

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

THE EXECUTIVE

18 April 2023

LOWERING THE AGE RANGE OF OVERDALE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Report by the Corporate Director – Children and Young People’s Service

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To report the outcome of a public consultation carried out by the Governors of Overdale Community Primary School.
- 1.2 To seek approval for the publication of proposals and statutory notices to lower the age range of Overdale Community Primary School.
- 1.3 To ask the Executive (or the Executive Member for Education and Skills if there are no objections during the representation period) to schedule taking a final decision on the proposal at their meeting on 20 June 2023.

2.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Governing Body of Overdale CP School has asked the Local Authority to propose lowering of the age range of their school from 3-11 to 2-11 in order to offer education for two-year-old children.
- 2.2 This report is supported by a number of appendices as listed below:
 - Appendix 1: Consultation document
 - Appendix 2: Consultation Responses
 - Appendix 3: Statutory Proposal
 - Appendix 4: Draft Statutory Notice
 - Appendix 5: Equality Impact Assessment
 - Appendix 6: Climate Change Impact Assessment

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Eligible 2-year-olds are entitled to 15 hours per week of funded early education from the beginning of the school term following their 2nd birthday until the term after their 3rd birthday when they are able to join a nursery class or a ‘Foundation stage class’. This funded entitlement can be taken up in a maintained school, and/or in an Ofsted registered private and voluntary sector provision. It is parental choice as to which type of provision is most appropriate for their child and most convenient for individual circumstances.
- 3.2 Overdale Community Primary School currently provides education for children from 3 years in its nursery. The school is now proposing to provide places for 2-year-olds, as an extension of its existing nursery provision for 3-year-olds.
- 3.3 The Middle Deepdale housing development in Scarborough, which sits within Overdale’s catchment area, required a new primary school to serve the development. The existing

Overdale Community Primary School was relocated into a new school building, which now serves the existing Overdale catchment area including the new development.

3.4 Overdale school, now located on a 2.3 hectare site in the Middle Deepdale development, has been expanded to 420 pupil places. The school's new £6.5M building has a large separate nursery block. This nursery block was provided on the understanding that the school would include early years provision once bedded in and Covid issues settled.

3.5 It is necessary to bring this proposal before the Council's Executive, as a 'Prescribed Alteration'. Under School Organisation Guidance on making 'Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools', while governors of Voluntary schools can determine their own proposals for lowering their age range, only Local Authorities can authorise lowering the age range of Community schools¹.

4.0 THE PROPOSAL

4.1 Overdale Community Primary School is proposing to provide places for 2 year olds in its dedicated nursery building. Though an extension of its current Nursery provision, the new provision would have a qualified early years teacher and suitably qualified and experienced teaching assistant(s) to provide for a young child's development and to support the learning and development of 2-year-olds with a 1 adult :4 children staffing ratio.

4.2 There will be high quality play-based provision for the 2-year-olds in the nursery class which meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) including role play, sand, water, construction, reading, and free flow between inside and outside play. This will offer children the choice of play activities, allowing them to engage in learning which is relevant and appropriate to their age and stage of development.

4.2 From September 2023 Overdale School will initially offer 4 full-time equivalent places each day. From September 2024 they will expand to offer up to 8 full-time (or equivalent part-time) places for 2-year-olds, which can include provision over lunchtime. There will be an additional charge if a school dinner is provided.

4.3 Priority for admission of nursery-aged children will be determined by the Council's Admissions Policy for Nurseries. This is separate from admissions to the school, which are determined by the Council's policy for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools. Attendance in Nursery does not provide priority for admission to the Reception-year.

5.0 ISSUES TO CONSIDER

5.1 The effect the proposals would have on existing providers must be considered. Other pre-school providers have been consulted and given the opportunity to make their views known on the proposal. The expectation is that North Yorkshire providers within a three-mile radius are consulted.

6.0 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN AND ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES

6.1 During the six weeks running from Monday 6 February to Monday 20 March 2023 the Governing Body of Overdale Community Primary School consulted the local community on their proposal. The consultation document, which is appended to this report (as Appendix 1), was sent out to parents, local stakeholders, and other Early Years providers.

6.2 8 positive written responses to the consultation have been received (Appendix 2).

6.3 These were mostly parents, and all the respondents supported the proposal. A typical parental response was: "My child is in Year 1 and her little brother is at nursery elsewhere.

We ... would have preferred if he could be at the same school and get comfortable with the environment at a young age rather than now having to start new again.”

- 6.4 Overdale Governing Board met on Monday 20th March; reviewed the consultation responses (Appendix 2) and confirmed that they wish to ask the LA to continue with the statutory proposal.

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Revenue

Costs for 2-year-olds will be met with the revenue funding received from a combination of means-based funding and parental subscription. The Governing Body and the Headteacher have modelled this revenue funding against the staffing and running costs and feel that this will be cost-neutral and financially viable.

7.2 Capital Implications

Overdale Community Primary School was relocated into a new, and considerably larger, school building in the Middle Deepdale housing development. There are no capital implications because the new school has been designed with a dedicated and purpose-built nursery block. The school is currently reviewing practice for the 2-year-olds, and considering ways in which younger children can access developmentally appropriate equipment and resources.

7.3 Transport costs

There are no transport costs related to this proposal.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 set out the manner in which prescribed alterations could be made to maintained schools. The statutory guidance 'Making Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools' was updated in January 2023¹. Careful attention has been paid to this guidance throughout the process.

9.0 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no Human Resource issues in relation to this decision.

10.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken in respect of this change and is attached at Appendix 5. A Climate Change Impact Assessment has been undertaken and is attached at Appendix 6.

11.0 CONCLUSION

- 11.1 The consultation process has revealed widespread support for the proposal. The Governing Body considered the consultation responses on 20 March and voted in favour of proceeding to seek the approval of the Executive to publish statutory notices.

12.0 NEXT STEPS

- 12.1 It is proposed to publish proposals and statutory notices on Thursday 4 May 2023. The proposals would be published on the Council's website and the statutory notice would be

¹ DfE, School Organisation (Making Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) Regulations 2013 and Department for Education statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers, Making Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools, January 2023.

published in a local newspaper and displayed at the main entrance to the school. This would provide four weeks for any further representations to be made to the Local Authority by Thursday 1 June.

12.2 The Executive agreed a model for decision making on school organisation proposals on 25 September 2007. If approval is given to publish statutory proposals and notices, it is proposed that a final decision is taken by the Executive on 20 June 2023 (or by the Executive Member for Education and Skills if there are no objections during the representation period).

12.3 The key dates are shown below:

Consultation (6 weeks)	6 February – 20 March 2023
Governing Body consider consultation responses and vote to proceed	20 March 2023
Council's Executive decision to publish statutory notices	18 April 2023
Statutory notices published	4 May 2023
Representation period (4 weeks)	4 May – 1 June 2023
Final decision by Council's Executive (or by the Executive Member for Education and Skills if there are no objections during the representation period)	20 June 2023
Implementation	4 September 2023

13.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

13.1 It is recommended that:

- i. The proposals and statutory notices be published on 4 May to lower the school age range of Overdale Community Primary School from 4 September 2023.
- ii. The Executive schedule taking a final decision on these proposals on 20 June 2023.

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Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Consultation document
- Appendix 2 – Consultation responses
- Appendix 3 – Statutory proposal
- Appendix 4 – Statutory notice
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- Appendix 6 – Climate Change Impact Assessment