

The Future of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Camden

Thank you for attending this session today

We want to acknowledge that this consultation about your child's school may be causing you and them some anxiety and concern. We want to reassure you that no decisions have been made at this stage.

The consultation provides 3 options for you to consider, and we want to hear your thoughts on these and any other ideas or suggestions you may have.



Marcus Boyland
Cabinet Member for
Best Start for Children
and Families



Tim Aldridge
Executive Director
Children and Learning



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Director of Education
Commissioning and
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Why are we consulting?

Falling birth rates, as well as **families moving out of London**, mean there are fewer children to take up school places.

Births in Camden have fallen by approx. 28.8% since 2015

This impacts the number of primary school places needed. In Camden in January 2026:

- There were **1,460** places available for Reception. However, there were only 1,312 pupils.
- Across all primary year groups, **14.4%** of school places were unfilled.

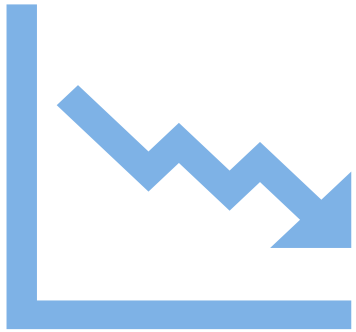
Why are we consulting?

Looking forward, School Place Forecasts show that fewer children are expected to need Reception places, which means more school places are likely to remain empty.

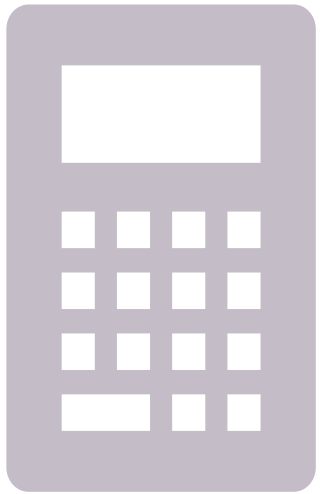
By 2032 - 33:

Reception: demand is projected to fall, leaving 14% of places unfilled

All primary year groups: The number of empty school places is expected to rise to 20%



Why are we consulting?



Schools get most of their funding based on how many pupils attend a school.

Fewer pupils means less funding for schools, while costs like staffing and buildings often remain high. This can create financial pressure, with some schools spending more than they bring in. This may cause a risk to educational quality if resources are spread too thinly.

Some schools are already facing financial difficulties because of falling pupil numbers. St Joseph’s is one of those schools.

Why are we consulting?

St Joseph's has been significantly affected by falling pupil numbers.

For the 25/26 school year, they had:

- 30 places available at Reception, but only **11** pupils.
- For Reception – Year 6, they had 210 places available, but only **117** pupils.

In March 2026, the school was in £536,767 deficit.

What are we consulting on?

No decisions have been made yet. We have included some options in the consultation for your views

1	Reducing the number of places St Joseph's offers at Reception
2	To close St Jospeh's

What are we consulting on?

Option	What does this mean?	Anything else I should know?
Option 1: Reducing the number of Reception places available	To have only 15 Reception places available (currently 30)	Reception = half a class. May mean classes combine year groups

What are we consulting on?

Option	What does this mean?	Anything else I should know?
Option 2: Close St Joseph's	St Joseph's is closed, and pupils are supported to apply to other schools	St Joseph's is located near other schools

Hearing from you:

Other Options?

We would like to hear whether you have alternative ideas as to how we can respond to the number of empty school places.

When looking at the options for St Joseph's, it might be helpful for you to consider

1. Contributes to securing a viable future for the school
2. Contributes towards reducing the levels of empty school places in Camden
3. Helps to ensure that current and future pupils will continue to receive a high standard of education in a safe and inclusive environment

What happens next?

We will review your feedback alongside the feedback from the other consultation responses. We will then plan the next steps and update you. This will be early next year, to ensure we can properly consider all the feedback.