

# Our Lady's Catholic High School for Girls Statutory Notice

## Introduction

1. The proposer:  
On Monday 5<sup>th</sup> June Our Lady Catholic High School Governing Body, with Roman Catholic Diocese of Westminster and London Borough of Hackney (Local Authority) support, approved the recommendation to publish a **Statutory Notice** on the proposal to make a prescribed alteration to Our Lady's Catholic High School.
2. **Name and address of the school**  
**Our Lady's Catholic High School**  
6-16 Amhurst Park,  
London, N16 5AF  
Tel: [020 8800 2158](tel:02088002158)  
E-mail: [officeadmin@olchs.co.uk](mailto:officeadmin@olchs.co.uk)

### 3. Description of prescribed alteration:

The proposed alteration is to change the school from a single-sex Catholic girls' school to a co-educational Catholic School, by changing its Year 7 intake, from 1st September 2024.

There are two proposed prescribed alterations:

1. Change of gender composition
2. Consequential changes to the admissions arrangements.

In addition, governors are considering a change of school name.

## Reason for prescribed alteration.

1. Improved secondary preference options for boys in Hackney.

The Governing Body at Our Lady's Catholic High School, after due consideration of the options' for future admissions to the school intends to admit the first co-educational cohort to Year 7 in September 2024, subject to approval from the Archbishop of the RC Diocese of Westminster, Hackney Local Authority and the Schools' Adjudicator.

There is evidence of the need for a new co-educational Catholic choice in the North East of the Borough.

Our Lady's Catholic High School is situated at the North of Hackney.

The school's closest neighbours are Jewish Community and independent only schools.

The nearest co-educational schools are:

Skidders Academy (.8 ml)

Gladesmore Community School (.9)

Stoke Newington (1.4 ml)

The Petchey Academy (1.8 ml)

Mossbourne Community Academy (1.9 ml)

All are full in Year 7 and all were oversubscribed in both 202/3 and 2023/4. Whilst the numbers of boys and girls currently awaiting offers at Skidders and Mossbourne are roughly equal, there are 47 more boys than girls awaiting offers at Stoke Newington, and 23 more at The Petchey Academy and 11 more at Gladesmore.

The nearest co-educational Catholic School (Cardinal Pole – 2.5 ml) is also full in Year 7 and was also over-subscribed in 2022/3 and 2023/4. There are more boys than girls awaiting an offer at the school.

Overall, this indicates that boys in the North-East of the Borough are disadvantaged in that the range of nearby options available to them is limited. The nearest boys places available are at Waterside Academy (2.6 miles)

In addition, the nearest Catholic boys places available to them are at Bishop Challoner School in Tower Hamlets (4.9 miles).

## 2. Enhanced educational opportunities for the community

Our Lady's High School has a strong tradition as a caring, effective Catholic School. Governors believe that admitting boys will offer additional opportunities to ensure boys and girls are better supported to prepare them for today's more equitable world, and will help us to maintain and maximise expertise and resources across our staff group.

We know there is insufficient opportunity for boys in our area to access quality Catholic education, including the brothers of some of our existing students.

We believe the proposed changes will:

- Broaden the scope of the school's rich diversity, underpinned by our Catholic and Servite values;
- Build on the legacy of this school so that it continues to serve the local community in the future;
- Respond to changes in the local and national schools environment and to ensure our provision matches the local need;
- Sustain the school's improvement journey towards Outstanding.

## Pupil Numbers and Admissions

The table below shows the current capacity at Our Lady's and neighbouring Hackney Schools.

School Name	2023/24			2022/23		
	PAN	Vacancies	Waiting List	PAN	Vacancies	Waiting List
Our Lady's High School	120	54	0	120	40	0
Cardinal Pole Catholic School	180	0	15	180	-5	11
Lubavitch Senior Girls School	30	13	2	30	-2	0
Mossbourne Community Academy	216	0	467	216	-5	54
Skinners' Academy	180	0	34	366	-6	10
Stoke Newington School and Sixth Form	255	0	118	255	0	22
The Petchey Academy	180	0	10	180	-7	1
Yesodey Hatorah Senior Girls School	80	0	5	80	10	0

Gladesmore School, which is in Haringey, has a PAN of 243, and was oversubscribed in 2022/3 and is for 2023/4.

Projected numbers for the next three years are expected to remain similar, with boys in the North-east of the Borough not being able to access boys places without travelling.

## Displaced Pupils

Our Lady's Catholic High School will maintain the same PAN of 120. The number of applications from girls has reduced to well below this level. The school will have 54 vacancies in Year 7 this year. This pattern is expected to continue. Admitting boys from the area would easily be accommodated within the existing PAN without displacing girls.

In considering the move from single sex education governors' recognised that some parents have concerns that the gender being introduced will be at a disadvantage, and that already at the school will have to make un-necessary adaptations. Governors and the staff will ensure this is not the case at Our Lady's Catholic High School.

The Headteacher and a large proportion of the staff have experience of teaching in co-educational settings. The school is well equipped and has appropriate space for a PAN of 120. Plans for minor building adaptations are already underway.

The leadership team have significant expertise in securing excellent outcomes for boys and girls and leading positive transitions. Our Lady's Catholic High School already offers mixed gender sixth form provision.

In order to minimise any impact on current students, the admission of boys would take place at Year 7 only and grow organically from that period. As a result, any current students will still be taught in single-sex teaching and tutor groups.

## **Impact on the Community**

The proposal would improve provision for the Hackney community by providing a co-educational option in the North-East of Hackney so that boys' secondary preference options are increased.

Other local co-educational schools are over-subscribed, so the provision should help reduce their waiting lists as well as adding to the opportunities for partnership work across schools.

The Governors at Our Lady's Catholic High School undertook a full school-level consultation exercise (Appendix 3) to address any concerns within the school community and beyond. Meetings were held and FAQs (Appendix 4) were considered and mitigations put in place before deciding to progress to Statutory Notice.

## **Rural Primary Schools**

Not applicable

## **Balance of Denominational Provision**

The other Catholic School in Hackney (Cardinal Pole Catholic School) is full. By providing places for boys at Our Lady's Catholic High School, other denominational provisions should not be affected.

## **Nursery Provision**

Not applicable

## **Sixth Form Provision**

Sixth form provision at Our Lady's High School is already mixed gender provision.

## **Special Educational Needs Provision**

As at the January 2023 census, there were 7 pupils on roll at Our Lady's Catholic High School who have an Educational Health and Care Plan (1.2%). There are a further 37 students with SEN needs but without an EHCP (6.43%). The proportion of children with SEN needs is not expected to change significantly (although nationally boys tend to have higher levels of identified SEND)

## Travel

The changes will only impact on travel in that boys in the North-East will have an additional secondary school option available reducing their need to travel further afield for a school place.

## Finances

The financial arrangements for the school will not alter. Offering places for boys will improve the financial sustainability of the provision.

## Procedure for Making Representations (objections and comments)

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this statutory notice, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by email or by post.

**Closing date for responses is 5pm, Friday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

By email: [officeadmin@olchs.co.uk](mailto:officeadmin@olchs.co.uk)

By post: **Our Lady's Catholic High School**  
6-16 Amhurst Park,  
London, N16

We will not be able to consider any responses received after 5pm 7<sup>th</sup> July  
A report considering all responses received during the representation period will be published on the Our Lady's Catholic High School Website in July 2023.

The publication date for this notice is 9<sup>th</sup> June 2023. It has been published on the school website, school noticeboards, and externally at all entrances to the school. It has also been published in Hackney Gazette, local newspaper. Copies have been sent to the Diocese of Westminster, Hackney Council and the DFE.