

Committee: **Lead Members for Children's Services**

Date: **20 April 2015**

Title of the report: **Proposed Change of age range at four primary schools in East Sussex**

By: **Director of Children's Services**

Purpose of Report: **To seek Lead Member approval to lower the age range at four primary schools to enable them to establish nursery provision for two to four year olds on their sites.**

Recommendation:

The Lead Member is recommended to:

1. with effect from 1 May 2015, approve lowering the age range at All Saints CE Primary School, East Hoathly CE Primary School and Polegate School from 4-11 to 2-11; and
 2. with effect from 1 September 2015, approve lowering the age range at St Paul's CE Primary School from 4-11 to 2-11.
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1. Background:

1.1 All children aged three and four are entitled to be funded for up to 15 hours free early education or childcare per week. In 2013/14 this offer was extended to approximately 20% of two year olds. From 2014/15 this entitlement is being rolled out to around 40% of two year olds. The eligibility criteria mean that the numbers receiving the two year old offer are likely to be skewed towards the more deprived areas of the county.

1.2 The introduction and roll out of the two year old offer means that the numbers of children receiving funding for a free early education and childcare place is rising significantly. This increase is further fuelled by the recent rises in births in the county. The number of funded children is predicted to rise from 9,600 in 2013/14 to approximately 11,300 by 2017/18, an increase of around 19%.

1.3 Information from the Department for Work and Pensions has been used to identify 'hot spot' areas for developing new early year's places. The areas of identified demand (Children's Centre areas) include Sidley, St Leonards and Polegate. Schools with the capacity to expand and offer additional places for 2 year olds were identified in each area and feasibility studies undertaken. All Saints CE Primary School (Sidley), St Paul's CE Primary (St Leonard's) and Polegate (Polegate) were identified as having capacity to expand. A new modular building is being provided at All Saints at a cost of £267,379, St Paul's will have an extension to its main building, costing £508,334 and £40,000 has been spent at Polegate to bring the former Children's Centre into use as a nursery after it was de-designated by Lead Member on 10 September 2014 to deliver places for two to four year olds. East Hoathly CE Primary School is not in an identified 'hot spot' area but is a school whose governing body wishes to lower its age range having taken over the management of the on-site nursery from 1 February 2015.

2. Supporting information:

2.1 On 9 February 2015, the Lead Members for Children's Services approved the publication of statutory notices in relation to a proposal to lower the age range at each of the four schools to enable them to establish nursery provision for two to four year olds on their sites.

2.2 The statutory notices were published on 20 February 2015. The notices were posted on the entrances to each school and published in The Eastbourne Herald (Polegate), the Sussex Express (East Hoathly) and the Bexhill and Hastings Observer* (All Saints and St Paul's). The notices and full proposals were also posted on the Council's website.

* Due to a printing error the notices were published in the wrong edition of the Observer on 20 February 2015. The notices were published in the correct edition on 27 February 2015.

2.3 Publication of each notice was followed by a four-week period of representation, when comments or objections could be made to the Council. At the end of the representation period, no comments or objections had been received.

2.4 Prior to the publication of notices, each governing body undertook a period of consultation on a proposal to lower their age range from 4-11 to 2-11 to enable them to establish nursery provision for two to four year olds on their school sites. The findings of each consultation are summarised below.

- All Saints CE Primary School received no responses to their consultation.
- East Hoathly CE Primary School received 22 responses, all of which supported the proposal.
- Polegate School received 9 responses, all of which supported the proposal.
- St Paul's CE Primary School received 6 responses, of which 4 supported the proposal. The main concerns raised were around parking and the potential impact on one local Early Years provider.

3. Factors to be considered by the decision maker and types of decision

3.1 Proposed changes to the organisation of maintained schools have to follow a prescribed process established by the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013. The process set out above complies with these requirements.

3.2 The regulations set out a number of factors which the Lead Members for Children's Services should have regard to before making a final decision on the proposed changes. These are set out in **Appendix A**.

4. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

4.1 In conclusion, lowering of the age range at the four primary schools will enable each school to establish early years provision for two to four year olds on their sites and enable the Council to meet its statutory requirement to ensure a sufficient supply of early years places in areas of identified demand.

4.2 For this reason, the Lead Member is recommended to:

- with effect from 1 May 2015, approve lowering the age range at All Saints CE Primary School, East Hoathly CE Primary School and Polegate School from 4-11 to 2-11; and
- with effect from 1 September 2015, approve lowering the age range at St Paul's CE Primary School from 4-11 to 2-11.

STUART GALLIMORE

Director of Children's Services

Contact Officer: Fiona Wright, Assistant Director Education and ISEND

Local Members: Councillors Michael Ensor, Michael Phillips, Nick Bennett, Stephen Shing, Daniel Shing and Trevor Webb

APPENDIX A: In accordance with the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013, the Lead Members for Children’s Services should have regard to the following factors before reaching a final decision on proposed changes to maintained schools.

1	Did the published notices comply with statutory requirements	The notices complied with statutory requirements as set out in 3.1 of the report.
2	Are the proposals related to other published proposals	The proposals to lower the age range at All Saints Primary School, East Hoathly CE Primary School, St Paul’s CE Primary School and Polegate School are not related to other published proposals.
3	Was consultation carried out prior to the publication of notices	<p>The Governing Body of each school undertook a period of consultation on a proposal to lower their age range from 4-11 to 2-11 to allow them to establish early years provision on their sites for two to four year olds. The findings of each consultation are set out below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Saints CE Primary School, Bexhill. The consultation period ran from 17th November, 2014 to 15th December, 2014. The school consulted with parents, staff, governors, and local nurseries. No responses were received • East Hoathly CE Primary School. The consultation period ran from 6th October, 2014 to 10th November, 2014. The school consulted with parents, staff, governors, local nurseries, parent and toddler groups, local community. In total, 22 responses were received, all of which supported the proposal. No concerns were expressed • Polegate School. The consultation period ran from 3rd November, 2014 to 1st December, 2014. The school consulted with families, governors, staff, local nurseries and pre-schools. In total, 9 responses were received, all of which supported the proposal. Polegate will begin accepting 2, 3 and 4 year olds from the middle of February 2015 as a pilot scheme ahead of a final decision on the formal proposal • St Paul’s CE Primary School, Hastings. The consultation period ran from 3rd November, 2014 to 1st December, 2014. The school consulted with governors, staff, families, local pre-schools and nurseries. In total, 6 responses were received, of which 4 supported the proposal. The main concerns raised were around parking and the potential impact on one local Early Years provider
4	Have any particular comments or objections been raised during the representation period which could directly affect the proposals	No comments or objections were received during the representation period.
5	The effect on education standards and diversity of provision	The Council does not believe the creation of Early Years places at any of the schools will have a negative impact on other providers, schools and academies in the surrounding areas as existing Early Years provision within the area is predicted to be at capacity by the summer term of the 2014/15 academic year. The new provision will enable the Council to meet its statutory duty to provide Early Years places in each area and will help to meet the aspirations of parents, raise local standards and narrow attainment gaps.
6	The demand for places	Information from the Department for Work and Pensions has been used to identify ‘hot spot’ areas for developing new early year’s places. The areas of identified demand (Children’s Centre areas) include Sidley, St Leonards and Polegate. Schools with the capacity to expand and offer additional places for 2 year olds were identified in each area and feasibility studies undertaken. All Saints CE Primary School (Sidley), St Paul’s CE Primary (St Leonard’s) and Polegate (Polegate) were identified as having capacity to expand. A new modular building is being provided at All Saints, St Paul’s will have an extension to its main building and Polegate will use the former Children’s Centre on site after it was de-designated by Lead Member on 10 September 2014 to deliver places for two to four year olds. East Hoathly

		CE Primary School is not in an identified 'hot spot' area but is a school whose governing body wishes to lower its age range having taken over the management of the on-site nursery on 1 February 2015.
7	The impact on school size	The proposals will not affect the size of any of the schools, which will remain at their current capacities.
8	The proposed admission arrangements	The proposals will not affect the admission arrangements of any of the schools, which will remain as published.
9	National curriculum	All four schools will deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage for children aged 2-5 years.
10	Equal opportunities issues	<p>The Council does not believe that there are any sex, race or disability discrimination issues arising from the proposed changes.</p> <p>The proposals will have a positive impact by creating opportunities for children and families to access early years provision within their local area that meets their needs.</p>
11	Community cohesion	The Council believes that the proposals will enhance community cohesion by enabling more local children and their families to access early years provision in areas of identified demand.
12	The impact on travel and accessibility	The proposals will not unreasonably extend journey times as places are being delivered in local areas to meet identified demand.
13	Capital	Capital investment is required at three of the four schools to create early year's provision on site. The costs of each project are: All Saints CE Primary School £267,379, St Paul's CE Primary School £508,334 and Polegate £40,000. Capital funding has been approved from the Expansion of EYEE Places to Eligible 2 Year Olds Capital Expansion Grant to deliver each project.
14	School premises and playing fields	The proposals will not affect the playing fields currently available at each school for physical education in accordance with the school premises regulations.