

Proposal to include a Pre-School in Wellow School

Background

Since the closure of Wellow Under Fives in early 2017, there has been no pre-school provision in the village. Increasing numbers of families are now driving, some considerable distance, to find early years provision for their children. Rurally isolated families and those without transport are now not accessing pre-school provision which means our most vulnerable children are arriving at school with poor social and academic skills - they are not 'school ready'. Their low level of development, on entry, impacts on the wider cohort of new admissions.

Objectives and benefits

Combined with the school's infrastructure, expertise in teaching and learning and strong leadership and governance, an onsite pre-school will provide high quality provision, with a seamless transition to school.

Pre-school children will benefit from close liaison between the staff of the two settings, a cohesive sharp focus on outcomes for all children and a consistent and professional staffing structure.

As part of the larger school structure, we will be able to provide a safe, caring and fun environment for children to learn and grow, and to ensure their ongoing development in a secure and sustainable way whilst building strong relationships with parents.

Accommodation

The school proposes to accommodate a pre-school by returning the current art/DT room to its original state as a classroom. In turn, each class will 'move down' the school freeing the current Year 1 classroom to use as a pre-school. Modifications to this room are required; extended entrance on the car park side, toilet cubicle adjustments, installation of a small kitchenette, improved covered outside area and secure door in the internal corridor. In addition, the school proposes to further clear the woodland Glade area and provide access for 'Forest School' learning and activities as part of pre-school provision. This accommodation will provide places for up to 20 children per session.

The after school club provision will be relocated to the music room.

Staffing

The pre-school setting will be overseen by the Head of School with an early years, qualified teacher providing leadership from within the setting daily. All other permanent staff will be at least NVQ qualified and will be dependent on the ratios required, according to numbers of children on roll in each session.

All positions available within the new setting will be advertised externally with successful candidates invited for interview. All members of staff involved with the pre-school will be employed by the school in line with Hampshire County Council Policy.

Funding and hours

We anticipate that we will offer the following sessions on a term time only basis.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Morning 8.45-11.45					
Afternoon 12.15- 3.15					
Short Day 8.45-3.15					
Medium Day 8.30-4.00					
Long Day 8am-6pm					

For eligible children/families, the school will offer funded hours (15 or 30), with the option to 'top up' hours as parents require.

There will be limited spaces for two year olds where parents will need to pay for the hours their child attends.

Expressions of Interest

Parents in the community who would use the setting have been invited to register their interest by completing a form provided. The level of interest has been high with a number of parents coming forward to register and the school now has information and contacts for those people who the preschool will target.

Proposed opening date

Depending on the success of grant applications, we aim to open the preschool on Monday 16th April 2018, at the beginning of the summer term. We will be able to confirm this in January when we will contact parents who have registered their interest.

Main school admission

The availability of an on-site pre-school does not change the way children apply and are admitted to the main school. Children will be equally prepared to move and attend any primary school. Even with the pre-school as part of the school all parents must make an application for their child to be offered a place in the Reception classes, i.e. they will not automatically progress from the pre-school to the reception class. Applications will be handled using the County Council's school admissions policy which gives priority to children living in the catchment area.

If you have any comments to make about this proposal, please send them to preschool@wellow.hants.sch.uk

The Governors have organised an Extraordinary General Meeting on Monday 29th January at 7pm in Wellow School Hall.