



Consultation about Offerton Hall Nursery Provision

Tell Us What You Think!

The Proposal

Stockport Council and the leaders of Offerton Hall Nursery and Dial Park Primary School want to improve the sustainability and integration of nursery education in Offerton. We are proposing to do this by arranging for the current provision at Offerton Nursery Hall School to be managed as part of Dial Park Primary School.

Why Change?

Offerton Hall Nursery has been identified as requiring review following a proposal by the Nursery School in 2016 to improve sustainability of the provision. With upcoming changes to nursery education provision nationally, we need to consider future viability and sustainability of the setting. The setting has had a number of surplus places and a deficit budget in recent years.

It is proposed to arrange for the current Nursery School education to be managed as a nursery class of Dial Park Primary School. This would mean the formal closure of the Nursery School and a reduction in the lower age limit of the Primary School to accommodate a nursery class.

The nursery class would remain in its current location. The Nursery School building would transfer to the management of the Primary School.

We want to ensure the highest possible quality of education for Stockport's children and we also need to make sure that we provide value for money by making best use of the funding available to us.

We now have an opportunity to enhance provision by creating a campus at the Half Moon Lane site which will provide high quality education for children from 2 to 11 years of age as part of the same school.

The Council reviews nursery provision with three principles in mind:

- addressing areas of over- and under-supply,
- the effective and efficient use of resources,
- the offer of continuous provision from 2 to 11 years of age where possible.

The Council believes that the best way to sustain long-term, high quality nursery provision is to take the opportunity to move the management of the nursery provision to the primary school.

What Will Change?

Under the proposal, there will be no apparent change for parents, or for children attending the nursery provision. The proposal will mean ongoing high quality and integrated

education for pupils aged from 2 to 11.

The overriding aim is to provide the highest possible quality of education for Stockport's children which we believe, based on evidence, can best be achieved by developing the maintained provision so that 2, 3 and 4 year olds can benefit from interactions with 'older' children.

There will be no change to the number of places available and the nursery provision will remain in its current building. There may be some changes to access the building and between the primary and nursery buildings. These will be agreed with the school if the proposal goes ahead.

As the Nursery School would close, the Governing Body would be the existing Dial Park Primary School Governing Body. There is currently an overlap between some members of the Governing Bodies.

The proposal is subject to consultation and to the agreement of the Council's Cabinet, after full consideration of the consultation responses.

The Offer

Currently Offerton Hall Nursery School offers the following services:

24 part time 2 year old places
117 part time 3 and 4 year old places (mornings or afternoons)
Breakfast club from 8:15 to 8:45am

From September 2017 the Nursery School will also offer 13 places for 3 and 4 year olds entitled to 30-hours and from January 2018 there will be 26 places.

Under the proposal there are no plans to change or reduce the current offer. All nursery settings may however review provision from time to time.

Quality

Offerton Hall Nursery is an Outstanding setting and has been at its last four inspections. The Nursery School shares its outstanding practice with other settings as well as mentoring and training students. The exemplary early years pedagogy in the Nursery School should be maintained under the new management structure.

Dial Park Primary School is currently a Good school. The school was noted at its 2013 inspection as improving standards and EYFS children making good progress as they are well-taught. At the short inspection in 2017, this was followed by comment that pupils in the early years make a good start to their education and the number achieving a good level of development is increasing.

The Benefits

Through the proposed change, the following benefits can be realised:

- Continued overall improvement to the quality of early education provision for Early Years Foundation Stage children;
- Further support for the achievement of statutory targets around narrowing the attainment gap between children in areas of disadvantage and their peers in other areas of the Local Authority;
- Continuity and consistency in the delivery of high quality early education for 2 to 11 year-olds with a clear focus on improving attainment and progress;
- Continued effective support and challenge from the Local Authority to impact on improved standards at the end of Early Years Foundation Stage;
- Compliance with Government requirements regarding sufficiency;
- Making best use of limited resources.

The principle of 2 to 11 provision is based on sound educational research findings which confirm the value of high quality, maintained early years education but does not specify that this can only be delivered through nursery schools; rather, the research confirms that the best option is maintained provision with integrated childcare which is what will be achieved through this proposal.

HMCI's Early Years Annual Report 2015 notes:

"We found that where schools and settings shared a site, were directly managed by one overarching leader or had entered into a professional network with others in the locality, expertise was shared effectively to allow all early years professionals to learn from the best."

"We observed disadvantaged two-year-olds making the greatest progress when they were able to learn and play alongside their older early years peers. Where providers operated as an integrated provision, we found the youngest children benefited from hearing more sophisticated language and seeing personal, social and emotional behaviours in action from their more confident three-, four- and five-year-old friends. This type of provision was also successful because it replicated the incidental learning children encountered at home when interacting and playing alongside their older siblings. We found this type of integrated working organisation to be more prevalent in schools than pre-schools, where children of different ages tended to remain in their own 'rooms' for much longer periods of the day."

"The older children themselves also benefited."

Through the proposal, we can make the best use of resources to give the best chance to improve further by joining up education for children aged from 2 to 11 across the campus. The good standard of effectiveness in the current reception class will provide better continuity for nursery pupils who then move into the Primary School.

Financial Implications

The Department for Education (DfE) introduced a new early years national funding formula (EYNFF) which took effect from April 2017 and provides the Local Authority a base rate level of funding at £4.30 per hour (national floor level) for both the universal free entitlement and the extended 30 hours offer (working parents only from September 2017).

The Council is responsible for administering the local early years single funding formula (EYSFF) that determines the funding (base rate and any supplements) allocated to each setting offering the universal and extended offer. The funding reforms further outline that from 2019/20 at the latest, all settings must be funded at the same base rate level including Nursery Schools; that are currently funded at a higher level to recognise their additional statutory costs (i.e. Headteacher). The DfE is providing supplementary funding for three years from April 2017 to maintain Nursery School funding at their current level, this is however not guaranteed beyond 2019/20 and the recent national consultation outlined further detail would be provided on options to identify efficiency savings and improve the long term sustainability of Nursery School provision.

Given the above position relating to Nursery School supplementary funding, statutory obligation to allocate a flat base rate level of funding to all settings by 2019/20 and the requirement for the Council to ensure best value and deliver the best outcomes for all children within its envelope of financial resources available, it is appropriate to assess the long term viability of individual settings as appropriate.

The proposed change of the Nursery School provision at Offerton Hall and Dial Park Primary School provides longer term financial security (i.e. senior management efficiency savings / affordability within the financial resources available), maintains a high quality Local Authority maintained nursery provision for two, three and four year olds on the same campus and achieves value for money when assessing costs and service delivery outcomes for the children.

Staffing Implications

Due to the delegated arrangements for employment of staff by schools, the formal closure of the Nursery School would mean the Nursery School staff posts would be at risk. However in line with previous successful projects of this nature, consultation has been undertaken with the Governing Body of the Primary School to secure ring-fenced recruitment for staff affected by proposals should the proposals go ahead. There will however be a requirement for nursery staff at the Primary School in order to continue the provision and the high quality of provision at the Nursery School is culturally embedded in those staff.

The Headteacher would be the Headteacher of the Primary School as the Nursery School would become a class of the Primary School. From September 2017 the Primary School Headteacher will manage the Nursery School following arrangements made between the Governing Bodies of the Nursery and Primary School.

In line with previous successful projects of this nature, consultation has been undertaken with the Governing Body of the Primary School to secure ring-fenced recruitment for staff affected by proposals in the first instance.

The Process and Consultation

If the proposal is approved, we will need to add the nursery places to Dial Park Primary School. We will also need to formally close the Nursery School. **However, it is very important to remember that there will be no reduction in provision, no change to the provision itself, and the location will not change as a result.** Put simply, it means

a change in management for the existing Nursery School.

Following consideration of the consultation responses, the Council's Cabinet will decide whether to publish a legal notice for the proposal.

The Council's consultation on the proposal will take place from 18th September 2017 to 3rd November 2017. All interested parties will be given the chance to express a view about the proposal.

During the consultation period, meetings will take place with the Nursery School leaders, staff, pupils and parents/carers. We want to hear direct from the people most affected by the proposal, what their views are.

We will discuss with staff, parents and pupils the opportunities they feel are presented by the proposal and what benefits should be created.

After the consultation, responses will be reviewed to help form a recommendation. The recommendation will take full account of the responses from the consultation process.

If the proposal is agreed, we will publish a statutory notice, following which there will be a statutory four-week representation period. During the representation period any comments or objections can be submitted for consideration when the final decision is made.

The final decision will then be made on whether to implement the proposal.

Hard copies of this consultation letter and response form will be sent to a range of people to seek their views. The consultation letter and a response form will also be made available on the Council's website (www.stockport.gov.uk/haveyoursay) along with contact details for responses.

Drop-in sessions will be hosted at the Nursery School and at the primary school for staff, parents/carers and families to ask questions, express their views face-to-face and discuss the proposal further. Dates of the sessions are listed below.

Drop-in Sessions




Date: Monday 25th September 2017
Time: 8:30 am to 10.00 am
Location: Dial Park Primary School




Date: Tuesday 26th September 2017
Time: 8:30 am to 10.00 am
Location: Offerton Hall Nursery School



Date: Tuesday 26th September 2017
Time: 2:30 pm to 16:00 pm
Location: Dial Park Primary School

 **Date:** Friday 6th October 2017
Time: 2:30 pm to 16:00 pm
Location: Offerton Hall Nursery School

 **Date:** Thursday 12th October 2017
Time: 8:30 am to 10.00 am
Location: Offerton Hall Nursery School


How Else to Respond

We are keen to hear your views about this proposal. To make sure your comments are taken into account, you can:

- Complete and return the consultation response form to: Schools Organisation Team, Upper Ground Floor, Stopford House, Piccadilly, Stockport, SK1 3XE
- Attend a drop-in session
- Send an email to: schools.organisation@stockport.gov.uk

Please ensure you respond by 03/11/17


The Timeline

 **September to November 2017**

- Consultation on the proposal – Deadline **3/11/17**


 **November 2017**

- Review of consultation responses


 **December 2017**

- Consideration of responses and decision on whether to publish statutory notice

If the publication is approved:


 **January to February 2018**

- Publication of statutory proposals
- Four-week representation period (during which comments or objections can be submitted to the Council)

 **February 2018**

- Final decision to be taken on the proposal

If the proposal is approved:

 **September 2018**

- Implementation

Consultation about Nursery Provision

Frequently asked questions

1. What is the proposal?

Stockport Council, along with leaders of Offerton Hall Nursery and Dial Park Primary School, wants to take advantage of an opportunity to improve the sustainability and integration of nursery education in Offerton. We proposing to do this by arranging for the current provision at Offerton Hall Nursery School to be managed as part of Dial Park Primary School.

2. What does the proposal mean?

If the proposals were to go ahead:

- The nursery provision will remain in its current building
- Management of the nursery provision would move to Dial Park Primary School.
- The nursery places would be added to Dial Park Primary School.
- There would be formal closure of the Offerton Hall Nursery School.
- Children from 2-11 years of age would be educated in the same school at the Half Moon Lane site.

3. Why have the proposals been made?

The Nursery School has been identified as requiring review following a proposal by the Nursery School in 2016 to improve the sustainability of the provision. With upcoming changes to nursery education provision nationally, we need to consider future viability and sustainability of the setting.

4. How certain are you that there is a risk to the sustainability of the Nursery School?

The Local Authority was approached by the Nursery School in 2016 with a proposal to review the setting due to surplus places and a deficit budget.

The Department for Education (DfE) introduced a new early years national funding formula (EYNFF) which took effect from April 2017 and provides the Local Authority a base rate level of funding at £4.30 per hour (national floor level) for both the universal free entitlement and the extended 30 hours offer (working parents only from September 2017). The funding reforms further outline that from 2019/20 at the latest, all settings must be funded at the same base rate level including Nursery Schools; that are currently funded at a higher level to recognise their additional statutory costs (i.e. Headteacher). The DfE is providing supplementary funding for three years from April 2017 to maintain Nursery School funding at their current level, this is however not guaranteed beyond 2019/20.

The proposed change of the Nursery School provision at Offerton Hall and Dial Park Primary School provides longer term financial security (i.e. senior management efficiency savings / affordability within the financial resources available).

5. The number of children that have taken up a place at the nursery has risen this year. Surely that is a good sign and means more money in the school budget and financial security?

The forecast for the Nursery School budget has improved, however, sustainability of the setting has not necessarily improved given the uncertainty of numbers in future years.

6. Why do you have to close the Nursery School?

If the proposals are approved then we will need to add the nursery places to Dial Park Primary School and formally close the Nursery School. At present Offerton Hall Nursery School and Dial Park Primary School are two separate establishments. Formally closing the Nursery School, adding nursery places to Dial Park School would create one establishment. There would be the legal closure of the Nursery School as a separate establishment. **It is important to remember there will be no reduction in provision, no change to provision itself and the location will not change.**

7. If you close the Nursery School what will happen to the Nursery School staff?

The formal closure of the Nursery School would mean the Nursery School staff posts would be at risk. However in line with previous successful projects of this nature, consultation has been undertaken with the Governing Body of the Primary School to secure ring-fenced recruitment for staff affected by proposals should the proposals go ahead. There will be a requirement for nursery staff at the Primary School in order to continue the provision and the high quality of provision at the Nursery School is culturally embedded in those staff who work there.

The Headteacher would be the Headteacher of the Primary School as the Nursery School would become a class of the Primary School. From September 2017 the Primary School Headteacher will manage the Nursery School following arrangements made between the Governing Bodies of the Nursery and Primary School.

8. Will the staffing structure change at the school?

Should the proposals go ahead the staffing structure may change, however this is a decision for the Governing Body. Formal consultation would be required on any new staff structure. This would not be until the determination of the proposals, ie after February 2018. The exemplar early pedagogy should be maintained under any new management structure.

9. The Nursery School has its own Governing Body. Who would govern the nursery class?

Should the proposals go ahead the education currently managed by the Nursery School would be managed as a nursery class of Dial Park Primary School and as part of the school would be governed by Dial Park Primary School's Governing Body.

10. Will children automatically transfer from the nursery class to the reception class at Dial Park Primary School?

Parents/carers will still need to apply for a place in the Reception year group at their preferred primary school(s). Full information about applying for school places can be found in the school admissions booklet: www.stockport.gov.uk/admissions.

11. Will the school uniform change?

Should the proposal go ahead it is proposed that for nursery children there would be a like for like swap of one item of the uniform which has been purchased such as polo shirt, jumper or fleece. This will ensure that the uniform the children wear from September 2018 is the same for all children - Dial Park red.

12. Pupils in the Primary School have morning, lunchtime and afternoon playtimes. Will the nursery children have these breaks too?

There are no plans to alter the excellent practise and provision in the nursery. Put simply, the proposals means a change in management for the existing Nursery School. All nursery settings may however review their provision from time to time.

13. Primary pupils attend school assemblies. If the nursery is part of the school would children attend those assemblies?

As above, there are no plans to alter the excellent practise and provision in the setting. All nursery settings may however review their provision from time to time.

14. Dial Park Primary School took over the management of the Nursery School in September. Has the decision already been made?

No, the decision has not yet been made. The Headteacher of Dial Park Primary School became acting responsible Headteacher for the Nursery School, temporarily for one year following an approach by the Governing Body of the Nursery School.

15. Who makes the decision?

The Council's Cabinet will consider all feedback received during the consultation and will make a decision on whether to proceed to the next stage and publish a statutory notice.

16. What if I am not happy with the decision made?

If the proposals are agreed, we will publish a statutory notice, following which there will be a statutory four-week representation period. During the representation period any comments or objections can be submitted for consideration when the final decision is made.

If the decision is made not to progress then further consultation would take place on any renewed proposals.

17. Why have the Council made no suggestions or recommendation as to how the Nursery School can continue as a Nursery School by rationalising and reorganising?

The approach we have taken here is to focus on sustainability of the setting and maintaining standards. The Nursery School has been judge by Ofsted to be Outstanding in its last four inspection. Any changes through rationalising and reorganising could impact on the outstanding practice and provision. The Council believe that the best way to sustain long-term, high quality nursery provision that is taking place in the Nursery School is to take this opportunity to move management of the nursery provision to the Primary School. If the Council's Cabinet decide they do not want to go ahead with the proposals then they

can instruct us to go back out to public consultation on one or more ideas for the Nursery School.

18. How can I find out more?

Further information can be found in the consultation document and on line at www.stockport.gov.uk/consultation. Drop-in sessions will be hosted at Offerton Hall Nursery School and Dial Park Primary School details of which can be found in the consultation document and on the Council's website. Officers from the Council will be present to answer any questions you have and to listen to your views

19. How do you respond to this consultation?

Completed consultation response forms can be posted to Schools Organisation, Upper Ground Floor, Stopford House, Piccadilly, Stockport SK1 3XE or emailed to schools.organisation@stockport.gov.uk.

The form is also available on line at www.stockport.gov.uk/haveyoursay