

# **Cabinet**

**16 June 2022**

## **Age Range Changes – Arley and St John’s Primary Schools**

### **Recommendation**

That Cabinet approves the change of age range at both Arley and St John’s Primary Schools from 3-11 to 4-11 with effect from September 2022.

### **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 Both St John's Primary School and Arley Primary School currently have an age range of 3 – 11, admitting 3-year olds into a Nursery class. The schools both wish to change age range to become a 4 – 11 primary school and replace the current Nursery class with a governor-run nursery.
- 1.2 Changing the age range of the two schools requires a statutory process, with the decision made by Cabinet. The change is supported by the schools and we have received no objections to the proposal through the consultation process.

### **2. Financial Implications**

- 2.1 There are no financial implications for WCC from these changes. There are financial benefits to schools in operating early years provision via governor-run provision rather than maintained nursery classes.

### **3. Environmental Implications**

- 3.1 None.

### **4. Supporting Information**

- 4.1 The current Nursery classes at both schools must be directly led by a qualified teacher and additional level 3 qualified early years professional. The cost of staffing is placing increasing financial pressures on the schools.
- 4.2 The schools will replace the current Nursery class with school run nurseries.

Delivery of early years places in this way is more cost efficient and can be adapted to meet demand (including the potential to take 2-year olds and longer sessions) in the future. Financial benefits for the schools come in part through the flexibilities of not requiring the same level of qualifications for some staffing. It is important therefore that the governor-run nurseries strive for the same high quality provision that they would do if it was a Nursery class.

- 4.3 The age range changes will see no reduction in places for the community as the offer at the school run nurseries will reflect those places previously offered by the Nursery classes.
- 4.4 Changes at national level have seen several alterations to the early years offer in recent years, including:
- the introduction of funded places for disadvantaged 2-year olds
  - the increased universal entitlement for 3-year olds from 12.5 hours per week to 15 hours per week
  - the introduction of 30 hours funded childcare for working parents of 3-year olds.
- 4.5 This proposal recognises that many working parents require early years places to be delivered in a much more flexible manner than the traditional nursery class can provide, alongside creating a more financially viable delivery model that can adapt to meet differing demands in an efficient way.
- 4.6 Any proposed changes to the age range of a community school must be carried out in accordance with the Statutory Guidance issued by the Department for Education, '*Making Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools*'. The guidance requires the local authority to undertake a statutory consultation for a period of at least 4 weeks, with the proposals published both online and in a local newspaper, as well as sent to the governing body.
- 4.7 WCC ran the required statutory consultations between 25 April and 23 May 2022, with details published online at:  
<https://ask.warwickshire.gov.uk/schools/arley-primary-school/>  
<https://ask.warwickshire.gov.uk/schools/st-johns-primary-school/>  
and public notices published in local newspapers (Nuneaton News and Leamington Observer). No responses were received to either consultation.
- 4.8 The guidance states that the local authority should make its decision within two months of the end of the consultation period.

## 5. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

- 4 week consultation – 25 April to 23 May 2022
- Cabinet meeting – 16 June 2022
- Changes implemented – September 2022.

### Appendices

None

### Background Papers

None

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Other members: