

## Corporate Scrutiny Committee – 6 June 2023

### Written question from Sarah Cottell of Ryde to the Corporate Scrutiny Committee

Why has St Mary's chosen to possibly be closed, considering its advantages below?

- A high intake, 29 in Preschool, 28 due to start Sept 2023
- The building is suitable to accommodate all children in separate classes
- The grounds and surrounding woodland to provide outside learning through forest school and other outside activities, reception/ preschool also have their own separate outdoor playground/ learning areas.
- Appropriate staffing levels and teaching assistants and can offer SEND provisions
- Breakfast club/after school clubs, enabling parents to work
- It is in walking distance for the majority of pupils, myself included, who with 4 children ages 7 and under, and a non-driver, would struggle to get much further
- Is the only Catholic school in Ryde and enables the opportunity for religious learning and expression
- Ofsted report requires improvement, which isn't low, new leadership can provide improvement as we have already seen.

## Response

*Thank you for your recent question submitted to the Corporate Scrutiny Committee about the primary school place planning paper that was due to be discussed at the Isle of Wight Cabinet on Thursday 8 June 2023.*

*The Isle of Wight Council's Children's Services Management Team were asked to draft this paper following a discussion on forecast pupil numbers at the September 2022 Policy and Scrutiny Committee for Children's Services, Education and Skills.*

*However, as the Cabinet has decided that the paper will no longer be presented and therefore the recommendations will not be taken forward for public consultation, a response to your questions is no longer appropriate.*

*It is important to note that the questions submitted are exactly the type of queries we would have been seeking during the consultation, had the decision been made on 8 June for the consultation to begin. It was intended that officers would have attended public meetings to explore these issues in full. After the consultation the views of all those contributing to the debate would have been shared with Cabinet and fully considered before any final proposals were made for further consultation.*

*It is our experience that such consultations have been meaningful and have often led to better decision making with proposals being refined before further statutory consultation.*

*Should Cabinet decide to undertake a consultation in the future I would urge you to contribute with queries such as these to the discussions at that time.*