

DETERMINATION

Case reference: VAR/000512

Admission Authority: The Governing Body of Salvio Salesian College, Sefton

Date of Decision: 29 June 2011

Determination

In accordance with section 88E of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 I approve the variation to the admission arrangements of Salvio Salesian College, a voluntary aided secondary school.

I determine that the published admission number will be increased from 150 to 180 with effect from September 2012 and admission arrangements will be amended to include the parishes of St Elizabeth of Hungary and Our Lady Star of the Sea which are served by St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School and Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School.

The referral

1. The Governing Body of Salvio Salesian College, ("the College") has submitted a request for an in-year variation to its admission arrangements for the school year 2012/13 to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator. The College seeks to amend its admission arrangements to include the parishes of St Elizabeth of Hungary and Our Lady Star of the Sea which are served by St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School and Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School, following the decision to close St Wilfred's Catholic High School on 31 August 2012. In addition it seeks to increase its published admission number (PAN) from 150 to 180.

Jurisdiction

2. The referral was made to me in accordance with section 88E of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (the Act) which states that:

"where an admission authority (a) have in accordance with section 88C determined the admission arrangements which are to apply for a particular school year, but (b) at any time before the end of that year consider that the arrangements should be varied in view of a major change in circumstances occurring since they were so determined, the authority must [except in a case where the authority's proposed

variations fall within any description of variations prescribed for the purposes of this section] (a) refer their proposed variations to the adjudicator, and (b) notify the appropriate bodies of the proposed variations”.

3. I am satisfied that the proposed variations are within my jurisdiction.

Procedure

4. In considering this matter I have had regard to all relevant legislation, guidance and the School Admissions Code. The documents I have considered in reaching my decision include:

- Minutes of the Cabinet members meeting of 19 April 2011
- Diocesan Protocol “*Admission to Sefton Secondary Schools*”
- the referrals and supporting documents from the governing body of the College, the Council and Liverpool Archdiocese
- minutes of the governing body meeting on 4 May 2011
- maps of primary schools within a 3 mile radius and of secondary schools within a five mile radius of the School
- the net capacity assessments (NCA) for the School
- booklet for parents ‘Admission to Sefton Secondary Schools 2011/12
- Ofsted report dated December 2009.

Consideration of Factors

5. On 19 April 2011 it was formally agreed by Sefton Council (“the Council”) that St Wilfred’s Catholic High School in Sefton would close on 31 August 2012. This decision by the Council was taken after the admission arrangements for the College had been determined for 2012/13. Two Catholic secondary schools in the area have been asked to consider variations to their determined arrangements in order to secure sufficient places for pupils who would otherwise be displaced and for those families seeking an education in a Catholic secondary school.

6. The Liverpool Archdiocesan Schools Department, supported by the Council made a request to the governing body to vary its admission arrangements in order to realign two of the four parishes, served by linked feeder schools that had previously been aligned to St Wilfred’s Catholic High School. There has been full consultation and positive responses from those consulted. It is accepted that a single successor school could not be named as there is no Catholic secondary school within the area with spare capacity to accommodate up to 120 additional pupils each year.

7. The College has spare accommodation on site which became available when a new area sixth form centre was opened. The College has not had a sixth form intake since 2009. Governors have agreed to utilise this accommodation and the net capacity assessment has been reviewed and

now has an indicated admission limit of 180.

8. The variation will enable the College, the Diocese and the Council to advise parents of the proposed changes before they express preferences for 2012/13, in the autumn of 2011.

9. The Archdiocese has investigated existing transport links and has already discussed with the College the potential to improve these links if additional pupils were to travel to the site.

10. The most recent inspection report which provides an assessment of provision and standards at the College indicates that it is a good and rapidly improving school with some aspects of its work which are outstanding. Its capacity for further improvement is also judged to be outstanding.

Conclusion

11. The Council's decision to discontinue St Wilfred's Catholic High School was made after the College had determined its admission arrangements for 2012/12 and therefore clearly constitutes a major change of circumstances.

12. The College, Diocese and Council are seeking to manage the situation pragmatically in order to secure sufficient places to meet parental preferences for Catholic secondary education from September 2012 and the College has the capacity to accommodate additional pupils.

13. I am therefore of the view that the requested variation for the College School is needed and is practically achievable within the time available.

14. In accordance with section 88E of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 I approve the variation to the admission arrangements of Salvio Salesian College, a voluntary aided secondary school.

15. I determine that the published admission number will be increased from 150 to 180 with effect from September 2012 and admission arrangements will be amended to include the parishes of St Elizabeth of Hungary and Our Lady Star of the Sea which are served by St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School and Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School.

Determination

16. In accordance with section 88E of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 I approve the variation to the admission arrangements of Salvio Salesian College, a voluntary aided secondary school.

17. I determine that the published admission number will be increased from 150 to 180 with effect from September 2012 and admission arrangements will be amended to include the parishes of St Elizabeth of Hungary and Our Lady Star of the Sea which are served by St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School and Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School.

Dated: 29 June 2011

Signed:

Schools Adjudicator: Carol Parsons