

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

Date: **21 June 2023**

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

Title of report: **Proposal to lower the age range at Punnetts Town Community Primary School**

Purpose of report: **To seek Lead Member approval to lower the age range at Punnetts Town Community Primary School to enable the governing board to take over the management and running of the voluntary run early years provision currently on the school site.**

RECOMMENDATION:

The Lead Member is recommended to authorise a change of age range at Punnetts Town Community Primary School from 4 to 11 to 2 to 11 with effect from 1 September 2023.

1. Background

1.1 On 28 March 2023, the Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability (the Lead Member) considered a report on a proposal to lower the age range at Punnetts Town Community Primary School (the school).

1.2 As described in the report, the current voluntary run early years provision, Little Punnetts, has been operating on the site of the school since February 2014. The current Trustees of Little Punnetts can no longer continue to oversee the management and running of the pre-school and have requested the governing board of the school take over the provision. To enable the school to do this the governing board are seeking to lower the school's age range from 4 to 11 to 2 to 11 with effect from 1 September 2023. The East Sussex Early Years Forecasting model is showing a need for early years provision within the village.

1.3 The aim of the proposal is to integrate fully nursery provision into the Early Years Foundation Stage within the school. The governing board wishes to ensure that there will continue to be nursery provision to support the local area and offer high quality early education delivered by experienced and well-trained staff across the Early Years Foundation Stage.

1.4 A consultation was carried out between 10 January and 24 February 2023. By the close of the consultation period, 11 responses had been received. All respondents were fully supportive of the proposal to lower the school's age range from 4 to 11 to 2 to 11 to provide early years provision for children within the village.

1.5 Having considered the feedback from the consultation, the Lead Member approved the publication of a statutory proposal to lower the school's age range with effect from 1 September 2023. [The report and minute](#) from 28 March 2023 Lead Member meeting can be viewed on the Local Authority's website.

2. Statutory process

2.1 Proposed changes to the organisation of maintained schools must be in accordance with Section 19 (1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (as amended) and the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 (the Regulations).

2.2 In accordance with these requirements, a statutory proposal was published on 5 May 2023. Statutory notices were published in the Sussex Express and posted at the entrance to the school on the same day, providing details to interested parties on how the full proposal could be accessed.

2.3 Publication of the statutory proposal was followed by a four-week period of representation, when further comments or objections could be made to the Local Authority. At the end of the representation period on 2 June 2023, no comments or objections had been received.

2.4 The regulations describe several factors to which the Lead Member should have regard before making a final decision on the proposal. These are set out in **Appendix 1** to this report.

3. Equality Impacts

3.1 The Lead Member is required to have due regard to the duties set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the Public Sector Equality Duty) in determining the proposal. The Local Authority has completed an initial equality impact assessment which concludes that a full equality impact assessment is not required. No potential equality impacts or barriers have been identified by officers or stakeholders during either the initial consultation or the subsequent representation period following the publication of the statutory proposal. The Local Authority believes the proposal will have a positive impact by creating opportunities for children and families to continue to access early years provision within their local area that meets their needs.

4. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

4.1 In conclusion, the Local Authority and governing board of Punnetts Town Community Primary School would ensure there continues to be early years provision to support the local area and offer high quality early education across the Early Years Foundation Stage.

4.2 For this reason, the Lead Member is recommended to authorise the change of age range at Punnetts Town Community Primary School from 4 to 11 to 2 to 11 with effect from 1 September 2023.

ALISON JEFFERY

Director of Children's Services

Contact Officer: Jane Spice

Tel. No. 01323 747425

Email: jane.spice@eastsussex.gov.uk

LOCAL MEMBERS

Councillor Bob Bowdler

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None.