



**Public consultation on proposal to alter the lower age range at three Oxfordshire primary schools in order for the attached nursery schools to become part of the primary schools' provision, and to close the nursery schools as separate establishments**

**3 December 2012 – 28 January 2013**

*Schools and Nurseries involved:*

Five Acres Primary & Nursery Schools, Ambrosden  
John Hampden Primary & Nursery Schools, Thame  
West Kidlington Primary & Nursery Schools, Kidlington

See full details and respond via a quick online questionnaire at  
<http://myconsultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk>



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



**OXFORDSHIRE  
COUNTY COUNCIL**

## **What is the proposal?**

The county council is proposing that three Oxfordshire primary schools “merge” with their associated nursery schools. The schools in question are Five Acres Primary & Nursery Schools in Ambrosden, John Hampden Primary & Nursery Schools in Thame and West Kidlington Primary & Nursery Schools in Kidlington.

In each location, the two establishments already share a Headteacher and Governing Body, and the members of staff have the same employer. The proposed change would therefore be administrative in nature.

The process would involve the legal closure of the nursery schools as separate establishments, and they would become part of the primary schools as nursery classes. The primary schools’ age ranges would change from 4 – 11 to 3 – 11. In practical terms, there would be no noticeable change for pupils, parents or teaching staff.

If the proposal goes ahead there would be no effect on admissions; children in the school’s nursery class would still need to apply for a place in the school’s Reception (F1) year, just as they do now.

## **Why is this being proposed?**

There are some disadvantages to the nursery schools and primary schools remaining separate. For example, the Headteacher and Governing Body must currently manage two separate budgets, go through two Ofsted inspections and make two versions of any official return of information to the Department for Education (DfE). This duplication of work takes up considerable administrative and management time in each case.

The proposal also means greater flexibility on how money is spent by the Governing Bodies. With a single budget for each primary school to manage, funding can be directed toward priorities agreed upon across the whole school. Currently, some funding can only be spent by the Governing Bodies on the primary schools, even if there is a more urgent need for it in the nursery schools, and vice-versa.

For these reasons, following discussion with the county council, the Governing Bodies and Headteachers of the three schools involved are in favour of the proposal.

## **What happens if the proposal doesn’t go ahead?**

If the schools and nurseries remain separate, there would be no immediate change to pupils, parents and staff on a practical level. However, it is likely that the duplication of administrative time and work in running two separate establishments would increasingly become an unnecessary financial drain on the Governing Bodies. Because of changes made in April 2011 by the DfE to the Early Years Single Funding Formula for nursery schools, there is now no financial advantage to running two establishments in parallel. Detail of the changes may be viewed on the DfE website:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/earlylearningandchildcare/delivery/funding/a0068704/early-years-funding-reform>

## **What happens next?**

This public consultation seeks your views on the proposal, and runs until 28th January 2013. Following the end of the consultation period, a report will be written summarising the responses received and will go before either the Member for Education or the full Oxfordshire County Council Cabinet, depending on whether objections have been received nor not.

Following consideration of the responses received, a decision will be made by the Member or Cabinet on whether to proceed to publish a Statutory Notice on the proposal, which is the next step. If a Notice is published, it will appear around all the schools' sites and in local newspapers. This is a second opportunity for the public to respond, and this period lasts for six weeks. On the closure of this period, a second report is written and a final decision is made by either the Member or Cabinet.

It is likely that the full process above would mean a final decision in May/June 2013.

## **How do I respond to the consultation?**

You can give us your views in several ways. The quickest and easiest way is online at <http://myconsultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk> where all our consultations are listed. Click on the right consultation and then use the online questionnaire and submit your views directly.

Alternatively, you may write to us or print off the form at the back of this leaflet and post it to: Diane Cameron, School Organisation & Planning, FREEPOST OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL.

You may also email your views to us at:

**[nurseriesmerger-manager@myconsultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:nurseriesmerger-manager@myconsultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk)**

**Remember your response must be received by 28 January 2013**

## **Response Form**

I/we wish to make the following comments:

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Signature ..... Name.....

Address (optional) .....

- Parent of a child at one of the nursery schools involved (please specify which)
- Parent of a child at one of the primary schools involved (please specify which)
- Parent of a child not yet at school
- Governor / Staff at a school involved (please specify which)
- Local resident
- Other (specify) .....

*Tick all that apply*

**Please return by 28th January 2013 to:**  
**Diane Cameron**  
**School Organisation & Planning**  
**FREEPOST OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

(No stamp required)

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