



Your questions answered

Will my child be offered a place at the amalgamated school?

All pupils currently attending Sullivan or New King's will be guaranteed a place at the amalgamated school if they want it.

Will my child stay with his/her classmates and current class teachers?

Sullivan children would transfer to New King's with their classmates and many of their class teachers, providing as much continuity as possible.

Will the proposal disrupt my child's education?

All change brings a degree of disruption and both sets of pupils would have to move sites (see site and timeline proposals in the consultation document), but by transferring current pupils and class teachers together, there would be continuity in pupils' education, provided by teachers they know.

The Council would assign link education advisers to each of the schools to help them maintain the highest standards.

Why not amalgamate with Langford?

Langford primary school is also under-subscribed, but serves a different group of families, including those living to the east of Wandsworth Bridge Road, so an amalgamation with Langford would lead to more families travelling longer distances.

Is this about cutting budgets?

No. Schools' funding comes directly from the Government based on the number of pupils. By amalgamating on one site, the new school would be able to spend its money more effectively. In addition, the council would invest at least £2 million in a significant building refurbishment.

It does not represent value for money to maintain two separate schools, both requiring some investment in repairs and maintenance, when both are under-occupied and when there is a more strategic opportunity to consider. The proposal targets resources at one school, where the investment will provide a high quality environment for many years. An additional benefit is that it releases the other school site for rebuilding in order to provide brand new facilities, meeting a demand which cannot be provided for elsewhere. The cost of this school will be met by additional capital grant funding not otherwise available to the borough.

The top-to-bottom refurbishment of the New King's building will include upgrades of roof, windows, heating and electrical installations, as well as improvements to external areas. If, as a result of amalgamation, this refurbishment goes ahead, it will provide state-of-the-art facilities not usually found in primary schools, in particular specialist classrooms to deliver science, music and art.

If this goes ahead, what money will be available for reinvestment in the pupils' education?

There would be real advantages. The savings made on running costs by moving from two schools to one would free up much more money to be spent on front line learning activities.

The number of pupils dictates the amount of money received from Government, so that would stay the same, but the Council estimates that approximately £400,000 could be saved by amalgamating on one site. There would be economies of scale in utility bills, cleaning and maintenance. Back office functions such as finance, IT and site management would be streamlined. Potential staffing structures are yet to be detailed, but there would be a single Headteacher.

The £400,000 estimated is approximately 20% of a primary school's budget, the equivalent, for example, of the cost of employing an extra eight teachers. Making such significant savings by amalgamating two relatively small schools on one site would give the school a great opportunity to reinvest the money in teaching staff, support staff and equipment.

Why is only Fulham Boys' Free School being considered if the Sullivan site is vacated?

It is the only new school that is currently without a site. Fulham Boys' Free School has been able to demonstrate it has parental support in the area and it has been approved by the Government. It would provide boys at the amalgamated primary school with an additional option when choosing their secondary school.

Will opening a new free school be fair to other secondary schools in the area?

To get Government approval for a new free school, its proposers have to show there is a need for new places and that they have support from sufficient numbers of local families. Fulham Boys' Free School has already made its case and gained permission to open in Fulham. We have been impressed with the popularity of the new free school and academy that have opened in Hammersmith and with their success in complementing existing state school choices. The addition of a Church of England option for boys would improve the range of choices for local families.

More information on the Fulham Boys' Free School proposal is available on their website:

<http://www.fulhamboysschool.org/>

You say parents are enthusiastic about Fulham Boys' Free School and that it improves the range of choices, but what is the case for needing a new Church of England secondary school for boys?

There is currently an imbalance of places for boys and girls in the borough that the new school would help correct. At present there are three girls' secondary schools in Hammersmith & Fulham and only two boys' schools, one of which offers places only for Roman Catholic boys.

For residents wanting single-sex education in Hammersmith and Fulham, 73 offers of secondary places were made to boys this year compared to 194 offers to girls. This is disproportionate, particularly as there were more applications for boys, 601, than there were for girls, 585. The new school would help meet this need.

Fulham Boys' Free School would provide the first boys' Church of England school in H&F, with as many of the places (up to 60 each year) allocated on the basis of proximity to the school as on the basis of faith. The school is supported by the London Diocesan Board for Schools and will work closely with the popular and highly successful Lady Margaret School, a Church of England academy for girls. A memorandum of understanding is being agreed between the two governing bodies setting out the areas on which they plan to work together for the benefit of the pupils attending the two single-sex schools.

What analysis has the Council undertaken on the likely traffic pressures in south Fulham arising from the potential new school and other developments in the area?

The Council has already met with representatives of the Peterborough Road and Area Residents' Association (PRARA) to discuss residents' concerns and has agreed to commission a holistic survey of all developments in the area and their likely impact.

If the site did become available and Fulham Boys' Free School were to apply for planning permission, its School Travel Plan would be scrutinised by the Council's planning and environment departments, taking into account all the residents' views and opinions. Approval for the scheme would not be granted if the plan did not meet the departments' planning requirements.

Would part of the Sullivan site need to be sold off to help finance the project or would all the money be coming directly from the government?

The Department for Education (DfE) has confirmed that if the Sullivan site were to be vacated and made available to Fulham Boy's School, the DfE would fund the building of this new secondary school at a cost of £13.5million. There are no plans currently for the Sullivan site, or any part of it, to be sold off to help finance the project.

Is the Council handing over the land, the buildings and the schools to private companies?

No. Fulham Boys' Free School has been approved by the Government and is a publicly funded school with the status of charitable trust. If the amalgamation proposal were to go ahead and the Sullivan site eventually vacated and made

available to Fulham Boys' Free School, the Council would follow standard national procedures and grant a lease of 125 years to the charitable trust.

Similarly, if New King's Primary took the decision to become an academy, with Thomas's Day Schools as partner, the new academy would have the legal status of charitable trust and be subject to all the regulations that apply. Again, in line with standard practice, the Council would grant a 125 year lease to the charitable trust.

This is exactly what the Council has done in other cases where H&F schools have changed status – Canberra Primary School, for example, now an ARK academy, as well as the schools in the Fulham College Academy Trust: Fulham Cross Girls' and Fulham College Boys'.

Who is being consulted and what publicity is being organised for the consultation?

We would like local people and everyone at the schools affected to have their say about the proposal and we have made every effort to ensure they can.

More than 60 different letters, accompanied by consultation materials, were sent to stakeholders seeking their views. Consultation letters were sent to all parents and carers of pupils at Sullivan, New King's and Parayhouse schools and to the Headteachers, Chairs and all staff and governors of the schools: a total of some 650 letters together with consultation booklets.

All requests for stock of the booklet with its integral response form have been met. Substantial supplies of the booklets have been delivered to the schools for their own distribution. Over 1,000 booklets have also been provided for Hurlingham & Chelsea Secondary School and Langford Primary School. We have supplied Fulham library with stock of the booklet for display.

In addition to the distribution of hard copy materials, we are encouraging participants to visit the online consultation space, where they can keep themselves informed of developments and register their views.

Individual consultation letters have been written to: all Trades Unions representing staff at the schools; the local MP; the Councillors of the three affected wards (Sands End, Parsons Green & Walham, Town); the eight neighbouring Local Authorities; Head of Special Educational Needs at Wandsworth; Headteachers of all Fulham schools potentially affected (nurseries, primaries, secondaries, specials and PRUs); the founders of Fulham Boys' School and the Directors of the C of E and RC Diocesan Boards for Education. A consultation communication was sent to all Hammersmith & Fulham schools via the Council's weekly School Staff Zone e-bulletin. Letters and copies of the booklet were also sent to Children's Centres in Fulham.

Sullivan, New King's and Parayhouse schools have been asked to suggest any other stakeholders or special interest groups they feel should be consulted.

We have gone to great lengths to publicise the consultation. The consultation has, for example, been featured several times in the Council's 'Your Hammersmith & Fulham' e-newsletter, mailed to 42,000 subscribers. A press release was sent to all local media, including blogs, and was posted prominently on the public-facing lbhf

website and the intranet for staff. The online consultation and supporting information was linked to the story and went live in the early hours of 16 July.

Why is the consultation period over the school summer holidays, what is the closing date?

We feel that the lengthy consultation period (beyond that required) will maximise the opportunity for parents and local people to have their say. We felt it was to the benefit of all concerned to start the consultation as early as possible, but recognise that some of the consultation period falls within the school holidays. We have taken this into consideration: Department for Education (DfE) guidance recommends that a consultation of this sort runs for a minimum of six weeks; the period we have allowed is 12 weeks, from 16 July through to a closing date of 8 October. If, following consultation, the decision were taken to go ahead with the proposal, statutory notices would be published in October 2013 for a further six-week period within which further representations could be made.

What is being done to support parents, staff and governors to respond to the consultation proposals?

The measures we have taken to inform all concerned by letters and distribution of consultation materials is detailed above.

We have worked with the schools to set dates for public meetings at each of the two schools, as noted in the consultation booklet:

Public meetings

Thursday 5 September 2013, 6.30pm

New King's School, New King's Road, Fulham SW6 4LY

Tuesday 10 September 2013, 6.00pm

Sullivan School, Peterborough Road, Fulham SW6 3BN

We have arranged these meetings to provide opportunities for Council representatives Cllr Georgie Cooney, Cabinet Member for Education, Andrew Christie, Tri-borough Executive Director of Children's Services and Ian Hegg, Tri-borough Director for Schools' Commissioning, to explain the proposal and for those attending to raise questions and air their views face-to-face. The Heads and Chairs of Governors intend to welcome their school communities and to make their own presentations. The meetings will be noted and any issues raised will be reported and considered as contributions to the consultation.

We are continuing to liaise with the schools over the detailed arrangements and will support the meetings in every way possible. The Council's Events Management team have undertaken to provide a professional PA system and technical support. In addition to stage microphones, there will be roving mics for the Q and A session when the meeting is opened to the floor.

Meetings are also being arranged for the staff of both schools. The aim is to help all staff understand the proposal and what it will mean for them if the decision is taken to proceed. Senior Council managers will attend and there will be Human Resources and Trades Union representation.

Any costs arising from the public meetings and staff meetings organised by the Council will be met by the Council.

There may have been spare capacity in both schools in the past, but is it true that they are oversubscribed for this current intake in September?

Reception place take-up for 2013/14 is becoming clear now that the pupils have started school for the new term. Neither Sullivan nor New King's have met their published admissions number and filled their reception classes. It should be emphasised that all classes from Years 1-6 in both schools continue to have spare places.

What are the figures for the spare capacity in community primary schools in this area?

The last school census figures (May 2013) showed that classes across the year groups were not full in four of Fulham's community primary schools, including Sullivan and New King's. There were 384 spare places out of a total of 1260 places available, i.e. over 30% of places were unfilled.

If there are spare places in these schools, why have extra places been created in other Fulham schools?

Over the last four years the Council has worked to provide a total of 616 extra places (88 extra reception places per year) in popular and oversubscribed Fulham primary schools that meet the Schools of Choice agenda. There was clear demand for these places, expressed in parents' application preferences, and their provision has proved extremely popular – all the places have filled:

- 30 extra places at St John's Walham Green
- 28 new bilingual places at L'école Marie d'Orliac
- 30 extra places at Holy Cross

We are told there is increasing demand for primary places nationally. What demand has the Council estimated?

The Council has a duty to provide sufficient school places and estimates how many places will be needed year on year, looking at factors such as population increase, housing developments and family mobility. The Council's latest predictions, as set out in the chart below, show a projected increase across H&F in demand for new primary places at reception level from 1,516 places in 2012/13 to 1,650 places in 2016/17. The main area of projected additional demand is in the northern half of the borough, but with concentrations in Fulham Broadway and Sands End due to proposed new housing developments. Currently, however, primary schools in Fulham have sufficient capacity to meet demand.

The Hammersmith & Fulham School Capacity submission to the Department for Education in 2012 is as follows:

Forecasts	Reception
2012/13	1516
2013/14	1580
2014/15	1646
2015/16	1604
2016/17	1650

Are additional places required to cope with developments that are planned as part of the South Fulham Riverside regeneration?

Yes. The Council recognises that more primary places will be needed. The exact number will depend on the scale of the final developments, but the Council estimates that spare capacity in existing schools in the area is such that it can meet this need.

Given that Sullivan Primary School was judged by Ofsted as 'good with outstanding features' in May 2010 and is oversubscribed for Autumn Term 2013, how can you justify a proposal that means it would cease to exist? How does this fit with the Council's 'Schools of Choice' agenda?

In line with the Council's Schools of Choice agenda, which sets out to increase the number of outstanding, high-achieving and oversubscribed schools parents can choose from in the borough, the Council has been working with both New King's and Sullivan for some time to help them become schools of choice. Both schools, despite the fact that their standards are high and that they are judged to be good schools by Ofsted, have spare places in every year group.

It would be fair to say that consideration of the future of Sullivan school and the need to have a plan which involves change has been on the agenda for some time, as detailed below. The approach to date and the current proposals are in line with the Council's Schools of Choice agenda.

What is the background to this? Did discussions take place with the Governors and Senior Management Team at Sullivan and at New King's before the Council announced this proposal?

The Council originally approached Sullivan in 2010 to discuss a possible federation with Hurlingham and Chelsea School and the opportunity to provide a new primary school building for Sullivan on the Hurlingham and Chelsea site. At that time, governors at Sullivan decided not to progress with the federation or the building proposal. The following year, Hurlingham and Chelsea and Langford governors decided to federate and Sullivan were again approached with an offer to join the federation but declined the offer. Then in 2012, the Council approached both New King's and Sullivan to offer support in developing a federation proposal between the two schools. New King's governors were keen to work with Sullivan, but no joint decisions were taken to move forward.

Subsequently, New King's governors decided that they would like to convert to academy status working with Thomas's London Day Schools as a partner. The Council was generally supportive of their plans, but given the ongoing spare capacity issues at both schools, asked New King's to delay their consultation on the proposed academy conversion while the Council began a consultation on the amalgamation of both schools. Given the timeline that New King's had originally set for consulting on their proposal, **within that current** term, the Council felt that the consultation on the amalgamation should begin on 16 July, allowing more time for discussion and for responses about the proposals to be submitted.

The meetings with New King's took place on 2 July and 8 July. At the latter, the school was informed of the decision to begin a public consultation on the amalgamation proposal on 16 July. The equivalent meeting with Sullivan's Headteacher and Chair of Governors had also been arranged and took place the next day, 9 July.

If you are moving a whole school into another school, what will be the impact on the children in both schools?

If we proceed, there will inevitably be some disruption, but we are sure that the benefits far outweigh any disadvantages and we will make every effort to ensure a smooth transition. The proposed method of amalgamation, with one school expanded to accommodate the pupils from the other, is the least disruptive of the ways of achieving a new combined school, providing better facilities and educational opportunities on one site.

Places in the amalgamated school will be guaranteed for all existing pupils and, as we explain in the consultation document, Sullivan children would transfer to New King's with their classmates and many of their class teachers, providing as much continuity as possible.

Both sets of pupils would have to move sites, but by transferring current pupils and class teachers together, there would be continuity in pupils' education, provided by teachers they know. Additionally, existing governors at Sullivan School would be encouraged to nominate themselves for available places on the governing body of New King's School.

The Council would provide professional support to ensure that the phased process of change is managed properly. This applies to all aspects of change management, with particular emphasis on the maintaining the high standards of education, with link education advisers allocated to both schools.

We firmly believe that by amalgamating on one site, the combined school could reduce running costs and take better advantage of economies of scale to improve facilities and learning experiences. We think that bringing together these two schools on one site, building on the best from each, will have a significant impact on raising standards further and will help the amalgamated school attract more families, fill current surplus places and provide a securer long term future.

Can you provide more information about the next stage proposed, the amalgamated school becoming an academy? This is another uncertainty – what will it mean and is the proposal part of this consultation?

It is the aim of the existing governing body of New King's to convert to academy status from September 2014 as "Parson's Green Academy - in partnership with Thomas's Day Schools". This will almost certainly remain the aim of the new governing body if the schools amalgamate. The Council is fully supportive of the proposal, but any academy proposal would be subject to a full, stand-alone consultation with parents and staff and this would come from the governing body.

New King's has told the LA that the proposal has the full support of the governors, Head and teaching staff and that Thomas's have proposed a full partnership model between the two organisations. The school's vision is to offer 'a world-class education for our international community', building on the strengths of a successful community primary school, adding significant elements of an independent school offer to bring a unique school of choice for local parents.

The school is confident that Thomas's possesses all the necessary academic, financial, administrative and logistical experience required to achieve these aims and to support the continued development of New King's.

How would this proposal transform the educational opportunities for the children?

The Council envisages that the proposed amalgamation would enable the new school to develop a vision which allows every child to experience a truly exceptional education.

New King's has been developing an international focus to their curriculum, based on the very latest educational research. The school would continue to follow the International Primary Curriculum and would build on pioneering work with the Maths Mastery programme (a rigorous mathematics curriculum praised for raising standards around the world) to build an innovative, effective and highly relevant approach for pupils.

Changes would include a broadening of the curriculum, introducing a particular focus on Science, and Music (building on an area of particular strength at Sullivan). Improved resourcing would aid the enriched curriculum. The refurbishment would provide well defined specialist learning areas such as an art studio, music room and a creative computing suite. A brand new junior science lab would be created, linked to an outdoor classroom and greenhouse. The refurbished site would provide great opportunities to learn within state of the art facilities which would be otherwise unavailable in the primary sector.

Specialist teaching and specialist multi sensory resources including a dedicated multi sensory room would be introduced. The radically refurbished facilities would include a lift, providing full access to all areas for all pupils, helping ensure a first class inclusive education.

Additionally, the proposed partnership with Thomas's offers significant benefits. The organisation is recognised for offering a rich and broad education which inspires

enjoyment, learning and achievement. Thomas's would provide invaluable academic, administrative and logistical support. New King's anticipates linking up with Thomas's schools for a wide range of exciting, creative projects and aims to build on existing strengths to offer the very best educational opportunities.

What is the status of the amalgamation consultation - who devised the format and who will be analysing the results? When will the results be published?

This is a formal consultation, now live, that will lead to a Cabinet decision. The consultation adheres to DfE School Organisation Decision Makers Guidance for Local Authorities and the established good practice format and previous models used by the Council. The consultation can be viewed at: www.lbhf.gov.uk/fulhamschools

A report summarising and analysing the consultation feedback will be produced for consideration in the Cabinet decision making process and will be made available to the public alongside the other consultation materials on the lbhf website.

If the consultation feedback is largely against the move of Sullivan what will happen?

The Council has an obligation to make best use of its resources and will take all views expressed in the consultation into account before deciding whether or not to proceed.

The New King's building is older and has less green space than Sullivan. How will these proposals address this?

The Council believes that the substantial New King's building offers excellent scope for modernisation, with an increase in first class accommodation which would compensate for the loss of the Sullivan building. The Council would ensure that outdoor space at New King's will be of high quality and sufficient for the numbers of children attending. The intended creation of an outdoor classroom/greenhouse and pond is one example, supporting innovative delivery of the science curriculum. The redesigned and refurbished site would provide exceptional, state of the art facilities.

As a partner, Thomas's expertise will be invaluable. They operate four leading primary schools, three of which occupy purpose built Victorian school buildings similar to New King's. These buildings have been transformed by Thomas's and are now impressive, thriving schools with rolls of between 400 and 600 pupils.

Consultation closes 8 October

We want to hear your views

Read more and fill in your response online at
www.lbhf.gov.uk/fulhamschools