

Blessed Robert Sutton Sixth Form Consultation – Wednesday 9th January – Wednesday 6th February 2019

THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

Proposals from schools or academies wishing to change Post 16 provision must be approved by the Secretary of State for Education. The Department for Education specify that any consultation to change Post 16 provision must be published at least **four months** prior to the planned changes and that the consultation period must last for a period of at least **one month**. Comments may be posted or emailed to school. (email address)

This consultation has been arranged by Mr A. Smith Headteacher of Blessed Robert Sutton Catholic Voluntary Academy. Blessed Robert Sutton Catholic Voluntary Academy is part of the St. Ralph Sherwin Catholic Multi-Academy Trust.

The Governors of Blessed Robert Sutton and the Trustees of the St. Ralph Sherwin Trust, invite comments on the issues set out in this paper. Views expressed during this consultation will be considered by the governors and trustees, with a decision announced on **Friday 15th February**.

An Open Evening based around the consultation will take place on **Wednesday 16th January** from 7.00 pm in the Main Hall.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The future of school sixth forms has been highlighted in the media for some time, particularly in light of changes in the way Post-16 students are funded in schools and colleges. The funding has gradually declined over the last few years and this has had particular impact on small sixth forms.

The average Sixth Form College has around 1,700 students, while the average school sixth form has a little over 200. Economies of scale apply, so it is more expensive per student for schools to provide a sixth form, meaning they often have to subsidise sixth form students from other funding streams, including that received for 11 to 16-year-old students.

Recent enhancements of Post-16 provision in Burton upon Trent means there is considerable choice for Year 11 school leavers. In the local area families have a range of Post 16 Providers to choose from; Burton and South Derbyshire College for Vocational courses, St. Benedict's Catholic Voluntary Academy, Derby, plus a number of local schools, which offer very broad programmes of study.

The Department for Education recognises that sixth forms with fewer than 200 students are not financially viable. Currently Blessed Robert Sutton has 63 students in the 6th Form (Years 12 and 13 combined.)

At the Blessed Robert Sutton 6th Form Open Evening and Taster Day we presented to Year 11 pupils the courses and facilities that we have to offer them from September 2019. The range of activities was impressive and the mood very positive. Gauging feedback after these events is imprecise, however, 43 Year 11 pupils expressed an interest in remaining at Blessed Robert Sutton, Post 16 (results and Subject choices permitting) from these 55 pupils have applied for the 6th Form in September 2019.

SOME KEY QUESTIONS

What commitment does the school have to a Post 16 Roman Catholic education for its pupils?

Blessed Robert Sutton offers a 'distinctive' Catholic Post 16 education – there are currently 9 students in Year 12 who identify as Roman Catholic

How effective was Blessed Robert Sutton 6th Form in 2018?

Blessed Robert Sutton has a Post 16 Value Added Score of -0.19.

Can partnership work with another 6th Form provider be explored?

- A 6th Form Partnership with Paulet School operated in recent years. Although the schools demerged, discussions have taken place to explore the possibility of working collaboratively in the future.
- Collaboration with St Benedict's Catholic Academy will be explored (including travel to Derby, lessons transmitted electronically etc.)

What are the implications for pupils currently in Year 13?

Year 13 students will continue their education regardless of any decisions made following this consultation.

What are the implications for pupils currently in Year 12?

Depending on the decisions made after the consultation period, there are a number of possible outcomes for Year 12 students;

- Year 12 students progress as a small Year 13 at Blessed Robert Sutton, where they will be taught jointly with **new** Year 12 students.
- Year 12 students progress as a small Year 13 at Blessed Robert Sutton, with **no** Year 12 students joining the 6th Form.
- Year 12 students choose an alternative Post 16 provider to continue their Year 13 studies.

I will go to great lengths to ensure that every Year 12 student currently on roll, receives the most comprehensive education and pastoral support, throughout their remaining year at Blessed Robert Sutton Catholic Voluntary Academy.

What are the implications for pupils currently in Year 11?

Depending on the decisions made after the consultation period, there are a number of possible outcomes for Year 11 pupils;

- Year 11 pupils enter a small 6th Form at Blessed Robert Sutton, as Year 12 and be taught alongside Year 13 students.
- Year 11 pupils attend a partnership 6th Form - with St Benedict's Catholic Voluntary Academy or Paulet High School and 6th Form College.
- Year 11 pupils find an alternative Post 16 provider – following Impartial Advice and Guidance from our Careers Officer / Heads of 6th Form

What are the financial implications of a low pupil intake into Blessed Robert Sutton 6th Form?

Typically twelve Post 16 students per class make it financially viable (i.e. pay for the teaching and overheads.)

Currently Blessed Robert Sutton 6th Form operates with student numbers of sixty three.

It therefore, costs £210,000 more to staff and resource the 6th Form than the income received.

As this is cumulative, the 6th Form provision at Blessed Robert Sutton has had a significantly detrimental effect on finances over the last few years.

What are the implications of maintaining the current 6th Form provision on Pre-16 education at Blessed Robert Sutton?

- Class sizes in KS3 and KS4 are required to be larger.
- KS3 and KS4 Learning resources are reduced.
- The school does not have the funding to support; Chaplaincy, Counselling or Library facilities.

What are the implications for teachers at Blessed Robert Sutton?

The recruitment and retention of high quality staff is essential for the success of Blessed Robert Sutton.

Should decisions following the consultation lead to the closure of the 6th Form, the vast majority of staff currently involved in the delivery of Post 16 courses will have the opportunity to remain at Blessed Robert Sutton and work wholly on the delivery of the 11-16 curriculum.

Financially the school cannot retain the current teaching capacity.

THE CONSULTATION

This is a consultation – a means by which to discuss and gather information concerning Post 16 provision at Blessed Robert Sutton Catholic Voluntary Academy (it is not a vote or referendum.) Specifically the consultation is in preparation for Curriculum Planning for the 2019 / 20 Academic Year.

Once the Consultation period closes on Wednesday 6th February the Governors and Trustees will consider the information provided and make their decisions.

The decisions that the Governors and Trustees make will be outlined to parents / carers and pupils / students by letter on Friday 15th February.