

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Lead Member for Children's Services
Date:	14 May 2024
Title:	Winklebury Infant School Age Range
Report From:	Services for Young Children, Children's Services

Contact name: Peter Cooper - Service Manager Childcare Development

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Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Executive Lead Member with feedback on the statutory public notice in relation to the proposal for Winklebury Infant School in Basingstoke to lower their age range to take children from the age of two and deliver nursery provision from 8.30am to 3.30pm.
2. This report seeks Executive Lead Member approval for the age range of the school to be lowered to take children from two years old and deliver nursery provision from 8.30am to 3.30pm.

Recommendation(s)

3. That approval be given to the following proposal, published by Hampshire County Council under Section 19 (1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006:
 - To make a prescribed alteration to Winklebury Infant School, Willoughby Way, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG23 8AF, to provide nursery provision for up to 24 places for children from two years old, with effect from 1 September 2024, 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 for the request to lower the age range for Winklebury Infant School.
5. Winklebury Infant School is a community school currently approved to take children of school age from Year R to Year 2. The Published Admission Number (PAN) for the school is currently 60 with a capacity of 180. The Governing Body of the school is seeking to:
 - (a) Lower the age range to two years old; and

- (b) Directly manage the early years' facility as part of the school.
6. Winklebury Infant School proposal is for the Governing Body of the school to take on the management of Winklebury Infant School pre-school known as WISPS currently operated by the Trustees of WISPS. The school will deliver 24 pre-school places for children aged two, three and four years old.
 7. The school leadership team has reviewed its management, financial and operational arrangements related to this proposal. These were presented to the Governors at their meeting on 20 November 2023, who gave full agreement to the proposal.
 8. There is no cost to Hampshire County Council associated with this proposal.
 9. A public consultation was held from 1 March 2024 with the consultation period closing on 29 March 2024.
 10. No objections were raised during the public consultation.
 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://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/guidance/making-significant-changes-to-maintained-schools) guidance sets out the process to be followed.
13. A Public Notice was published in the press on 1 March 2024 with the consultation period closing 29 March 2024. The school held a drop-in session on 11 March 2024 for members of the public to ask questions in respect of the consultation.

Contextual information

14. The proposed pre-school provision will provide parents whose children currently attend WISPS continuation of childcare options from Winklebury Infant School.
15. Having a school managed pre-school will not make Winklebury Infant School an all through school. Parents of children attending the pre-school will still be required to apply for their place in Year R through the usual admission arrangements.
16. The Winklebury Infant School proposal to take on the management of the existing WISPS supports the continuing need for early years childcare services in the Winklebury area of Basingstoke, thus supporting families from an area

of deprivation.

Finance

17. The current WISPS delivery is in an area of the school building on the school site specifically designed for pre-school care for 24 children. This area is currently leased through the County Council with the income of the tenancy provided to the school. This tenancy arrangement will cease when the Governing Body assumes the management of the pre-school. The provision will continue to be delivered by the School from the area within the school building.
18. The key to successful early years provision is the ability to be financially sustainable within the limitations of the early years' education funding. Providers achieve this through setting appropriate parental fees for additional services together with allowable consumable charges. It is therefore important that both the school's Governing Body and leadership team regularly review their business plans and 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 pre-school is kept separate to the school's main budget.
19. Winklebury Infant School has undertaken its own due diligence and understands that the pre-school income can only be met from early years education claims and parental fee income. At its meeting of 20 November 2023, the Governing Body approved the financial plans for the lowered age group. The Governing Body understands its financial responsibilities regarding this age range change including the budgetary requirements and the potential loss of income from the rental arrangement.
20. To support the process of taking on this early year's provision, the school have provided an outline business plan and financial projections. The school have indicated that the pre-school income will support taking on the current WISPS staffing and running costs of the provision. The school recognises and has accounted for the additional local government employer pension costs of staff transferring. The plan also indicates opportunities to be investigated by the school to extend the childcare offer to meet the needs of working families.
21. The Winklebury Infant School has accessed support from the Council's Education Finance Services (EFS) to gain clarity in respect of school budget and budget planning for the proposed pre-school provision. EFS are satisfied with the school's approach to budgeting in relation to this proposal.

Human Resources Implications

22. As Winklebury Infant School is proposing to take on an existing provision, there are TUPE implications affecting five full time equivalent (FTE) staff. The school has identified that it can put in place appropriate staffing arrangements from September 2024 to support this proposal. The earliest date for transfer of

staff is 1 September 2024.

23. The school is responsible for ensuring employment of appropriate staff for the pre-school and have taken HR advice in considering this proposal.

Performance Impact

24. Winklebury Infant School recognises that delivering an early years provision will offer an early intervention approach to children with SEND and implement early support prior to children starting school, thus allowing a smooth transition with identified support in place for children who, through the coordinated main round school admission process, are offered a Year R place at the school.
25. The school acknowledges that in having a single OFSTED rating, the future performance assessment of the infant school will be expanded to include the pre-school and therefore a positive or negative assessment on this new provision can impact on the outcomes for the whole school.

Consultation and Equalities

26. Winklebury Infant School informed other local provisions and families of their intention to take over WISPS, which is currently under the management of the Trustees of WISPS who are in support of the proposal. Winklebury Infant School also organised a parent meeting on 11 March 2024 to discuss the proposal.
27. On 21 February 2024, a statutory four-week public consultation was approved in respect of this proposal. It ran from 1 March 2024 to 29 March 2024.
28. As part of the consultation process, the school published a “statement of intent” publicising a consultation drop-in session to be held on 11 March 2024. This statement also went out to all the parents of Winklebury Infant School.
29. Winklebury Infant School consulted with local stakeholders and has spoken to parents and directly with local childcare providers. During the Public Notice period, Winklebury Infant School held a meeting with parents to launch the proposal. Discussions with the neighbouring pre-school have been positive about the proposal of Winklebury Infant School going age downwards.
30. No objections were raised during the public consultation.
31. The school Admissions Team have no concerns with the proposal.
32. An Equalities Impact Assessment is attached to this report (Appendix 1). The proposal will provide inclusive access to early years education and therefore has a positive impact on users of the service.

Conclusion

33. Winklebury Infant School proposal to expand their provision age downwards to **two-year-olds**. This supports the continuation of early years education and childcare and the anticipated growth in demand for early years education services. The school wish to manage the early years provision directly to provide a teacher led early years' service. Because 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.

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>Date</u>
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Making significant changes ('prescribed alterations') to maintained schools (publishing.service.gov.uk)	January 2023

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents	
<p>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.)</p>	
<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
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:

Name of project or proposal: Lowering Age Range Winklebury Infant School

Name of accountable officer: Peter Cooper

Email: Peter.Cooper@hants.gov.uk

Department: Children's Services

Date of assessment: 8 January 2024

Service Affected

Winklebury Infants School

Service Description

Winklebury Infant School is a community school for 4 - 7 year olds. It is located in the Winklebury and Manydown Ward of Basingstoke with capacity for 180 children and 60 pupil admission number (PAN). 26.9% of pupils are eligible for free school meals and provides education to children of mixed gender.

Currently a charitable organisation provides early years childcare on the school site offering 24 places, 5 days a week. There are 4.6 FTE staff in the preschool.

Service Change

The school proposes to absorb the current charitable operated pre-school provision which will continue to be accommodated in the separate preschool room on the school site and to be directly managed by school governance. The number of preschool children will remain the same due to the space limitations of the building they occupy but will become part of the schools pupil numbers.

There will be no changes to the staff of either the school or pre-school other than pre-school staff employment terms and conditions will come under HCC. There will be no change to the staff hours of employment at this time. The school offer to the community will change to infant and preschool education for 2-7 year olds. Committee run preschools find it difficult to recruit parents to their committees with some at risk of closure. By the school taking over the pre-school the early years places for this location are secured for future families. The places support continuous provision for children in this area and ensure a clear transition from the pre-school provision to the school. It will enable more opportunity for joint activities between the school and preschool. The school use the Management Information System in Arbor and /or CPOMs to collect data for the protected characteristics. When children join, parents use a paper copy questionnaire to answer such questions and the information is collated and uploaded to Arbor. The pre-school also use paper copies. So if the age down process is approved the school will put the pre-school children onto the Arbor system.

Geographic Impact

Basingstoke and Deane

Engagement/Consultation

No, but intend to or planned.

Additional Information

Discussions have taken place with the staff and school governors

Overview Statement

Age

Public Impact - Positive

Staff Impact – Positive

Decision Rationale

Children from age 2 years will benefit from continual provision at the same locality with familiar faces and surroundings. This will build on their confidence and friendships. The flow through school will ensure any additional needs identified and supported by early years are known to the school at an earlier stage in the child's education.

Mitigation/Actions

Disability

Public Impact - Neutral

Staff Impact - Positive

Decision Rationale

The building is accessible for adults and children with low level access and wide entry. The early years service will continue to be inclusive and support children aged 2/3 and 4 with SEND.

Mitigation/Actions**Gender Reassignment**

Public Impact - Neutral

Staff Impact - Neutral

Decision Rationale

There will be no change in benefits to this protected characteristic group, over and above the current circumstances and over other protected characteristics groups. The adult toilet in this facility is gender neutral as is the accessible toilet.

Mitigation/Actions**Pregnancy & Maternity**

Public Impact - Neutral

Staff Impact - Neutral

Decision Rationale

There will be no change in benefits to this protected characteristic group, over and above the current circumstances and over other protected characteristics groups.

Mitigation/Actions**Race**

Public Impact - Neutral

Staff Impact - Neutral

Decision Rationale

There will be no change in benefits to this protected characteristic group, over and above the current circumstances and over other protected characteristics groups.

Mitigation/Actions**Religion or Belief**

Public Impact - Neutral

Staff Impact - Neutral

Decision Rationale

There will be no change in benefits to this protected characteristic group, over and above the current circumstances and over other protected characteristics groups.

Mitigation/Actions

Sex

Public Impact - Neutral

Staff Impact - Neutral

Decision Rationale

There will be no change in benefits to this protected characteristic group, over and above the current circumstances and over other protected characteristics groups.

The school is mixed gender.

Mitigation/Actions

Sexual Orientation

Public Impact - Neutral

Staff Impact - Neutral

Decision Rationale

There will be no change in benefits to this protected characteristic group, over and above the current circumstances and over other protected characteristics groups.

Mitigation/Actions

Marriage & Civil Partnership

Public Impact - Neutral

Staff Impact - Neutral

Decision Rationale

There will be no change in benefits to this protected characteristic group, over and above the current circumstances and over other protected characteristics groups.

Mitigation/Actions

Poverty

Public Impact - Positive

Staff Impact - Neutral

Decision Rationale

Positive as the school intends to offer early years funded places to low income eligible families with children aged 2 and through early years pupil premium for those aged 3 and 4 year old.

The move to school management ensures the staff have continued employment.

Mitigation/Actions

Rurality

Public Impact - Neutral

Staff Impact - Neutral

Decision Rationale

There will be no change in benefits to this protected characteristic group, over and above the current circumstances and over other protected characteristics groups.

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

The decision for this report is essentially to note the change of Governance for the pre-school provision at Winklebury Infant School who are going age down to include 2 year olds from 1 September 2024. The school age range will become 2 to 7 years. There are no other changes as the same area within the school will continue to be used to provide early years education offering the same number of places. When the building was constructed consideration would have been given to the impact of climate change. There are no adaptations planned for the building at this time. Should there be in the future regard would be given to climate change and Hampshire's target to become carbon neutral and resilient to the impacts of a 2°C temperature rise by 2025.

The space is part of the school building which will be monitored for future changes in view of the anticipated increase in temperatures and to keep users safe from overheating.

The staff remain the same, they and parents are encouraged to walk to the pre-school with their children and to avoid using cars so reducing carbon emissions.

No other change is planned at this time, and as such does not have any climate change considerations.