

Appendix 3 – Statutory Proposal - To close Townsend Primary School

Southwark Council publishes these proposals under section 15(2) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to close Townsend Primary School with effect from 31 August 2023.

Category	Information
1. Contact details	
a. School contact details and category	<p>Townsend Primary School is a Community Primary School Townsend Primary School's address is Townsend Street, London SE17 1HJ.</p> <p>Townsend Primary School's phone number is 020 7703 2672, and email office@townsend.southwark.sch.uk</p>
b. Local Authority contact details	The London Borough of Southwark, 160 Tooley Street, LONDON, SE1 2QH. Phone number is 020 7525 5000
2. Implementation	
The date on which it is proposed to close the school or, where it is proposed that the closure be implemented in stages, the dates of and information about each stage.	Townsend Primary School is proposed to be closed from the 31 st August 2023 onwards.
3. Reason for closure	
3. A statement explaining the reason why closure of the school is considered necessary.	3. The closure of Townsend Primary School is considered necessary because it is no longer financially sustainable. The pupil roll has fallen consistently over the past five years resulting in reduced funding which the school receives based on pupil numbers. From the start of the next financial year, the funding gap due to falling pupil numbers is anticipated to be approximately £360,000, incurring further debt every year thereafter, due to the number of vacant places if the school remains open. The Council believe that, were Townsend Primary School to remain open, a new reduced staffing model would be required from September 2023, which would not enable children to continue receiving the high quality education they deserve and need.

Category	Information																														
4. Pupil Numbers and Admissions																															
<p>4. The numbers (distinguishing between compulsory and non-compulsory school age pupils), age range, sex, and special educational needs of pupils (distinguishing between boarding and day pupils) for whom provision is currently made at the school.</p>	<p>4. There is no pre-school/nursery at Townsend Primary School and therefore, there are no non-compulsory school age pupils. Townsend does not include any boarding pupils. There are 131 pupils on roll (as at October Census Day), 6 children have an EHCP and a further 28 are supported with SEND action plus. A breakdown of children on roll by age group is shown in the table below:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="628 539 1398 658"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>R</th> <th>1</th> <th>2</th> <th>3</th> <th>4</th> <th>5</th> <th>6</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Girls</td> <td>7</td> <td>12</td> <td>10</td> <td>4</td> <td>11</td> <td>16</td> <td>7</td> <td>67</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Boys</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> <td>10</td> <td>12</td> <td>9</td> <td>9</td> <td>15</td> <td>64</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total	Girls	7	12	10	4	11	16	7	67	Boys	4	5	10	12	9	9	15	64			
Year	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total																							
Girls	7	12	10	4	11	16	7	67																							
Boys	4	5	10	12	9	9	15	64																							
5 to 7. Displaced pupils																															
<p>5. A statement and supporting evidence about the need for school places in the area including whether there is sufficient capacity to accommodate displaced pupils.</p>	<p>5. Demand for reception places in the area has reduced dramatically in the last 5 years, the local authority took action in 2018/19 to reduce this excess by formally reducing the published admission number at twelve schools.</p> <p>This school is situated in the Southwark's school place planning area 1 – (PA1) – “Borough, Bankside and Walworth”, which comprises 18 other schools. Demand in this locality has decreased substantially, due to consistently falling birth rates, as well as a variety of socio-economic factors that have led to fewer families living in the area. The table below shows reception year figures, capacity, vacancies and percentage of vacancies.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="628 1312 1350 1503"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>2019</th> <th>2020</th> <th>2021</th> <th>2022</th> <th>2023</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Places</td> <td>945</td> <td>810</td> <td>810</td> <td>795</td> <td>765</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Uptake</td> <td>658</td> <td>612</td> <td>608</td> <td>587</td> <td>558</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vacancies</td> <td>286</td> <td>198</td> <td>202</td> <td>208</td> <td>207</td> </tr> <tr> <td>%</td> <td>30%</td> <td>24%</td> <td>25%</td> <td>26%</td> <td>27%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Places	945	810	810	795	765	Uptake	658	612	608	587	558	Vacancies	286	198	202	208	207	%	30%	24%	25%	26%	27%
Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023																										
Places	945	810	810	795	765																										
Uptake	658	612	608	587	558																										
Vacancies	286	198	202	208	207																										
%	30%	24%	25%	26%	27%																										
<p>6. Details of the schools or further education colleges at which pupils at the school to be discontinued will be offered places, including</p>	<p>6. The local authority has confirmed that there are over 600 vacancies across years R to 6 at 9 other primary schools within 0.6 miles of Townsend Primary School, which indicates there is sufficient capacity to accommodate displaced pupils, subject to parental preferences made through an admissions process. A coordinated admissions process will be delivered by the local authority for all families with a child on roll at Townsend Primary School to enable them to apply for an alternative school of preference for September 2023. Parents also have the option to apply to schools, which are further away as there are some families travel from outside of the immediate area to enable their children to attend Townsend The School Admissions Team at the</p>																														

Category	Information
<p>6(a) any interim arrangements</p> <p>6 (b) the provision that is to be made for those pupils who receive educational provision recognised by the local authority as reserved for children with special educational needs; and</p> <p>6 (c) in the case of special schools, the alternative provision made by local authorities other than the local authority which maintain the school.</p> <p>7. Details of any other measures proposed to be taken to increase the number of school or FE places available in consequence of the proposed discontinuance.</p>	<p>Local Authority can provide information and contact details for schools; they can be contacted at the following email address: schooladmissions@southwark.gov.uk</p> <p>6a) there are no interim arrangements required</p> <p>6b) there is no SEND specialist reserved provision at this school - this section does not apply. There are 6 children with EHCPs – transition arrangements for these children into alternative schools are being managed by caseworkers on the local authority’s Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) team to ensure appropriate placements are made.</p> <p>6c) Townsend Primary School is not a special school, this does not apply</p> <p>7. There is no need for additional places to be provided in order to accommodate the children displaced by the closure of Townsend Primary School, as there are currently, over 600 spare places within half a mile of the school available across year groups to accommodate displaced pupils.</p>
8. Impact on the community	
<p>8. A statement and supporting evidence about the impact on the community of the closure of the school and any measures proposed to mitigate any adverse impact.</p>	<p>8. The decision to propose closure of Townsend Primary School has been taken to protect the education of children attending the school, and ensure that, should the school close they can have a managed transition to other local schools.</p> <p>Southwark Council acknowledge that the closure of the school will have an impact on the community, and be deeply felt by many families/local residents due to the significant, community links and emotional ties developed and held by generations at Townsend Primary School. However, given the significant level of capacity at high quality schools in the locality and across Southwark as a whole, families will be able to access alternative school places in the community. The closure of Townsend may enable some of the surrounding schools with low rolls to strengthen their intake and as a result, to become more financially viable.</p>

Category	Information
	No mitigation will be required because of the availability of alternative school places at other schools in the local community.
9. Rural primary schools	
9. Where proposals relate to a rural primary school designated as such by an order made for the purposes of section 15, a statement that the local authority or the governing body (as the case may be) considered section 15(4).	9. Townsend Primary School is not in an area that has been classified as “rural”, nor has it been designated as such by an order made for the purposes of section 15.
10. Balance of denominational provision	
10. Where the school has a religious character, a statement about the impact of the proposed closure on the balance of denominational provision in the area and the impact on parental choice.	10. The school does not have a religious character
11. Maintained nursery schools	
11. Where proposals relate to the discontinuance of a maintained nursery school, a statement setting out (a)the local authority’s assessment of the quality and quantity of the alternative provision compared to the school proposed to be discontinued and the proposed arrangements to ensure the expertise and specialism continues to be available; and (b)the accessibility and convenience of replacement provision for local parents.	11. Townsend is a 4-11 primary school and includes no nursery provision, this section does not apply

Category	Information
12. Sixth form provision	
<p>12. Where the school proposed to be discontinued provides sixth form education, the effect for 16 to 19 year olds in the area that the closure will have in respect of</p> <p>(a)their educational or training achievements;</p> <p>(b)their participation in education or training; and</p> <p>(c)the range of educational or training opportunities available to them.</p>	<p>12. Townsend is a 4-11 primary school, it does not include sixth form provision, this section does not apply.</p>
13. Special Educational Needs Provision	
<p>13. Where existing provision that is recognised by the local authority as reserved for pupils with special educational needs is being discontinued, a statement as to how the local authority or the governing body (as the case may be) believe the proposals are likely to lead to improvements in the standard, quality and/or range of the educational provision for these children</p>	<p>13. There is no special educational needs provision reserved for SEND pupils at Townsend, so no specialist provision is proposed for discontinuation.</p>
14-15 Travel	
<p>14. Details of length and journeys to alternative provision.</p>	<p>14. All children on roll at the school could be offered a place within 0.6 miles of their existing school – there are 9 schools with more than 660 places, across year groups R to 6 available within this area. Every parent however, is able to make a preference for an alternative school inside or outside this area.</p>

Category	Information
	The commuting distance of children, currently attending Townsend is not likely to be substantively affected as they transition into alternative schools. It is therefore not expected that journeys to and from alternative schools provided will be lengthier than at present due to availability but longer journeys may occur as a result of parental preference of schools outside of the local area.
15. The proposed arrangements for travel of displaced pupils to other schools including how the proposed arrangements will mitigate against increased car use.	15. As outlined above, the pupils displaced by the school closure may not be unduly inconvenienced by lengthier travel, as there is plenty of provision within walking distance of Townsend Primary School. This would help to mitigate against any increase in car use, as no more car journeys will be necessary than at present.
Making objections to or comments on these proposals	<p>Within four weeks from the date of publication of these proposals, by 5 pm on [Date to be confirmed] any person may object to or make comments on the proposals or, request a paper copy of the proposal by emailing</p> <p>vilma.edwards@southwark.gov.uk</p> <p>or by post to: <i>Vilma Edwards, SELA, Children's Services, Southwark Council, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH</i></p>

Signed

Nina Dohel
Director of Education