

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND LIFELONG LEARNING****DATE:** 28 November 2023**REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER:** CLARE CURRAN, CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND LIFELONG LEARNING**LEAD OFFICER:** RACHAEL WARDELL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND LIFELONG LEARNING**SUBJECT:** Proposal to lower the age range of Hurst Green Infant School and Nursery**ORGANISATION STRATEGY PRIORITY AREA:** Empowered and Thriving Communities**Purpose of the Report:**

The Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Lifelong Learning is asked to review the educational rationale for the proposal to lower the age range at Hurst Green Infant School and Nursery from 3 to 7 years old to 2 to 7 years old.

Hurst Green Infant School and Nursery is a one form entry infant school in Oxted. The school is a community school and has a good Ofsted rating.

This would mean that the current nursery provision for 2 year olds led by the Governing Body would become a maintained nursery managed by the school, under the same Ofsted registration as the school.

This piece of work helps Surrey County Council meet empowered and thriving communities and no one left behind because the project to expand the age range of Hurst Green Infant School meets the need for early years provision within the Tandridge district.

This proposal requires Surrey County Council to follow the statutory process for making significant changes ('Prescribed Alterations') to a maintained school because the proposal is for a change in age range in a community school.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that The Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Lifelong Learning:

1. Determines the Statutory Notices approving the proposal without modifications to lower the age range a Hurst Green Infant School and Nursery

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The nursery is currently meeting a need identified through the Surrey County Council Childcare Sufficiency assessment. The proposed change will incorporate the current nursery provision as part of the maintained school. This will enable the school to build on and strengthen the arrangements already in place and provide a joined-up approach for all children from 2 to 7 years old.

As nursery children will be on roll as part of the whole school, the systems and processes will be streamlined, enabling the school to deploy our resources across the nursery and school to ensure that every child realises their potential.

Executive Summary:

1. Hurst Green Infant School and Nursery is a one form entry infant school in the borough of Tandridge, rated good by Ofsted in 2022. The school currently also offers childcare for 2 year olds under section 27 of the Education Act 2002 which enables Governing bodies of maintained schools to set up and run facilities and services whose provision furthers any charitable purpose for the benefit of (a) pupils at the school or their families, or (b) people who live and work in the area in which the school is situated.

The Proposal:

2. To lower the age range of Hurst Green Infant School and Nursery from 3 to 7 years old to 2 to 7 years old.
3. Surrey County Council and the Governing Body of Hurst Green Infant School and Nursery are proposing to lower the age range of Hurst Green Infant School and Nursery Primary School in Oxted from 3 to 7 years of age to 2 to 7 years of age.
4. As the nursery is now an integral part of the community, lowering the school age supports more efficient governance and operational

functions and means the nursery children become pupils of the school. This continues to support the government's policy on providing 15 and 30 hours Funded Early Education for 2, 3 and 4 year olds.

5. Lowering the school age to incorporate the current nursery provision as part of the maintained school, will enable the school to build on and strengthen the arrangements already in place and provide a joined-up approach to achieving our vision for all children from 2 to 7 years old. As nursery children will be on roll as part of the whole school, the systems and processes will be streamlined, enabling the school to deploy our resources across the nursery and school to ensure that every child realises their potential.
6. This proposal requires Surrey County Council to follow the statutory process "Making significant changes ('prescribed alterations') to maintained schools" because the proposal is for a change in age range in a community school.

Planned admissions arrangements

7. There are no planned changes to the Published Admission Number (PAN) of 30 reception places.
8. There are no planned changes to the admissions arrangements to gain a reception place at Hurst Green Infant School and Nursery. There will be no automatic right for nursery aged children at the school to gain a reception place at the school.
9. There are currently 4 part-time places for 2 year olds offered at the section 27 nursery at Hurst Green Infant School and Nursery. There is no change to how parents apply for a nursery place and information can be found on the school's website [Hurst Green Infant School & Nursery \(hurstgreenschool.org\)](http://hurstgreenschool.org). Children who currently attend the nursery at the school will continue to attend the same setting with the same staff and do not need to reapply for a place under the new registration.
10. The capacity in the school from year R to year 2 is not impacted by this consultation. The permanent capacity of the school from year R to year 2 is 90.
11. The admissions criteria for community and voluntary controlled schools, along with other individual schools admissions criteria, in Surrey are published each year in the [schools admissions booklets](#). Hurst Green Infant School and Nursery can be found in the Primary School Booklet for Tandridge primary schools. Parents of children applying for a reception place would need to apply in the normal way

for admission to the infant school whether their child attends the nursery provision or not.

Consultation:

12. The statutory process for making significant changes ('Prescribed Alterations') requires an informal period of consultation followed by the publication of statutory notices for 4 weeks during term time. The following people have been made aware of the proposals: parents/carers of children attending the school or nursery; employees and Governors of the school; relevant 7 unions; local residents; other users of the school building; other local schools; local borough and county councillors and the School Admissions Forum.
13. Surrey County Council published an informal consultation on www.surreysays.co.uk from 19 June 2023 to 17 July 2023. An online public meeting was offered on 28 June at 4 pm but there were no requests to attend. 1 person responded to the consultation. 1 (100%) respondent agreed with the proposal and 0 (0%) respondent disagreed with the proposal.
14. Statutory notices were published on www.surreysays.co.uk from 11 Sep to 9 Oct 2023. The long statutory notice is attached as **Annex 1**. The notice was published in the local paper on 14 September 2023.
15. The full consultation analysis report is attached as **Annex 2**.

Risk Management and Implications:

16. There are no identified risks and implications.

Financial and Value for Money Implications:

17. There is no capital cost relating to this proposal.
18. Hurst Green Infant School and Nursery will receive revenue funding where pupils are eligible for Funded Early Education and Childcare for 3 to 4 year olds or Funded Early Education for 2 year olds (FEET). The number of places is not increasing from the current nursery on site at the school so the revenue funding will not change.

Section 151 Officer commentary:

19. Significant progress has been made in recent years to improve the Council's financial resilience and the financial management capabilities across the organisation. Whilst this has built a stronger financial base from which to deliver our services, the increased cost of living, global financial uncertainty, high inflation and government policy changes mean we continue to face challenges to our financial position. This requires an increased focus on financial management to protect service delivery, a continuation of the need to be forward looking in the medium term, as well as the delivery of the efficiencies to achieve a balanced budget position each year.
20. In addition to these immediate challenges, the medium-term financial outlook beyond 2023/24 remains uncertain. With no clarity on central government funding in the medium term, our working assumption is that financial resources will continue to be constrained, as they have been for the majority of the past decade. This places an onus on the Council to continue to consider issues of financial sustainability as a priority, in order to ensure the stable provision of services in the medium term.
21. As such, the Section 151 Officer supports the recommendations of this report.

Legal implications – Monitoring Officer:

22. Section 27 of the Education Act 2002 enables the governing body of a maintained school to provide any facilities or services whose provision furthers any charitable purpose for the benefit of pupils at the school or their families, or people who live or work in the locality in which the school is situated. This includes provision of a nursery setting within the school.
23. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 and The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) Regulations 2013 set out the statutory process that must be followed by the proposer and the decision maker. In this case, the school is a community school and consequently the local authority is both proposer and decision maker. The statutory process has been correctly followed.
24. The local authority has carried out a consultation on the proposal which is in accordance with statutory requirements. Such consultation involved those directly affected by the changes together with relevant representative groups.
25. In considering this Report, the Cabinet Member must give due regard to the results of the consultation as set out in the Annexes attached and the response of the Service to the consultation comments and

conscientiously take these matters into account when making its final decision.

Equalities and diversity:

26. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed and no modifications to the proposal have been identified. The EIA is attached as **Annex 3**.

Other implications:

27. The potential implications for the following Council priorities and policy areas have been considered. Where the impact is potentially significant a summary of the issues is set out in detail below.

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	The proposals would sustain early years provision for pupils in Oxted, thereby ensuring that those who are Looked After are closer to home, more connected to local communities and support services.
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	Safeguarding vulnerable children is a high priority in all Surrey schools. Schools have considerable expertise in safeguarding vulnerable children and adhere to robust procedures. The school will continue to apply good practise in the area of safeguarding as they do currently. In addition, safeguarding is a key area for monitoring when Ofsted carries out inspections.
Environmental sustainability	The nursery becoming part of the school will be a sustainable offer that meets the need for places outlined in the childcare sufficiency assessment. Availability of early years

	childcare particularly free early education places reduces travel in the area and supports working parents.
Compliance against net-zero emissions target and future climate compatibility/resilience	No implications
Public Health	The nursery becoming part of the school will be a sustainable offer that meets the need for places outlined in the childcare sufficiency assessment. The nursery will continue to offer 15 hrs and 30 hrs funded places for 3 and 4 year olds and additional funded places for eligible 2 year olds. Availability of early years childcare particularly free early education places promotes health and wellbeing for children and their families. Funded Early Education for 2 year olds for FEET offers 15 hours of free childcare support earlier for eligible families

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

28. Subject to the Cabinet Member determining the statutory notices Surrey County Council and the Governing Body of Hurst Green Infant School and Nursery will proceed to implement the proposal and lower the age range of the school from 1st January 2024.

Contact Officer:

Mike Singleton, Service Manager Education Place Planning

Consulted:

Headteacher of Hurst Green Infant School and Nursery
 Governing body and staff members of the schools
 Cllr Clare Curran, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Lifelong Learning

Rachael Wardell, Executive Director for Children, Families and Lifelong Learning
Liz Mills, Director Education and Learning
Carrie Trail, Head of Education

Annexes:

ANNEX 1 Statutory Notice (Long version)
ANNEX 2 Consultation Analysis Summary Report
ANNEX 3 Equality Impact Assessment