

Report to: **Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability**

Date: **7 October 2019**

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

Title of report: **School age range change - at Stonegate Church of England Primary School**

Purpose of report: **To seek Lead Member approval to publish statutory notices in respect of a proposal to lower the age range at Stonegate Church of England Primary School to enable the governing body to provide early years provision on the school site.**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Lead Member is recommended to:

- 1) Authorise the publication of statutory notices in respect of a proposal to lower the age range at Stonegate Church of England Primary School from 4-11 to 2-11. The proposal to take effect on 1 September 2020;**
 - 2) Delegate authority to the Director of Children's Services to amend the proposals prior to their publication if required.**
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1 Background

1.1 The governing board of the school wishes to lower its age range from 4-11 to 2-11 to accommodate families who wish to access early years provision on the school site.

1.2 The aim of the proposal is to integrate, fully, a twelve place nursery provision into the Early Years Foundation Stage within the school. The governing board wishes to ensure that the school supports the local area by offering high quality early education delivered by experienced and well-trained staff across the Early Years Foundation Stage. The aim is to build on the work already done by the school to secure good outcomes for all children in the future.

2 Supporting information

2.1 The governing board consulted between 7 June and 5 July 2019 on a proposal to lower the school's age range with effect from 1 September 2020. The governing board consulted with staff, families of children at the school, the local community and other interested parties. As part of the consultation the school also conducted a needs survey.

2.2 By the close of the consultation period six responses had been received, all in support of the proposal. Each respondent provided further comment on the proposal and this can be viewed in **Appendix 1**. A further 16 people responded to the needs survey, indicating a requirement for early years and wraparound childcare provision at the school.

2.3 The proposal to lower the school age-range from 4-11 to 2-11 at Stonegate Church of England Primary School is supported by the Diocese of Chichester.

2.4 The governing board has undertaken thorough financial modelling to ensure the proposal is cost neutral and will not impact on the school budget.

2.5 Proposed changes to the organisation of schools have to follow a prescribed process established by the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013. In view of the positive feedback received during the consultation period it is proposed that a statutory notice is now published with regard to the proposal in accordance with the regulations.

2.6 It is intended to publish the statutory notice in the Sussex Express on Friday 22 November 2019. The notice would also be posted on all entrances to the school on the same day. In addition, the notice and full proposal would be posted on the Council's website. A four week period of representation would follow, giving interested parties a further opportunity to comment on the proposals. The Council has a duty to determine each proposal within two months of the end of the representation period. We anticipate that a decision would be taken at the Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability meeting on 30 January 2020.

3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 In conclusion, we believe the proposal to lower the age range at Stonegate Church of England Primary school will help to build on work already done by the school, ensuring a fully integrated Early Years Foundation Stage to help secure good outcomes for all children.

3.2 The Lead Member is recommended to:

- 1) Authorise the publication of statutory notices in respect of a proposal to lower the age range at Stonegate Church of England Primary School from 4-11 to 2-11. The proposal to take effect on 1 September 2020;
- 2) Delegate authority to the Director of Children's Services to amend the proposals prior to their publication if required.

STUART GALLIMORE
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LOCAL MEMBER
Councillor John Barnes (Rother North West)

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
None

LIST OF APPENDICES
Appendix 1 – Summary of consultation responses

Summary of consultation responses received by the school

Response 1	"I feel certain a provision for children from 2 years would be welcomed in Stonegate. This would make it easier for many parents rather than travelling to nurseries in other villages and help fill the gap left by the closure of Stonegate pre-school some years ago."
Response 2	"I think the school is a great asset to the village of Stonegate and if the village is to thrive it needs new blood in the sense of new families, with children, moving to it. The excellent reputation the school has can only help with families wanting to move here and with the increased age range and the various clubs; the school is doing its bit to help working families raise their children in a safe and pleasant environment."
Response 3	"Excellent idea and will be great for the community."
Response 4	"A necessity for our local primary school in order to maintain numbers. Our village is in need of a nursery since we lost Stonegate pre-school and this would provide excellent on site facilities too. The wrap around care is a fantastic idea to support working families. We fully support the proposal."
Response 5	"I had children at Stonegate School from 2004 to 2010. I think it is a marvellous idea to incorporate nursery provision at the school. It will be fit-for-purpose unlike the hotchpotch at the Village Hall. Not a fan of breakfast club as I believe the start of the day should be family orientated. I like after-school clubs that provide that extra interest and life skills that the curriculum does not accommodate."
Response 6	"There would appear to be plenty of childcare facilities in the area right now, where the service is offered on a full time basis not just term time. Having wrap around care however would be very good. To be able to provide breakfast club and after school care would be a great asset to the school."