



Public Consultation Document Aylesham Primary School



Kent County Council would like to hear your views on a proposal to change the age range of Aylesham Primary School (from 3-11 years to 4-11 years) and the closure of the maintained nursery class.

Date of Public Meeting: Thursday 10 December at 7.00 pm

Venue: Aylesham Primary School

1. INTRODUCTION

Kent County Council would like to consult the families in Aylesham on a need to consider a proposal to close the maintained nursery class at Aylesham Primary School and to change the age range of the school from 3-11 years to 4-11 years.

This proposal is being brought forward because of the financial difficulties that both the school and the Pre-School Learning Alliance voluntary nursery are facing. The difficulties have arisen as a result of the way the funding of both the maintained nursery class and private nursery provision operates.

This document contains details of how you can take part in and respond to this public consultation. Implementation of the proposal is subject to the outcome of this consultation and decision making process and the timescale is outlined on page 6.

Martyn Doole
Area Children's Services Officer, Dover & Thanet
Kent County Council

2. BACKGROUND

The Aylesham Primary School maintained nursery class was established in 1997 by Kent County Council alongside an existing private pre-school provider which had been operating in a classroom since 1986.

In 2003 the Pre-School Learning Alliance were successful in obtaining funding from the New Opportunities Fund (NOF), now known as the Big Lottery Fund. The funding enabled the purchase of a demountable building, which was sited on the primary school site in 2004. The private pre-school was dissolved at this time and its assets, including the staff, transferred to the Pre-School Learning Alliance. With capital funding from NOF, the Pre-School Learning Alliance set up a nursery under the Neighbourhood Nursery Initiative (NNI). As the Neighbourhood Nursery and the maintained nursery class worked closely together, they both moved into the new Neighbourhood Nursery building. The Sunshine Corner Neighbourhood Nursery is a joint venture between the Pre-School Learning Alliance and Aylesham Primary School.

The Sunshine Corner Neighbourhood Nursery is well established and a valuable asset to the Aylesham community. It is one of the providers delivering the childcare element of the Children's Centre 'core offer' under a partnership agreement with the Children's Centre. It is registered for thirty two places for 3 to 5 year olds, eight places for 2 to 3 year olds and six places for 0 to 2 year olds. It is open five days a week all year round and offers before and after school provision.

In its first three years, the financial viability of the joint venture was achieved through neighbourhood nursery revenue grant funding, and the implementation of an agreed formula for sharing the Nursery Education Funding between the school and the Pre-School Learning Alliance (with the approval of Kent County Council) and through awards of both revenue and capital grant monies from a number of bodies (including KCC) against successful funding bids.

The Neighbourhood Nursery revenue funding came to an end three years ago and as a result it has proved extremely difficult to cover the operational costs of the nursery. The nursery has had to seek sustainability funding from KCC. A number of management initiatives have been taken to both improve the fee income and keep costs under control while still ensuring a quality environment for young children. However, whilst these initiative have realised some tangible benefits there still needs to be further action taken to achieve sustainability for the setting.



3. THE PROPOSAL

The proposal is to merge the school's maintained nursery and the full day-care Neighbourhood Nursery. Both Aylesham Primary School and the Pre-School Learning Alliance support the proposal. This would be achieved by changing the age-range of Aylesham Primary School from 3-11 years to 4-11 years and effectively closing the maintained nursery class.

Although the school would cease to offer nursery classes from 1 September 2010 the actual places would still be available through the Sunshine Corner Neighbourhood Nursery which would then be solely under the control of the Pre-School Learning Alliance. The provision would continue to be an integral part of the Aylesham Children's Centre and there would be a qualified nursery teacher who would lead on Early Years Foundation Stage practice within the nursery. This would ensure that all children would continue to have access to the Early Years Foundation stage framework. This proposal would give more flexibility to tailor services to meet the needs of parents/carers in the Aylesham community.

If the maintained nursery class ceased, all the Nursery Education Funding payments would be made to the Neighbourhood Nursery and all the finances would be under the control of the Pre-School Learning Alliance. This would have a significant beneficial impact on the Neighbourhood Nursery's long term sustainability and any additional initiatives, such as increasing the number of places available for children aged 0-2 years, would help towards achieving that goal.

This proposal offers seamless continuity of services. The Pre-School Learning Alliance would continue its commitment to work in partnership with the school to help monitor quality and delivery of the Early Years Foundation stage.

If the proposal goes ahead

- All of the children entitled to receive the Early Years Foundation Stage Entitlement for 15 hours a term after their 3rd birthday would continue to do so.
- All 3-5 year olds would continue to be able to attend term time only and have access to the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.
- The Sunshine Corner Neighbourhood Nursery would continue as a viable provision and there would be no loss of childcare places.

If the proposal does not go ahead

- There would be a risk that the Neighbourhood Nursery element of the Sunshine Corner Neighbourhood Nursery would cease. This would mean that the current full day care provision would no longer continue.
- The maintained nursery class would continue to operate during term time only for 3-5 year olds offering morning or afternoon sessions.
- There would be no provision for 0-2 year olds.
- The Children's Centre would no longer be able meet the requirements for a full 'core offer'.

4. HOW TO GIVE YOUR VIEWS

▶ **Complete and return the response form to:**

Martyn Doole, Area Children's Services Officer (Dover & Thanet)
Clover House, John Wilson Business Park, Thanet Way,
Whitstable, Kent CT5 3QZ. Fax: 01227 772290
(Your comments must reach us by 19 January 2009)

▶ **Come to a public meeting on:**

Thursday 10 December at 7.00 pm at
Aylesham Primary School, Atlee Avenue, Aylesham, Kent CT3 3BS

- An elected member of Kent County Council will chair this meeting, at which all interested parties will have an opportunity to put forward their views.
- Officers from the Local Authority will also be present to clarify points of detail.

▶ **Email your comments to: school.consultations@kent.gov.uk**

(We will note all you say, but will not be able to respond individually to response forms, letters or emails)

5. CONSULTATION & DECISION MAKING TIMETABLE

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| Public Consultation Period | 25 November 2009 to 19 January 2010 |
| Public Meeting | Thursday 10 December, 7 pm |
| Report Back to the Kent County Council School Organisation Advisory Board * | 4 February 2010 |
| Public Notice Issued (subject to Cabinet Member decision) | 5 March 2010 |
| Public Notice Expires | 16 April 2010 |
| Decision by Local Authority | May 2010 |
| Adjudication (if required) | June/July 2010 |
| Implementation | September 2010 |

* The School Organisation Advisory Board meeting is held at County Hall, Maidstone and the webcast can be watched via the kent.gov.uk website.

The meeting is open to the public.

6. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

- Following this consultation, all views received, either in writing, by email or at the Public Meeting, will be reported to the School Organisation Advisory Board of Kent County Council.
- A Cabinet Member decision will be made on whether to take the proposal forward.
- If so, a Public Notice will be published in a local newspaper, at the school and nursery and in public places like the library or community centre. The Public Notice will run for six weeks. Representations about the proposal can be made.
- A decision will then be reached on whether the proposal is to be implemented.
- In certain circumstances this could include referral to the statutory Schools Adjudicator.
- All views will be considered before a decision is made.

Public Consultation Response Form

The proposed change of age range for Aylesham (Community) Primary School (from 3-11 years to 4-11 years) and the closure of the maintained nursery class.

PLEASE RETURN NO LATER THAN 19 January 2010

**To: Martyn Doole, Area Children's Services Officer (Dover & Thanet)
Clover House, John Wilson Business Park, Thanet Way,
Whitstable, Kent CT5 3QZ.**

Fax: 01227 772290

You can also email your views to: school.consultations@kent.gov.uk

Do you agree with the proposal?

Yes

No

Do you have a child aged 3 to 4 years attending the Sunshine Corner Neighbourhood Nursery term time only

Yes

No

I am: (please tick as appropriate)

The parent/carer of a pupil at Aylesham Primary School

The parent/carer of a child attending the Sunshine Corner Neighbourhood Nursery

A member of staff at Aylesham Primary School

A member of staff at the Sunshine Corner Neighbourhood Nursery

A governor of Aylesham Primary School

Other interested party (please state interest)

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| Name: |
| Address: |
| <p>Kent County Council is a data controller under the Data Protection Act 1998 and will comply with the requirements of the Act at all times. We will ensure that your personal information is processed fairly and lawfully and in this instance used only for the purpose of validation, which will enable a fair and just consultation.</p> |

PLEASE WRITE YOUR COMMENTS OVERLEAF

My comments are as follows:

Please continue on another sheet if necessary

This document is available on:
<http://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-learning/about-education-service/consultations/>
Responses can be emailed to: school.consultations@kent.gov.uk

If you have difficulty reading this document and require it in another format please contact your school.