

Brighton & Hove City Council

Children, Families and Schools Committee

Agenda Item 44

Subject: Petitions referred from Full Council

Date of meeting: 22 January 2024

Report of: Executive Director for Governance, People & Resources

Contact Officer: Name: Francis Mitchell
Tel: 01273 294183
Email: Francis.Mitchell@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Ward(s) affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

1.1 To receive petitions debated at the Full Council meeting held on 14 December 2023.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

2.1 That the committee responds to the petition either by noting it or, where it is considered more appropriate, calling for an officer report on the matter.

3. Context and background information:

3.1 To receive the following:

Petitions:

1) Save St Bartholomew's C of E Primary School from closure:

Brighton and Hove City Council are proposing to close down St Bartholomew's C of E Primary School. This proposed decision is because of "falling" numbers in pupils in the area and earmarked for as soon as end of July 2024.

We cannot allow this to happen!

St Bartholomew's is safe, loving, caring and passionate school. The children are happy, enjoy learning and the staff are dedicated to deliver the very best start to all the young children who have passed through its doors. Each child is treated as an individual with respect and taught with their own strengths and qualities in mind.

It is a school who are committed supporting pupils and families with additional needs. Closing it would deprive many of these children's opportunities and it would have detrimental impact for many of our families who rely the support from school.

Children have had their education and their lives disrupted enough due to the pandemic. We do not need to add even more unnecessary and cruel uncertainty. All the children need stability and security and to be able to access an education in the setting they are familiar with and feel settled in.

Our children and communities have suffered enough. We do not need another possible block of flats being built in the area, all for their financial gain.

Together, let's save St Bartholomew's! Help our children remain at school they love, with their friends.

2) Help save St. Peter's Community School:

My daughter, who has Special Educational Needs (SEN), is a proud student at St. Peter's Community School in Portslade-by-Sea, Brighton and Hove, Brighton, UK. This school is a beacon of hope for children like her who struggle in larger educational settings due to their unique SEN needs.

St. Peter's is not just a school; it's an amazing community where teachers are kind, compassionate and understanding. The focus here is always on the families and children - an ethos that fosters well-mannered students who feel valued and supported.

However, our beloved school faces uncertain times which could disrupt the education of many pupils including SEN children who may not cope well in bigger settings this is due to falling pupil numbers across the city. Which is no fault of St Peter's.

The closure of such schools can have devastating effects all pupils but also on SEN students' academic progress and mental health (source: British Journal of Special Education). We must act now to ensure that our children continue to receive the support they need within this nurturing community environment.

We urge local authorities to recognize the importance of maintaining smaller community-based schools like St Peter's for SEN students without an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP). Our plea is simple but urgent - save our school from any threat that could compromise its existence or capacity.

Please sign this petition today to help preserve St. Peter's Community School for current pupils as well as future generations with/ without special educational needs.