

**Report of Director of Children & Families**

**Report to Executive Board**

**Date: 21<sup>st</sup> June 2017**

**Subject: Outcome of consultation to change the age range of Hovingham Primary School from 3-11 years to 2-11 years.**



Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): <b>Gipton &amp; Harehills</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**Summary of main issues**

This report contains details of a proposal brought forward to meet the Local Authority's duty to ensure sufficiency of 0-19 provision. The changes that are proposed form prescribed alterations under the Education and Inspections Act 2006. The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 and accompanying statutory guidance set out the process which must be followed when making such changes. The statutory process to make these changes varies according to the nature of the change and the status of the school and the process followed in respect of the proposal is detailed in this report. The decision maker in these cases remains the Local Authority.

There is a high demographic need for additional Free Early Education Entitlement (FEEE) places for eligible 2 year olds in the Harehills area. Hovingham Primary School is proposing to lower the age limit of the school to enable them to deliver this provision. A public consultation on this proposal was conducted from 28 April to 12 May 2017.

## **Recommendations**

Executive Board is asked to:

- Approve the publication of a Statutory Notice to lower the age limit of Hovingham Primary School from 3 to 2, changing the school's age range from 3-11 years to 2-11 years. This then enables the school to deliver free early education entitlement for eligible 2 year olds.
- Note the responsible officer for implementation is the Head of Learning Systems.

## 1 **Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 This report contains details of a proposal brought forward to meet the local authority's duty to secure sufficient Free Early Education Entitlement (FEEE) places for eligible 2 year olds. This report describes the outcome of a consultation regarding a proposal to lower the age limit at Hovingham Primary School changing their age range from 3-11 years to 2-11 years and seeks permission to publish a statutory notice in respect of this proposal.

## 2 **Background information**

- 2.1 The available demographic data has identified that additional FEEE places for eligible 2 year olds are required in the densely populated Harehills area to help address the demand from families living locally. The lower age range of the school needs to be changed to enable the school to deliver this provision.
- 2.2 The governing body at Hovingham Primary School are supportive of plans to offer early education to eligible 2 year olds as part of the permanent expansion of the school. Accommodation has been identified which would support the delivery of 20 sessional places both morning and afternoon.
- 2.3 A school led consultation in partnership with Leeds City Council took place from 28 April to 12 May 2017 seeking views on the proposed change of the lower age limit. Information regarding the consultation was distributed to parents, ward members, local headteachers and Early Years providers. The consultation was promoted on the school's news webpage and also through the Leeds City Council, website and Child Friendly Leeds and Family Information Service twitter accounts to ensure engagement with the local community.

## 3 **Main issues**

- 3.4 Hovingham Primary School building is currently undergoing a permanent expansion to increase its published admission number from 60 to 90 places for September 2017. Within the scope of the capital works, accommodation has been identified which would support the delivery of 2 year old early education provision. The school is a popular and good school in an area of high demographic need. The governing body is very positive about the potential to engage with local families at an earlier stage of a child's development and to ensure children have the best opportunities within a high quality early years environment, to prepare them for school.
- 3.5 During the consultation to change the school's lower age limit there were 17 written responses received. 14 respondents supported the proposal to lower the age range, two were opposed and one neither supported nor opposed the proposal.
- 3.6 A full summary of comments made and any concerns raised follows. A copy of the responses received can be requested from the Capacity Planning and Sufficiency Team at [educ.school.organisation@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:educ.school.organisation@leeds.gov.uk)

3.7 In summary, those in support of the proposal commented that early education provision for two year olds helps them to develop confidence and acquire knowledge preparing them for school. One parent felt this also made it easier for the teachers too due to continuity. One parent described the issues they had experienced with accessing childcare in the area and that the provision may enable parents to work.

3.8 Concern raised during the consultation;

3.8.1 **Concern:** A child of two years old may not be mentally prepared to be left by a parent within a school environment.

3.8.2 **Response:** Parents or carers of eligible two year olds can choose to access FEEE provision. However if a parent feels their child is not ready for early education they can decide not to take up this offer as this is not a statutory requirement.

## 4 **Corporate Considerations**

### 4.1 **Consultation and Engagement**

4.1.1 The process in respect of all the proposals has been managed in accordance with the relevant legislation and with local good practice.

4.1.2 The consultation was carried out over a two week period. The school sent letters to all parents and published the consultation on their website. The website included documents translated into to multiple languages to maximise engagement with parents/carers. Local ward members, headteachers of other schools and early years providers in the area were informed about the consultation. The consultation was also promoted on the Leeds City Council website and through the Child Friendly Leeds and Family information Service Twitter accounts.

### 4.2 **Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

4.2.1 The EDCI form for lowering the age range at Hovingham Primary School has been completed and is attached as an appendix to this report.

### 4.3 **Council policies and Best Council Plan**

4.3.1 This proposal supports the legislative requirement on the Council to secure sufficient early education places for eligible 2 year olds in Leeds.

4.3.2 This proposal offers good value for money through its capacity to support achievement of the Best Council outcome to give everyone the chance to do well at every level of learning, gaining the skills they need for life.

4.3.3 The proposal provides tangible support for the city's aspiration to be the Best Council, the best city in which to grow up and a Child Friendly City. The delivery of early years places through the Learning Places Programme is one of the baseline entitlements of a Child Friendly City and by creating good quality local early education places we also offer strong support towards achievement of the aim to

improve educational achievement and the closure of achievement gaps. In turn, this proposal provides underlying support for the Council's ambition to produce a strong economy by compassionate means. A good quality early education place also contributes to the achievement of targets within the Children and Young people's Plan, such as our obsession to improve behaviour, attendance and achievement. It is, therefore, important that when bringing any proposal forward, there is a degree of certainty that any change would not have a negative impact on the teaching and learning in the school. The Headteacher and the Governing Body is confident that the proposed change can be successfully managed without detriment to the education of current and future pupils.

#### **4.4 Resources and value for money**

4.5 At its meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2016, Executive Board approved the permanent expansion of Hovingham Primary School. The approved capital scheme includes additional accommodation which will enable the school to deliver early education provision for eligible 2 year olds.

#### **4.6 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

4.6.1 The processes that have been and will be followed are in accordance with the Education and Inspections Act 2006 as set out in the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007, and amended by School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013.

4.6.2 This report is subject to call in.

#### **4.7 Risk Management**

4.7.1 The proposal to change the lower age limit at Hovingham Primary School has been brought forward to meet an immediate need for FEEE for eligible 2 year olds and create opportunities to give the best start possible for young children in the Harehills area. A decision not to proceed at this stage would mean a lack of available places for children within an area of high demographic need and the authority's ability to meet its legislative requirement to secure sufficient early education places in the Harehills area would be at risk

### **5 Conclusions**

5.1 Our ambition is for Leeds to be the best city in the country and for Leeds City Council to be the Best Council. As a vibrant and successful city we will attract new families to Leeds, and making sure that we have enough early education for pre-school children is one of our main priorities. This proposal has been brought forward to meet that need, and following the appropriate consultation, we now seek to move it to the next stage. This would ensure that children in Leeds have the best possible start to their learning, and so deliver our vision of a Child Friendly City.

5.2 The majority of the respondents support the change of the lower age range limit of Hovingham Primary School. Concerns raised during consultation have been

considered, and on balance, the proposal remains strong and addresses the need for 2 year old provision in the area.

- 5.3 The proposed FEEE places are required to ensure the authority meets the requirement to ensure sufficiency of early education provision for eligible 2 year olds. There is evidence of local need for places in the area and it is therefore recommended that the proposal to change the school's lower age limit be approved.

## 6 **Recommendations**

6.1 Executive Board is asked to:

- Approve the publication of a Statutory Notice to lower the age limit of Hovingham Primary School from 3 to 2, changing the school's age range from 3-11 years to 2-11 years. This then enables the school to deliver free early education entitlement for eligible 2 year olds.
- Note the responsible officer for implementation is the Head of Learning Systems.

## 7 **Background documents**<sup>1</sup>

7.1 None

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.