



Saint Joseph's Catholic Primary Voluntary Academy

Philip Avenue, Cleethorpes, North East Lincolnshire, DN35
9DL

Acting Head Teacher: Mrs M Steeper

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3rd March 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

It is with great sadness that I am writing to update you on the future of St Joseph's Catholic Voluntary Academy, Cleethorpes.

After a period of discussion between the Department for Education (DfE), Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust (OLoL CMAT) and the Nottingham Roman Catholic Diocesan Education Service (NRCDES), the Minister of State for Schools, Georgina Gould, has approved a substantive decision **to formally close St Joseph's Catholic Primary School on 31 July 2026**. This decision has been approved in line with the Department for Education's guidance: Closure of an Academy by mutual agreement¹.

The decision to propose closure has not been taken lightly. We recognise how difficult and distressing this news will be for pupils, families, staff and the wider parish community and we remain committed to supporting every child and family with care, transparency and compassion.

The number of pupils attending the school has fallen sharply over recent years, from 163 in 2020–21 to just 56 (including Nursery pupils) in March 2026. This significant decline has made it increasingly difficult to provide the full and rich educational experience that children deserve. Smaller year groups and limited peer interaction affect both learning and social development, despite the hard work and commitment of staff.

Because school funding is directly linked to pupil numbers, the drop in pupil numbers has also created substantial financial pressures. The school can no longer sustain the staffing, resources, and facilities needed to operate effectively. This limits our ability to maintain a broad curriculum, invest in improvements, and plan confidently for the future.

We are now entering a formal 'Listening Period'. This is an opportunity for the OLoL CMAT to share with you the rationale for closing and plans to support the transition of pupils to schools in the local area. There will also be an opportunity for you to share your views on the closure with us. However, this will not affect the decision made by the Minister of State for Schools.

The school and Trust are working closely with the Local Authority who have pledged to support families in securing new school places, and children with EHCPs and other vulnerabilities will receive dedicated transition support. We will also continue to work closely with staff throughout this process.

¹ [Closure of an academy by mutual agreement](#)

We plan to hold two parents' meetings on **12th March 2026** at which OLoL CMAT staff and Local Authority Admissions representatives will be present to support the transition process to a new school. Details of these meetings are as follows:

- Thursday 12th March 9:00am
- Thursday 12th March 4:00pm

However, should you wish to contact the Local Authority before those meetings take place, they have provided the following contact details:

School Admissions Team, New Oxford House, George Street,
Grimsby, North East Lincolnshire, DN31 1HB

Email: schooladmissions@nelincs.gov.uk

Telephone: 01472 326291

I would be grateful if you could fill in the form below and return this to school to indicate which meeting you will be attending. If you are unable to attend either of these times, please indicate this on the form and we will contact you separately.

The Listening Period is open for four weeks and further information can be found on our dedicated webpage. Full information about the closure proposal can be found via the following link: <https://www.ololcatholicmat.co.uk/cjoclosure/>

If you have any immediate questions, please email us at: cjoclosure@ololcatholicmat.co.uk

We will hold a special assembly in school on Wednesday to explain this very difficult decision to the children and to celebrate our school. We will put question boxes in classes for the children, and I will always be checking in with everyone (children, staff and families).

Yours sincerely,

Michelle Steeper
Acting Headteacher

Parents' Meeting regarding School Closure

Name of child.....

Thursday 12th March 2026 – please circle the relevant option below and return to school, or complete the Microsoft Form using this link [Parent Meeting 12th March 2026 – Fill in form:](#)

- 9am
- 4pm
- I am unable to attend either of the above meetings
- I would / would not like to be contacted separately.

