



Informal consultation – Summer 2022

Proposed Change of Age Range of Crown Meadow First School and Nursery

This document contains information that will help you understand the issues surrounding this considered change. If you require any additional information not included in this document to enable you to make a response, please contact the school office.

Consultation dates	Monday 25 April to Friday 20 May 2022
Q and A drop in	Wednesday 4 May 2022 from 5:00pm to 6:00pm (virtual – please register your attendance at office@crowmeadow.worcs.sch.uk , so we can send you an invite)
Address	Crown Meadow First School and Nursery Birmingham Road Alvechurch B48 7TA
Email	office@crowmeadow.worcs.sch.uk

Dear Parents / Governors / Colleagues

Consultation on proposed change of age range of Crown Meadow First School and Nursery from 3-9 to 2-9

This document explains:

- Why we feel it is appropriate to consider a change of age range
- The timescale for the consultation
- Who is being consulted
- What happens at the end of the consultation period

Have your say

It is very important that all those involved have a say. Please submit your response via the online form here:

Alternatively, a copy of the response form can be downloaded from the school website or at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/schoolconsultations. If you are unable to access the online response form, please email the school office.

Responses must be submitted via the online form or paper copies to:

Crown Meadow First School and Nursery
Birmingham Road
Alvechurch
B48 7TA

Or e-mail to office@crowmeadow.worcs.sch.uk

Responses must be received by noon on Friday 20 May 2022

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher

Responses required by noon on Friday 20 May 2022

Background information

Worcestershire County Council, as the Local Authority responsible for education provision, has a statutory responsibility to secure, as far as is reasonably possible, early years education provision that is of good quality, accessible, flexible, inclusive and provided through a range of settings to meet parental demand for childcare for children aged two, three and four.

Since the 2006 Childcare Act, families with three-and four-year-old children in England are entitled to 570 hours of free childcare per year, over no fewer than 38 weeks of the year, beginning in the term after their third birthday and until the child reaches compulsory school age. This universal offer was introduced to support child development and school readiness. In 2013 this offer was extended to eligible families from the term following the child's second birthday.

Maintained Community schools can operate nursery provision for children two to four years of age. Crown Meadow First School and Nursery currently offers early education places for three- and four-year olds as part of their maintained age range of the school, meaning the provision is teacher led and students are considered as pupils of the school. Under this proposal, the provision would be extended to also enable two-year olds to access this provision.

The Proposal

The school leadership feels that the time is right to consider the extension of their school nursery class for two-year-olds alongside provision for three- and four-year olds. In order to do so, the Local Authority must lower the age range of Crown Meadow First School and Nursery by one year; from 3-9 to 2-9 from 1st September 2022.

Changing the age range of the school and operating two-year-old provision as part of the maintained school will have a number of benefits:

- Children attending the two-year old provision can be integrated fully into the school community. Parents and carers will benefit from the opportunity to pay for services using online methods. Registration of all children will be consistent, as will tracking of attendance and attainment.
- The extension of provision for 2 year olds will support the sustainability of the nursery provision at Crown Meador First School and Nursery.

If approved the increase would take effect from September 2022.

Admission into the nursery will be in line with the maintained nursery school's admission policy. This change will have no impact to the admissions policy and criteria for reception.

Evidence of Demand

Governors have been part of the consideration of this change and the nursery sub-committee discussing and voting positively on the proposal. Parents have been informed an application is

in progress – and verbally parents have expressed support for the extension of provision for two-year-old children to be included on the school roll as with three- and four-year olds. Take up of nursery places for two year olds from families living within Alvechurch Village is limited and this proposal is anticipated to have a positive impact on choice for families and uptake of places. As a result this proposal is not expected to have a significant impact on other providers currently serving the wider Alvechurch area.

School Capacity

Crown Meadow First School and Nursery is a popular school rated ‘Good’ by Ofsted in November 2021 which provided a detailed review of Nursery quality provision. The Senior Leadership of the school has significant combined early years knowledge including a Head of School Development with significant early years experience and a highly qualified Early Years Lead already in post. Moreover, a new Nursery Teacher is due to begin in September 2022.

No additional accommodation is required to support this change as the existing room will be used with minor amendments to adjust for the change in provision and ensure sufficient space for statutory space standards to be met the Early Years Framework requirements.

The school has a clear established commitment to working with other Nurseries in transition, mid-year changes and will continue to work with schools as children begin their Reception year. The school are also committed to working with other Nurseries to ensuring any child who splits funding receives high quality Nursery provision. This includes working with the LA and private provisions to ensure moderation of data and to ensure children receive a balanced education.

How the decision will be made

At the conclusion of this consultation period the Governors will consider any issues that have been raised before deciding whether to make a formal approach to the County Council. The County Council will consider evidence from various sources in order to reach a considered view on the merits of the proposal. In particular the following factors:

- All responses to the public consultation
- The quality of education provision at the school
- The ability of the school to manage the proposed change to support the continued improvements at the school
- Demand for places at the school and in the local area

Who is being consulted?

This document will be made available to:

- Parents and carers of pupils attending the School
- Staff and Governors of other local schools
- Local District and County Councillors
- Other local providers
- Immediate neighbours
- Local Member of Parliament
- Cabinet Member Responsible for Children and Families
- Any other local stakeholder

What happens next?

Consultation Phase – Monday 25th April to Friday 20th May 2022

During the consultation phase anyone with an interest can express their views on the options expressed in this document. This document, and the meeting detailed on the cover, form part of this consultation.

Submission of formal proposal to Local Authority

The governors will take note of issues raised during the consultation. At the conclusion of the consultation period a decision will be made whether to submit a formal proposal to the County Council, requesting their support.

If a formal proposal is made, officers at the County Council will then prepare a report for the Cabinet Member Responsible detailing the arguments for and against the change. The anonymised responses of the public consultation will be shared with the Cabinet Member Responsible for Education and Skills along with the Governors' comments on the issues raised.

Cabinet Member Responsible Decision

If the Cabinet Member Responsible decides to support the proposal, the County Council will publish formal Public Notice. The public will then have a final opportunity to comment or object within a four-week timescale laid down in law. Notices are published in the local press and displayed outside the School. At the end of the four weeks any objections will be reported to the Cabinet Member Responsible for Children's Services for a final decision.

It is very important that all those involved have a say. Please submit your comments by noon on Friday 20th May 2022 by completing the online response form available on the school and WCC website at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/schoolconsultations. If you are unable to access the online response form you can obtain a paper copy from the school office or from this link.