

9th February 2024

Consultation:

Proposed lowering of the age range to 2 years old at Standlake CE Primary School

Governors at Standlake CE Primary school together with trustees of Eynsham Partnership Academy have been considering how best to future proof the school so it best serves the local community now and in the future. This letter outlines the proposal and invites you to contribute to the consultation.

Context and Background

Standlake CE Primary School has been serving the local community for more than 100 years. The school has a strong ambitious leadership team and teaching staff and consistently receives high praise for its personal development of the children because of the values, ethos and experiences the school offers.

The school joined the Eynsham Partnership Academy in 2014 and has since had two OFSTED inspections rating it a 'GOOD' school with the most recent being January 2023, when 3 out of 5 areas were judged to be 'OUTSTANDING', including our Early Years provision. It is this provision the school wishes to expand so that more children in the local community can benefit *'from an exciting curriculum which gives children an extremely strong start to school life'* (Ofsted, 2023).

There is also a local necessity to offer provision to 2-year-olds, with the new government funding coming in to support families with early years childcare, and limited availability of child minders and nurseries in the Standlake area that offer the extended hours parents need.

Being a small village school, Standlake is also susceptible to the fluctuating pupil numbers, bringing with it financial implications if the pupil role is not maintained. It is hoped that by increasing the access for younger children to the nursery, more families will get the opportunity to see the excellent provision across the school and consider enrolling their child when they become statutory school age.

Proposal

We propose that Standlake CE Primary School lowers its age range to 2-year-olds. These children would share the same learning environment as our 3-year-olds in our existing nursery, with some minor adaptations to cater for younger children. The operating hours would also be the same, 8.00am-5.00pm, with parents being able to select morning or full day options. Standlake would build on the existing staff in the nursery to ensure that the 1:5 two-year-old ratio and 1:8 three-year-old ratio is adhered to.

This proposal supported by our Governors and the Eynsham Partnership Academy.

Headteacher: Andrew Denham

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How will this suggested change help?

It will provide greater continuity in both care and education as children progress from Early Years into KS1. Knowledge about the children's progress, development and needs (especially those with medical or additional needs) can be shared and built on at each stage of their education.

A progressive curriculum can be developed starting at age two, which allows children to build on knowledge and skills each year, which supports all children to make excellent progress.

Children will have access to the wider facilities on the school site which supports excellent transition. It is expected that this will allow us to accommodate more children at a time when there is a great demand for pre-school care and education.

Timings

This consultation commences on 9th February 2024 and will run for 4 weeks until 6th March 2024. During that period, there will be a meeting to share and discuss these plans. Following consultation feedback, a request will be made to the Department for Education to change the age range to 2-11 years old. Our plan is to make this change from 1st September 2024.

What to do next and by when

Have your say by writing to Standlake CE Primary school, Standlake, Witney, Oxon, OX29 7SQ or by emailing admin@epatrust.org by midday on 6th March 2024 and /or coming to the meeting on Thursday 29th February at 9.00am in the school hall. All responses to the consultation will be collated, summarised and reviewed by governors and the trusts trustees. They will be sent to the Department for Education as part of the case for change. This is a normal part of the process.

Summary

We very much hope that the community support this proposal and the benefits that it will bring and we look forward to hearing your views.

Best wishes

Andrew Denham
Headteacher
Standlake CE Primary School

Karen Armeanu
Chair of Governors
Standlake CE Primary school