

Proposal to change the age range of Evesham Nursery School

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Contact: Rachel Kiernan, Provision Planning Project Manager, rkiernan@worcestershire.gov.uk

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Introduction

Worcestershire County Council is proposing to make a significant change to Evesham Nursery School under The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) regulations 2013. This document contains all the relevant information to allow interested parties to decide whether to support the proposed change. This proposal is not related to any other proposals.

School Details

Address:	Evesham Nursery School, Four Pool Lane, Evesham, WR11 1BN
Status:	Community

Description of Proposed Alteration

Evesham Nursery School has a school age range of 3 – 5 years. The Governing Body of the School operate two year old provision under their community powers (Section 27 of Education Act 2002). The school want to lower the age range of the school to include the two year olds as pupils of the school. Evesham Nursery School in the only Maintained Nursery School in Worcestershire, they are classified as a Community School.

Objectives

The objective of this proposal is to lower the age range of Evesham Nursery School by one year; the lower age range would be two years. The upper age range will remain at five years.

Background and Statutory process

The Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act (2015), by amending the Childcare Act (2006), removed the requirement for schools to register their early year's provision for two-year-olds separately with Ofsted. This came into force on the 26th May 2015.

Maintained schools have options for delivery of early year's provision. Maintained Community schools can operate nursery provision for children two to four years of age. , Local Authorities can propose a change of age range of 1 year or more for Community schools by following a statutory process. This full proposal is part of the statutory process. In these cases, the two-year-olds will be classed as 'pupils' (included on the schools' register of pupils) of the school and included on the school census. Maintained schools can also make provision for two-year-olds under Section 27 (Education Act 2002). The Governing Body have powers to provide community or charitable facilities. In this case, the children are not pupils of the school and are included on the Early Years census. In both cases, the provision will be inspected as part of the main school inspection. Schools must ensure the provision and the environment is fit for purpose and meets the needs of two-year-olds and EYFS Framework is adhered to.

In September 2016 Cabinet agreed a change of policy with regards to schools seeking to change their age range which sets out how the LA will respond to such proposals. A copy of the policy position can be found in the published Cabinet report, item 6 in the reports pack: [Thursday 13th October Cabinet meeting](#).

Educational Standards and Diversity of Provision

Evesham Nursery School is graded as a good school by Ofsted. The current provision offers funded and non-funded two year olds the opportunity to attend for a three hour morning or afternoon session.

Once our two year olds are included within the age range of the school they will be integrated fully into the school community. Parents and carers will benefit from the opportunity to pay for services using online methods. Registration of all children will be consistent as will tracking of attendance and attainment.

The school offer a fully inclusive environment, linking with Health and Social care professionals. Evesham Nursery School maintains strong links with The Vale of Evesham Special School and will continue to offer split placements for some children. This approach allows the school to identify and address barriers which are preventing swift progress whilst developing excellent relationships with families. Ensuring the ratios reflect children's needs rather than the provision's legal requirements will enable all children to transfer to their Reception Class with a greater understanding of needs, interest, strengths and difficulties which will allow them to flourish.

Evidence of Demand

The Evesham Nursery School is a popular school.

The following table details the number of children on roll at Evesham Nursery School over the last 4 years:

Academic Year	Funded 2 year olds on roll	Funded 3 & 4 year olds on roll
2014 - 15	14	67
2015 – 16	20	70
2016 - 17	15	69
2017 – to date	30	81

There is a waiting list for places at Evesham Nursery.

The school consulted with families. Verbally parents have expressed support for the two year old children to be included on the school role as the three and four year olds. Parents acknowledge that this would make processes easier including the ability to pay for services using an online cashless alternative. Parents and carers also appreciated the approach to create developmentally appropriate provision which reflects the strengths and needs of all children in the nursery school without division according to age.

Some parents queried whether the school would consider requests for full day provision for two-year olds. The school responded to this and are now offering full day provision including lunch for children in the term they turn three. The school also offer lunch sessions to 2 year old children eligible for funding and / or Early Years Pupil Premium funding. Developmental needs are always considered when extending session outside the normal 3 hours for such young children. Their needs remain the priority focus throughout.

School Accommodation

Evesham Nursery school were successful in a bid to the Department for Education in the Summer 2016 for Early Years Capital to create additional places to offer the extended (30 hour) free entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds. The project created 26 new places from September 2017.

The school intend to create three zones offering decreasing levels of adult support/ direction according to need, developmental level and age (2 year olds are required to be supported within a 1:4 ratio whereas three and four olds ratios increase to 1:13). Currently there is a perceived divide between the age groups and the new provision will eliminate the preconception that age dictates development.

Proposed Admission Arrangements

A Published Admission Number (PAN) is not a legal requirement for nurseries. Evesham Nursery School adheres to the Local Authority Nursery Admission policy. No other changes are proposed in respect of the admission criteria for Evesham Nursery School.

Equal Opportunity Issues

An Equality Impact Screening was carried out on this proposal. No issues were identified.

Project Costs and Capital Funding

There are no costs associated with lowering the age range of the school. The additional places created to offer the extended (30 hour) free entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds was funded purely from the Department for Education 30 hour grant

What happens next?

Representation Stage – Monday 27th November 2017 to Friday 22nd December 2017

During this period anyone with an interest can express their views on the proposal outlined in this document. This document is the Full proposal. A public notice will be published in the local papers, on the County Council website, school website and school notice boards.

Final Decision – January 2018

If there are objections to this proposal then these will be considered on behalf of the County Council by the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education & Skills before a final decision is made on whether to proceed with the proposal.

Implementation

If approved, this proposal will be implemented by the school in January 2018.

Procedure for responses

Anyone wishing to make a response to this proposal must write to:

Provision Planning & Accommodation Team

Ref: Evesham Nursery School Proposals

Children, Families and Communities

PO Box 73

Worcester

WR5 2YA

Or e-mail to rkiernan@worcestershire.gov.uk

Responses must be received by **Friday 22nd December 2017**.