

29 January 2025

Dear Stakeholder, Parents and Carers,

Consultation on a proposal to change the age range at Kettlesing Felliscliffe Community Primary School by permanently raising its age from 2-11 years to 4-11 years by ceasing Nursery Provision from September 2025.

The governing body are proposing to cease maintained nursery provision at Kettlesing Felliscliffe School in September 2025. The purpose of this communication is to seek your views on this proposal.

The five-week consultation will run from Wednesday 29th January 2025 to Wednesday 5th March 2025.

The proposals that are being relate to the nursery provision only.

Context

As you are aware a decision to temporarily close the nursery provision at Kettlesing Felliscliffe School was made by the Interim Executive Board from September 2023. This was based on the low take up of nursery provision, financial viability, and demographics in the area. Term time only provision offering traditional school hours at the school may also have been taken into consideration by working parents who required more flexibility to suit their working hours.

Since the temporary suspension of nursery provision, a marketing strategy has been put in place across the federation including the design and production of leaflets, distributed across Harrogate and Otley, advertisements and use of social media to promote the school.

The governing body have considered a number of factors regarding reinstating nursery provision at the school. Based on this review the governing body is now proposing to permanently cease nursery provision at Kettlesing Felliscliffe School from September 2025.

Although the Governing Body recognise some shortfalls in nursery provision across the wards of Birtswith and Washburn, and is aware of the Government's programme of childcare expansion for working parents and for school based nursery provision, there is a range of quality providers in the surrounding area. Within a five mile radius, there are 3 preschools, 9 private day nurseries, 10 childminders, 8 schools with nursery provision, 3 independent schools with nursery provision and 2 childcare providers on non-domestic premises. For further information on nursery provision in the area, please contact the Family Information Service via this link [Early education and childcare | North Yorkshire Council](#).

Forecast data on area birth rate:

The birth rate data for North Yorkshire shows a declining birth rate. The data predicts that the number of children applying to primary schools will decline into the future.

Birth rate data shows there would be 5 children born in the catchment area of the school who would potentially require a place for 3 and 4 year old provision and 5 children who would potentially require a place for 2 year old provision from September 2025.

Location and School Building/Site:

The location of the school is rural and accessed off the A59 Skipton Road. The school is on a constrained site limiting any further expansion, the indoor space is limited.

The previous nursery space is currently used as a valuable intervention space for pupils at the school where teachers can provide targeted support to students who need additional help with pastoral support or their learning.

Finance and Staffing:

Governors reflected that maintaining nursery provision at the school could attract new parents. The Government has extended government funded provision to eligible Working Parents to two year old children for 15 hours and this will be extended to 30 hours from September 2025. The governing body recognises that the government is offering funding to schools wishing to open new or expand current school based nursery provision. However, the nursery provision would not be new nor would the governing body be looking at expanding the provision. Nursery numbers are expected to be too small to be economical. It is neither financially nor educationally viable to continue Nursery provision with such small numbers.

What will happen next?

All views and comments on this consultation will be considered by the governing body and a report with recommendations will then be passed to North Yorkshire Council. All responses to the consultation received by the 5th March 2025 are scheduled to be considered by the Council's Executive on 15 April 2025.

If the Council's Executive decides to proceed with the closure proposal of the nursery provision, then statutory notices would be published in the local press on 6 May 2025. These notices would provide a further four weeks for representations to be made. A final decision is then scheduled to be taken by North Yorkshire Council's Executive on the 15 July 2025. If agreed the nursery provision would cease from the 31 August 2025.

How do I make my views known?

Your views are important, and we welcome the thoughts and responses of all members of the school's community. All comments, suggestions or queries, can be e-mailed to consultation@rbk.n-yorks.sch.uk by Wednesday 5th March 2025.

Yours sincerely

The Governing Body of the Ripley, Beckwithshaw and Kettleasing Federation