



29/11/2024

Consultation on Lowering School Age Range to include Nursery Aged pupils 2 – 11

As you are aware Mill Hill Primary School (part of Arete Learning Trust) opened its nursery for 3+ year olds in September 2022. Following the success of this we are now considering expanding our offer to provide spaces for 2-year olds as well our existing 3-year olds.

We are therefore consulting about lowering the school age range from 3 – 11 to 2 – 11 from September 2025.

The Trustees see this as an exciting opportunity which would enable Mill Hill Primary School to provide early education and childcare places to children aged 2 and 3 years old. The provision will cater for government funded places for 2 (the term after turning 2) and 3-year olds (15/30 hours depending of age and specific circumstances). Non-funded sessions would be available as they are currently.

Proposed lowering of our age range to include 2-year olds

We are proposing to extend our current provision by lowering the school's age range to include 2-year olds (admitting the term after the child turns 2). We would very much like to know the views of parents and other interested members of the community. The nursery provision will be teacher led and staffed by Early Years practitioners who have the required qualifications. The setting will be appropriately staffed to meet the statutory adult to child ratios of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). If approved, the school will cater for EYFS children across 3 rooms – rising 3's (academic year the child turns 3), rising 4's (academic year the child turns 4) and Reception aged children (academic year the child turns 5). There will be movement and shared activities between the rooms.

What would the nursery look like?

The extended nursery provision (2-year olds +) would be accommodated within our existing double EYFS rooms. The reception children will move into the neighbouring classroom (all rooms are adjoining and share the same outdoor area). The provision will be very similar to what is currently available in the existing EYFS. There will be areas such as role-play, sand, water, construction, reading, mark making, outside play, etc. The room would be equipped with suitable furniture, equipment and resources aimed at 2 and 3-year olds. There would be free flow between areas, including outside, allowing children the choice of activities. The children would follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum from the very beginning in the six areas of learning that describe everything that children do, see, hear or feel, both planned and unplanned. These areas are: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and creative development. Most importantly, it would be an active area allowing children to move around freely and engage in a wide range of activities. The extended provision would follow the same timings as our current nursery.

Benefits

- Families would have access to high quality school based Early Years provision from the term after they turn 2 until 11 years old.
- Provides a seamless transition from nursery into primary school
- Speech and language gaps and any other areas of individual need can be identified and addressed from earlier on in a child's education.
- Provides Government funded places for 2-year olds (the term after they turn 2) and 3-year olds providing continuity for parents and children
- The nursery provision would be managed by an experienced head teacher and school leadership team

Consultation Period

This consultation is open to everyone who has an interest in our school or who may be affected by the proposed changes. You are receiving this notice of consultation pursuant to the Department of Education guidance. The consultation is open for 3 weeks from the date of this letter, and so you can comment on the proposals any time from 29/11/2024 to 20/12/2024. A decision as to whether to proceed with the proposed addition of a nursery provision will not be reached until the consultation has concluded and the comments made reviewed. All responses received during the consultation will be seriously considered before a final decision is taken to submit the application to add a nursery provision. A final decision on the addition of a nursery provision at Mill Hill Primary School will be made by the relevant Department of Education Regions Group following the submission of the application by the Trust.

The Local Committee of the school and Arete Learning Trust's Trustees would welcome your views on the proposal. Please send any comments addressed to Mrs Rebecca Bainbridge, Mill Hill Primary School, Crosby Road, Northallerton, DL6 1AE or by email office@millhill-alt.uk

The closing date for receipt of responses is **20/12/2024**

