

**CABINET MEMBER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH & EDUCATION -
22 NOVEMBER 2017**

**REPORT ON THE PROPOSED EXTENSION OF AGE RANGE AT
DUNMORE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Report by Director for Children's Services

Introduction

1. This report follows a local consultation and statutory Notice period relating to the county council's proposal to extend the age range at Dunmore Primary School. The proposal has been made with the support of the school's Governing Body.
2. The school carried out informal public consultation activities with local parents / carers who were not using the school's Nursery, but were taking up school places from Reception year onwards. This was done through a questionnaire in February 2016 (Annex 1) and the needs of parents who responded was analysed (Annex 2).
3. A Public Notice was published (Annex 3) in the Abingdon Herald on 27 September 2017 and was also posted at the school's entrance and on the school website and county council website. The Notice period ran from 27 September until 24 October 2017. It was accompanied by a Full Proposal document (Annex 4), which was available to read online at the Oxfordshire County Council public website, or by request.
4. The decision-making power in terms of determining the proposal in this case lies with the Cabinet Member for Public Health & Education.

The Proposal

5. The proposal is to alter Dunmore Primary School's age range from 3-11 to 2-11 from 1 January 2018.
6. The proposal is to formally establish provision of 24 part time equivalent places for 2 and 3 year olds, and new wraparound care provision for this age group and for 4 and 5 year olds. For clarity, the full early years offer being proposed at the school is as follows (as set out with more detail in Annex 2):

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Provision	Times	Maximum number of children	Accommodation
CORE 2-3 year olds (15 hour funded priority)	9am – 12 OR 12 - 3pm	12 (24 places)	Former Children's Centre building
Wraparound for 2-3 year olds	EITHER 7.45 – 9am OR 3 – 5.45pm	4	Former Children's Centre building
CORE 3-4 year olds (Nursery age)	9 – 3pm	60	Existing Nursery class room + 'Beehive' space in Dunmore School
Wraparound for 3-4 year olds	7.45 – 9am, 3 – 5.45pm	12	Former Children's Centre building
Wraparound for 4-5 year olds (Reception classes)	7.45 – 8.45am, 3.10 – 5.45pm	12	Former Children's Centre building

7. The provision for 2 year-olds is currently run by the school under its community powers facilities (since September 2017), but the governors wish to formalise the arrangement by extending the school age range.
8. The Governing Body of Dunmore Primary School wants to be able to meet the needs of the local community into the future, as it does now. Dunmore Primary School is an Ofsted-rated "Good" school (last inspection 2017). Extension of the age range would therefore increase the number and extent of good quality early years places offered in the local area.
9. The Council has obtained DfE approval for capital grant clawback deferral dependent on the former Children's Centre being used by the school to deliver additional funded early education and wraparound childcare places.
10. Officers now seek formal approval for this proposal from the Cabinet Member for Public Health & Education.

Representations

11. The informal public consultation activity carried out by the school generated 17 responses, and identified the main barriers to taking up the school's Nursery offer were the lack of wraparound care (58% of respondents) and no provision being available on a Friday afternoon (33% of respondents).
12. The statutory Notice generated two representations (formal responses). One of these was from Abingdon Town Council, which responded with formal support for the proposal.

Legal background

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13. The Education & Inspections Act 2006 and The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools)(England) Regulations 2013 establish the procedures that must be followed when changing the age range of a maintained school.
14. Local authorities also have a duty to have regard to statutory guidance, in this particular case *“Making Prescribed Alterations to Mainstream Schools”* published April 2016.
15. The Guidance states that the statutory proposal must contain sufficient information for interested parties to make a decision on whether to support or challenge the proposed change. The proposal should be accessible to all interested parties and should therefore use ‘plain English’. The full proposal must be published on a website (e.g. the school or LA’s website) along with a statement setting out:
 - how copies of the proposal may be obtained;
 - that anybody can object to, or comment on, the proposal;
 - the date that the representation period ends;
 - and the address to which objections or comments should be submitted.
16. A brief notice (including details on how the full proposal can be accessed e.g. the website address) must be published in a local newspaper. Within one week of the date of publication on the website, the proposer must send a copy of the proposal and the information set out in the paragraph above to the governing body and any other body or person that the proposer thinks is appropriate.
17. The county council confirms that it has adhered to the relevant legislation and statutory Guidance.
18. Local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure sufficiency of early years and childcare provision, which this expansion would support.
19. **Consideration of consultation and representation period**

The decision-maker will need to be satisfied that the appropriate fair and open local consultation and/or representation period has been carried out and that the proposer has given full consideration to all the responses received. If the proposer has failed to meet the statutory requirements, a proposal may be deemed invalid and therefore should be rejected. The decision-maker must consider **ALL** the views submitted, including all support for, objections to and comments on the proposal.
20. **Community cohesion**

Schools have a key part to play in providing opportunities for young people from different backgrounds to learn with, from and about each other; by encouraging, through their teaching, an understanding of, and respect for, other cultures, faiths and communities. When considering a proposal, the decision-maker must consider its impact on community cohesion. This will need to be considered on

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a case-by-case basis, taking account of the community served by the school and the views of different sections within the community.

Financial and Staff Implications

21. There is no anticipated negative effect predicted on other local provisions. The proposed provision for 2 year-olds is already being run by the school under its community facilities powers, in the same accommodation that the Children's Centre used to occupy. This would continue under this proposal.
22. There will be additional staff and increased maintenance requirements costs in taking over the ex-Children's Centre accommodation. These will need to be funded primarily from the school's Early Years funding, which will increase in proportion to increases in pupil numbers. Resources for Early Years are provided by government through the Dedicated Schools Grant, which will increase proportionately to increases in overall early years pupil numbers in Oxfordshire.

Equality and Inclusion Implications

23. The decision-maker must have regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) of LAs/governing bodies, which requires them to have 'due regard' to the need to:
 - eliminate discrimination;
 - advance equality of opportunity; and
 - foster good relations.
24. The Equality Impact Assessment of Oxfordshire's Pupil Place Plan (November 2016 with revised version due for publication November 2017) identified that increasing places at the heart of their communities has a positive impact on equalities through promoting social inclusion and minimising barriers to accessing education. There are not any sex, race or disability discrimination issues that arise from the changes being proposed.

Decision

25. The decision maker has to have regard to 'Guidance for decision makers' April 2016.
26. Decisions must be made within a period of two months of the end of the representation period or they must be referred to the Schools Adjudicator.
27. In considering the proposals for a change of age range, the Cabinet Member can decide to:
 - reject the proposals;
 - approve the proposals without modifications; or

