saint George Catholic Voluntary Aided College will remain at 120. There will therefore be very little capital cost as the college has the capacity to meet an increase in pupil numbers to its current assessed capacity of 600 students (the college currently has 480 students at the time of writing this proposal). We envisage essential capital spending on toilets and changing facilities, to be met from LCVAP. The college has gained the necessary funding to construct an all-weather sports pitch, which will go some way in meeting the needs of both boys and girls’ PE.

13. See Appendix 6 for a copy of funding confirmation.

### 14. Age range

Not Applicable

### 15. Early years provision

Not Applicable

### 16. Changes to sixth form provision

Not Applicable

17. Not Applicable

### 18. Special educational needs

Not Applicable

19. Not Applicable

20. Not Applicable

## FULL STATUTORY PROPOSALS

### 21. Sex of pupils

- (a) details of the likely effect which the alteration will have on the balance of the provision of single sex-education in the area;

The alteration would mean a non-fee paying mixed-sex Catholic school for boys and girls aged 11-16 would be created within Southampton, where no such provision is currently offered, despite their being strong demand for this. There will no longer be a Catholic school for boys only within Southampton, but there will still be a Catholic school for girls only (St Anne's). There would still be a boys only maintained school in the county (in Portsmouth).

- (b) evidence of local demand for single-sex education; and

Evidence from the formal consultation shows there is a stronger demand for mixed-sex education than single-sex education within our community. This is because the majority (72%) of the adults who responded to the consultation wanted Saint George Catholic Voluntary Aided College to admit girls as well as boys from 2013. Being a Catholic school, it is also important to note that 81% of all Catholics who responded also preferred Saint George to become a mixed-sex school. The consultation provided more evidence for mixed-sex education rather than single-sex education. Appendix 2 details all comments made during the consultation.

In addition to the evidence collated from the consultation, it is also important to note that there appears to be no demand for single-sex education at Key Stage 2 or at Key Stage 5, and all primary schools and sixth form colleges in Southampton are mixed-sex. Every child that has attended a Catholic primary school has, up until the age of 11 years, been taught in a co-educational setting. There has been no choice for Catholic parents to send their children to a mixed-sex Catholic school in Southampton for over forty years.

Furthermore, when Southampton City Council carried out its *Learning Futures* consultation in 2006, there was no overwhelming evidence for single-sex education within the city, and therefore all single-sex schools other than Saint George and St Anne's were either closed or merged into co-educational schools, leaving Saint George and St Anne's the only single-sex schools in the city.

- (c) details of any transitional period which the body making the proposals wishes specified in a transitional exemption order (within the meaning of section 27 of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975).

Girls would be admitted progressively from 2013 onwards, and therefore not until September 2017 would Saint George Catholic Voluntary Aided College have mixed-sex year groups across the school from Years 7 to 11. Therefore the transitional exemption order will apply for admissions into Year 7 at Saint George up to admissions the year commencing September 2017.

### 23. Extended services

Not Applicable

### 24. Need or demand for additional places

Not Applicable

### 25. Expansion of successful and popular schools

Not Applicable

25A. Not Applicable