



Withymoor Primary School Consultation

**Lowering the age range of
Withymoor Primary School
- Dudley**

MARCH 2024

**Gayfield Ave,
Brierley Hill
DY5 2BH**

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Introduction

The Trustees of Withymoor Primary School are consulting on its proposal to lower the age range of Withymoor Primary School, Dudley from 3 to 11 years to 2 to 11 years, to provide child care to more parents from September 2024.

This document outlines the consultation process and timescales for lowering the school age to offer more childcare for working families and invites you to submit your views.

Background

Withymoor Primary School is a two-form entry primary school in Dudley. The school is a thriving successful school rated 'Good' by Ofsted in 2018.

The Trustees of Withymoor Primary School believe that offering provision from age 2 will benefit the children and families in the local community, through the provision of high-quality affordable childcare and quality education for children from 2 years to 11 years, enabling families to use their Government Funded Early Education childcare entitlement at one setting.

The proposal

The Trustees of Withymoor Primary School are proposing to lower the age range of Withymoor Primary School from 3 years to 11 years, to 2 years to 11 years. The Trustees have followed the DfE guidance by consulting with Dudley Local Authority before making this proposal – they support our application to offer child care to 2 year olds.

Why are we proposing to change the age range of Withymoor Primary School?

In April 2024 the Government are supporting parents to return to work by supporting the cost of child care. We recognise there may be an increased demand from parents for places for children aged 2 – not just age 3 as it currently the case.

The nursery and reception class will operate as a combined Foundation Stage Unit. This will also allow children to progress in line with their developmental age rather than chronological age, by providing fluidity between the nursery class and reception class

and enable our educationalists to deliver high quality early years and primary education, covering a rich and varied curriculum, from 2 years to 11 years – something that we do very well.

Our Vision

Through lowering the school age we will achieve our vision to be the ‘primary and nursery school of choice for our local community’.

We aim to give children of all abilities every opportunity to develop their academic, social, emotional, spiritual, and physical aspects of learning. We will combine our outdoor resources, including our forest school area and playing fields, strong community links and rich and broad curriculum to develop confident, motivated, and responsible children who will be prepared for secondary school and make a positive contribution to society and their local community.

We appreciate local families, with and without children, our neighbours, local residents, and local early years providers will have a number of questions. To help answer some of your initial queries the Trustees, Head Teacher and Early Years Leader have compiled a list of Frequently Asked Questions (see below).

Why are we consulting now?

Following Government changes to free child care for working parents starting April 2024 the Trustees are following the consultation process outlined in 'Making significant changes ('prescribed alterations') to an open academy (January 2022)', in association with the Local Authority, to lower the school age range to enable the delivery of nursery provision to 2 year olds within the school.

Changes to the DfE/Ofsted Regulations enabling schools to include provision for 2 year olds will ensure that the nursery provision will be included within the school's inspection process.

Will the Proposal have any impact on the school's admission arrangements?

Currently we offer 60 reception places each year for local children. There are no planned changes to the Published Admission Number (PAN) of 60 reception places.

The capacity in the school from reception to year 6 is not impacted by this consultation.

Parents of children applying for a reception place would need to apply in the normal way for admission to the primary school whether their child attends the nursery provision or not. By attracting local families to the nursery class, we hope that the majority of families will be successful should they choose to apply to reception class at Withymoor Primary School.

Buildings

Withymoor Primary School is fortunate that it has a self contained nursery unit. Therefore, these proposals will not require additional building work.

Consultations, approvals and overall timescales

It is proposed that the age range of the school changes from 1 September 2024. The proposed changes require a period of consultation.

This consultation on the proposal to lower the school age, is taking place between 11th March 2024 to 19th April 2024. During this period the Trustees will share its proposals with the wider professional network, local schools, local community, partner agencies, and the staff and parents of the school.

This will provide an opportunity for consultees to make their views known before a final decision is taken. Following the consultation period, the Trustees will apply to the West Midlands Regional Director to make a significant change to the school's age range, taking into account the consultation responses.

The decision will be published on the Trust and school website as soon as it has been finalised.

Have your say

The Trustees of Withymoor Primary School would like to know what key stakeholders feel about the proposal to lower the school age range to 2-11 years. The consultation will open on 11th March 2024 for four weeks.

You can respond by:

a) Accessing the consultation online on the school's website:

www.Withymoor.dudley.sch.uk

b) Completing the consultation response form that is available alongside this document. You can email the form or print it, complete it and send it back to:

Consultation on Lowering the School Age Range,

Gayfield Ave,

Brierley Hill

DY5 2BH

or Email: info@Withymoor.dudley.sch.uk with the subject:

FAO Withymoor Primary Consultation on Lowering the School Age Range.

All responses must be received by 19th April 2024

What happens next

We will hold a public meeting for parents and any other interested parties to discuss the proposal and to hear the views that people have.

As a public meeting, anyone who wishes to may attend. The event will be held on the 18th March at 15.30 in the school hall at Withymoore Primary School, there will be a short presentation followed by questions and answers.

Please join to share your views and ask questions.

Consultation response form

(Also available online at <https://www.withymoor.dudley.sch.uk>)

Proposal to lower the age range of Withymoor Primary School, Dudley from 3 to 11 years to 2 to 11 years, from September 2024, to ensure the school meets the needs of local working families.

Name

Relationship with the school e.g. parent, local business:

.....

1. I SUPPORT the proposal to lower the age range of Withymoor Primary School from 3 to 11 years to 2 to 11 years from September 2024.

OR

2. I DO NOT SUPPORT the proposal to lower the age range of Withymoor Primary School from 3 to 11 years to 2 to 11 years from September 2024.
- 3.

My reasons are:

.....

Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

1. What are your opening hours?

Our core hours are 08:30 to 15:30 Monday to Friday.

Morning sessions are from 8:30 to 11:30 and afternoon sessions are 12:30 to 15:30.

2. Do you provide places for children in receipt of 15 and 30 hours Funded Early Education entitlement?

Yes, we offer places to children in receipt of 30 and 15 Funded Early Education (FEE and FEET) hours. All 3 and 4 year olds are eligible for 15h FEE, some 3 and 4 year olds are eligible for 30h FEE, and some 2 year olds are eligible for 15 hours FEET.

3. When can FEE or FEET funded hours be used?

15 hours places must be taken either as mornings or afternoons (8:30 – 11:30 or 12:30 – 15:30) Monday to Friday, during term time only (38 weeks per year). 30 hours must be taken as full time places.

4. Do I pay for lunch?

If a child has a 30-hour place, parents are required to provide a packed lunch. An additional charge of £4 per child per day is payable to cover staff costs over the lunchtime period.

5. Can addition hours above FEE or FEET funded hours be purchased and if so, how much does it cost?

Yes, after using 15 hours during core hours, you may book, subject to availability, additional core hours at £5.00 per hour. Please notify us of the additional hours you require when registering your child, and we will try our best to accommodate your needs. You may book occasional ad-hoc additional hours, subject to availability.

6. What other fees are charged if my child is eligible for FEE or FEET?

There are no additional childcare charges for FEE and FEET funded places other than the £4 per day lunchtime charge detailed above and, unlike some nurseries, we do not usually charge for enrichment activities such as activities in our forest school, art, music and sport as we consider these to be part of our Early Years Curriculum offer.

Additional chargeable items are: lunchtime child care and off-site trips.

Additional hours in addition to a 15 core hours place, subject to availability, are charged at £5.00 per hour.

We also ask for a donation of £1 per week per child to cover the cost of snacks.

7. What entrances will be used? Can we come onto site to drop off within setting?

The usual nursery entrance will be used during school hours to pick up or drop off a child. This is segregated from the school site.

8. Can you book term-time only or all year round?

We run term time only (38 weeks). There are 5 days during the school year allocated to be INSET (Teacher Training Days) and school and nursery are closed for 1 day, usually in May, for local elections.

9. Does the Nursery open on Bank Holidays?

No, we close for Statutory bank holidays each year.

10. If we attend the nursery, do we have to go to the school?

Although we hope that you will want your child to continue their education at Withymoor Primary School there is no requirement for you to apply to Reception class at Withymoor Primary School.

11. If we attend the nursery, do we get a priority place for the school?

No. Currently no mainstream school in England can offer priority places to children attending a school-attached nursery. All parents wishing their child to join the school in Reception class will need to apply in line with the school's admission arrangements detailed on our website each year. However, children in the Foundation Stage Unit will

be able to move between the Reception class and nursery class as determined by their developmental stage, even if they will not be joining Reception class or did not attend the nursery class.

12. What areas of the school will the children have access to?

All areas including the playgrounds, fields, and forest school.

13. Will the nursery children mix with older children and their siblings?

The nursery children will integrate with Reception classes and, occasionally, with our older year groups, e.g. for sports day and carols at Christmas. Nursery and Reception outdoor play areas are separate but near each other to ease transition.

14. Will there be a teacher in the nursery?

The nursery class will be run by a qualified Early Years practitioner, and the whole Foundation Stage will be overseen by our Early Years Lead who is a qualified teacher.

15. What qualifications do staff have?

Early Years Lead: QTS (Qualified Teacher Status) Level 6

Nursery Manager: B.A. Hons in Early Years and Education Level 6

Nursery Staff: NVQ3 and Foundation Stage Degrees in Early Years Level 5

16. How do you recruit? Do you allow students?

We advertise vacancies locally and through WM Jobs. We recruit in line with our Safer Recruitment Policy to ensure safeguarding of our children (please see our website for details). As a teacher training school, we welcome student teachers seeking experience in the early years, in addition to our regular staff.

17. Do you have qualified first aiders?

Yes, staff hold Pediatric Level 3 First Aid Qualification

18. What food will be provided? Will meals be taken in the main school or within the nursery?

30 hour placed children will eat their packed lunches in the nursery room and sometimes outside in summer term.

Healthy snacks of milk, water, toast, crumpets and fruit will be provided - we ask for a £1 per week donation for this.

19. Will the children be expected to wear school uniform? What does my child need to wear?

Yes, nursery children wear our Withymoore Primary School uniform. This is to provide all children with a sense of belonging. Children need to wear appropriate, comfortable footwear and will need wellies kept onsite for some outdoor activities and to access the outdoor learning environment.

20. What else do I need to provide for my child?

Nappies (if needed), sunhat, sun lotion, waterproofs, spare clothes, wellies and packed lunch (if 30 hours). We also ask that children have a PE kit in line with our school policy.

21. How will you help my child with toilet training?

We will work alongside you to help your child with toilet training, and have a child-size toilet, and a nappy changing area in the main school care room.

22. Will my child be able to have a daytime sleep?

Yes, we make sure there is time in the session for children to have some quiet time and if required they can use one of the sleep mats. All staff have been trained to understand Safer Sleeping Practices.

23. Will it be free flow to an outdoor area?

Yes, the nursery has an outdoor play area and free-flow access will be available each day. We encourage outdoor learning and your child will be able to move freely between the inside and outside learning environment throughout all seasons.