



ENGLISH MARTYRS' CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Worship Together, Aspire Together, Excel Together

English Martyrs' Catholic Primary School and the Old Kent Road Area Action Plan

Before Christmas the Governors met with Southwark Council and the Archdiocese of Southwark Education Commission. At this meeting Governors were asked to start a two-year consultation process on the possibility of a school merger, given our falling school roll and the surplus of places in all schools in the local area. No decision was made by the Governing Body before Christmas other than to seek further evidence before starting any future consultation.

In January 2021 Southwark Council published its consultation for the Old Kent Road Area Action Plan which includes:

- 20,000 new homes, including at least 7,000 affordable homes of which at least 5,000 will be social rent homes
- A new secondary school, two new primary schools and the potential to expand nine existing primary schools in the area

The Old Kent Road Area Action Plan highlights the expected growth in the area and therefore the projected demand for school places in the local area.

English Martyrs' currently draws 87% of its pupils from the areas impacted by the Old Kent Road Area Action Plan. We are therefore concerned that the Council is encouraging us to consider a merger, when additional school places may be required within the next few years. We are also worried that such a merger would reduce the offering for Catholic families in the area, and cause unnecessary uncertainty and disruption, when compared to safeguarding existing school communities like English Martyrs'.

English Martyrs' Catholic Primary School is an important part of our local community. A Catholic school has been on this site for 117 years. We have seen generations of pupils come through our door and we continue to serve a diverse community. We are rightly proud of our legacy and our ambition for many more years of serving our community.

With the support of the Education Commission, the Governing Body has made it clear to Southwark Council that it will be pausing any consultation process.

As a school community it is hugely important that we respond to the Old Kent Road Area Action Plan consultation to highlight importance of including our school in any future development plans. Inclusion in this plan will help safeguard the school's future. The Governors will make their response public on the website and would encourage all parents and members of the local community to respond individually as well.

The Old Kent Road Area Action Plan consultation will end on the 5th April and can be found: <https://www.southwark.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy-and-transport-policy/development-plan/area-action-plans-section/old-kent-road-aap/current-and-previous-versions-of-okr-aap>

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