



## DECISION RECORD

Officer Key Decisions are subject to the Council's Call-In Procedure (Annex 9 of the Council's Constitution <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/freedom-of-information-and-council-data/open-data-statistics-about-hertfordshire/who-we-are-and-what-we-do/who-we-are-and-what-we-do.aspx>)

**Subject:** Whether to initiate consultation on a proposal to change the age range of York Road Nursery School, Hitchin, to allow children to be admitted from the age of 2.

Staff Contact: David Shevlane

Executive Member: Terry Douris

Tel: 01992 556199

Portfolio: Executive Member for Education,  
Libraries & Localism

### 1. Decision

To initiate a public consultation on a proposal to change the age range of York Road Nursery School (a community school), York Road, Hitchin, Hertfordshire, SG5 1XA ("the school") by altering the lower age limit. This will change the age range from 3 to 5 years to 2 to 5 years, enabling the school to start offering places to 2-year-old children from 2 September 2019.

### 2. Reasons for the decision

We are proposing to lower the admission age of the school to ensure that 2-year-old children in the community, particularly the most vulnerable, are able to access the free place that they are entitled to. The take-up of the entitlement for 2-year-old children in this locality is lower than the county and national average. The ability of the school to offer this entitlement from September 2019, combined with effective marketing and a good working relationship with York Road Family Centre, will ensure that families are offered this provision, and increased awareness of the offer will stimulate demand and increase take-up.

Currently the nursery has capacity for 96 children in the morning and 88 children in the afternoon including children accessing the day care on site; it is proposed that this number will not change, but 12 of the children will be 2-year-olds.

There is a surplus of places across the maintained and private, voluntary and independent (PVI) childcare sector in this locality for 3 and 4-year-olds and the school have confirmed that there are 92 children<sup>1</sup> of this age attending the school at present. Therefore, it is not anticipated that lowering the admission age to the age of 2, will have a negative impact on children aged 3 and 4.

Children access either a morning or afternoon session, each running for 3 hours. The school has sufficient and suitable space to accommodate 2-year-old children. Therefore, no additional space or buildings are required to implement this proposal.

<sup>1</sup> autumn term 2018 school funding return  
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The proposed change of age range will bring the school in line with the vast majority of other maintained nursery schools in the county which admit children from the age of 2.

### 3. **Alternative options considered and rejected**

None

### 4. **Consultation**

#### (a) Comments of Executive Member

The Executive Member has no comments other than to concur with the Director's decision to initiate a public consultation.

#### (b) Comments of other consultees

None

### 5. **Following consultation with, and the concurrence of the Executive Member, I am proceeding with the proposed decision.**

Signed:



Title: Jenny Coles, Director of Children's Services

Date: 16<sup>th</sup> November 2018

### 6. Copies of agreed document to:

- Elaine Shell, Democratic Services Manager, Room 213, Old Block, County Hall (signed paper original). Electronic copy to [Democratic.Services@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Democratic.Services@hertfordshire.gov.uk)

and following the expiry of the call-in period to:

- Executive Member(s) - Councillor Terry Douris and/or Councillor Teresa Heritage; other Executive Members (as appropriate)
- Local Member; other Local Members (as appropriate)
- Chair (Councillor David Andrews), and Vice-Chairs (Councillors Karen Hastrick and Roma Mills) of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Office of the Schools Adjudicator ([osa.team@osa.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:osa.team@osa.gsi.gov.uk))
- The governing body / proposers (as appropriate) – email to school head teacher to forward to chair of governors for distribution to governing body members
- The trustees of the school (if any)
- The local Church of England diocese - Canon David Morton, Director of Education, Diocese of St Albans ([dde@stalbans.anglican.org](mailto:dde@stalbans.anglican.org))
- The local Roman Catholic diocese - Mr JP Morrison, Director of Education, Diocese of Westminster ([jpmorrison@rcdow.org.uk](mailto:jpmorrison@rcdow.org.uk))