

Public Consultation Document
NEWINGTON CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL
NURSERY UNIT



Kent County Council would like to hear your views on a proposal to change the age range of Newington Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School (from 3-11 years to 4-11 years) by the closure of the maintained nursery unit and its replacement by a voluntary pre-school provision.

Date of Public Meeting: Thursday 30 September at 7.00 pm
Venue: Newington CE Primary School, School Lane,
Newington, Sittingbourne, ME9 7LB

1. INTRODUCTION

Kent County Council would like to consult the families and wider community in the Newington locality on a need to consider a proposal to close the maintained nursery unit at Newington CE Primary School, which would also require making a change to the age range of the school (from 3-11 years to 4-11 years).

The nursery is not attracting sufficient 3 year olds and is therefore not financially viable. The governing body has asked the Local Authority to bring forward a proposal that would enable the local pre-school provider, The Cherries Pre-School, to move into the maintained nursery unit accommodation, replacing the existing nursery.

2. BACKGROUND

Newington CE Primary School has a 52 place (26 full time equivalent) maintained nursery unit which opened in September 2006. When Kent County Council committed (in 2004) to expand the number of maintained nursery units in Kent, it was decided that units would be established in areas of the highest social need or low pre-school provision. Newington fitted both these categories but especially the low number of pre-school places available in the locality. However, children have not come forward to fill the available places.

The table below shows the number of pre-school children currently living in the Newington locality.

Age 0+	Age 1+	Age 2+	Age 3+	Age 4+ (current Year R)
Awaiting 2010 data	33	32	23	13

The beneficial impact of good quality pre-school provision on children's learning and social behaviour is recognised by Kent County Council. However, the maintained nursery unit is unable to offer the flexible childcare that many families are looking for. The maintained nursery unit has therefore been undersubscribed since it opened.

There will only be 9 children entering the nursery at the start of the new academic year, September 2010. The maintained nursery unit will operate in the mornings only.

Newington has one pre-school provision other than the maintained nursery unit. The Cherries Pre-school Playgroup is a charity-based organisation run by a partnership of qualified staff and a parent Management Committee. The Cherries operates from the Village Hall and provides term time sessional childcare five days per week for children aged from two years until they reach school age. The Cherries has 26 registered places and usually 18 to 20 places are filled each year.



3. THE PROPOSAL

The proposal is to close the maintained nursery unit and replace it with the local voluntary pre-school provision currently operating in the Village Hall. The Cherries Pre-School Playgroup would move into the maintained nursery unit accommodation from April 2011. Children entitled to receive the Early Years Foundation Stage Entitlement for 15 hours a week attendance a term after their 3rd birthday would be able to do so at The Cherries, so provision in the locality would be sustained. If this proposal goes ahead, any child attending the maintained nursery unit at the time of its closure would be guaranteed a place at The Cherries.

The Cherries would be renting the accommodation which comprises a teaching and care area and a safe covered external area. It has its own entrance, kitchen, office and toilet provision. The Cherries are currently restricted in what they can offer parents because they have to share the Village Hall with other users and do not have adequate toilets and outdoor play facilities. Moving into the accommodation would mean that The Cherries would be able to increase the offer available, to include breakfast, lunch and after-school clubs, afternoon and all day sessions in a flexible way which parents prefer.

The Cherries has produced a Business Plan outlining the future sustainability of the pre-school should the proposal go ahead. The Cherries has a good reputation in the village and in June 2009 the overall quality of the provision was judged by Ofsted as good. The pre-school employs four members of staff all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. In addition there are two voluntary members of staff.

The Cherries already has close links with Newington CE Primary School and being sited with the school would provide the opportunity for additional partnership working and build on the good transitional arrangements already in place.



4. HOW TO GIVE YOUR VIEWS

Complete and return the response form to:

Alison Osborne, Area Education Officer
Clover House, John Wilson Business Park, Thanet Way,
Whitstable, Kent CT5 3QZ. (Fax: 01227 772290)

(Your comments must reach us by 25 October 2010)

Come to a public meeting on:

Thursday 30 September 2010 at 7.00 pm

At Newington CE Primary School
School Lane, Newington, Sittingbourne, Kent ME9 7LB

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

Public Consultation Period	13 September to 25 October 2010
Public Meeting to be held at the school	Thursday 30 September at 7 pm
Report Back to the Kent County Council School Organisation Advisory Board *	10 December 2010
Public Notice Issued (subject to Cabinet Member decision)	13 January 2011
Public Notice Expires	24 February 2011
Cabinet Member decision and appeal period	March 2011
Implementation	26 April 2011

* 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 in public places like the library. The Public Notice will run for six weeks. Representations about the proposal can be made.

A determination 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 Newington CE Primary School by the closure of the maintained nursery unit and its replacement by a voluntary pre-school provision

PLEASE RETURN NO LATER THAN 25 October 2010

To: **Alison Osborne, Area Education Officer**
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

I am: (please tick as appropriate)

The parent/carer of a pupil at
Newington CE Primary School

The parent/carer of a child at
the maintained nursery unit

A member of staff at
Newington CE Primary School

The parent/carer of a child
at The Cherries

A governor of Newington CE
Primary School

A member of staff at The
Cherries

Other interested party

A member of The Cherries
Management Committee

Name of other school or interested party

Name:

Address:

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.

PLEASE WRITE YOUR COMMENTS OVERLEAF

My comments are as follows:

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.