



Cabinet report

Date	16 DECEMBER 2021
Title	LOWERING OF AGE RANGE AT HUNNYHILL PRIMARY SCHOOL
Report of	CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES, EDUCATION AND LIFELONG SKILLS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The purpose of this paper is to report the outcome of the public consultation and seek authority from Cabinet to approve the lowering of the age range to three years old at Hunnyhill Primary School with effect from 1 January 2022.
2. A consultation process has been undertaken (in line with the Department for Education's publication "Making Significant Changes ("prescribed alterations") to Maintained Schools) for six weeks (as set out in the regulations) between 28 September and 9 November 2021
3. No representations were received in response to the consultation.

RECOMMENDATION

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| 4. That Cabinet approves the lowering of the age range to three years old at Hunnyhill Primary School with effect from 1 January 2022. |
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BACKGROUND

5. Hunnyhill Primary School applied to lower their age range from four years old to three years old to facilitate a preschool provision on their school site. The proposal is to open a preschool with 32 children aged 3-4. An existing Pre-School on the site, Jigsaw Preschool, is closing and the proposal is for staff to TUPE across to the school. The director of the pre-school and parents support this application to transfer all management, administration, and governance to the school. The aim is to ensure continuity of care for those children already attending and to keep an onsite pre-school for the community.
6. Jigsaw Pre-school is a private limited company providing 32 childcare places. There are five staff employed. The preschool currently receives government funding for free early years education for children aged two, three and four

years. The preschool is sited on Hunnyhill Primary School grounds connected to the main building of the school.

7. The current capacity of Hunnyhill Primary School is 420 and will be unaffected by the proposal. The current number of pupils registered at the school is 381. The current admission number for the school is 60 and is not affected by the school taking on the preschool which will be a separate capacity of 32 on the implementation of this proposal.
8. Hunnyhill Primary School was judged Good in April 2013, which was supported by a short inspection undertaken in April 2017.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

9. The proposal from Hunnyhill Primary school to lower its age range to three years allows for the continuity of care and, early years education of the children currently at the preschool.
10. This directly links to the Corporate Plan 2021-25 priority which is to work with local communities to maintain and ensure appropriate local school provision. In addition to this it supports the commitment that through ongoing business of the council we will work with and challenge schools performance to ensure that all are good or outstanding, and to ensure work is undertaken to challenge schools in financial deficit to secure a more sustainable position for the schools and the council.

CONSULTATION

11. The Public Notice was published on the 28 September and the consultation period ran until the 9 November 2021. The notice was published on the iwight.com and information was shared by the school to all parents/carers.
12. The consultation also appeared in the County Press and Observer Friday 1 October 2021 to allow other stakeholders to comment on the proposal.
13. A public meeting was held at the school on the 1 November 2021 and no one attended. It is felt that the school has provided sufficient information for all parents/carers in advance of this and therefore no concerns or queries were to be raised.
14. No representations have been received by the Isle of Wight Council, Governing Board or other stakeholders in response to these consultations.
15. All school and preschool staff have been consulted and are in agreement with the proposal.

FINANCIAL / BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

16. The school finance officer has assessed the financial position with the school and governors. The report shows it to be in balance for at least the next three years. This indicates the sustainability of the proposal assuming the number of children planned for will be forthcoming.
17. The school has undertaken its own due diligence and understands that the preschool children finances can only be met from early years education claims and parental fee income.
18. Five members of staff will be transferred from the pre-school to the direct management of the school. The Terms and Conditions of work will change according to the Hay Grade pay scale which will be in line with the support staff at the school. This will result in an increased cost in staffing.
19. The Early Years Advisory Team will continue to support the Head Teacher on financial projections to ensure such developments do not have a financially detrimental impact on the running of the school.
20. There will be no direct financial implications for the Local Authority as maintained schools have devolved individual funding and are required to manage their own overall financial position within their allocated resources.

IMPACT ON YOUNG PEOPLE AND FUTURE GENERATIONS

21. This proposal will have a positive impact on both the short- and long-term future for the young people, and future generations on the Isle of Wight. Children on roll of the preschool will continue to receive a place at the provision should the proposal be approved, ensuring the continuity of care.

CLIMATE, ENVIRONMENT & UNESCO BIOSPHERE IMPACT

22. Subject to the availability of funding heat decarbonisation plans will be commissioned in the near future for all LA owned school buildings. This will assist us in the submission of applications for future funding and ultimately to support the IWCs target to be carbon neutral by 2035.
23. The preschool opening hours are not intended to be changed, and therefore as a result of the proposal it is not likely to have an impact on the building emissions. The school do however regularly promote active travel to school which will continue to support the reduction of emissions created from transporting children to school by car.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

24. The Head Teacher has been required to undertake their own due diligence in review of the preschool and has taken IOW legal, finance and HR advice.

25. The Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment rights for the five staff transferring from the preschool to the direct management of the School. School has sought HR/legal support for this.
26. The five staff members Terms and Conditions of work will change according to the Hay Grade pay scale and will be in line with the support staff at the school.
27. Changes to maintained schools are considered 'prescribed alterations', which require a specific statutory process to be followed for their correct implementation. This process has been followed and is set out in the statutory guidance 'Making significant changes ('prescribed alterations') to maintained schools updates in October 2018. The specific prescribed alteration proposed by this report is a change of age range by one year which is a change that can be proposed by a Local Authority in respect of a community school and must have a period of at least four weeks' formal consultation after the publication of a statutory proposal/notice before a decision can be made.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

28. The council as a public body is required to meet its statutory obligations under the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equal opportunities between people from different groups and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or believe, sex and sexual orientation.
29. The recommendations being proposed by the Council in this report; the lowering of the age range at Hunnyhill Primary School will not have a negative impact on equality and diversity.
30. The policies of the council and Hunnyhill Primary School in relation to equal opportunities and eliminating discrimination will continue to apply should the proposed change be approved.
31. An equality impact assessment has been completed and is attached in Appendix 1

RISK MANAGEMENT

32. TUPE is considered a risk due the amendment of existing preschools staff's terms and conditions. However as these will be on Hay Grade pay scale and will be in line with the support staff at the school it is considered to be more advantageous to them.
33. The financial risks have been reviewed by the Senior Finance Business Partner and are seen as negligible. However, it should be noted that the financial risks have been determined on models of 50 percent occupancy and 85 percent

occupancy. A decrease in the number of children in the area due to birth rates and/or a change in parental demand could have an effect on the pre-school. The LA will continue to support the pre-school to ensure the business model remains sustainable.

PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

34. The current preschool space is sufficient for the proposed pupil numbers under the Statutory Framework for the early years foundation stage 2021. There are sufficient toilets and the environment is secure. It has access to an outdoor area and the available space in all areas is maximised for play and active learning.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – EIA – Hunnyhill Primary School

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