

Christ the King Catholic Primary School Consultation Document

Proposal to Close the Nursery at Christ the King Catholic Primary School

As part of the consultation process the Governing Body believe it is important that the people with an interest in the school's educational provision are consulted on these changes and that their views are listened to. This consultation document sets out the proposal in detail and explains why the Governing Body of the school thinks this proposal is necessary. The aim is to provide you with information so that you can let them know what you think. Whilst the Governing Body hope that you agree with them, it is important that you tell them at this early stage whether you agree with them, and if not, what your issues and concerns will be. As yet no final or binding decisions have been made. Your views count and will be listened to.

1 What is the proposal for Christ the King Catholic Primary School?

This proposal is recommending the closure of the Nursery provision and Christ the King Catholic Primary School and changing the age of admission from 4-11 to 5-11. This would mean that the Reception Class would be the first point of entry to the school. Should the situation change there is always the possibility that Nursery provision could be re-established at Christ the King Catholic Primary School.

Why do we need to do this?

- 2 There are a number of reasons why this proposal has been made by the school's Governing Body. The Nursery is not full and has not been for many years. School is funded per pupil and each space that exists in the Nursery means a shortfall in funding. This has had a knock-on effect each year the Nursery has not been full. The Nursery is not and has not been generating enough income to pay for the current staffing levels.

The new Early Years Foundation Stage legislation now states that there must be a teacher in the Nursery. This means that should the Nursery stay open a fulltime teacher would have to be employed in the Nursery. With the funding that a 13 place Nursery generates not being sufficient to fund current staffing, employing a teacher would only make this situation worse. In the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage it states – 'There must be at least one member of staff for every 13 children. At least one member of staff must be a school teacher'. The Nursery is currently a drain on the whole school budget. Funding that would otherwise have supported teaching and learning in the rest of the school has had to be reallocated to Nursery in order to maintain current staffing levels.

- 3 The new legislation also states that the amount of space needed in a classroom for children aged three to five is 2.3 square metres per child (page 35 Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage). The size of the current provision in its present format is only big enough to house the Reception class. Major building work would have to be undertaken in order to make the provision meet current requirements. Initial projections put the cost of this building work to be around £150,000 of which school would be liable for 10% (£15,000). Should this building work take place then the redevelopment and extension of the current Year 2 and Year 3 classrooms would have to, at best, be put on hold until our current liability for the building work had been paid off and the liability for the work on the Early Years Unit. This would be to the detriment of children in Phase 1.
- 4 Demand for places at the Nursery has been low. This could be, again, for differing reasons. Perhaps school cannot meet the needs of parents as they are now. The Nursery is currently run on a sessional basis – 08:45 to 11:45 and 12:30 to 15:30. There are other providers in the area who offer complete wrap round care which would appeal to parents who work every day of the week. School does not have the facilities to be able to offer this service. For the next academic year, 2009/10, there are only 13 applications which would mean the Nursery running at 50% capacity which is just not a viable option.
- 5 The Admission Number for the Reception class would stay at 30. Obviously there is the risk that school will have a reduced number of applications for entry to the Reception class. The Governing Body of the school have considered this possibility very carefully and accepted that this could be the case initially. Before the school had a Nursery pupils attended other settings but still came to Christ the King when they reached the appropriate age. The Governing Body also recognises that the school will need to be marketed far more than it has been to date.

What options have been considered?

- 6 Other options have been considered. Employing a teacher to work in the Nursery has been costed out taking into consideration annual increments and post-threshold status. Another option was to move to a morning only Nursery and employ a teacher part-time. This was discounted because by 2010 all Nurseries have to be offering fully flexible care. If school moved to a morning only Nursery it would mean that this time next year we would be facing the same problem again. All that would have happened would have been that the decision was delayed by 12 months. Redeveloping the Early Years Unit has also been considered. The cost of the redevelopment compared to the income it would generate just did not compare favourably.

Consultation Process

What happens next?

- 7 We are consulting parents, governors, staff and the community during February and March 2009. The governing body will then consider the response to the consultation, and decide in light of them whether they wish to publish a statutory notice. Anyone who disagrees with the proposal can formally object at this stage. At the end of the statutory notice period the Executive Board of the City Council will receive a report summarising the proposal and any representations received in relation to the statutory notice. The Board will be asked to consider whether, in the light of any representations, to approve or reject the proposal. This decision is currently anticipated in July 2009.

When would these proposals take effect?

- 8 Set out below is the timetable of key dates currently envisaged, although this may be subject to change.

| | |
|---|---|
| 23 rd February to 3 rd April 2009 | Public consultation (6 weeks) |
| April 2009 | Governing Body agree to publish statutory notices |
| April 2009 | Publish statutory notices giving 6 weeks for representations to be made |
| May/June 2009 | Notice expires |
| June 2009 | Submit documentation to Executive Board |
| July 2009 | Executive Board decision |
| 31 st August 2009 | Implementation |

What are your views?

- 9 Whether you agree or disagree with the proposal or aspects of it, whether you have concerns that you feel have not been addressed or factors that you think we have not taken into account, please let us know. We would like to hear your views. Please address any views you wish to make to:

Chair of Governors
Christ The King Catholic Primary School
Kings Approach
Bramley
LS13 2DX