

# HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

## Decision Report

<b>Decision Maker:</b>	Executive Member for Childrens Services
<b>Date:</b>	22 November 2022
<b>Title:</b>	Sun Hill Infant School Age Range
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Children's Services

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**Email:** Tracey.messer@hants.gov.uk

### Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide feedback on the statutory public notice in relation to the proposal for Sun Hill Infant School to take children from age 3 years old and to deliver nursery provision from 9am to 3pm.
2. This report seeks approval for the age range of the school to be lowered.

### Recommendations

3. That approval be given to the following proposals, published by Hampshire County Council under Section 19 (1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006:
  - To make a prescribed alteration to Sun Hill Infant School, Sun Lane, Alresford, Winchester SO24 9NB, to provide nursery provision for up to 24 places for children from 3 - 4 years old, commencing with 24 places with effect from 1 January 2023, and with a requirement to consult with the Council prior to any further expansion of places.

### Executive Summary

4. This report outlines the rationale, background and outcome of the Public Notice to the request to lower the age range Sun Hill Infant School.
5. Sun Hill Infant School is a community school currently approved to take children of school age from Year R to Year 2. The Published Admissions Number (PAN) for the school is currently 45 with maximum capacity of 135. The governing body of the school is seeking to:
  - a) Lower the school age range to 3-year-olds; and
  - b) Directly manage a new early years' facility as part of the school.

6. The Sun Hill Infant School proposal is to open a new provision. The school leadership team has reviewed its management, financial and operational arrangements, and the governors at its meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2022 gave full agreement to the proposal.
7. The lowered age range will be accommodated within the school building which has full facilities to accommodate younger children and access to outdoors.
8. There is no cost to Hampshire County Council associated with this proposal.
9. A public consultation was held from 9 September to 7 October 2021.
10. There have been no objections raised.
11. A copy of the Public Notice is appended (Appendix 2). The County Council has complied with all statutory requirements relating to the publication of the Public Notice.

## **STATUTORY PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

12. *The Making Significant Changes ('prescribed alterations') to Maintained Schools* ([publishing.service.gov.uk](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)) guidance sets out the process to be followed.
13. As a Public Notice was published in the press on 9 September 2022 with the consultation period closing 7 October 2022.

## **Contextual Information**

14. Sun Hill Infant School had organised an open day and informed other local provision and families of the intention to open a preschool on 15 June 2022. There had been a preschool within the locality, and this had closed due to a poor Ofsted outcome in August 2020. There is currently one full day care in Alresford for families, so choice for early years provision is limited.
15. A new childcare provision on site for 3 to 4-year-olds will allow further choice of childcare to parents in the Alresford area and support those also with older siblings at the school. Within the Alresford and Itchen Valley areas, there are highlighted three preschools, one full day care provider and one early year's funding approved childminder. The other three preschools are located outside of Alresford – one in Bishops Sutton and two in the Itchen Valley area. These are not accessible to families without transport.
16. Having a nursery managed by the school will not make Sun Hill Infant an all through school. Parents of children attending the nursery will still be required to apply for their place in Year R through the usual admission arrangements. There is scope for children who are eligible for either early years pupil premium, or the service premium, for admission authorities to give priority in

their oversubscription criteria where these children: a) are in a nursery class which is part of the school; or b) attend a nursery that is established and run by the school. There will be requirement for the nursery to be named in the admission arrangements and its selection must be transparent and made on reasonable grounds. Confirmation from the school to take up this admission arrangement will be established once a formal decision is made on the lowering age range.

17. The Sun Hill Infant School proposal to open new early year's provision supports the growth of child population in the area over an eight year period and supports potential growth in demand for services. The Small Area Population Forecast data (2021) estimates that there is a 12% increase in 0–4-year olds from 2021 – 2028 within the Alresford and Itchen Valley area.
18. A review of the childcare population and take up of childcare in Alresford has confirmed a need for 24 places.
19. The school is currently experiencing low numbers in their school admissions which is freeing up classroom space and staffing.
20. There is also new housing planned for the ward with 400 new homes and this new provision therefore helps to provide sufficient childcare places for the anticipated population growth.
21. The Sun Hill Infant School proposal to open a new provision supports the growth of child population in the ward over a six-year period to meet potential demand.

## **Finance**

22. The key to successful early years provision is the ability to be financially sustainable through the limitations of the early years' education funding, through setting appropriate parental fees for additional services together with allowable consumable charges. It is therefore important that both the school governing body and leadership team regularly review their business plans, financial forecasting and establish close monitoring of the income and expenditure with good debt management. It is also recommended that the income and expenditure of the proposed nursery is kept separate to the school's main budget.
23. Sun Hill Infant School has undertaken its own due diligence and understands that the nursery income can only be met from early years education claims and parental fee income. At its meeting of 17 May 2022, the governing body approved the financial plans for the lowered age group. The governing body understands its financial responsibilities regarding this age range change and the budgetary requirements.

## **Human Resources Implications**

24. As Sun Hill Infant School is setting up a new provision, there are no TUPE implications. The school has identified and can put in place appropriate staffing arrangements from January 2023 to support this proposal.
25. The school is responsible for ensuring employment of appropriate staff for the nursery and have taken advice from schools HR support in considering this proposal.

## **Performance Impact**

26. Sun Hill Infant School recognises that delivering an early year's provision will offer an early intervention approach to children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and implement early support prior to children starting school, thus allowing a smooth transition with identified support in place for children who through the school admission process move through to Year R.
27. The school is responsible for meeting all the regulatory requirements of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and any subsequent OFSTED inspection.

## **Consultation and Equalities**

28. On 4 July 2022, the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services approved a statutory four-week public consultation in respect of this proposal which opened from 9 September to 7 October 2022.
29. There were no objections raised during the period of public notice. There was only one comment received which stated: "I want to show my support for this as Alresford has not its own preschool anymore. The community would really benefit from being able to walk and not have to drive outside the area for a preschool".
30. As part of the consultation process, the school published a "statement of intent" publicising a consultation drop-in session on 15 June 2022. This statement went out to all the parents of the infant and junior schools. The headteacher also spoke to one local preschool and the full day nursery in Alresford.
31. Individual meetings have been held with the three preschools local to Sun Hill Infant School and the conversations were all positive. Early discussions have also been held about how all the local preschools might be able to work together to support each other with staffing, training and other aspects in the future.
32. In response to the formal consultation, early expressions of interest from parents have moved to 4 definite enrolments for the majority of sessions offered (currently mornings only) and 6 families wishing the child to attend at least two sessions a week.

33. During the statutory consultation there have been no respondents objecting to the proposal.
34. An Equalities Impact Assessment is attached to this report (Appendix 3). The proposal will provide inclusive access to early years education and therefore has a positive impact.

### **Conclusion**

35. The Sun Hill Infant School proposal to open a new early years provision supports the growth of child population in the ward over a six year period and supports potential growth in demand for services. The school wish to manage an early years provision directly to provide teacher led early years' service. As the school is a local authority community school, the local authority was required to approve a statutory consultation and Public Notice to be undertaken before any decision can be confirmed.

There were no submitted objections.

## REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

### Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	Yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes

### Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:		
<u>Title</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Date</u>
DCS and Executive Member		6 August 2021
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives		
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>	
<i>The Making Significant Changes ('prescribed alterations') to Maintained Schools</i> (publishing.service.gov.uk)	<b>October 2018</b>	

### Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

None

## **EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:**

### **- Equality Duty**

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

### **- Equalities Impact Assessment:**

Equality and diversity objectives will be considered on an individual project basis by conducting Equality Impact Assessments and are not considered at this stage or within this report.

## Appendix 1

### RESPONSES TO THE CONSULTATION AND OBJECTIONS RAISED AND RESOLUTION.

There were no objections raised. Following a visit to Sun Hill Infant School from Steve Brine MP on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2022 - see responses below

The following email was sent into the Strategic Planning team and forwarded onto Services for Young Children on 3 October 2022

To: Strategic Planning Unit <[strategicplanningunit@hants.gov.uk](mailto:strategicplanningunit@hants.gov.uk)>  
Subject: Sunhill preschool

I want to show my support for this as Alresford has not its own preschool anymore. The community would really benefit from being able to walk and not have to drive outside the area for a preschool.

#### **Facebook posts from the Sun Hill Infant School page**

FB Respondent 1: Very exciting! (Received 1 thumbs up)

FB Respondent 2: ooooooh, how exciting!! (Received 1 thumbs up)

FB Respondent 3: I can't wait to (fingers crossed) use the pre-school!!!! (Receive 2 thumbs up)

FB Respondent 4: Fantastic head, fantastic school. Have has 3 children attend (1 there currently) and would definitely use this preschool if our children were the right age now. (Received 7 thumbs up and a heart)

FB Respondent 5: Wow, what a fantastic idea. Exciting news. This way, even more parents can benefit from this amazing school and the leadership team who run it. (Received 4 thumbs up)



## Appendix 2 – Public Notice

### SUN HILL INFANT SCHOOL, ALRESFORD - REDUCTION IN AGE RANGE

1. Notice is hereby given in accordance with Section 19(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, that Hampshire County Council intends to make a prescribed alteration to SUN HILL INFANT SCHOOL, Sun Lane, Alresford SO24 9NB (category of school – Community) with effect from 1 January 2023.

2. The PAN for the school is currently 45. It is proposed that the age range for the school is lowered to enable nursery children aged from 3 years to attend. The governing body of the school is seeking to lower the school age range to 3-year-olds and directly manage a new early years' facility as part of the school. Children attending the nursery will still be required to apply for their place in Year R through the usual admission arrangements.

3. The current capacity of the school is 180 and will be unaffected by the proposal. The current number of pupils registered at the school is 123. The current admission number for the school is 45 and is not affected by the school taking on the nursery which will be a separate capacity of 24 on the implementation of this proposal. There are no costs associated with this proposal.

4. Notice is an extract from the complete proposal. Copies of the complete proposal may be obtained from Gemma Bowry, Strategic Development Officer, Children's Services Department, EII Court North, Winchester, Hampshire SO23 8UG; telephone 0370 779 4892; e-mail: [strategicplanningunit@hants.gov.uk](mailto:strategicplanningunit@hants.gov.uk)

5. Within four weeks from the date of publication of these proposals, any person may object or make comments on the proposal by sending them to Gemma Bowry, Strategic Development Officer, Children's Services Department, EII Court North, Winchester, Hampshire SO23 8UG; telephone 0370 779 4892; e-mail: [strategicplanningunit@hants.gov.uk](mailto:strategicplanningunit@hants.gov.uk)

36. Contact:

Gemma Bowry, Strategic Development Officer, Children's Services Department,  
EII Court North, Winchester, Hampshire SO23 8UG  
Email: [strategicplanningunit@hants.gov.uk](mailto:strategicplanningunit@hants.gov.uk)

Appendix 3

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASESMENT

And on the council's webpage

[Children's Services | About the Council | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#)