



Consultation on extending the school age range at Byley Primary School to include provision for three-year-old children.

The current position

Byley Primary School currently provides education for children from 4-11 years. We are a fully inclusive school, valuing and respecting everyone equally.

We have been aware for some time that many of our children access mixed nursery education from a variety of providers. However, until now, we have been unable to offer to fill this gap for the community. With a great deal of consideration and a change to the structure of classes, we will be able to incorporate provision for 3-year-old children in a high quality Early Years and Foundation Stage setting.

The purpose of this document is to propose changes to the age range at the school. The school propose to lower the age range by 1 year, this being to accommodate children aged 3-4 years. The governing board of the school needs to consult on the proposed changes in line with DfE guidance and wishes to receive the views and comments of all stakeholders involved with our school. The consultation period will run for 4 weeks from:

6th June 2016 – 4th July 2016

The proposal

It is proposed to lower the age range of children admitted to Byley Primary School from 4-11 to 3-11. We propose that 12 places would be available for 3-year-old children; in line with Universal free entitlement (currently this is 15 hours per week).

The children would be taught in a mixed class with Reception children (4 Years of age), located in a large, airy classroom with direct access to outdoor learning opportunities.

The unit would be led by a full-time teacher and when numbers grow, support staff.

We believe that providing care and education at the earliest opportunity is fundamental to our Community and the holistic ethos of our school. It is recognised that the earliest years of a child's life have the most significant impact on his or her long-term development, better outcomes and lifestyle choices. These are formative years physiologically, cognitively, socially and emotionally.

The benefits

- Our small size allows us to provide individualised support for all children's social, emotional, spiritual and academic development within a caring, nurturing setting led by specialist staff
- Home visits will take place earlier, meaning that there is the opportunity to build positive relationships that impact on the children learning from an earlier age
- The children would benefit from experiencing early educational activities to support their learning and development, as part of a wider school curriculum and led by a qualified teacher
- Research has shown that where schools provide Early Years education, pupils make rapid progress as they move between the early stages of learning. School staff are able to share their expertise between Early Years and Key Stage 1 and this is critical to consistent progress
- Where children go on to attend the school, the transition would be a smooth and effective process allowing the children to settle more quickly. It would provide continuity of education and provision through a single leadership team and governing board
- It would support parents/carers in finding high quality, flexible child care in the local area and offer a wider parental choice
- A wider range of resources and expertise could be shared across the age range of the school. This wider flexibility can be particularly useful for children with special educational needs or vulnerabilities
- It would provide opportunity for children to attend provision on the same site as their older siblings. This should impact positively on parents' time and logistics of using different child care providers

It is hoped that these arrangements will be in place ready for September 2016. This would depend on the formal process to be followed.

How to make your views known

We are currently consulting on the proposal outlined above and would be happy to receive your comments by email to: head@byley.cheshire.sch.uk or by letter.

The governing board will consider all comments received during the consultation period.

All comments must be received by 9:00am on 4th July 2016

Questions and Answers

The Governing Board of Byley Primary School is proposing to formally lower the age range of school from 4–11 years to 3–11 years to facilitate Early Years provision for 3-4 year olds. We would like to know the views of parents and other interested members of the community.

Why are the Governors making these proposals?

All 3 and 4 year olds are entitled to 15 hours per week of free Early Years Foundation Stage education from the beginning of the school term following their 3rd birthday until compulsory school age. This free entitlement can be taken in a maintained school nursery, a 'foundation stage' class and/or an Ofsted registered private and voluntary sector setting. It is parental choice as to which type of provision is most appropriate and most convenient for their child.

From the Department for Education publication: Early Education and Childcare:

Key priorities-

All 3 year olds are able to access their entitlement to 15 hours of universal funded Early Years education in a high quality setting. Evidence shows that children receiving quality Early Years education, significantly improves developmental outcomes and educational attainment.

What would this provision look like?

Byley Primary School is proposing to provide places for 3-4 year olds as an extension of current infant class provision. Early Years staff would work together to provide an excellent environment for young learners' development. The class would have a qualified and experienced teacher to support the learning and development of the 3 and 4 year olds.

It would be very similar to what is currently available to existing Reception children in school. There would be high quality play-based provision including role-play, sand, water, construction, reading, mark-making and outside play. There will be free-flow between areas, including outside, offering children the choice of activities and allowing them to engage in learning which is relevant and appropriate to their stage of development. They will be supported by knowledgeable and appropriately trained adults.

All staff are knowledgeable about age appropriate development and characteristics of effective learning for 3 year olds, and also have a clear understanding of expectations and tracking processes of attainment for 3 and 4-year-old children.

Parents and carers will be successfully engaged in their children's learning at school allowing for a seamless transition to the Reception class.

All 3 year olds are entitled to 15 hours per week of free Early Years Foundation Stage education from the beginning of the school term following their 3rd birthday until compulsory school age. We wish to provide the opportunity to take up the free entitlement with the option for additional paid hours in a maintained school and nursery setting.

How many places will be offered?

The school will provide up to 12 places. This could be arranged flexibly depending upon the needs of the family and current legislation.

Which children would be eligible for a place?

Priority for admission will be determined by the admission policy of the school.

How will the new mixed class affect other providers?

The extended provision would take children aged 3-4 years old. Our school has links with other local pre-school providers. They are being consulted and have the opportunity to make their views on the proposal known.

Why is this consultation taking place?

Currently the youngest children that the school can admit are in the Reception class. In order to take younger children into school, legal processes must be followed to lower the age range for the school from 4-11 year olds to 3-11 year olds. The first step in this process is that local people must be asked for their views.

What will happen next?

This is the first step of the consultation. Comments on this consultation will be considered by the Governing Board which will then decide whether to proceed with the proposal.

Addendum:

Following the recent change in Statutory Guidance, if the GB decide on a trial increase the admission of children will be implemented in September 2016, if the GB decide to request a permanent increase the LA will start to implement the prescribed process in September 2016 with a view to implementing admissions from January 2017 if the decision is in favour of a permanent

If these proposals go ahead, when will the new class open?

It is proposed that the first children will join the school in September 2016.

Addendum:

Following the recent change in Statutory Guidance described above the new class would open in September 2016 if the Governing Body decision is to proceed on a trial basis; and in January 2017 if a Governing Body request to make a permanent increase is approved by the LA.

How do I make my views known?

Your views are important and we would value your opinions. You can send your comments by email to head@byley.primary.sch.uk or by letter.

Comments should be returned by 9:00am on 4th July 2016

If you have any further queries, these should be addressed to Mrs K Walsh (Head teacher).

Consultation Process Timescale:

Process:	Date:
Publication of consultation	6 th June 2016
Consultation Process	6 th June – 4 th July
Analysis of responses	5 th and 6 th July
Decision communicated	8 th July
Meeting for Parents	July 2016
Final implementation of proposals	September 2016

Addendum:

Following the recent change in Statutory Guidance, if the GB decide on a trial increase the admission of children will be implemented in September 2016, if the GB decide to request a permanent increase the LA will start to implement the prescribed process in September 2016 with a view to implementing admissions from January 2017 if the decision is in favour of a permanent increase.