

# Lewisham Polling District Review 2024-25. Representations, submissions and responses

## Part 1: Correspondence with the public

Ward	District or Polling Place	Details	Response
Hither Green	Brindishe Green Primary School	<p>My child is at Brindishe Green Primary School and we have just been informed that in addition to an already planned INSET day on 1 July they have now taken the decision to close the school to children on 4 July due to being a polling station.</p> <p>In the last few years they have managed to remain open during local and mayoral elections by keeping polling station in one small area of the school, but we as parents have had to endure many school closures over the years due to polling, and this is extremely disruptive to the school, over 600 pupils and the parents who now have to make plans around this. There must be an alternative venue locally to be used as a polling station - it seems absolutely absurd and frankly a huge conceit that the huge disruption to so many people is rendered irrelevant each time.</p>	<p>The allocation of polling stations is a statutory process that the council must undertake at least every 5 years. This process includes a formal consultation period, and the final decision goes to Full Council for approval in a vote by all Councillors. The last review took place in August to November 2021. The next review will take place in August to November 2024. I shall keep your complaint on record to inform the review. If there are proposals to use the school as a polling place then we shall write to the school for their feedback. Changing the location of a polling place outside of a formal review is challenging and was simply not possible for this election. Furthermore, it would also have significant negative impacts – not only for the planning but most importantly for voters. Consistency of a polling place is an important factor for enabling repeated turnout from voters. Given this school has been used for 2 other major elections this year, and for many previous elections, the voters will expect to attend the exact same venue and could be deterred from voting if there is a change.</p> <p>I have visited the school in the past to assess the suitability as a polling place. The school did express concerns and asked us to use a smaller area that would allow them to remain open. This has always been done for local elections, but Parliamentary elections require more space due to a much higher turnout. The timing of this election is unfortunate, for the council, for schools, and for many others. However, these elections are hugely important for our democracy and are rightly given primacy.</p> <p>The school made the difficult decision to close based on their safeguarding responsibility. There are over 3,000 people allocated to vote at this polling station, and we can expect around 70% of them to attend. That is a large number of people and the school will have considered the risks of having pupils on site.</p>
Hither Green	Brindishe Green Primary School	<p>Many thanks for your very swift response - I wasn't sure how to get in contact with someone without making a complaint, so I'm glad that my message seems to have found its way through.</p> <p>Thanks for explaining the review process, and this is all very useful to hear. I know that the school is frustrated at being the polling station, but I understand the reasons behind making sure there is a consistent location. I wonder if in the future somewhere like St Swithuns church hall could be considered - also very local and the impact of its use would be reduced to a very few people, as opposed to around 1000. In any case, it is reassuring to know that you will keep my message on file for the next review.</p>	<p>As a follow-up to this complaint, I just want to confirm that I have added this to our review of polling districts and stations. We will be investigating the church and other locations to assess as an alternative to the school, and will put that to the ward councillors in a consultation meeting. And I was wondering, if you were able, could you please share details of our review of polling stations with other parents? If we were to receive more feedback from residents that could help with coming to a decision. The notice of the review can be found here: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a> We will be publishing via many other methods as well, but word of mouth is always useful. Thanks again for raising this with us.</p>
Hither Green	Brindishe Green Primary School	<p>Brindishe Green School has asked parents to write to you and request that the school no longer be used as a polling station. As a Brindishe Green parent since 2014, I am writing instead to request that you continue using the school in this fashion. It is convenient for thousands of local voters, Brindishe Green families included, and would be detrimental to local democracy if moved elsewhere.</p> <p>I therefore request that you consider the interests of the majority of local residents and retain the polling station at this location.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p> <p>On this polling place specifically, we are investigating another local venue to assess if it can provide the same quality of venue with the required accessibility and convenience for voters. I would appreciate your feedback on whether St Swithun’s Church at 191 Hither Green Lane would represent a convenient location of a similar standard to the school?</p>
Hither Green	Brindishe Green Primary School	<p>Thanks for your prompt response. Yes, St Swithun's church would be fine, as it is very close to the current location and I'm sure they'd do their utmost to help. My principal concern was that a polling station might be moved out of the locale entirely, which seems not to be the intention.</p>	<p>Thanks for the response. I can confirm we intend to retain the same service, with polling stations that are local and accessible for all residents. We’ll contact the church and do an assessment. If it meets all the requirements and will still provide decent access for voters then we will consult with councillors to make a decision.</p>
Hither Green	Brindishe Green Primary School	<p>I've seen some communication regarding the council's review of polling stations.</p> <p>Brindishe Green is the school my children attend, and we've seen disruptions even school closure in recent cycles, which is quite difficult for both the school and families to manage, not to mention interruption to children's learning when there is wider efforts nation wide to improve attendance.</p> <p>Please look for alternative venues rather than using schools as part of your review. Brindishe Green in particular is one of the largest primary schools in the local area, issues mentioned above is even more amplified as a result.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>

Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I would like to complain about my child’s school being used as a polling station.</p> <p>Last year the school had three different elections resulting in an instant cost of £1200 from the school budget just to cover catering. Whilst we can claim back some money for staffing and energy costs, catering losses can't be claimed. This is a shocking waste of public funds at a time when school budgets are stretched.</p> <p>There are many other polling stations in Sydenham Ward (including as close as the Grove Centre). There were no queues at these centres (there are so many!) and they were very overstaffed, so I feel the loss of centres in this area would not be detrimental to the democratic process.</p> <p>As a teacher myself I cannot comprehend such as wasteful loss to children’s learning.</p> <p>Some further points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- disruption to children's education with school closure when the school is used as a polling station. Appalling considering that many children are still playing catch up after the pandemic.</li><li>- impact on work/life of the 400 families in our school community</li><li>- disproportionately negative impact on parents/carers with less flexible work schedules/arrangements.</li></ul> <p>Parents/carers may need to take holiday or unpaid leave to cover these closures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- impact on school dates planning (we try to use INSET days for these school closures but can't plan for this as elections aren't scheduled far enough in advance)</li><li>- impact on school staff (someone has to be on site from 6am to 11pm - this has been managed between the headteacher and premises manager in the past)</li></ul>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website:</p> <p><a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I don't feel that St Bart's needs to be a polling station, as there are many others in the area.</p> <p>It disrupts education of the children, upsets the families that have to work, it costs the school in catering costs and is not needed given so many others in the area. Please can they be taken off the list.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website:</p> <p><a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>Please do what you can to remove St Barts primary school as a polling station.</p> <p>Last academic year was disrupted by three elections. This has disrupted the children’s education. As parents of a child at the school we had to take time off work. This is not easy and has cost us money. The teachers say that it has cost the school money to compensate caterers, and caused staffing problems as someone has needed to be on site on polling days.</p> <p>My household uses postal votes. I understand there are several other polling stations in the ward. Removing St Barts will not have a big negative impact.</p> <p>I don't think it is fair to place the burden on St Barts, the children, staff, and parent community, when there are other alternatives.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website:</p> <p><a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I am emailing with regards to the polling station review which I understand Lewisham Council is conducting.</p> <p>I would like to request that my child's school, St Bartholomew's Primary School in Sydenham is no longer used as a Polling Station. Last academic year the school was shut for three days, including once to elect the Lewisham Mayor not long before the school was again shut for local elections. This is incredibly disruptive for the children particularly as this is still the generation that has their education interrupted by the pandemic. It's also tough on the parents with a disproportionate impact on those with less flexible working arrangements. They must either take annual or unpaid leave, or pay for childcare. The school is only able to provide limited childcare due to the number of adults entering the school grounds to vote and the need for safeguarding. There is also cost to the school for each closure which cannot be reclaimed. Last year £1200 had to be paid from the school budget to cover the cost of unpaid for school meals on the days it was closed for Polling. At a time when school budgets have never been tighter, this is really unfair on the teachers or the children.</p> <p>The closures also have an unfair impact on teaching staff who take on the additional admin of trying to coincide further school closures with election day closures (often not possible due to the short periods of notice given for elections) and also have a staff presence on site from 7am - 11pm on the day.</p> <p>There are many other polling stations situated in the immediate local area, and anecdotal observations suggest that many of these stand mainly empty for the majority of the day. I do not therefore believe that stopping the use of St Bartholomew's as a polling station will have a detrimental impact on the local democratic process.</p> <p>Thank you for your time, and I look forward to hearing the outcome of the review.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website:</p> <p><a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>

Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I am a parent of a child that goes to st bartholomews primary school. I work full time. I understand that the Local Authority is consulting on polling station locations. I am writing to request that St Bartholomews Church of England primary school, the peak, Sydenham is no longer used for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- disruption to children's education including my own child's with school closure when the school is used as a polling station. Additional, this is unfair given that we are unable to take our children out of school for holidays etc.</li><li>- impact on work/life of the 400 families in our school community. I have to take a day off from my role as a civil servant to ensure there is childcare for my son. There would be no holiday clubs available.</li><li>- disproportionately negative impact on parents/carers with less flexible work schedules/arrangements. I am already having to use all my annual leave to cover the school holidays.</li><li>- there are plenty of other polling stations in the ward that can be used and don't require school closure including the nearby grove centre and secondary schools that might not require full closure</li></ul> <p>Thanks for reading my email and hope that the school can stop being used in the future.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I am writing to you as a concerned parent on behalf of St Bartholomew's Primary School in SE26 regarding the ongoing use of the school as a polling station for local and national elections. I have also cc'd local ward councillors and the councillor responsible for children and young people, as this issue greatly impacts the families in our community.</p> <p>The use of St Bartholomew's as a polling station significantly disrupts the children's education and the daily lives of over 400 families. School closures force parents and carers, especially those with less flexible work schedules, to take holidays or unpaid leave to cover the unexpected disruption. This places a considerable strain on families, many of which are already balancing work and childcare.</p> <p>There is also a financial impact on the school, with £400 in catering losses alone that cannot be reclaimed. While the school has tried to schedule INSET days to accommodate these closures, the unpredictability of election dates makes this problematic. This puts additional pressure on staff, who must manage the school premises from early morning until late at night—duties shared by the Head Teacher and Premises Manager in previous years.</p> <p>Most importantly, alternative polling stations within the ward could easily be used without closing the school. These locations are familiar to local residents and would avoid the disruption caused by closing the school on election days.</p> <p>I strongly urge you to reconsider using St Bartholomew's as a polling station to avoid further disrupting the children's education and the wider school community. I look forward to your response and hope for a solution that better supports our children and families.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I would like to raise a complaint of St Barts school being used as a polling station. It is adversely impacting my children's education with a significant number of days them out of school. Other school have not lost days and my children are negatively impacted by our local school being used over other locations.</p> <p>Please below my concerns:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. disruption to children's education with school closure when the school is used as a polling station</li><li>2. impact on work/life of the 400 families in our school community</li><li>3. disproportionately negative impact on parents/carers with less flexible work schedules/arrangements. Parents/carers may need to take holiday or unpaid leave to cover these closures</li><li>4. cost to the school (£400 each time for catering losses that can't be reclaimed)</li><li>5. impact on school dates planning (we try to use INSET days for these school closures but can't plan for this as elections aren't scheduled far enough in advance)</li><li>-6. Impact on school staff (someone has to be on site from 6am to 11pm - this has been managed between the headteacher and premises manager in the past)</li><li>7. there are plenty of other polling stations in the ward that can be used and don't require school closure</li></ol> <p>I look forward to your response and Lewisham supporting local primary schools rather than creating additional barriers to the boroughs learning and children to development, where there are already so many challenges post Covid.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I'm writing to you to contribute to the review on polling stations that is happening in October.</p> <p>My two childs attend St Bartholomew's Primary school in Sydenham and having the school used as a polling station has caused great disruption. After the pandemic I feel children's education is so precious and having multiple days off to allow the school to be a polling station is having a really detrimental effect. This not only is disrupting so many children's education, but is also putting a great pressure on the school financially (at a time when they need every penny they can get!). They are having to pay the catering company £400 for every day that the school is closed to pupils, which quite frankly is terrible.</p> <p>There are multiple other public buildings very close by that could easily be polling stations instead. I urge you to please reconsider the use of St Bart's School.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>

Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I'm emailing to request that St Barts Primary in Sydenham is removed from the polling station list for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Last minute polling means lots of working families are stuck for childcare when the school is closed by this use.</li><li>2. I have had to use annual leave once and get a grandparent to drive 4 hours in one day to cover another date for childcare, as I didn't have enough leave left to cover it myself, and I have no flexibility with 'buying' annual leave or my work schedule.</li><li>3. I understand it costs the school £400 in lost catering per closure day, which can not be recovered. The school budget is horrendously stretched already. That money, if not wasted on unused catering, could have covered core syllabus essentials to help the teachers give engaging lessons and a rich learning environment for the children.</li><li>4. I understand the school can't plan for polling as the dates aren't released early enough to be covered by an Inset day, which skews the childrens' number of learning days.</li><li>5. There is an impact on staffing at the school due to long opening hours of polling stations- someone has to stay in the building, and they're already working long enough hours!</li><li>6. I understand, looking at the map, there are numerous other polling stations in Sydenham, also near to St Barts, so no one local to the school will be negatively impacted and will still be able to vote.</li></ol> <p>I ask that you take this in to consideration for the wellbeing and learning of our school children and families.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I’m writing in reference to the polling station review in Lewisham - specifically in regards to the use of St Barts as a polling station.</p> <p>I feel incredibly strongly that the use of the school as a polling station is thoroughly unnecessary and inappropriate, given the availability of other stations within close proximity to the school and the impact it has on the children and the school itself.</p> <p>Given the events of recent years, and the pandemic, to continue to actively disrupt children's education with unnecessary school closures is baffling.</p> <p>Beyond this, it also causes significant financial impact to the school - which does such fantastic work with such a limited budget. The amount it costs the school could mean additional free meals for dozens of children a year, further materials for learning and development, or even increased specialist support for those with additional needs. Instead the school is forced to pay £400 per day closed in catering costs - which cannot be reclaimed. That’s £1,200 in the last year alone.</p> <p>At the same time, it also means staff are required to be on site to supervise (from 6am to 11pm!) when they could (and should) be focusing on the provision of care and education of children.</p> <p>I could of course make the point about the impact on parents/carers and families - but that isn’t really the point - it’s about the impact on the school and the children. There are plenty of other polling stations in the ward that can be used and don't require school closure.</p> <p>I don’t normally write in about community or social issues as I feel like the council has a tough job on their hands - but in this case I felt I have to voice my concerns, it’s a legacy decision that benefits no one and needs to change.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I am the parent of two children attending St Bartholomew’s primary school, one of whom is neurodiverse and requires specific accommodations.</p> <p>I wanted to take the opportunity of the polling station review conducted by Lewisham to express my views over our school’s role as polling station.</p> <p>The use of the school as a polling station is very disruptive to the children. Not only do they miss a day of teaching, but it can be very detrimental to children with special needs, like my child. She does not cope well with a change of routine and missing school is a big issue for her.</p> <p>On top of that we, as parents, need to make the necessary arrangements with our respective jobs, so that we can be with the children on polling day. Our jobs do not allow the flexibility to always work from home. There are plenty of other polling stations in the area, less than 5 minutes walk, and there is always the option to vote by post.</p> <p>I would therefore be grateful if you would consider removing St Bartholomew’s from the list polling stations.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>

Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I am writing in relation to the current use of St Bart’s primary as a polling station. I understand that there is a consultation every 5 years to reassess polling stations and would like to provide my view as both a parent and school governor.</p> <p>I believe that the school should no longer be used as a polling station due to the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- It has a massive impact on the work/life of the 400 families in our school community particularly as dates are not known much in advance.</li><li>- It has a disproportionately negative impact on parents/carers with less flexible work schedules/arrangements. As a result, parents such as myself, a working mother, have to take unpaid leave to cover these closures.</li><li>- The school is already under budgetary stress and my understanding is that certain costs are incurred by the school that cannot be reclaimed (eg £400 per day for catering costs).</li><li>- Our school staff already work incredibly long hours and being a polling station requires staff presence from 6am to 11pm on the day of the election.</li><li>- The school is often unable to align Inset days with these election dates due to their last minute nature or if inset days have already happened earlier in the year.</li><li>- The children of St Bart’s Primary have experienced alot of disruption already within the past 2-3 years - due to Covid, due to the teacher strikes and due to several elections this past year - disrupting our children’s education.</li></ul> <p>I also note that there are plenty of polling stations in Sydenham and in proximity including the Grove Centre and the Sydenham Centre. Removing St Bart’s Primary as a polling station would very unlikely hinder the ability of our local population to vote.</p> <p>I also note that having voted in the elections for the past 20 years and attended at different times of days, I have never even queued to be able to vote.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I understand that you are imminently reviewing locations of polling stations in our ward.</p> <p>Please can we ask that you remove St Bartholomew’s school on Peak Hill in Sydenham from the list. It causes a lot of disruption to both pupils and teachers as well as the added cost and knock on impact to working parents who have to find and fund alternative arrangements.</p> <p>This year was incredibly disruptive with three elections and while that might be a freak year, who knows what’s round the corner and we feel we have done the duty and time on acting as a polling station. Surely there are other centres that can be used locally or simply make do with the other polling stations nearby.</p> <p>Here’s a summary of why we’d like a review and a chance to have a break:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- disruption to children's education with school closure when the school is used as a polling station</li><li>- impact on work/life of the 400 families in our school community</li><li>- disproportionately negative impact on parents/carers with less flexible work schedules/arrangements. Parents/carers may need to take holiday or unpaid leave to cover these closures</li><li>- cost to the school (£400 each time for catering losses that can't be reclaimed)</li><li>- impact on school dates planning (we try to use INSET days for these school closures but can't plan for this as elections aren't scheduled far enough in advance)</li><li>- impact on school staff (someone has to be on site from 6am to 11pm - this has been managed between the headteacher and premises manager.</li></ul>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>We would like to draw your attention to the cost to St Bartholomew’s school when it is used as a polling station. There are issues with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- disruption to children's education with school closure when the school is used as a polling station</li><li>- impact on work/life of the 400 families in our school community</li><li>- disproportionately negative impact on parents/carers with less flexible work schedules/arrangements. Parents/carers may need to take holiday or unpaid leave to cover these closures</li><li>- cost to the school (£400 each time for catering losses that can't be reclaimed)</li><li>- impact on school dates planning (they try to use INSET days for these school closures but can't plan for this as elections aren't scheduled far enough in advance)</li><li>- impact on school staff (someone has to be on site from 6am to 11pm - this has been managed between the headteacher and premises manager in the past)</li><li>- there are plenty of other polling stations in the ward that can be used and don't require school closure</li></ul> <p>We hope you can move the polling station to avoid the disruption and cost to the children in the community</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>

Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>We have been made aware of the polling station review and as a concerned parent I wanted to reach out to you.</p> <p>St Bart's has been used as a polling station 3 times in the last year. This results in the school being closed to all pupils for these days.</p> <p>What that means as a parent is that we have to pay for childcare which with two children at the school is not inconsiderable.</p> <p>It also means that they miss school - which with the current push to make sure children attend as much as possible rather goes against the grain.</p> <p>Our children have already lost so much time at school due to Covid, and teaching them that going in is really important only to have them off for elections is counter intuitive.</p> <p>For the school, of which I am the secretary of the PTA it has significant cost implications. Catering services have to be paid for which last year meant an immediate loss of £1200 which cannot be claimed back. It also means that someone has to be on site from 6am - 23.00 - another cost.</p> <p>As a school in London there are plenty of polling stations in the vicinity so using a school does not feel either justified or morally right.</p> <p>As the sister in law of an MP I fully understand the need for polling stations so that the country can execute it's democratic right - however to do this at the detriment of young children and already financially struggling schools cannot be acceptable.</p> <p>I would ask that you reconsider the use of our school going forward.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I am writing as a parent of two children at St Bartholomew's School and a Sydenham Ward resident.</p> <p>I would like to strongly object to the renewal of St Bartholomew's School as a polling station for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•The disruption to the children's education and increased instability to those children whose families rely heavily on school meals for their daily nutrition.</li><li>•There are nearly 400 families in our school whose work and life is impacted by needing to organise alternative childcare at a cost or take annual or unpaid leave from work.</li><li>•The negative impact on staff whose date planning and lesson planning is disrupted.</li><li>•The cost to the school of closure is £400 per day payable to the catering company for lost income. This is a significant and unnecesary drain on school funds, which are already strained.</li><li>•There are plenty of other polling stations in the ward which can be used and don't require an entire school closure.</li></ul> <p>If an alternative venue is needed I would propose Holy Trinity Church on Sydenham Park which is a large venue. It is very near St Bartholomew's School and its use would be minimally disruptive to the community. Additionally, TNG on Wells Park Road would also be an excellent venue to add further options to the local area.</p> <p>I hope you will take these issues seriously and I look forward to hearing the results of the review.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I am writing to express my concerns regarding the continued use of St Bartholomew's Primary School, The Peak, London SE26 4LJ, as a polling station for local and national elections, and to request that it be removed from the list of polling stations in future elections.</p> <p>The use of the school as a polling station causes significant disruption to the education of the children, requiring school closures on election days. This has a direct impact on the 400 families in our community, particularly parents and carers who may have less flexible working arrangements. Many are forced to take holiday or unpaid leave to manage these closures, placing an undue burden on their work and personal lives. Additionally, the financial impact on the school is substantial. Each closure results in a loss of approximately £400 due to unrecoverable catering costs, which is a strain on the school's already limited budget. Over the past year alone, this amounted to £1,200 in costs that could have been allocated to more vital educational resources.</p> <p>The school's staff are also affected, with senior staff required to be on-site from 6am to 11pm to facilitate the running of the polling station. This places an unnecessary burden on the headteacher and premises manager, whose time could be better spent supporting the school's primary function—education.</p> <p>Given the availability of alternative polling stations within Sydenham Ward, including The Grove Centre which is very nearby, I strongly urge the Council to consider these options instead of disrupting the operation of the school. I believe this would not negatively impact the democratic process, as there are ample locations that can serve the community's needs without affecting the school's ability to function.</p> <p>I hope the Council will take these concerns seriously as part of the ongoing polling station review. Thank you for your consideration.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>

Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I am writing to express my concerns regarding the continued use of St Bartholomew's Primary School, The Peak, London SE26 4LJ, as a polling station for local and national elections, and to request that it be removed from the list of polling stations in future elections.</p> <p>The use of the school as a polling station causes significant disruption to the education of the children, requiring school closures on election days. This has a direct impact on the 400 families in our community, particularly parents and carers who may have less flexible working arrangements. Many are forced to take holiday or unpaid leave to manage these closures, placing an undue burden on their work and personal lives. Additionally, the financial impact on the school is substantial. Each closure results in a loss of approximately £400 due to unrecoverable catering costs, which is a strain on the school's already limited budget. Over the past year alone, this amounted to £1,200 in costs that could have been allocated to more vital educational resources.</p> <p>The school's staff are also affected, with senior staff required to be on-site from 6am to 11pm to facilitate the running of the polling station. This places an unnecessary burden on the headteacher and premises manager, whose time could be better spent supporting the school's primary function—education.</p> <p>Given the availability of alternative polling stations within Sydenham Ward, including The Grove Centre which is very nearby, I strongly urge the Council to consider these options instead of disrupting the operation of the school. I believe this would not negatively impact the democratic process, as there are ample locations that can serve the community’s needs without affecting the school’s ability to function.</p> <p>I hope the Council will take these concerns seriously as part of the ongoing polling station review. Thank you for your consideration.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I am writing to express my concerns regarding the use of St Bartholomew's Primary School as a polling station for local and national elections. I would like to request that the school be removed from the list of polling stations in future elections due to the significant negative impacts on the school community.</p> <p>Impact on Children's Education</p> <p>The use of the school as a polling station requires it to close on election days, which disrupts the education of the children. Unscheduled closures affect the continuity of their learning and the school calendar. While efforts are made to align closures with INSET days, elections are not always scheduled far enough in advance to plan for this, leading to last-minute disruptions.</p> <p>Impact on Parents and Carers</p> <p>The closures have a considerable effect on the 400 families in our school community. Parents and carers, particularly those with less flexible work schedules, are disproportionately affected. Many are forced to take holiday or unpaid leave to cover these closures, which can place significant financial and personal strain on working families.</p> <p>Impact on School Staff</p> <p>School staff are also heavily impacted by these closures. The headteacher and premises manager are required to be on-site from 6am to 11pm on polling days, which adds to their already demanding roles. This extended responsibility is unnecessary, given that there are alternative venues available within the ward.</p> <p>Impact on School Budget</p> <p>Each closure results in a direct financial cost to the school. On average, the school incurs a loss of £400 per day due to unrecoverable catering costs when meals are not served. Over the past year, three separate election days have resulted in £1,200 being taken from the school’s budget. This is funding that could be better spent on educational resources and supporting the children.</p> <p>Alternative Venues</p> <p>There are several other polling stations within Sydenham Ward, including The Grove Centre, which is in close proximity to the school. The use of these venues would avoid the disruption to the school’s operations without detriment to the democratic process.</p> <p>Given these impacts, I urge the Council to reconsider using the school as a polling station and explore the use of alternative venues for future elections.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and consideration.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>

Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I would like to request that St Barts school be removed from the list of polling stations in future elections due to the significant impacts on the school.</p> <p>Impact on Children's Education. Obviously being a giant polling booth disrupts the education of the kids. All of this is very last-minute and disruptive to their planned lessons.</p> <p>The closures have a considerable effect on the families and parents in the school. We are forced to take holiday or unpaid leave to cover these closures, which adds to strain on families.</p> <p>School staff are also heavily impacted by these closures. The headteacher and premises manager are required to be on-site from 6am to 11pm on polling days, which adds to their already demanding roles. We need happy a headmaster!</p> <p>I've learnt each closure results in a direct financial cost to the school. A loss of £400 per day due to unrecoverable catering costs when meals are not served. Over the past year, three separate election days have resulted in £1,200 being taken from the school's budget. This is funding that could be better spent on educational resources and supporting the children.</p> <p>There are several other polling stations within Sydenham Ward, including The Grove Centre, which is in close proximity to the school. The use of these venues would avoid the disruption to the school's operations without detriment to the democratic process.</p> <p>Given these impacts, I urge the Council to reconsider using the school as a polling station and explore the use of alternative venues for future elections.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I am writing to express my opposition to the continued use of St Bartholomew's Primary School as a polling station for local and national elections. I would like to request that the school no longer continues to be a polling station in future elections due to the significant negative impacts on the school, parents and most importantly the children.</p> <p>The use of the school as a polling station requires it to close on election days, which disrupts the education of the children. Unscheduled closures affect the continuity of their learning and the school calendar.</p> <p>The closures have a considerable effect on the families in our school community. Working parents and carers are disproportionately affected. We are forced to take holiday or unpaid leave to cover these closures, which places significant financial and personal strain on working families.</p> <p>School staff are also heavily impacted by these closures. The headteacher and premises manager are required to be on-site from 6am to 11pm on polling days, which adds to their already demanding roles. This extended responsibility is unnecessary, given that there are alternative venues available within the ward.</p> <p>Each closure results in a direct financial cost to the school. On average, the school incurs a loss of £400 per day due to unrecoverable catering costs when meals are not served. Over the past year, three separate election days have resulted in £1,200 being taken from the school's budget. This is funding that could be better spent on educational resources and supporting the children.</p> <p>There are several other polling stations within Sydenham Ward, whose daily operations mean that the disruption does not impact as many people as severely as continuing to use the school - for instance The Grove Centre, which is in close proximity. The use of these venues without St Barths as a venue, do not, I believe, cause detriment to the democratic process.</p> <p>Given these impacts, I urge the Council to reconsider using the school as a polling station and explore the use of alternative venues for future elections.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I am writing to voice my opinion re. st Bartholomew's primary school's use as a polling station. I believe it's now coming up for review.</p> <p>We have been affected quite a lot this year as our daughter's education has been disrupted several times and we have had to juggle childcare around our other responsibilities. I don't think this is fair on us parents and all involved at the school.</p> <p>Also the impact on school staffing and additional expenditure which is out of their control when the school is forced to close is very unfair especially because I feel it's quite unnecessary to use the school as a polling station when several other polling station options are so near i.e. Grove Centre and St Bartholomew's church. Another alternative site option could be Holy Trinity Church?</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>



Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>My son has been at St Barts school for four years now and the inconvenience and disruption to children's education with school closure when the school is used as a polling station really can't be underestimated. I really feel we as a community have delivered our community responsibility by hosting these and it is time for someone else to take on the responsibility. The impact on work/life of the 400 families in our school community, it's disproportionately negative impact on parents/carers with less flexible work schedules/arrangements is unfair.</p> <p>We need to take holiday or unpaid leave to care for our child or have to pay from wraparound care. I was not aware of this but I'm outraged to hear of the cost to the school (£400 each time for catering losses that can't be reclaimed)</p> <p>Please consider the impact on school dates planning and school staff. There are plenty of other polling stations in the ward that can be used and don't require school closure. The local one we use doesn't have huge queues. I'm pleading school to be removed from the polling station.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I am writing to express my concerns regarding the use of St Bartholomew's Primary School as a polling station for local and national elections. I would like to request that the school be removed from the list of polling stations in future elections due to the significant negative impacts on the school community.</p> <p>Impact on Children's Education</p> <p>The use of the school as a polling station requires it to close on election days, which disrupts the education of the children. Unscheduled closures affect the continuity of their learning and the school calendar. While efforts are made to align closures with INSET days, elections are not always scheduled far enough in advance to plan for this, leading to last-minute disruptions.</p> <p>Impact on Parents and Carers</p> <p>The closures have a considerable effect on the 400 families in our school community. Parents and carers, particularly those with less flexible work schedules, are disproportionately affected. Many are forced to take holiday or unpaid leave to cover these closures, which can place significant financial and personal strain on working families.</p> <p>Impact on School Staff</p> <p>School staff are also heavily impacted by these closures. The headteacher and premises manager are required to be on-site from 6am to 11pm on polling days, which adds to their already demanding roles. This extended responsibility is unnecessary, given that there are alternative venues available within the ward.</p> <p>Impact on School Budget</p> <p>Each closure results in a direct financial cost to the school. On average, the school incurs a loss of £400 per day due to unrecoverable catering costs when meals are not served. Over the past year, three separate election days have resulted in £1,200 being taken from the school's budget. This is funding that could be better spent on educational resources and supporting the children.</p> <p>Alternative Venues</p> <p>There are several other polling stations within Sydenham Ward, including The Grove Centre, which is in close proximity to the school. The use of these venues would avoid the disruption to the school's operations without detriment to the democratic process.</p> <p>Given these impacts, I urge the Council to reconsider using the school as a polling station and explore the use of alternative venues for future elections.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>

Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I am writing in response to the review of polling station locations, to urge you to remove St Barts Primary School (Sydenham) from the list of polling stations.</p> <p>I have one daughter who currently attends the school in Year 1, while another daughter will join Reception next year.</p> <p>My older daughter's vital first year of schooling was repeatedly disrupted by polling station-related closures. There were three such closures in the last academic year, which represents three days of lost learning time. That's already substantial, but over the course of the 7 years she and her little siser will be at the school, there is the potential for many more such closures.</p> <p>Parents are normally provided with a list of school holidays and inset days in September. However two of the polling station closures were announced at short notice (the Lewisham mayoral election and the General Election), meaning they could not be incorporated as inset days and giving the school and parents little time to prepare.</p> <p>As working parents, my husband and I had no choice but to use the 'election day' childcare camp hosted at the school, which cost £41 each time - a total of £123 over the three closures for which we were not entitled to any reimbursement by Lewisham council. We're not well off and could ill afford to lose that money.</p> <p>Places on these camps were very limited as the school's big hall is used for voting, so there was not enough capacity for all the parents who needed childcare, and so there was a scramble to get a place. No parent of young children, trying to get by in London, needs this kind of stress or expense.</p> <p>Moreover, the school was forced to reimburse the school dinners catering provider £400 on each of the closure days - a total of £1,200 lost and unrecoverable from the council. At a time when schools face such budgetary difficulties and cannot afford to employ enough teaching assistants, this is a bitter pill indeed.</p> <p>What makes this financial hardship, stress and loss of learning even more difficult to understand is that there is already an ample polling station moments from the school, at the Grove Centre. Other possible locations nearby (which would cause far less disruption) include TNG Youth Centre and Holy Trinity Church.</p> <p>The impact on 400 young learners and their families is simply unjustified and parents and school staff are united in saying: 'This must stop.' Please listen to us.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>My three children attend St Bartholomews primary school in Sydenham.</p> <p>We have been made aware of the polling station review and as a concerned parent I wanted to reach out to you.</p> <p>St Bart's has been used as a polling station 3 times in the last year. This results in the school being closed to all pupils for these days.</p> <p>The following points outline why I believe it is important to remove our school from the list of polling stations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- disruption to children's education with school closure when the school is used as a polling station</li><li>- impact on work/life of the 400 families in our school community. I had to pay for a full day of childcare for 3 children on each of the polling days last year and it really impacted on my weekly take home pay on those weeks.</li><li>- disproportionately negative impact on parents/carers with less flexible work schedules/arrangements. Parents/carers may need to take holiday or unpaid leave to cover these closures. Neither myself or my husband have flexible working hours or are in careers where we can not work from home.</li><li>- cost to the school (£400 each time for catering losses that can't be reclaimed). I was shocked to find out that the school is actually loosing money on these days. A total of £1200 last year alone.</li><li>- impact on school dates planning (we try to use INSET days for these school closures but can't plan for this as elections aren't scheduled far enough in advance). All elections last year were too short notice and so didn't overlap with any of the planned inset days. So were a direct loss of teaching days for our children.</li><li>- impact on school staff (someone has to be on site from 6am to 11pm - this has been managed between the headteacher and premises manager in the past)</li><li>- There are plenty of polling stations in the vicinity and venues that could be suitable for this use, using a school and requiring school closure does not feel justified or morally right.</li></ul> <p>I fully understand the need for polling stations so that the country can execute it's democratic right - however to do this at the detriment of young children and already financially struggling schools and families cannot be acceptable.</p> <p>I would ask that you reconsider the use of our school going forward.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>

Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I am writing to express my concerns regarding the use of St Bartholomew's Primary School as a polling station for local and national elections. I would like to request that the school be removed from the list of polling stations in future elections due to the significant negative impacts on the school community.</p> <p>Impact on Children's Education</p> <p>The use of the school as a polling station requires it to close on election days, which disrupts the education of the children.</p> <p>Unscheduled closures affect the continuity of their learning and the school calendar. While efforts are made to align closures with INSET days, elections are not always scheduled far enough in advance to plan for this, leading to last-minute disruptions.</p> <p>Impact on Parents and Carers</p> <p>The closures have a considerable effect on the 400 families in our school community. Parents and carers, particularly those with less flexible work schedules, are disproportionately affected. Many are forced to take holiday or unpaid leave to cover these closures, which can place significant financial and personal strain on working families.</p> <p>Impact on School Staff</p> <p>School staff are also heavily impacted by these closures. The headteacher and premises manager are required to be on-site from 6am to 11pm on polling days, which adds to their already demanding roles.</p> <p>This extended responsibility is unnecessary, given that there are alternative venues available within the ward.</p> <p>Impact on School Budget</p> <p>Each closure results in a direct financial cost to the school. On average, the school incurs a loss of £400 per day due to unrecoverable catering costs when meals are not served. Over the past year, three separate election days have resulted in £1,200 being taken from the school’s budget. This is funding that could be better spent on educational resources and supporting the children.</p> <p>Alternative Venues</p> <p>There are several other polling stations within Sydenham Ward, including The Grove Centre, which is in close proximity to the school.</p> <p>The use of these venues would avoid the disruption to the school’s operations without detriment to the democratic process.</p> <p>Given these impacts, I urge the Council to reconsider using the school as a polling station and explore the use of alternative venues for future elections.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website:</p> <p><a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
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Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>We are writing to express our concerns regarding the use of St Bartholomew's Primary School as a polling station for local and national elections. We would like to request that the school be removed from the list of polling stations in future elections due to the significant negative impacts on the school community.</p> <p>Impact on Children's Education:</p> <p>The use of the school as a polling station requires it to close on election days, which disrupts the education of the children. Unscheduled closures affect the continuity of their learning and the school calendar. While efforts are made to align closures with INSET days, elections are not always scheduled far enough in advance to plan for this, leading to last-minute disruptions.</p> <p>Impact on Parents and Carers:</p> <p>The closures have a considerable effect on the 400 families in our school community. Parents and carers, particularly those with less flexible work schedules, are disproportionately affected. Many are forced to take holiday or unpaid leave to cover these closures, which can place significant financial and personal strain on working families.</p> <p>Impact on School Staff:</p> <p>School staff are also heavily impacted by these closures. The headteacher and premises manager are required to be on-site from 6am to 11pm on polling days, which adds to their already demanding roles. This extended responsibility is unnecessary, given that there are alternative venues available within the ward.</p> <p>Impact on School Budget:</p> <p>Each closure results in a direct financial cost to the school. On average, the school incurs a loss of £400 per day due to unrecoverable catering costs when meals are not served. Over the past year, three separate election days have resulted in £1,200 being taken from the school's budget. This is funding that could be better spent on educational resources and supporting the children.</p> <p>Alternative Venues:</p> <p>There are several other polling stations within Sydenham Ward, including The Grove Centre, which is in close proximity to the school. The use of these venues would avoid the disruption to the school's operations without detriment to the democratic process.</p> <p>Given these impacts, we urge the Council to reconsider using the school as a polling station and explore the use of alternative venues for future elections.</p> <p>We should also consider as important : safeguarding vulnerable children who are safer in school, unsettling for SEND children who need the routine and the financial impact on self employed parents. Also lack of meals for children and parents who depend on free school meals...</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website:</p> <p><a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
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Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>We are writing to express our concerns regarding the use of St Bartholomew's Primary School as a polling station for local and national elections. We would like to request that the school be removed from the list of polling stations in future elections due to the significant negative impacts on the school community.</p> <p>Impact on Children's Education:</p> <p>The use of the school as a polling station requires it to close on election days, which disrupts the education of the children. Unscheduled closures affect the continuity of their learning and the school calendar. While efforts are made to align closures with INSET days, elections are not always scheduled far enough in advance to plan for this, leading to last-minute disruptions.</p> <p>Impact on Parents and Carers:</p> <p>The closures have a considerable effect on the 400 families in our school community. Parents and carers, particularly those with less flexible work schedules, are disproportionately affected. Many are forced to take holiday or unpaid leave to cover these closures, which can place significant financial and personal strain on working families.</p> <p>Impact on School Staff:</p> <p>School staff are also heavily impacted by these closures. The headteacher and premises manager are required to be on-site from 6am to 11pm on polling days, which adds to their already demanding roles. This extended responsibility is unnecessary, given that there are alternative venues available within the ward.</p> <p>Impact on School Budget:</p> <p>Each closure results in a direct financial cost to the school. On average, the school incurs a loss of £400 per day due to unrecoverable catering costs when meals are not served. Over the past year, three separate election days have resulted in £1,200 being taken from the school's budget. This is funding that could be better spent on educational resources and supporting the children.</p> <p>Alternative Venues:</p> <p>There are several other polling stations within Sydenham Ward, including The Grove Centre, which is in close proximity to the school. The use of these venues would avoid the disruption to the school's operations without detriment to the democratic process.</p> <p>Given these impacts, we urge the Council to reconsider using the school as a polling station and explore the use of alternative venues for future elections.</p> <p>We should also consider as important : safeguarding vulnerable children who are safer in school, unsettling for SEND children who need the routine and the financial impact on self employed parents. Also lack of meals for children and parents who depend on free school meals...</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website:</p> <p><a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
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Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>Polling district review - St Bartholomew's Primary School polling station - Sydenham</p> <p>I write with representations for consideration in your Polling district review.</p> <p>Specifically, I write to request that a decision is made to cease using St Bartholomew's Primary School in Sydenham as a polling station.</p> <p>Reasons not to use St Bartholomew's Primary School as a polling station</p> <p>As a parent of two children at the school, I am aware that the school struggles with the impact of the requirement for it to be a polling station for local and national elections. It has meant that the school has had to close on those days but it has also been a considerable cost to the school.</p> <p>In particular the closure of the school has the following negative impacts:</p> <p>1.disruption to children's education with school closure when the school is used as a polling station, the impact on SEND and vulnerable children being particularly damaging;</p> <p>2.loss of a free school meal for children when the school is closed, the impact of this will be most severely felt by low-income families;</p> <p>3.difficulties to the work/life of the 400 families in the school community which disproportionately negative impacts on sole parent families and parents/carers with less flexible work schedules/arrangements, such as parents working on zero hours contracts, lower income or self employed. Parents/carers may need to take holiday or unpaid leave to cover these closures;</p> <p>4.financial costs to the school - £400 each time the school is closed for polling due to catering losses that can't be reclaimed;</p> <p>5.impact on school dates planning – the school tries to plan INSET days to coincide with polling days but that is not possible as not all elections are scheduled far enough in advance e.g. the last Lewisham Mayoral election and General election;</p> <p>6.Increased working hours for school staff - someone has to be on site from 6am to 11pm - this has been managed between the headteacher and premises manager in the past.</p> <p>Possible alternative locations</p> <p>Alternatively, I would suggest that the following locations could be used as a polling station instead: 1) the Church of the Resurrection of Our Lord (RC), 165-169 Kirkdale, London SE26 4QL, 2) Holy Trinity Church Sydenham and Forest Hill, Trinity Path, London SE26 4EA, 3) a Portacabin on the car parking area outside St</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I am writing to express my concerns regarding the use of St Bartholomew's Primary School as a polling station for local and national elections. I would like to request that the school be removed from the list of polling stations in future elections due to the significant negative impacts on the school community.</p> <p>Impact on Children's Education</p> <p>The use of the school as a polling station requires it to close on election days, which disrupts the education of the children. Unscheduled closures affect the continuity of their learning and the school calendar. While efforts are made to align closures with INSET days, elections are not always scheduled far enough in advance to plan for this, leading to last-minute disruptions.</p> <p>Impact on Parents and Carers</p> <p>The closures have a considerable effect on the 400 families in our school community. Parents and carers, particularly those with less flexible work schedules, are disproportionately affected. Many are forced to take holiday or unpaid leave to cover these closures, which can place significant financial and personal strain on working families.</p> <p>Impact on School Staff</p> <p>School staff are also heavily impacted by these closures. The headteacher and premises manager are required to be on-site from 6am to 11pm on polling days, which adds to their already demanding roles. This extended responsibility is unnecessary, given that there are alternative venues available within the ward.</p> <p>Impact on School Budget</p> <p>Each closure results in a direct financial cost to the school. On average, the school incurs a loss of £400 per day due to unrecoverable catering costs when meals are not served. Over the past year, three separate election days have resulted in £1,200 being taken from the school’s budget. This is funding that could be better spent on educational resources and supporting the children.</p> <p>Alternative Venues</p> <p>There are several other polling stations within Sydenham Ward, including The Grove Centre, which is in close proximity to the school. The use of these venues would avoid the disruption to the school’s operations without detriment to the democratic process.</p> <p>Given these impacts, I urge the Council to reconsider using the school as a polling station and explore the use of alternative venues for future elections.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>

Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	I share the view that the disruption and cost to the school, its participants and staff is unacceptable	Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a>
Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	I would like lewisham to reconsider the use of St Bartholomew's primary school as a polling station for the following reasons. - disruption to children's education with school closure when the school is used as a polling station - impact on work/life of the 400 families in our school community disproportionately negative impact on parents/carers with less flexible work schedules/arrangements. Parents/carers may need to take holiday or unpaid leave to cover these closures cost to the school (£400 each time for catering losses that can't be reclaimed) impact on school dates planning (they try to use INSET days for these school closures but can't plan for this as elections aren't scheduled far enough in advance) - impact on school staff (someone has to be on site from 6am to 11pm this has been managed between the headteacher and premises manager in the past) there are plenty of other polling stations in the ward that can be used and don't require school closure	Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a>
Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	I hope you are all well. Some of you may remember me from my days as secretary of Sydenham branch. I am just writing as a parent of St Barts School to plead with you to review the school's use as a polling station. I understand that last year the school incurred significant costs as a result of elections and obviously our children missed many days of education. Given that there are viable alternatives, please could I have some assurances that you will act on the concerns of several of us in the community and find an alternative site.	Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a>
Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	I am writing to express my concerns regarding the use of St Bartholomew's Primary School as a polling station for local and national elections. I would like to request that the school be removed from the list of polling stations in future elections due to the significant negative impacts on the school community.  Impact on Children's Education The use of the school as a polling station requires it to close on election days, which disrupts the education of the children. Unscheduled closures affect the continuity of their learning and the school calendar. While efforts are made to align closures with INSET days, elections are not always scheduled far enough in advance to plan for this, leading to last-minute disruptions. Impact on Parents and Carers The closures have a considerable effect on the 400 families in our school community. Parents and carers, particularly those with less flexible work schedules, are disproportionately affected. Many are forced to take holiday or unpaid leave to cover these closures, which can place significant financial and personal strain on working families. Impact on School Staff School staff are also heavily impacted by these closures. The headteacher and premises manager are required to be on-site from 6am to 11pm on polling days, which adds to their already demanding roles. This extended responsibility is unnecessary, given that there are alternative venues available within the ward. Impact on School Budget Each closure results in a direct financial cost to the school. On average, the school incurs a loss of £400 per day due to unrecoverable catering costs when meals are not served. Over the past year, three separate election days have resulted in £1,200 being taken from the school's budget. This is funding that could be better spent on educational resources and supporting the children. Alternative Venues There are several other polling stations within Sydenham Ward, including The Grove Centre, which is in close proximity to the school. The use of these venues would avoid the disruption to the school's operations without detriment to the democratic process. Other venues which aren't polling stations nearby but I would suggest are more suitable than the school are Church of the Resurrection of Our Lord (RC) on the corner of Sydenham Park and Kirkdale, or Holy Trinity Church on Sydenham Park. Given these impacts, I urge the Council to reconsider using the school as a polling station and explore the use	Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a>



Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>Polling district review - St Bartholomew's Primary School polling station - Sydenham</p> <p>I write with representations for consideration in your Polling district review.</p> <p>Specifically, I write to request that a decision is made to cease using St Bartholomew's Primary School in Sydenham as a polling station.</p> <p>Reasons not to use St Bartholomew's Primary School as a polling station</p> <p>As a parent of two children at the school, I am aware that the school struggles with the impact of the requirement for it to be a polling station for local and national elections. It has meant that the school has had to close on those days but it has also been a considerable cost to the school.</p> <p>In particular the closure of the school has the following negative impacts:</p> <p>1.disruption to children's education with school closure when the school is used as a polling station, the impact on SEND and vulnerable children being particularly damaging;</p> <p>2.loss of a free school meal for children when the school is closed, the impact of this will be most severely felt by low-income families;</p> <p>3.difficulties to the work/life of the 400 families in the school community which disproportionately negative impacts on sole parent families and parents/carers with less flexible work schedules/arrangements, such as parents working on zero hours contracts, lower income or self employed. Parents/carers may need to take holiday or unpaid leave to cover these closures;</p> <p>4.financial costs to the school - £400 each time the school is closed for polling due to catering losses that can't be reclaimed;</p> <p>5.impact on school dates planning – the school tries to plan INSET days to coincide with polling days but that is not possible as not all elections are scheduled far enough in advance e.g. the last Lewisham Mayoral election and General election;</p> <p>6.Increased working hours for school staff - someone has to be on site from 6am to 11pm - this has been managed between the headteacher and premises manager in the past.</p> <p>Possible alternative locations</p> <p>Alternatively, I would suggest that the following locations could be used as a polling station instead: 1) the Church of the Resurrection of Our Lord (RC), 165-169 Kirkdale, London SE26 4QL, 2) Holy Trinity Church Sydenham and Forest Hill, Trinity Path, London SE26 4EA, 3) a Portacabin on the car parking area outside St Bartholomew’s Primary School House on The Peak, or, 4) a Portacabin on the car parking area in Mendip Close</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I’d like to request that my son’s school (St Barts) is no longer used as a polling station. There are other polling stations in the area, and also other buildings that could be used with less impact to school and families.</p> <p>We had 3 election days last year, which cost the school £1200 from the budget in catering costs which can’t be reclaimed - this is a huge amount to lose.</p> <p>Having my child at home impacts his routine greatly, and means that I can’t work that day as I we don’t have additional childcare for him due to his needs. I am a freelancer so this affects my business and income too. If I am booked to work that day, then my partner would need to take unpaid leave, again losing much needed income as a family.</p> <p>Using the school as a polling station is putting greater stress on parents and income, and is simply impractical for the school when there are other options for consideration.</p> <p>I hope there are enough decent points here for the council to reconsider.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I'm writing in response to the review of polling stations, wishing to request that St Bartholomew's primary school be removed from the list of polling stations in future.</p> <p>School closure causes disruption to the children's education and to parents/carers across 400 families, especially those with less flexible working arrangements. There is also a cost to the school (£400 each time) that can't be reclaimed, and to staff who have to be on site from 6am to 11pm on polling day.</p> <p>Given the wealth of other polling stations in this area that don't require school closure, I would strongly prefer for St Bart's not to be used in future.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>

Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I am writing to express my concerns regarding the use of St Bartholomew's Primary School as a polling station for local and national elections. I would like to request that the school be removed from the list of polling stations in future elections due to the significant negative impacts on the school community.</p> <p>Impact on Children's Education</p> <p>The use of the school as a polling station requires it to close on election days, which disrupts the education of the children. Unscheduled closures affect the continuity of their learning and the school calendar. While efforts are made to align closures with INSET days, elections are not always scheduled far enough in advance to plan for this, leading to last-minute disruptions.</p> <p>Impact on Parents and Carers</p> <p>The closures have a considerable effect on the 400 families in our school community. Parents and carers, particularly those with less flexible work schedules, are disproportionately affected. Many are forced to take holiday or unpaid leave to cover these closures, which can place significant financial and personal strain on working families.</p> <p>Impact on School Staff</p> <p>School staff are also heavily impacted by these closures. The headteacher and premises manager are required to be on-site from 6am to 11pm on polling days, which adds to their already demanding roles. This extended responsibility is unnecessary, given that there are alternative venues available within the ward.</p> <p>Impact on School Budget</p> <p>Each closure results in a direct financial cost to the school. On average, the school incurs a loss of £400 per day due to unrecoverable catering costs when meals are not served. Over the past year, three separate election days have resulted in £1,200 being taken from the school’s budget. This is funding that could be better spent on educational resources and supporting the children.</p> <p>Alternative Venues</p> <p>There are several other polling stations within Sydenham Ward, including The Grove Centre, which is in close proximity to the school. The use of these venues would avoid the disruption to the school’s operations without detriment to the democratic process.</p> <p>Given these impacts, I urge the Council to reconsider using the school as a polling station and explore the use of alternative venues for future elections.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I am writing to express my concerns regarding the use of St. Bartholomew's Primary School as a polling station for local and national elections. I would like to request that the school be removed from the list of polling stations in future elections due to the significant negative impacts on the school community.</p> <p>Impact on Children's Education</p> <p>The use of the school as a polling station requires it to close on election days, which disrupts the education of the children. Unscheduled closures affect the continuity of their learning and the school calendar. While efforts are made to align closures with inset days, elections are not always scheduled far enough in advance to plan for this, leading to last-minute disruptions.</p> <p>Impact on Parents and Carers</p> <p>The closures have a considerable effect on the 400 families in our school community. Parents and carers, particularly those with less flexible work schedules, are disproportionately affected. Many are forced to take holiday or unpaid leave to cover these closures, which can place significant financial and personal strain on working families.</p> <p>Impact on School Staff</p> <p>School staff are also heavily impacted by these closures. The headteacher and premises manager are required to be on-site from 6am to 11pm on polling days, which adds to their already demanding roles. This extended responsibility is unnecessary, given that there are alternative venues available within the ward.</p> <p>Impact on School Budget</p> <p>Each closure results in a direct financial cost to the school. On average, the school incurs a loss of £400 per day due to unrecoverable catering costs when meals are not served. Over the past year, three separate election days have resulted in £1,200 being taken from the school’s budget. This is funding that could be better spent on educational resources and supporting the children.</p> <p>Alternative Venues</p> <p>There are several other polling stations within Sydenham Ward, including The Grove Centre, which is in close proximity to the school. The use of these venues would avoid the disruption to the school’s operations without detriment to the democratic process.</p> <p>Given these impacts, I urge the Council to reconsider using the school as a polling station and explore the use of alternative venues for future elections.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>

Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I'm emailing to request that you consider removing St Bartholomew's school from the list of polling stations in Lewisham.</p> <p>As you will no doubt be aware, using a school as a polling station has an enormous impact on the local community. Last year there were three elections, which was hugely disruptive to children's education, as well as impossible for working parents who suddenly have to either cancel their work - which isn't always possible - or pay for extremely expensive additional childcare. For children with additional needs who need more support to settle into childcare settings, may not be able to attend alternative childcare and who often rely on a predictable routine, this can be a period of real stress and anxiety. It's an additional burden on families who really have enough to deal with, and makes it even harder for families to juggle work with family life.</p> <p>There are plenty of buildings available in our ward to use as polling stations which do not require closing a school. Some are geographically extremely close, so the impact of not using St Bart's would be minimal.</p> <p>Aside from the impact on families, using the school as a polling station also has a huge impact on the school itself. The school has to pay their catering provider about £400 per day they are closed to cover their losses. This came to £1200 last year - money that the school can then not spend on books, teachers or other resources for the children. They also need a member of staff to be on site from 6am until 11pm, a huge additional ask from hard working teachers and support staff.</p> <p>Thank you for considering my email, I really hope that you'll do all you can to remove at Bartholomew's from the list to reduce the impact on families in our community.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>It's been brought to my attention that people will be fined if there children are off school so Please could someone begin to help me understand how letting the children loose 6.5hrs of learning so that the school can be used as a Polling Station is acceptable?</p> <p>- disruption to children's education with school closure when the school is used as a polling station - same as it would be if a parent Kept their child off for a holiday... works both ways right?</p> <p>- impact on work/life of the 400 families in our school community - how do you expect 400 families to reschedule their rota? Find childcare or even PAY for extra childcare?</p> <p>- there are PLENTY of other polling stations in the ward that can be used and don't require school closure</p> <p>- disproportionately negative impact on parents/carers with less flexible work schedules/arrangements. Parents/carers may need to take holiday or unpaid leave to cover these closures</p> <p>- I personally couldn't afford any childcare so that would mean my child loses education and is stuck at home during these times.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>

Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I am writing to express my concerns regarding the use of St Bartholomew's Primary School as a polling station for local and national elections. I would like to request that the school be removed from the list of polling stations in future elections due to the significant negative impacts on the school community.</p> <p>Impact on Children's Education</p> <p>The use of the school as a polling station requires it to close on election days, which disrupts the education of the children. Unscheduled closures affect the continuity of their learning and the school calendar. While efforts are made to align closures with INSET days, elections are not always scheduled far enough in advance to plan for this, leading to last-minute disruptions.</p> <p>Impact on Parents and Carers</p> <p>The closures have a considerable effect on the 400 families in our school community. Parents and carers, particularly those with less flexible work schedules, are disproportionately affected. Many are forced to take holiday or unpaid leave to cover these closures, which can place significant financial and personal strain on working families.</p> <p>Impact on School Staff</p> <p>School staff are also heavily impacted by these closures. The headteacher and premises manager are required to be on-site from 6am to 11pm on polling days, which adds to their already demanding roles. This extended responsibility is unnecessary, given that there are alternative venues available within the ward.</p> <p>Impact on School Budget</p> <p>Each closure results in a direct financial cost to the school. On average, the school incurs a loss of £400 per day due to unrecoverable catering costs when meals are not served. Over the past year, three separate election days have resulted in £1,200 being taken from the school’s budget. This is funding that could be better spent on educational resources and supporting the children.</p> <p>Alternative Venues</p> <p>There are several other polling stations within Sydenham Ward, including The Grove Centre, which is in close proximity to the school. The use of these venues would avoid the disruption to the school’s operations without detriment to the democratic process.</p> <p>Given these impacts, I urge the Council to reconsider using the school as a polling station and explore the use of alternative venues for future elections.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I understand the local authority will be reviewing and consulting on polling stations for local and national elections. I would like to request that my children's school is no longer used for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Disruption to my children's education with school closure when the school is used as a polling station (3 days for each child last year)</li><li>•Impact on work/life of the 400 families in our school community</li><li>•Disproportionately negative impact on parents/carers with less flexible work schedules/arrangements. I had to take holiday and unpaid leave to cover these closures</li><li>•Cost to the school (£400 each time for catering losses that can't be reclaimed)</li><li>• impact on school dates planning (the school try to use INSET days for these school closures but can't plan for this as elections aren't scheduled far enough in advance)</li><li>•Impact on school staff (someone has to be on site from 6am to 11pm. This has been managed between the headteacher and premises manager in the past)</li><li>•There are plenty of other polling stations in the ward that can be used and don't require school closure</li></ul>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>

Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I am writing to express my concerns regarding the use of St Bartholomew's Primary School as a polling station for local and national elections. I would like to request that the school be removed from the list of polling stations in future elections due to the significant negative impacts on the school community.</p> <p>Impact on Children's Education</p> <p>The use of the school as a polling station requires it to close on election days, which disrupts the education of the children. Unscheduled closures affect the continuity of their learning and the school calendar. While efforts are made to align closures with INSET days, elections are not always scheduled far enough in advance to plan for this, leading to last-minute disruptions.</p> <p>Impact on Parents and Carers</p> <p>The closures have a considerable effect on the 400 families in our school community. Parents and carers, particularly those with less flexible work schedules, are disproportionately affected. Many are forced to take holiday or unpaid leave to cover these closures, which can place significant financial and personal strain on working families.</p> <p>Impact on School Budget</p> <p>Each closure results in a direct financial cost to the school. On average, the school incurs a loss of £400 per day due to unrecoverable catering costs when meals are not served. Over the past year, three separate election days have resulted in £1,200 being taken from the school’s budget. This is funding that could be better spent on educational resources and supporting the children.</p> <p>Impact on School Staff</p> <p>School staff are also heavily impacted by these closures. The headteacher and premises manager are required to be on-site from 6am to 11pm on polling days, which adds to their already demanding roles. This extended responsibility is unnecessary, given that there are alternative venues available within the ward.</p> <p>Alternative Venues</p> <p>There are several other polling stations within Sydenham Ward, including The Grove Centre, which is in close proximity to the school. The use of these venues would avoid the disruption to the school’s operations without detriment to the democratic process.</p> <p>Given these impacts, I urge the Council to reconsider using the school as a polling station and explore the use of alternative venues for future elections.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I am writing to express my concerns regarding the use of St Bartholomew's Primary School as a polling station for local and national elections. I would like to request that the school be removed from the list of polling stations in future elections due to the significant negative impacts on the school community.</p> <p>Impact on Children's Education</p> <p>The use of the school as a polling station requires it to close on election days, which disrupts the education of the children. Unscheduled closures affect the continuity of their learning and the school calendar. While efforts are made to align closures with INSET days, elections are not always scheduled far enough in advance to plan for this, leading to last-minute disruptions.</p> <p>Impact on Parents and Carers</p> <p>The closures have a considerable effect on the 400 families in our school community. Parents and carers, particularly those with less flexible work schedules, are disproportionately affected. Many are forced to take holiday or unpaid leave to cover these closures, which can place significant financial and personal strain on working families.</p> <p>Impact on School Staff</p> <p>School staff are also heavily impacted by these closures. The headteacher and premises manager are required to be on-site from 6am to 11pm on polling days, which adds to their already demanding roles. This extended responsibility is unnecessary, given that there are alternative venues available within the ward.</p> <p>Impact on School Budget</p> <p>Each closure results in a direct financial cost to the school. On average, the school incurs a loss of £400 per day due to unrecoverable catering costs when meals are not served. Over the past year, three separate election days have resulted in £1,200 being taken from the school’s budget. This is funding that could be better spent on educational resources and supporting the children.</p> <p>Alternative Venues</p> <p>There are several other polling stations within Sydenham Ward, including The Grove Centre, which is in close proximity to the school. The use of these venues would avoid the disruption to the school’s operations without detriment to the democratic process.</p> <p>Given these impacts, I urge the Council to reconsider using the school as a polling station and explore the use of alternative venues for future elections.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>

Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I am writing to you to express my view that St Bartholemew's Primary School, Sydenham, should cease to be used as a polling station following the current review. I believe there are other more suitable venues that could easily be substituted for the school. The continued use of the school poses a variety of issues including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•disruption to children's education when the school needs to be closed to be used as a polling station. While closures may be relatively infrequent, any disruption to children's education that can be avoided ought to be;</li><li>•closure of the school not only impacts the children but also their families who have to forego work to look after them or make alternative arrangements, often at a cost, for someone to provide childcare support. The impact is disproportionately negative for those parents/carers with less flexible employers or working arrangements. many parents may need to take holiday or unpaid leave to accommodate the days when the school is closed for use as a polling station.</li><li>•cost to the school of closures, in particular c.£400 per day catering losses arising as the school is contractually obliged to pay its catering provider for catering loses sustained for days when the school is closed. These costs cannot be reclaimed from central funds by the school</li><li>•impact on the school staff required to be on site from very early in the morning to very late at night.</li></ul> <p>I am certain there are other potential polling station venues that could be used which cause significantly less disruption and would ask that you seriously consider discontinuing the use of the primary school as a polling station venue.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>Re: St Bartholomew's Primary School polling station</p> <p>I am writing to express our concern regarding the use of St Bartholomew's Primary School as a polling station for local and national elections. I would like to request that the school be removed from the list of polling stations in future elections due to the significant negative impacts on the school community.</p> <p>Impact on Children's Education The use of the school as a polling station requires it to close on election days, which disrupts the education of the children. Unscheduled closures affect the continuity of their learning and the school calendar. While efforts are made to align closures with INSET days, elections are not always scheduled far enough in advance to plan for this, leading to last-minute disruptions.</p> <p>Impact on Parents and Carers The closures have a considerable effect on the 400 families in our school community. Parents and carers, particularly those with less flexible work schedules, are disproportionately affected. Many are forced to take holiday or unpaid leave to cover these closures, which can place significant financial and personal strain on working families.</p> <p>Impact on School Staff School staff are also heavily impacted by these closures. The headteacher and premises manager are required to be on-site from 6am to 11pm on polling days, which adds to their already demanding roles. This extended responsibility is unnecessary, given that there are alternative venues available within the ward.</p> <p>Impact on School Budget Each closure results in a direct financial cost to the school. On average, the school incurs a loss of £400 per day due to unrecoverable catering costs when meals are not served. Over the past year, three separate election days have resulted in £1,200 being taken from the school’s budget. This is funding that could be better spent on educational resources and supporting the children.</p> <p>Alternative Venues There are several other polling stations within Sydenham Ward, including The Grove Centre and St Bartholomew’s Church, which are near the school and already provide residents in the area easy access to attend a polling station.</p> <p>If a further venue is required, then perhaps other options can be explored: Holy Trinity / Church of the Resurrection of Our Lord / TNG</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>

Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I am writing both as a parent and an NHS clinician, specialising in child development, to express my concerns regarding the use of St Bartholomew's Primary School as a polling station for local and national elections. I would like to request that the school be removed from the list of polling stations in future elections due to the significant negative impacts on children, parents and school staff. There are other, more appropriate, options in the Sydenham Ward that would not have the same impact on children in these crucial early years of development. The decision to hold elections in St Bartholomew's Primary School have wide reaching negative consequences which are detailed below:</p> <p>1)Impact on children's education, wellbeing and social development</p> <p>The use of the school as a polling station requires it to close on election days, which disrupts the education of the children. Unscheduled closures affect the continuity of their learning and there is no guarantee that children are supported in the home to make up for the missed learning. This means that children at St Bartholomew's Primary School are unfairly disadvantaged in comparison with their peers in other local schools. School is also an important protective place for children’s emotional wellbeing and social development. Many children have limited opportunities and lack an enriched environment in the home. School gives them a chance to close the development gap with age-matched peers from better resourced families. Removing children from the school environment removes this opportunity and the social gaps will continue to widen. Given that we are in a Labour constituency with Labour councillors who hold child development and equal opportunities at the core of their manifesto, it would follow suit that Lewisham council sends a clear message that it understands the importance of school for the whole development of the child (not just educational, but social and emotional) and removes St Bartholomew's Primary School from its polling stations.</p> <p>2)Considerations for children with Special Educational Needs</p> <p>Whilst all children benefit from attending school, many children with special educational needs (including acquired brain injuries, congenital conditions, neurodevelopmental conditions) find change more difficult than their peers. For children with additional needs, a day off school in the usual school week is a source of confusion, frustration, upset and can lead to deteriorating mental health. Parents will often have experienced difficulties getting their child to accept going to school in the first place, and the routine provides predictability which is important in reducing distress in these children. This has a huge impact on the parents of these children who already hold more of the care burden that parents of typically developing children.</p> <p>3)Consideration of child safeguarding</p> <p>For many children, school is a place of safety. Over 800,000 children are affected by domestic abuse in the United Kingdom (ref: Barnados.org.uk). Domestic abuse by a parent is sadly the most common factor of all</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
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Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I am writing to express my concerns regarding the use of St Bartholomew's Primary School as a polling station for local and national elections. I would like to request that the school be removed from the list of polling stations in future elections due to the significant negative impacts on the school community.</p> <p>Impact on Children's Education: The use of the school as a polling station requires it to close on election days, which disrupts the education of the children. Unscheduled closures affect the continuity of their learning and the school calendar. While efforts are made to align closures with INSET days, elections are not always scheduled far enough in advance to plan for this, leading to last-minute disruptions.</p> <p>Impact on Parents and Carers: The closures have a considerable effect on the 400 families in our school community. Parents and carers, particularly those with less flexible work schedules, are disproportionately affected. Many are forced to take holiday or unpaid leave to cover these closures, which can place significant financial and personal strain on working families.</p> <p>Impact on School Staff: School staff are also heavily impacted by these closures. The headteacher and premises manager are required to be on-site from 6am to 11pm on polling days, which adds to their already demanding roles. This extended responsibility is unnecessary, given that there are alternative venues available within the ward.</p> <p>Impact on School Budget: Each closure results in a direct financial cost to the school. On average, the school incurs a loss of £400 per day due to unrecoverable catering costs when meals are not served. Over the past year, three separate election days have resulted in £1,200 being taken from the school’s budget. This is funding that could be better spent on educational resources and supporting the children.</p> <p>Alternative Venues: There are several other polling stations within Sydenham Ward, including The Grove Centre, which is in close proximity to the school. The Grove Centre House, Holy Trinity church or the church of resurrection of the lord, could also be used. The use of these venues would avoid the disruption to the school’s operations without detriment to the democratic process.</p> <p>Given these impacts, I urge the Council to reconsider using the school as a polling station and explore the use of alternative venues for future elections.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>As the consult on polling station locations is coming up soon and as a working parent, I request that our school is no longer used for this.</p> <p>It is a disruption to children's education.</p> <p>It is a cost for the school.</p> <p>Impacts on work/life of our family and the other 400 families in the school community.</p> <p>We need to take unpaid leave or holiday to cover these closures</p> <p>There are many other polling stations in the ward and I don't feel the removal of St Bartholomew's would be of detriment of the democratic process.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I’m writing to express my concerns regarding St Bartholomew’s Primary School being used as a local polling station.</p> <p>My now 8 year old daughter is currently in Year 4 but has attended since reception.</p> <p>During this time, there have been many closures due to local elections, with this year seeing more than ever. I’m worried that with the school closed for so many days my daughter’s education will be impacted. She started during the covid pandemic so was behind due to the home schooling, therefore every day for her is critical. The school do try and use Inset days to minimise disruption but this isn’t always possible and therefore there are more days she isn’t in school and learning. In addition, I work full time so paying £35 a time for care has a grave financial burden on me.</p> <p>Whilst on the subject of financial burdens, the school loses hundreds of pounds every closure as they still need to pay for services, such as school dinners, which aren’t being used. This money could be better spent on facilities upgrades or learning resources.</p> <p>I’m aware of other locations where voting could be done, with several in the Sydenham Ward, therefore I’d appreciate if you could consider removing St Bartholomew’s Primary School from the list for future elections.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>



Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I would like to object to the use of St Bartholomew's Primary School as a polling station for local and national elections. Please can the school be removed from the list of polling stations in future elections due to the significant negative impacts on the school community.</p> <p>Impact on Children's Education</p> <p>The use of the school as a polling station requires it to close on election days, which disrupts the education of the children. Unscheduled closures affect the continuity of their learning and the school calendar. While efforts are made to align closures with INSET days, elections are not always scheduled far enough in advance to plan for this, leading to last-minute disruptions.</p> <p>Impact on Parents and Carers</p> <p>The closures have a considerable effect on the 400 families in our school community. Parents and carers, particularly those with less flexible work schedules, are disproportionately affected. Many are forced to take holiday or unpaid leave to cover these closures, which can place significant financial and personal strain on working families.</p> <p>Impact on School Staff</p> <p>School staff are also heavily impacted by these closures. The headteacher and premises manager are required to be on-site from 6am to 11pm on polling days, which adds to their already demanding roles. This extended responsibility is unnecessary, given that there are alternative venues available within the ward.</p> <p>Impact on School Budget</p> <p>Each closure results in a direct financial cost to the school. On average, the school incurs a loss of £400 per day due to unrecoverable catering costs when meals are not served. Over the past year, three separate election days have resulted in £1,200 being taken from the school's budget. This is funding that could be better spent on educational resources and supporting the children.</p> <p>Alternative Venues</p> <p>There are several other polling stations within Sydenham Ward, including The Grove Centre, which is in close proximity to the school. The use of these venues would avoid the disruption to the school's operations without detriment to the democratic process. Or you could consider using Sydenham High, a private school.</p> <p>Given these impacts, I urge the Council to reconsider using the school as a polling station and explore the use of alternative venues for future elections.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I am writing as a parent of two children at St Bartholomew's School and a Sydenham Ward resident.</p> <p>I would like to strongly object to the renewal of St Bartholomew's School as a polling station for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•The disruption to the children's education and increased instability to those children whose families rely heavily on school meals for their daily nutrition.</li><li>•There are nearly 400 families in our school whose work and life is impacted by needing to organise alternative childcare at a cost or take annual or unpaid leave from work.</li><li>•The negative impact on staff whose date planning and lesson planning is disrupted.</li><li>•The cost to the school of closure is £400 per day payable to the catering company for lost income. This is a significant and unnecessary drain on school funds, which are already strained.</li><li>•There are plenty of other polling stations in the ward which can be used and don't require an entire school closure.</li></ul> <p>If an alternative venue is needed I would propose Holy Trinity Church on Sydenham Park which is a large venue. It is very near St Bartholomew's School and its use would be minimally disruptive to the community. Additionally, TNG on Wells Park Road would also be an excellent venue to add further options to the local area.</p> <p>I hope you will take these issues seriously and I look forward to hearing the results of the review.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I would like to request that St Bartholomew's Primary School is NOT a polling station in future. There are other options available which would not cause disruption to children's learning. Trying to stay open in the past has caused too many Safeguarding issues, however closing also has implications for Safeguarding for our most vulnerable pupils. Parents have to find alternative child care and not all parents are able to afford this. Our Headteacher or Premises manager has to remain on site until 11pm. Finally, whenever the school is used as a polling station it costs the school money as we are charged by the caterers for the meals which have not been provided that day. Now that every child receives a school meal this cost does have an impact on an already tight school budget and is therefore actually taking money away from what could be spent on enhancing pupils' learning.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>

Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>We are 'The Friends of St Bartholomew's,' a committed group of parents, teachers, and staff working tirelessly to support and enhance the school’s educational mission through fundraising and other efforts. We care deeply about the well-being of our children and the success of the school.</p> <p>We understand that a polling station review is currently underway, and we feel compelled to express our concerns about how using St Bart's as a polling station is significantly disrupting the school and its community. Over the past year, St Bart's has been used as a polling station three times, requiring the school to close each time. This has a deeply negative impact on both the children's education and the lives of their families.</p> <p>The following points illustrate why this is such an important issue for us:</p> <p>Loss of learning time: Each time the school is closed for polling, children lose an entire day of education.</p> <p>Strain on families: With over 400 families in our community, many parents struggle to find alternative childcare, often at an additional cost.</p> <p>Impact on working parents: For those with less flexible work schedules, this disruption means taking unpaid leave or using up precious holiday time.</p> <p>Financial strain on the school: Each closure costs the school approximately £400 in non-refundable catering losses, totaling £1,200 last year alone—funds that could be put to far better use for our students.</p> <p>Difficulty in planning: Elections are often scheduled with little notice, preventing us from aligning them with INSET days, thus directly cutting into vital teaching time.</p> <p>Burden on school staff: Our headteacher and premises manager are required to be on site from 6am to 11pm on polling days, which places an additional strain on them.</p> <p>We fully appreciate the importance of ensuring access to polling stations so that democracy can flourish. However, we implore you to consider the cost this places on our children’s education and the hardships faced by families who are already struggling financially.</p> <p>With many other suitable venues in the area, we kindly ask that you reconsider using St Bart’s as a polling station in the future.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I am writing as a concerned parent regarding the recent polling station review, and I felt it was important to reach out to you.</p> <p>St Bart's has been used as a polling station three times over the past year, resulting in the school being closed to all pupils on these days. As a parent, this poses significant challenges, not least of which is the financial burden of securing childcare. Moreover, this disrupts their education, particularly in light of the current emphasis on ensuring regular school attendance. It seems at odds with the message we’re trying to convey to our children about the importance of attending school, especially given the time already lost due to Covid.</p> <p>From the school’s perspective, as an active member the schools PTA, I am also acutely aware of the financial strain these closures create. Catering services must still be paid for, resulting in a direct loss of £1200 last year alone, which we are unable to recover. Additionally, someone is required to be on-site from 6am until 11pm, further increasing the financial burden.</p> <p>Given that we are a school in London, where there are many potential polling stations available nearby, it feels difficult to justify using a school, both practically and morally. While I fully understand the importance of having adequate polling stations to uphold our democratic process, I am particularly mindful of this — it should not come at the expense of young children’s education or place further financial strain on schools that are already struggling.</p> <p>I would sincerely urge you to reconsider the use of our school as a polling station in the future.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>

Sydenham	St. Bartholomew's Primary School	<p>I’m writing to request stop using St Bartholomew’s primary school in Sydenham as a polling station in the future.</p> <p>My daughter has been at St Barts school for four years now and the inconvenience and disruption to children's education with school closure when the school is used as a polling station really can’t be underestimated. I really feel we as a community have delivered our community responsibility by hosting these and it is time for someone else to take on the responsibility. The impact on work/life of the 400 families in our school community, its disproportionately negative impact on parents/carers with less flexible work schedules/arrangements is unfair.</p> <p>We need to take holiday or unpaid leave to care for our child or have to pay from wraparound care.</p> <p>I was not aware of this but I’m outraged to hear of the cost to the school (£400 each time for catering losses that can't be reclaimed)</p> <p>Please consider the impact on school dates planning and school staff. There are plenty of other, accessible polling stations in the ward that can be used and don't require school closure. The local one we use doesn’t have huge queues.</p> <p>I’m pleading school to be removed from the polling station.</p>	<p>Thank you for your submission to the polling district review. Your feedback is appreciated. The council will consider all submissions and revised proposals before making a final decision in January 2025. Please note that all representations received must be published alongside the final report. Personal information, such as name and address, will be redacted. More information about the review can be found on our website:</p> <p><a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p>
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Part 2: Engagement with Councillors

Ward	To / From	Details
All Wards	From officer Jamie Baker to ALL councillors	<p>Dear Councillors</p> <p>Our statutory review of polling districts and places has begun. An important part of the review is to seek the views of councillors. The final scheme will go to Full Council for formal approval in January 2025, so it is important that all members are happy with the polling scheme in their ward.</p> <p>You can find the official notice and ward maps on our website: <a href="https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review">https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/elections/changes-to-our-electoral-system/polling-district-review</a></p> <p>How to give your views:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.Email <a href="mailto:jamie.baker@lewisham.gov.uk">jamie.baker@lewisham.gov.uk</a></li><li>2.Meet Jamie online, via a Teams meeting, at a time of your choice (I can be flexible of course)</li><li>3.Attend one of our consultation meetings, in the Civic Suite (schedule below)</li><li>4.Call Jamie direct, or meet at Laurence House during the day</li></ol> <p>In-person meetings at the Civic Suite</p> <p>If you plan to attend one of these meetings, please RSVP so I can prepare. I can also send draft proposals for your ward in advance.</p> <p>New venues?</p> <p>If there is a new venue you would like us to consider, please let us know as soon as possible and we can contact them to schedule a site visit and assessment.</p> <p>And please feel free to contact me direct with any questions, requests for data, concerns, etc.</p>
Brockley	Councillor Stephen Penfold	<p>Thanks for letting me know. My concern arose from conversations I had with constituents in Arabin and Comerford Roads. This is a new part of the ward, only added after the boundary changes of 2022.</p> <p>People in those roads told me that at the last election their polling station was St Peter’s church on Wickham Road and they had to walk past a polling station at St Andrew’s church, on the corner of Wickham and Brockley Roads!</p> <p>Is that still the situation?</p>

Brockley	Jamie Baker to Councillor Stephen Penfold	<p>Hi Councillor</p> <p>Thanks for the feedback. Yes, that situation has been the case since the 2022 elections.</p> <p>St. Andrew’s Church is on the other side of the ward boundary in Ladywell, where it is used as a polling station. Wherever possible, the polling place has to be within the relevant ward. It would be possible to have 2 polling stations at St. Andrew’s Church, but it would be unusual to have stations from 2 different wards. For a Parliamentary election it would be fine, but for local elections there is potential for voter confusion due to the 2 different ward elections. But that is not insurmountable.</p> <p>I am able to create a draft proposal that uses St. Andrew’s Church, splitting the current district of DBR5 and sending voters to the nearest venue.</p> <p>But I do think it’s worth noting that this district already has a very decent turnout – 64% for the parliamentary election and 40% for the GLA elections. This is already comfortably above the borough average.</p> <p>Please find attached an image of a draft proposal that moves the boundaries for several of the districts, sending voters to their nearest polling place. You can see the stats for the current and revised scheme below. Perhaps this is a good start? Can you please review the maps and let me know your thoughts.</p>
Brockley	Councillor Stephen Penfold	<p>Thanks for looking at this. So, what you are saying is that the southern end DBR5 is split off and becomes DBR6 and the DBR6 votes go to St Andrew’s? That makes sense to me. I take your point that St Andrews is in Ladywell, but you had the situation where people from Arabin and neighbouring roads were walking past a Polling Station to get to their Polling Station half a mile away.</p>
Brockley	Jamie Baker to Councillor Stephen Penfold	<p>Thanks for the feedback. So we’ll go with the revised proposal of adding a new district called DBR6, with the polling station at St. Andrews. Please let me know if you would like any further revisions.</p>
Downham	Jamie Baker to all Downham ward councillors	<p>We’re currently reviewing the polling districts and polling places in Lewisham. We’ve considered various proposals for Downham, including moving the boundaries between some districts to ‘equalise’ the electorates. But on balance, we concluded that any change in this ward could be counter-productive. Therefore we are not proposing any changes to your ward. Can you please review the attached proposal and map, and let me know if you agree with our conclusion, or if there are any changes you’d like us to make.</p> <p>Separately to the polling district review, we’ll be doing some work with the data insight team to analyse participation across the borough and identify target groups and engagement we can do in advance of the next local elections in 2026. That work will take place from February next year.</p>
Downham	Councillor Oana Olaru	<p>Apologies for the delay- the only complaints we’ve had from residents were around Ten Em Bee being quite far and not as easily accessible by foot (which is true as the entry road can be quite dark in the evening). I assume it would not be easy to find an alternative location, but the New Social Club on Old Bromley Road might be fine with becoming a polling station (if appropriate for your requirements). The rest seem to work quite well and be quite visible to residents (which is helpful when turnout is as low as it often is).</p>
Downham	Jamie Baker to Councillor Oana Olaru	<p>Thanks very much for the feedback which is helpful. We agree about Ten Em Bee and would love a new venue. We’ve spoken with the New Studio Club at previous reviews and not had success. They would be willing to provide an upstairs room, but that would not be accessible for the mobility impaired. In addition, they would not be able to close the bar, which would mean voters having to walk through the bar to the polling place, which we know from the past would not be acceptable to many voters.</p> <p>I have written to their chairman again, and hopefully we can make an agreement – perhaps if the hire charge is high enough they could close the bar for the night and allow us to use the ground floor. But if that is not successful, then unfortunately the Ten Em Bee is the only available location. So the only alternative to Ten Em Bee appears to be sending those voters to a neighbouring district. That would mean a much longer walk for all those voters, hence we still feel using the Ten Em Bee is the best available option. We can send our facilities team to check out the lights and hopefully make some improvements which can aid voters walking down there. Perhaps we could deploy a security guard at the road entrance, which could make people feel safer?</p>
Evelyn	Jamie Baker to all Evelyn ward councillors	<p>We’re currently reviewing the polling districts and polling places in Lewisham. We’ve considered various proposals for Evelyn, including moving the polling places to new venues. But on balance, we concluded that any change in this ward could be counter-productive. Therefore we are not proposing any changes to your ward. Can you please review the attached proposal and map, and let me know if you agree with our conclusion, or if there are any changes you’d like us to make.</p>
Evelyn	Councillor Will Cooper	<p>All good from me.</p> <p>Just to keep aware of new developments in the ward going forward, as we will see a significant amount of people moving in to the ward in the next few years.</p>
Grove Park	Councillor Hilary Moore	<p>Hi Jamie – the possibility of a church hall will not come to fruition until it is built – so is a much longer term aim to replace Baring School for that polling district in Grove Park ward. So information stays as is for now.</p> <p>Thanks.</p>
Grove Park	Jamie Baker to Councillor Hilary Moore	<p>Thanks for the feedback. I think we may still be able to use one of the churches.</p> <p>We’ve spoken to St. Mildred’s and although their hall will probably not be ready until 2027, we would be able to use the main church building in the meantime. They host the blood donor clinic every fortnight in that space, so it is large and fully accessible.</p> <p>Then there’s the Trinity Presbyterian Church, which is just behind the school on Baring Road. From pictures it looks like it would be a good alternative, with a large hall and step-free access. The location is better than the school, so this is promising.</p> <p>We’ll complete the site visits next week and get back to you with a proposal.</p>
Grove Park	Councillor Hilary Moore	<p>Excellent – I had a few emails as to the effect on Baring School this year with three election days. Only issue am aware of with the use of inside a church as opposed to e.g. a separate Church Hall is that some people with different faiths don’t like to enter and possibly won’t do so for voting; have heard of this in another area of London but could be quite specific to that location.</p>

Grove Park	Jamie Baker to Councillor Hilary Moore	<p>That’s a good point and I’ll do some research. I am sure we’ve looked into this before, at a London level, and found there were some areas where this was an issue, but it was only a minority of people. We use quite a few churches, church halls, and a synagogue, and this has not come up in Lewisham’s previous reviews. But I better check. If the move will reduce voter turnout then we’ll have to reconsider of course.</p>
Grove Park	Councillor Suzannah Clarke	<p>Could I follow up on the use of a church as I am not sure what the policy is on that as some people might not be comfortable and we have to be careful to be inclusive, especially regarding democracy. There are many different types of churches, and some people are not accepting of certain religions or their rules, beliefs, or practices, and that could lead to some very difficult situations.</p>
Grove Park	Jamie Baker to Councillors Hilary Moore and Suzannah Clarke	<p>Thanks both for your comments. I’ve done some research on this issue today and have concluded that the use of churches has not been an issue for Lewisham. We have records of complaints and voter feedback for the last 7 years and there are zero complaints regarding the use of a church.</p> <p>We have 30 churches and 1 synagogue in our current polling scheme, and there were 5 more in the previous polling scheme. We use the actual church, rather than a hall or lobby area in at least 10 of those churches. We also use quite a few faith schools (CoE) and church linked charities/halls.</p> <p>Whilst there have been some issues with the use of religious buildings in parts of north London, I have not found any issues in the south.</p> <p>I’ve spoken to Jeremy and can confirm there are no legal obstacles to using a church. And there are examples in electoral commission guidance where church halls are recommended as good polling places.</p> <p>It’s worth noting that if we were to revise the policy and not use any churches then we would have a significant problem with our polling scheme. We would likely have to use many more primary schools, and many voters would have a much longer distance to travel to their polling station.</p> <p>In this specific instance, we have complaints from parents and the school, and a request from both the church and the school to move the polling place. In the absence of any counter representations, I would like to recommend we move the polling place to one of the churches. We hope to complete site visits this week, after which I shall get back to you to confirm the details of our proposed scheme, for you to consider.</p>
Hither Green	Councillor Mark Ingleby	<p>Further to my email below – I couldn’t see an actual map on the document for Hither Green.</p> <p>I received a request from Brownhill Baptist Church earlier in the year, as you will remember – they would like to be used again as a polling station and they do have a substantial hall area.</p> <p>But speak on Tuesday.</p>
Hither Green	Jamie Baker to Hither Green Councillors	<p>The Governance Committee was postponed until 18 December. We published the papers at the start of this month and I’ve had no feedback about Hither Green, so I doubt there’ll be any changes suggested by the committee. On the choice of St. Swithun’s or Hither Green Baptist Church, our preference is for the Baptist church. We’ve visited both venues and got assessments and photos. The reasons we prefer the Baptist church are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•The room(s) we would use for polling are of a better quality. The big room that we’d prefer to use looks less ‘churchy’ than the big room at St. Swithun’s</li><li>•The approach from the street has even pavement and street lighting, whereas for the other church there’s a side alley with uneven pavement and a requirement for extra lighting</li><li>•There is a single entrance from the street, whereas the other church can be approached from 2 streets which can confuse voters</li></ul> <p>However, both venues will work fine from an administrative point of view, so we if you had a preference for St. Swithun’s we will happily go with that. And if you’ve any other changes to suggest then we still have time to consider that too.</p>
Hither Green	Councillor Yemisi Anifowose	<p>Thank for you engagement on this, Jamie and Mark.</p> <p>I’m happy with the recommendations below, especially with Hither Green Baptist Church being proposed as the polling station for HG1. Although St Swithun’s benefits from being on the main road, we should prioritise accessibility and safety.</p> <p>I also like Goldsmiths Community Centre being used in HG4 especially as the future of Hope Church is uncertain.</p>
Ladywell	Jamie Baker to Ladywell councillors	<p>I’ve been working on some proposals for your ward today. Please see the attached doc which has maps and stats. This is very much a draft, and I’ll revise it based on your feedback. I think the main issue is the relatively small electorates in 4 districts, along with the use of 2 schools that have to close for polling day. Ideally we’d solve both those issues in the revised scheme by reducing the number of districts and removing both schools from the scheme. But I’m not sure about the voters on the east of Lewisham High Street crossing the main road to get to St Mary’s Centre, and there are other queries about where to place the new boundaries.</p> <p>I’m available to meet either in-person or online to discuss these proposals. Or you are very welcome to send feedback via email.</p>
Ladywell	Councillor Liz Johnson-Franklin	<p>Thank you for the info and maps</p> <p>Some thoughts / suggestions</p> <p>LA5 instead of St Mary’s School could we try the church hall at Lewisham URC 18 Courthill Road ? Still on the same side of Lewisham High St and would not disrupt school</p> <p>LA3 Would Ladywell Family Hub be easier re access ? Instead of Ladywell Centre</p> <p>The Baptist Hall seems to have had good numbers as an observation</p> <p>The issue re St Andrews is that many residents who live in that part of the Ward do not identify as being part of Ladywell If we decided not to use St Andrews and used the Baptist Hall we would loose votes so I think we should continue with St Andrews</p>

Ladywell	Councillor Liz Johnson-Franklin	<p>Another couple of points !</p> <p>I suggested the Lewisham RUC hall as I thought it would save on having to disrupt closing St Mary's School and it also is behind a number of blocks of flats where we are trying to encourage and engage with residents who were previously in Lewisham Central</p> <p>I understand the 2 are close to each other so if St Mary's does not have to close that is the best venue</p> <p>Given the possible problem re use of the Ladywell Centre or Ladywell Family Hub perhaps we should go back to the John Evelyn Centre although would not wish to close particularly as it could be during the exam period ref 2026 local elections</p> <p>Other site is the Baptist Church hall which is still in LA3 and is on the main road but a bit of a walk depending on which part of Dressington,Foxborough and Slaygrove residents live Could move Malyons Road over to vote at St Mary’s which is not such a long walk and this reduces having to consider Dressington Centre Ladywell Family Hub and John Evelyn Centre</p>
Lee Green	Councillor James Rathbone	I have no issues with the current polling arrangements for Lee Green – the use of Trinity Primary School for ELG5 isn’t ideal, but I’m not aware of any alternative options which would be better.
Lee Green	Jamie Baker to Councillor James Rathbone	<p>Morning Councillor</p> <p>That’s really helpful feedback, thank you. I completely agree.</p> <p>The one query we had was whether ELG2 and ELG3 could be merged, with a double station in one of either of the churches. But we’ve looked at that in detail before and concluded that the main road does not have enough safe crossing points at the right locations to allow voters to cross safely. I still think that’s the case. 5 districts is the ideal number we’re aiming for in all 3 member wards, so it’s already on the ‘sweet spot’.</p> <p>So our proposals for this ward will be a nil change. Are you able to discuss with your ward colleagues please? And will any of you be wanting to attend any of the consultation meetings, or have an online Teams meeting?</p>
Lee Green	Councillor James Rathbone	I discussed this with Ese and Eva today and we are all happy with the current arrangements for Lee Green.
Lewisham Central	Councillor Eidson Huynh	<p>Thanks for flagging this – wondering whether another polling place to the north end of Lewisham Central might be possible? The bit around Armory Road is an absolute maze and there are several big blocks around the top end of Thurston too. Is it worth looking up there?</p> <p>I remember campaigning and it was hard to convince people to go all the way to Prendergast School as their nearest polling station...Keen to hear your thoughts and happy to chat further.</p>
Lewisham Central	Jamie Baker to Councillor Eidson Huynh	<p>Hi Councillor</p> <p>Thanks for this insight. I’ve not drafted any proposals for Lewisham Central yet, so this will be extremely helpful. I definitely agree about Prendergast being a distance for some voters. We didn’t manage to find a suitable alternative last time, but we need to look again.</p> <p>Are you able to give your view on the polling station at Orchard Gardens? There are only 700 voters allocated to that station, which makes it the smallest station in the borough. So there is an argument to merge that district into the neighbouring one. But, given the relative isolated position of that estate, we feel there’s a stronger argument to retain that station otherwise those voters will struggle to attend any other venue.</p>
Lewisham Central	Councillor Eidson Huynh	<p>Thanks for your response.</p> <p>Could we perhaps use the ground floor of one of the tall buildings – Chapter Lewisham has a big lobby and ground floor space for instance...not sure if that’s appropriate though as not sure what the requirements are... Would be keen to hear what some of the options could be!</p>
Lewisham Central	Jamie Baker to Councillor Eidson Huynh	<p>Thanks, that’s very helpful feedback for Orchard Gardens. Because the electorate is so small we do need support to keep it going, and I agree it’s the right thing to keep it.</p> <p>We had the same thought about Chapter Lewisham, so we’ll give that a push. We didn’t get a favourable response the last time we asked, so I’ll try a different approach. I’ll do some research and present that to you in a draft proposal. If you’ll be attending one of the consultation meetings please let me know.</p>
New Cross Gate	Councillor Liam Shrivastava	<p>Hi Jamie,</p> <p>Thanks for this. Looking at the map it would appear New Cross Gate is unchanged, with stations at Scotney Hall, Lewington Centre and All Saints. Can you confirm that is the case?</p> <p>Many thanks,</p>
New Cross Gate	Jamie Baker to Councillor Liam Shrivastava	<p>Hi Councillor</p> <p>The map on the website is the current polling scheme. We’ve not received any requests to make amendments in that ward, but we’ll definitely consider any change you or colleagues suggest.</p> <p>2 of the polling districts are relatively small (DNG1 and DNG2) but we believe they work quite well with the layout of properties and roads. DNG3 is a large district, and we put a double polling station at All Saints which has worked well. The turnout a the last few elections has been pretty good in DNG3, which suggests it’s doing well. The turnout in the other 2 districts remains low, and we plan to do a piece of work with the data insight team to help inform a strategy to improve participation in the 2026 council elections.</p> <p>If you’ve got any views on the polling scheme please let us know.</p>

New Cross Gate	Councillor Liam Shrivastava	Ok thanks Jamie, all sounds good to me and would be keen to support any efforts to improve turnouts on the Winslade and Silwood estates. In my opinion, I would say the three polling stations are logical and make sense in terms of their locations and lots of residents seemed to be familiar with where they had to go to vote.
New Cross Gate	Jamie Baker to Councillor Liam Shrivastava	Morning Councillor Thanks for the feedback. We'll propose a nil change to the New Cross Gate polling scheme. And I'll diarise an update to you on our engagement plans early next year. That's likely to take place from March to July and will involve some data work to inform targets and strategies – plus input from councillors.
Perry Vale	Jamie Baker to Councillor John Paschoud	I've done a first draft of our proposals for Perry Vale ward. This is very much a draft, and subject to assessments of a couple of venues and their agreement. But the final scheme has to go to councillors for approval, so if you don't like some of these ideas then we can cross them out now rather than later.
Perry Vale	Councillor John Paschoud	<p>I quite like both those combinations.</p> <p>As far as (any) political parties that want (or are resourced) to play an active role on polling day go, a smaller number of larger polling stations are also more efficient. I get your point about them reducing the costs and risks for your operations too.</p> <p>I would support this - with the model of only 5 PDs in Perry Vale. I don't think the change will deter a significant number of voters.</p> <p>If there are any major changes proposed in Crofton Park, Forest Hill or Sydenham, could you please send me those too so I can discuss with ward cllrs?</p>
Crofton Park Forest Hill Perry Vale Sydenham	Jamie Baker to Councillor John Paschoud	<p>Morning Councillor That's very useful feedback to help develop the proposals.</p> <p>Sydenham – draft proposals attached. I've sent these to Cllr Best and the other Sydenham councillors for feedback, which has been positive. I thought I'd copied you in to that, apologies if not.</p> <p>Forest Hill – we are not keen on any changes to this ward. The reason is down to the layout of the roads, hills and location of the available polling places. I was keen to merge WFO4 and WFO5, sending all voters to Horniman Primary School and getting rid of the Church Worldwide, which has various issues (lighting, uneven pavement, mould, etc). But I'm not sure Horniman School could fit a double station whilst remaining open. Jennifer is keen for us to explore the use of the museum again, so we'll look into that. I think I need to walk those streets again and see whether there's options of moving the district boundaries to perhaps get rid of one.</p> <p>Crofton Park – Similar to Forest Hill, we're not sure about this one. On the face of it, DCR4 and DCR5 look good to be merged, as the polling places are extremely close together. There are some alternative venues but they're on the edge of the ward, so wouldn't improve things. I think St Saviour's Church would be the best choice of venue here, if the districts were to be combined. But I'm still on the fence as the electorates on both sides are quite high (around 1800).</p> <p>I'll give these all some more thought today, and discuss with Julie, and then come back to you with a draft proposal doc for all 4 of your wards. Also, please let me know if you're interested in any of the consultation meetings at the civic suite. I've only heard back from 1 councillor so far, which makes me think perhaps they'd prefer online meetings, 1-2-1s, or consultation via email – your views on that will be appreciated too.</p>
Rushey Green	Councillor Louise Krupski	Hi Jamie, As long as the sites were working as expected during the recent elections I do not have any objection to keeping the polling stations as they are. I understand that we are a bit school heavy in our offer but we are also not awash with community spaces either to provide alternatives. James is usually good at this stuff – happy to bend to his and John's insight! Louise
Rushey Green	Jamie Baker to Councillor Louise Krupski	We know that Holbeach School closes for polling day, so that's the one where we're looking for alternatives. Cllr Walsh has been in touch too. Once we've completed some site visits I'll contact you all again with a revised proposal. Keeping things as they are will remain the default unless we can find an improvement. Either way, it will be up to councillors to decide, so you will be able to reject any proposals we make.
Rushey Green	Jamie Baker to Councillor James J Walsh	In the Governance Committee meeting you requested we retain the polling place at Holbeach School for ERU4. The reason was that the new proposed venue at the Youth Theatre was too close to the boundary. I assume you would also like the old boundary to remain? That would make sense but I just wanted to confirm that was your intention before I submit the final proposals to full council. Can you please confirm you would like to retain the current polling district and station for ERU4 at Holbeach and are rejecting the proposed change?

Rushey Green	Councillor James J Walsh	<p>My query was a little more nuanced around the potential cost benefit analysis with moving the polling station out of the school.</p> <p>I do see the argument about trying to not impinge on the operations of a school, however the polling station has been opened whilst the school has been open previously. I am mindful with the move of the polling station potentially to the new Lewisham Youth Theatre hub that will not sit on predominant commuting lines for local residents and is on an edge where I feel most people would need to make a special trip Rather than utilising their democratic right whilst on another journeys i.e. to work.</p> <p>From my perspective I do think the school works well, and there is a lot of muscle memory locally for that as a polling place. When you couple that with it's on a natural desire line to/from a station for many it does feel like a good fit. However if the school leadership is really resistance and saying it's causing significant impacts to school operations by having it there, then I am more amenable to change. If they're not however then unless there is some other strong reason my vote would be to maintain the status quo.</p> <p>As for polling district boundaries old vs new in this area I've got more flex.</p>
Rushey Green	Jamie Baker to Councillor James J Walsh	<p>Thanks Councillor</p> <p>That's very helpful. The school has not made any complaint and they are sometimes able to remain open for smaller elections. Given there's a strong case to stay with the school, I think we need to retain the same boundaries. Our proposed boundary move would mean some voters who live right near the school would be reallocated to Laurence House which isn't logical. Keeping things consistent is the best option here, so that will be what we send to council for approval.</p> <p>Thank you</p> <p>Jamie</p>
Sydenham	From Councillor Chris Best	<p>Many thanks for your email and hope all is well with you.</p> <p>I have copied in Jamie Baker from our Electoral Team and as we have received a number of emails we are going to take a look and see if we can change the boundaries of the polling districts in upper Sydenham including St Barts School (the polling station for WSY4). I have attached a map so you can see the current polling districts.</p> <p>We appreciate the difficulties for parents and this year was exceptional in that we had three elections. The next planned election will be the local elections on the first Thursday in May 2026 followed by the London elections in 2028 and at some point a general election.</p> <p>As you know Lewisham has a long history of using primary schools as polling places. The law encourages the use of schools and other publicly owned buildings and we don't have to pay for the use of their premises, which is a great way of reducing the cost of elections. These buildings are already paid for out of public funds. Though note the buildings can charge for the heating, lighting, cleaning and caretaking costs. Schools are generally very accessible buildings, having to comply with DDA requirements, and thus represent some of the best facilities that our borough has. The majority of primary schools used as polling places are able to remain open for their pupils whilst being used. St Barts school closes because, as I understand the situation, the hall or the smaller office cannot be isolated from the rest of the school.</p> <p>From previous discussion with our polling officers and election team the polling stations must be accessible for the local community and we have on average over 2,000 voters per polling station. We currently have seven polling stations for Sydenham ward and St Barts School is the only public building that covers that area in Sydenham. The other six polling stations are St Barts Church which is not in WSY1 but accessible for the area, the Grove Centre, The Sydenham Centre, Sydenham Library and St Michaels Church Hall. For Hillcrest there is the resident clubroom that has been used and sometimes a portacabin. Portacabins are not suitable as there is no space for the polling staff to a take a break and we also have to hire a portaloo. We also need to review whether we can use the Hillcrest clubroom again as this building is now back under the control of the Council.</p> <p>We will have a meeting with officers and discuss the use of the Grove Centre for WSY4 and the TNG in Wells Park Road for WSY2.</p>
Sydenham	From officer Jamie Baker, to Councillors of Sydenham ward	<p>Morning Councillors</p> <p>As expected, since the launch of the polling district review last week, we've received quite a few representations about St Barts School (polling station for WSY4). I know that some of the emails have</p>
Sydenham	Councillor Jack Lavery	<p>Thanks Jamie. Their concerns are valid and pleased to see the sensible plans to not use the school in the future.</p> <p>Kind regards,</p> <p>Jack</p>



Telegraph Hill	Councillor Joan Millbank	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the review of the poll stations.</p> <p>I understand why the council uses its schools but I wish to draw your attention to comments we consistently get from constituents / voters in regard to school closures and the difficulties caused for parents/carers.</p> <p>In the past ways were found to keep parts of the schools operation (at John Stainer and Turnham), similar to those at Edmund Waller.</p> <p>I appreciate strict electoral rules apply but is there a way of reverting to past practices and only using parts of the schools for voting so (some) classes can continue minimising disruption to parent/carers.</p>
Telegraph Hill	Jamie Baker to Councillor Joan Millbank	<p>Hi Councillor</p> <p>Thanks for your comments. This is the issue we have with your ward too. The districts themselves are good, with the geography, roads and rail acting as natural boundaries. It's the use of 4 schools as polling places that we'd love to resolve. They don't all close, so I shall contact them and see what we can do to ensure they are able to remain open. I'll get back to you all with the details.</p>
Telegraph Hill	Councillor Joan Millbank	<p>There is also the Honor Oak Community Centre that could be used on the Honor Oak estate – access to the large hall can be separate from the rest of the building and has its own toilets. Might be alternative to Turnham Schools if full schoolclosure cannot be avoided.</p>
Telegraph Hill	Jamie Baker to Councillor Joan Millbank	<p>me know if you agree?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Of the 4 schools we use, only John Stainer has to close</li><li>•Kender Primary School has to close their nursery, but at both Turnham and Edmund Waller they are able to separate the polling from the school and keep open for all pupils. Turnham has moved their nursery pupils into the reception class so no pupils are affected</li><li>•The community centre is a viable alternative to Turnham and we'll be doing a site visit. From memory it is a good option and is only a short distance from the school. So if all the ward councillors are happy we'd like to recommend moving to that venue</li><li>•DTE4 remains the only issue.</li></ul> <p>oOne suggestion is we split that district, sending half to DTE5, and half to DTE3. The electoral team do not like that idea – the walk is too long and the hill up Pepys Road would be difficult for the mobility impaired</p> <p>oAnother alternative is to move to Drumbeat School. However, we've ruled that out previously due to the potential impact of closing the school on pupils, parents and carers</p> <p>oOn balance, we think we have to leave that district as it is, and continue to use John Stainer. I have spoken to the school and they are fine with it, for scheduled polls they use it as an inset day and that has worked well. It's only unscheduled polls like this year where it becomes an issue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Therefore, the only change we'd like to propose in your ward is moving the polling place for DTE5 from Turnham Primary to Honor Oak Community Centre.</li></ul>
Telegraph Hill	Councillor Joan Millbank	<p>Thank you for your further email.</p> <p>Taking into account – and agreeing with – all the points you raise I would support a move in DTE5 from Turnham School to HO Community Centre (also located on Turnham Road) if considered suitable and in particular if parts of the Centre could remain open for community use (the large hall which you would use has separate entrances and toilets).</p> <p>There is no suitable alternative to John Stainer and best to keep voting in that venue.</p>
Telegraph Hill	Councillor Luke Sorba	<p>Thank you for the feedback. I defer to Councillor Millbank who leads on the issue of ballot stations on behalf of TH Ward Councillors.</p>