



Flitcham Church of England Primary Academy

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Diocese of Norwich
Education and
Academies Trust

Consultation on change of age range to allow for pre-school places at Flitcham Primary Academy from September 2018

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to discuss proposed changes to the provision at Flitcham Primary Academy for pre-school children which requires a lowering of the school's age range by 2 years. The Governing Body of the Academy has decided that it should consult on the proposed changes in line with legal requirements, and wishes to receive the views and comments of all stakeholders in the Academy.

The consultation period will run for 4 school weeks from Monday 26th February 2018 to Sunday 25th March 2018. The Governing Body of the Academy will consider all comments received during the consultation period. We are consulting with all relevant stakeholders as required by law when making changes to school age range arrangements.

Note that the proposed change to the Academy's lower age limit is classified as a "Fast Track" change by the Department for Education which means the Secretary of State will need to grant approval for the change.

What change is being proposed?

Currently Flitcham Primary Academy has 15 places for children in Reception class and the school has no nursery provision.

From September 2018 we are proposing lowering the age range of Flitcham Primary Academy to 3 years old. This will enable us to create a nursery for 3-4 year old as part of our primary school. This will make the school's age range 3-11 years, rather than the current 4-11 years. Please note that there is no change proposed to our determined admission arrangements. The school's determined admission arrangements for school entry to Reception remain unchanged and there is no change to the fact that a nursery place does not in any way guarantee a place at the school, as is documented on our admissions policy on our web site.



Why is the school making this change?

From January 2018 we began the process of discussing the provision at Flitcham Primary Academy. Our strategic vision is to ensure the stability and sustainability of the school and we believe that by providing additional nursery provision the school will be a more attractive choice to parents, especially those with work commitments. From discussions with our own parents and parents looking around the school a new nursery class would be a considerable asset to the school. Lowering the age range of the primary school will allow for siblings of similar ages to be taught in the same setting from the age of 3, whilst providing wraparound care and full time nursery children in a refurbished 3-4 provision. In addition the facility will be used to provide wraparound care for any children already at the school outside of school hours, thereby increasing parent convenience.

We believe this will have a significant benefit for children's early years' development by guaranteeing that there is increased continuity between the nursery and primary settings which will consequently provide effective transition for the youngest learners as they move up into Reception class. The qualified teacher and highly skilled staff members will ensure that there is a difference in provision and planning for the children who are 'just three' and those who are approaching their fourth birthday, whilst in a school setting. All staff will be knowledgeable about the typical development and characteristics of effective learning for 3 and 4 year olds whilst having a clear understanding of expectations and tracking processes of the attainment of the three and four year old children. Parents/Carers will be successfully engaged in their children's learning at school, allowing for a seamless transition to reception.

In April 2017, Flitcham Primary Academy was inspected by Ofsted and Her Majesty's Inspectorate awarded the school Good in all of the key areas. Most significantly, for this proposed change, the Leadership and Management and the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Ofsted stated "Children start very well at Flitcham Primary Academy. Adults plan learning activities that are interesting and support children's personal development well.

Leadership in the early years is effective. Adults have high expectations of children's behaviour and conduct. Children respond well and work collaboratively and establish good relationships with their classmates. "

The 3-4 year olds will be integrated into this Early Years provision, allowing them to make similar rapid progress but at an earlier age, ensuring high quality early intervention for all learners. Highly skilled practitioners, including a qualified teacher will ensure that this is a setting that Parents/Carers can recognise and access easily whilst knowing that their children will make at least good progress.

Objectives of the proposal?

- To ensure high quality inclusive early years and foundation stage provision is available locally to the community and surrounding areas.
- To ensure free entitlement for eligible 3 and 4 year olds is available flexibly and extended through the school day to meet the needs of working parents.
- To ensure sustainability for the school by securing an increased intake into the reception year, by having an on-site nursery class.

Will the proposed change result in any educational impact on the existing primary school provision?

We have conducted a thorough assessment of the resources needed and effects on the existing primary school provision and we do not see that there will be any adverse impact on any existing level of provision. The school will be able to successfully manage this change, allowing for the nursery classroom and an outdoor space to be developed for the 3-4 year olds. This will be situated within the current Reception classroom and outdoor learning area, allowing for an Early Years Foundation Stage unit within the primary school. The current Year 1 and 2 class will be separated out into a classroom within the main school building, allowing for increased differentiation and a smaller class.

The Head of School at the primary school has significant experience of working within the early years and this combined with the fact that the other staffing will remain unchanged will ensure high quality teaching and learning for the nursery children.

Will the proposed change result in additional traffic near the school at drop off and pick up times?

The nursery sessions will begin at 9.00am and finish at 12.00pm with the afternoon session running from 12:15 to 3:15, which is similar to the 9.00-3:20 school day that the primary currently runs.

Any increase in capacity will inevitably result in an increase in the number of users accessing the site. However, a good proportion of the increased capacity is expected to be taken up by existing children or siblings of existing children and therefore this will minimise the additional traffic issues. The school expects to provide an additional wraparound service for early drop off from 8.00am, which is the same as its current provision. In addition an after school service may be provided to 5.30pm depending on the demand.

What will the impact be of providers of nursery provision locally?

The proposed increase to 30 hours free education for children of 3 and 4 year olds is not expected to impact on any other local provision as there is very little provision in the local area and the nearest is always over-subscribed.

The proposal is therefore likely to have a little to no impact on other providers in the medium to long term.

How can you ask questions, get more information & comment on the proposal?

If you have any questions, please contact the school on the number above or by email to office@flitcham.norfolk.sch.uk. If you wish to make a response to this consultation, then please email the school on the same email address or alternatively write to the school at the address provided above. We will be allowing 4 weeks for receiving responses, so all responses must be received by midnight on Sunday 25th March 2018 to be considered by the Governing Body when making its decision.