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Swaffham C of E Primary Academy Nursery Consultation Review: Initial Findings.

We are pleased to share our initial outcomes from our consultation for establishing a school based nursery at Swaffham C of E Primary Academy. We are grateful to all the families and community members who actively participated in this process. We received a total of 24 responses from a wide range of stakeholders including parents/ carers, local residents, local childcare providers, local community representatives and The Diocese.

Consultation period: 4 weeks from 19th December 2024 to 17th January 2025

We sought views on the following:

1. How far do you agree or disagree with our proposed change to the age range of Swaffham C of E Primary Academy from 4-11 to 3-11 years from September 2025.
2. Why did you say this?
3. Do you have any views about provision for children aged 2 and upwards?
4. Are there any other comments or suggestions you would like to make to help us with this decision and in planning for the future provision of the children?

Key Findings:

	Number of responses	Percentage
Strongly agree	3	12.5%
Agree	14	58%
Neither agree or disagree	nil	0
Disagree	3	12.5%
Strongly disagree	4	17%
Don't know	nil	0

Of the 24 stakeholders who responded;

17 / 24 indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed with our proposal : 70.5% of responses.

7 / 24 indicated that they disagreed or strongly disagreed with our proposal: 29.5% of responses.

Analysis of responses and positives:

A total of 17 out of 24 responses were in favour of our proposal.

These responses emphasised that current childcare providers are full and have long waiting lists- the town is growing and there are not enough nursery places available to meet the needs of the increasing number of nursery age children and this need will increase with further housing being built. Views

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that Swaffham is in need of more facilities to keep pace with the building of new houses including provision of childcare places and that another nursery provision would be an asset to the town. They emphasised our strengths in our EYFs provision, Ofsted outcome as a Good School and the positive reputation our school has within the local community. They identified the expertise that we have within our staffing team including our highly skilled SENDco and that our proposal would give local children access to high quality school based Early Years provision- it will benefit young families and children greatly to help further their social and academic development ready for starting school. Opportunities for effective transition support and the opportunity for early identification of needs which will benefit children's long term learning and development. The benefits of providing early inputs into the development of skills within the Early Learning Goals to support a good starting point for the children's education from compulsory school age onwards. The benefits of nursery families joining our school community early.

Views that another nursery is needed and recognition that a school led nursery offers something different to other local providers but that the school should work with other local providers as these are important within our Swaffham Community.

Our extensive learning environment and outdoor space was recognised. Suggestions that that we should consider opening a nursery and increasing provision for breakfast and wrap around care and offer flexible nursery provision whilst also working collaboratively with other local providers.

A total of 7 responses disagreed with our proposal.

These responses emphasised that there were already sufficient places in the town and if we were to open a school- based nursery then it would take places away from current providers. They suggested that our proposal would adversely impact on current local providers and that we could work alongside Swaffham Pre School. Suggesting a more thorough consultation of childcare places which looks at current placements at the pre- school and local childminders as they will know current need suggesting that the LA data obtained in November 2024 is out of date.

Queries/ additional points with response:

- ***there are not enough holiday clubs for children with nursery children***

It is not our intention to open a holiday club for nursery aged pupils. Our planned provision is for term time only.

- ***Would children who attend the nursery have priority when applying for a school place- if so this wouldn't be fair on other families who send their children to other local providers.***

We can confirm that the answer to this question is NO. All admissions are dealt with through the Local Authority. The school's admission policy is followed. This is available on our website.

- ***Where have we got our statistics from regarding need for places for 3-4 in the area as there are currently places available.***

We can confirm that this has come from a Local Authority Sufficiency Survey which was carried out upon our request on the 21/11/2024 by the LA Place Planning Officer.

This Sufficiency Survey identified the following:

- Funded early education and childcare is offered at 7 locations within the school catchment.
- Average take-up of funded places by the catchment 3-4 year olds for summer 2024 was higher (91.4%) compared to the Norfolk average (91.0%).
- There is continuing housing construction in the area with build out continuing at 6 sites and planning consent for 2 more. With a total of 444 dwellings yet to come the child yield for 3-4's will

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be 36 children requiring a childcare place over the life of the developments based on a yield of 4 to 8 children per year.

- The estimated number of children living within the catchment area, who may be eligible for and entitled to a free funded early education childcare place, is forecast to be 177, comprising 34 eligible two year olds, 143 three and four year olds across the three academic year groups.
- Currently there are insufficient numbers of funded early education and childcare places (118) if all local parents wished to access local provision.

There were 16 responses sharing views on provision for children aged 2 and upwards

4 responses were in favour stating that there is a need for this.

The other responses were mixed and shared that their need was for 3 and 4 year olds but recognising that 2 yr olds was also a positive move in the future.

Ongoing collaboration and updates

Discussions with Norfolk County Council's EYFS and Planning team, in conjunction with our Academy Trust, are ongoing.

We have submitted a bid to the DFE for their consideration as part of their School Based Nursery Capital Grant initiative. We are likely to hear on the outcome of this in February or March.

As shared in our consultation letter, we are very much committed to working alongside and in collaboration with other local providers.

We remain committed to keeping all stakeholders informed as developments progress.

Your continued caring and supportive engagement are deeply appreciated.

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