



Derwent Lower School

Headteacher:
Mr James Adkins, BA, MSc, NPQH

Hitchin Road
Henlow
Bedfordshire
SG16 6BA

Tel: 01462 812047
Fax: 01462 817364

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Consultation on change of age range to allow for spaces for Under 4's at Derwent Lower School from September 2017

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to discuss proposed changes to the provision at Derwent Lower School for under 4's, which requires a lowering of the school's age range by 2 years. The Governing Body of the School has decided that it should consult on the proposed changes in line with legal requirements, and wishes to receive the views and comments of all stakeholders in the school.

The consultation period will run for 4 weeks from Tuesday 1st November to Wednesday 30th November 2016. The Governing Body of the school will consider all comments received during the consultation period. We are consulting with all relevant stakeholders as required by law when making changes to school age range arrangements.

What change is being proposed?

Currently Derwent does not have a pre-school provision. From Sept 2017, we are proposing lowering our school's age range by 2 years, to enable us to take a maximum of 26 additional children after their 3rd birthday (known as "rising-4s"). Once we have a pre-school successfully running, we may wish to explore opening a nursery provision for children aged 2 and over. This change would ultimately make the school's age range 2-9 years rather than the current 4-9 years.

Why is the school making this change?

This proposed change is partly in response to parent request. At present, we have families who have children at Derwent but have younger siblings in a range of other pre-school provisions. We know that this creates problems for parents in needing to be in "two places at once". We feel we are now able to help parents in this position.

The key benefits of this proposal include:

- A reduction of transfer points from school to school in our children's learning journey in line with Central Bedfordshire Council's ambition "to achieve a single phase of education 0-19 and reduce school transfer points". This will lead to improved learning outcomes for children at Derwent.
- An easier transition into statutory school for children as the familiarity with Derwent will reduce anxiety.
- One team of qualified staff working closely together across the age range throughout the school day, which will improve children's readiness for statutory schooling.
- Fully integrated provision with opportunities for pre-school children to utilise Derwent Lower School facilities such as the playing field, hall, ICT suite, library and sunshine room.
- Quality before/ after school / holiday care provided by Derwent Lower School on the school site to support parents using the pre-school provision.



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Under this proposal, the school's pre-school provision would have a maximum of 26 places available. It is also necessary, in order to meet a Department for Education (DfE) requirement, that all 3 and 4 year olds from the on-site pre-school provision are included in the school census, which is submitted to the DfE. This ensures that the funding for these children comes through the correct route to the school, and requires that the age range of the school be lowered accordingly to include the younger children.

Will the proposed change result in any educational impact on our Reception class pupils or require additional staff?

This proposal will not have any impact upon the classroom space for statutory school age children. As we have a spare classroom ready to convert into the pre-school provision, there will be no need to share classroom space with any other classes. We also have the funds set aside to finance the refurbishment of the room and outside space to meet the needs of this younger age group. Consequently, there will not be any adverse impact on our existing provision.

What will the impact be for providers of nursery provision locally?

There will be very limited impact on other local providers. Given the amount of proposed housing in our locality and the limited numbers of rising-4 pupil places in the area, we are confident that local providers will not be affected by the change in age range at Derwent.

How can you ask questions, get more information & comment on the proposal?

You can attend a meeting regarding this proposed age range change on Thursday 3rd November at 6:30pm in the school hall. Parents with children at the school, as well as any other interested parties, are invited to attend. At this meeting, you will be able to ask any questions and raise any concerns that you may have. Alternatively, you can raise any matters with the Headteacher during the consultation process, which is from Tuesday 1st November to Wednesday 30th November 2016.

If you have any questions, you can contact the school in writing at:

Derwent Lower School,
Hitchin Road
Henlow
Bedfordshire
SG16 6BA

Alternately you can telephone Derwent on 01462 812047 or email derwent@cbc.beds.sch.uk

If you wish to make a formal response to this consultation, then please email Derwent Lower School on the same email address or alternatively write to the school at the address provided above. All responses must be received by 2.00pm on Wednesday 30th November 2016 to be considered by the Governing Body.

James Adkins
Headteacher, Derwent Lower School
October 2016