

Public Consultation – 11<sup>th</sup> October to 26<sup>th</sup>  
November 2021

# Proposed change of Age Range and Enlargement of Premises of Fladbury CofE First School

## Introduction

This document helps to explain the background to the proposals and the steps of this process, including:

- the background to proposals;
- who can propose and decide on changes;
- what is being proposed;
- why it is being proposed;
- the impact of the proposals;
- how and when the proposals if agreed would be implemented;
- who is being consulted;
- how to submit a consultation response; and
- what happens at the end of the consultation period.

If you require any additional information not included in this document to enable you to make a response, please contact [PershoreReview@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk](mailto:PershoreReview@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk) or the school:

<b>Address</b>	Church Street Fladbury Pershore Worcestershire WR10 2QB
<b>Email</b>	office@fladbury.worcs.sch.uk
<b>Phone number</b>	01386 860301

## Have your say...

It is very important that all those involved or have an interest have a say, we welcome your views.

An online survey can be accessed from the school website or Worcestershire County Council [Persnore Review webpage](#). If you are unable to access the online response form, please email the school office.

Paper responses must be submitted to the school office.

The seven-week consultation period commences on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> October and closes at noon on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2021. It is very important that all those wishing to respond to these proposals do so within this timeframe.

We are holding a consultation event to allow our stakeholders to learn more about our proposals and give the opportunity to provide feedback. A summary of events can be found in the table below:

Date & Time	Location & address	Delivery
10/11/2021 7-8pm	At Fladbury School Hall	Face-to-face

Yours sincerely,



Julie Wilson  
Headteacher



Sue Johnston  
Chair of Governors

**Responses required by noon on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2021**

## **School Details**

Name and Address:	Fladbury CE First School		
Status:	Voluntary		
Ofsted Rating / Date:	Good 31/01/2018		
Current age range:	4 to 9	Proposed age range:	3 to 11
Total pupil capacity as at 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2021:	100	Proposed total pupil capacity:	105 plus 15 nursery
Published admission number (PAN) as at 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2021:	20	Proposed PAN:	15
Currently pupils transition to:	Middle School at Year 5	Proposed for pupils to transition to:	High School at Year 7

## **Background information**

The Pershore Education Planning Area is made up of 16 Schools serving the town of Pershore and surrounding rural area. From September 2019 several schools had proposals agreed to change age ranges to create an option for a two-tier (Primary and Secondary school) system of education for families. A total of 6 schools in the Pershore area currently operate as Primary and Secondary schools.

Fladbury First School is a Voluntary Aided First School serving the villages of Fladbury, Wyre Piddle and Upper and Lower Moor. Fladbury School is, with the church St John the Baptist, at the very heart of an active village. The school draws from 3 villages serving those communities well with Christian worship and Christian values embedded in school life. The school is an important and highly respected integral part of the churches presence and teaching in these villages. We need our school to thrive to continue in these villages and with consideration to parents' responses, the Governing Bodies view is that this can be best achieved by increasing our age range to become a primary school and amending our pupil admission number (PAN).

## **What is proposed**

### ***First to Primary***

It is proposed to alter the age range of Fladbury First School from 4 to 9 to a 3 to 11 Primary School. This would change the school from a first school to a primary school and incorporate the pre-school age children into the maintained offer of the school.

Children in year 4 at the school would remain at the school for year 5 and 6. Children in Year 6 would then transition to a Secondary School for Year 7 onwards.

Lowering the age range of the school and operating three-year-old provision as part of the maintained school will have a number of benefits. Children attending the three-year old provision can be integrated fully into the school community. Parents and carers will benefit from the opportunity to pay for services using online methods. Registration of all children will be consistent, as will tracking of attendance and attainment.

**Historic and Forecast number on roll at Fladbury First School:**

	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Total
Oct 2020	15	22	14	12	14			77
Oct 2021	17	15	22	14	14			82
Oct 2022	11	17	15	22	14	14		93
Oct 2023	15	11	17	15	22	14	14	106
Oct 2024	15	15	11	17	15	22	14	109

Based on 5-year average transfer rates and anticipated stay on rates to year 5 based on similar school conversions. Includes expected additional children from housing developments. After 2021 the intake is restricted to 15 and any higher years over PAN are capped allowing no further additions.

The school is currently built to support 100 pupils, with 82 pupils currently on roll. It is proposed to decrease the Pupil Admission Number (PAN) from 20 to 15 to enable to additional year groups on the school site. We will maintain mixed years groups of 15 children per year to ensure consistent classes and key stage of circa 30 children. An historic PAN of 20 creates difficulty with grouping especially across the Key Stage and a PAN of 15 would enable a consistent and appropriate groupings.

Fladbury Pre-School class has had growing numbers over the last few years. The following table details the number of pre-school children over the last 4 years:

Academic Year	Funded 3 & 4 year olds on roll
2018/19	22
2019/20	24
2020/21	20

The pre-school age children would share the space with Reception class.

**Why is it being proposed?**

Changes to schools in the Pershore education planning area over several years has led to uncertainty and sustainability concerns across the education planning area. At present, one school exists outside of the Pershore tier structure in the two-tier Catholic pyramid; six schools have changed or have approved changes to two-tier; and two further schools have already consulted on change of age range proposals.

The creation of additional places in years 5, 6 and 7 as a result of the approved changes has resulted in an unsustainable level of surplus/excess places in these year groups. By 2023 we anticipate that two of the middle schools in the area will be operating at around 50% capacity, which creates significant difficulty to provide key stage 3 (Year 7, ages 10 to 11) curriculum in particular.

Over the last two years when a choice has been available, we have seen parents in the area choosing a Primary and Secondary (two-tier system) education in their school admissions applications, with an increasing percentage choosing to remain at already converted primary schools and a number choosing to transfer from first to primary schools during key stage 1 and 2.

This creates a risk to ensuring clear and high quality education journeys for pupils.

Fladbury CE First School is a rural school with a Good Ofsted judgement and Outstanding SIAMs report. For the last 7 years the school has had an increasing number on roll (49 to 82), a trend which demonstrates the success and popularity of our school. This proposal for conversion would enable Fladbury to continue to remain financially stable and provide more school places for local children. Conversion would ensure a clear and high quality educational journey, for our pupils.

### **Who can propose and decide the changes?**

All schools in the Pershore pyramid have agreed to consult on the proposal for an area-wide transition to a two-tier system of education, however, there is no single decision-making body that can legally agree such a change for all schools. The Local Authority in their capacity as Education Authority have agreed to coordinate this consultation but are not able to solely determine these changes. For details on the types of changes and the decision-making powers for each school, please see below:

#### **For Local Authority Maintained (Community, Voluntary, Foundation) schools:**

##### ***Expansion & Change of Age Range***

The Governing Body of the school can propose and decide for all types of mainstream schools to permanently enlarge premises and increase capacity of a school if the increase will result in a change of less than 30 pupils **and** 25%). The Governing Body of voluntary and foundation schools only can propose an alteration of change of age range by up to 2 years (excluding adding or removing a sixth form).

##### **Changes to Admissions Policies**

###### ***Published Admissions Number (PAN) where an enlargement of premises has not taken place.***

Changes to admissions policies include alterations to the Published Admissions Number (PAN) of schools, as well as changes to feeder school links and other changes affected admission to a school. Admission authorities must set a PAN for each 'relevant age group' when determining their admission arrangements. If an admission authority of a mainstream school wishes to increase or decrease PAN, without increasing the overall capacity of the buildings, this would be classed as an admissions change, not a prescribed alteration. The statutory process described in this guidance would not need to be followed (please see the [School Admissions Code](#) for further details of the processes admission authorities must follow).

## **Admission Arrangements**

An age range change may, in certain circumstances require changes to admission arrangements in order to implement the change. In such cases, schools must follow the admissions variation process.

An amalgamation is also likely to require an in-year variation of the school's admission arrangements. A request for an alteration to admission arrangements, in line with process, can be made at the same time as the school makes an application for a significant change.

### [Link to Consultation on school admission arrangements](#)

## **The Impact of the Proposal**

Worcestershire County Council is committed to supporting schools, these proposals are expected to provide the following benefits to Pershore schools and local families:

- every child has a clear and transparent education journey;
- schools are supported to deliver good education outcomes in a stable and known education system; and
- schools are able to deliver a full curriculum and remain sustainable and financially viable.

## **Quality of provision and breadth of curriculum**

After consultation with parents and stakeholders the perceived impact on the quality of education for children is that it would be positive on a number of counts.

- The continuity of education through the primary years would be enhanced if children were to continue their primary education in one setting.
- Staff are fully trained and have experience in teaching children through key stage two.
- An understanding of the requirements of upper key stage 2 curriculum along with consultation with other primary schools have resulted in an appreciation of the facilities required to teach this age group and provide suitable resources.
- The educational outcomes for all pupils would be improved as staff would know and understand the needs of each individual child for an additional 2 years
- Provide more opportunity for siblings to attend the same school
- Provide contact with parents' and carers over a longer period of time providing a continuous relationship which would work to the benefit of all children particularly those with special educational needs.
- Align the school with other schools within the area  
Enable the school to grow its staff team resulting in a broader skill set and the capacity to deliver an excellent bespoke curriculum which sustains school improvements.

## **Accommodation Required**

Additional accommodation is required to convert to a Primary School. The school in Fladbury is situated at the centre of the village on a site adjacent to the village hall and Parish Church. The site can be extended with additional accommodation provided and a proposed PAN reduction to 15. Thereby serving 105 pupils with an additional 15 in the Pre School and four correctly sized classrooms.

After completing due diligence and consulting with architects and the Diocese, the Governing Body have identified how suitable accommodation could be achieved. The construction work could be phased. Phase 1 would be to initially enlarge two undersized classrooms and construct one new

classroom. Phase 2 would be to complete the provision of appropriate classrooms and remodel the two remaining undersized classrooms to form one correctly sized room and a smaller teaching space for Design and Technology.

The school will move towards managing classes by making use of space within the school building during construction work.

### **School Transport**

Changes to schools can have an impact on transport for individual pupils. However, the current Transport policy is designed to support schools and pupils in a settled education planning area, therefore, the policy is currently out of line for all options during transition phase but would be suitable once a single pathway is in place.

To manage this, for those pupils attending a school at the time of the change ordinarily eligible for transport support, special transport arrangements may be put in place to assist during the transition phase. Once the changes have been implemented any new pupils joining the school will be subject to the normal application of the transport policy.

### **School staff**

The impact of conversion would require an additional teacher.

### **Vulnerable pupils**

It is envisaged that the change to a single tier system will make education transitions clearer and more straightforward and support in particular pupils from vulnerable backgrounds.

There is a strong Gypsy, Roma, Traveller community within the wider Pershore area and a specific assessment will be undertaken to ensure pupils from this community are supported during this change.

### **Financial – Capital**

These proposals will have capital and revenue implications for Fladbury CofE First School. A detailed feasibility study has been completed for the school to understand full capital and revenue costs and accommodation implications.

The new building will require capital allocation from WCF to the school. An initial detailed feasibility report is complete and the project is expected to cost circa £539,000. If proposals proceed, WCF will request Cabinet support the capital required.

### **Financial – Revenue**

Revenue implications for schools are yet to be fully determined – whilst middle schools may be at increased risk from financial deficits during the change period as pupil numbers decrease, Primary and Secondary schools will have an increase in numbers and pupil-led funding, however it is likely to take time before revenue costs for primary schools are directly aligned with pupils in the classroom. The revenue implications will need to be reviewed and carefully managed on a school-by-school basis.

## Funding considerations for decision makers

When determining these proposals, the decision-maker in each case should be satisfied that any necessary funding required to implement the proposal will be available and that all relevant local parties (e.g. trustees of the school, diocese or relevant diocesan board) have given their agreement. A proposal cannot be approved conditionally upon funding being made available.

## Other education areas

Some schools in Pershore education planning area attract pupils from outside of the Pershore area, for example from Evesham, Droitwich and Worcester. These proposals could impact the number of pupils able to transition into the Pershore schools because of the proposed feeder school changes and the proposed changes of age range will alter the intake points.

## How and when if approved would the proposals be implemented?

As part of this consultation stakeholders are being asked to consider, if approved, when they would like the changes to take effect from. We have created a [Persnore Education Journey Tracker](#) for pupils, parents and professionals to see in detail how the three options below would change the journey for pupils in the Pershore education planning area should the proposals be approved, and the year groups available at each school.

There are three options to manage the proposed changes:

### **Option 1: Transition in line with natural progression, coordinated age range changes and coordinated accommodation changes. All changes made by September 2024.**

2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Year 5	Year 5	Year 5	Year 5	Year 5
Year 6	Year 6	Year 6	Year 6	Year 6
Year 7	Year 7	Year 7	Year 7	Year 7
Primary	Middle	High		

### **School changes**

- Change of age range at First schools in 2022 and 2023. All First schools to convert to Primary by September 2023
- Removal of Year 5 intake and change of age to remove year 7 for Middle schools from September 2023
- Increase of PAN and change of feeder links at Pershore High for 2023 to admit all pupils in year 7 in pyramid.

### **Impact**

- Final year 5 intake in September 2022 at Abbey Park Middle and St Nicholas Middle to be the only year group on roll in Middle schools in 2023/2024 (year 6).
- Students applying for Middle school places (1<sup>st</sup> September 2021 to 15<sup>th</sup> January 2022) for September 2022 will not know at point of application that Middle schools will not be delivering year 7 places.



**Option 2: Year groups 5 & 6 closed in Middle schools early, impacting pupils' journeys and greater impact for families. Children would need to change school after year 5 for one year. All changes made by September 2023.**

2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Year 5	Year 5	Year 5	Year 5	Year 5
Year 6	Year 6	Year 6	Year 6	Year 6
Year 7	Year 7	Year 7	Year 7	Year 7
Primary	Middle	High		

### **School changes**

- Most First schools to convert in '22. All schools to convert to Primary by September 2023
- Closure of Abbey Middle School and St Nicholas CE Middle from September 2023 and applications made by pupils in year 5 to transfer back to a Primary for Year 6. Change of age range of St Barnabas CE First and Middle for September 2023
- Increase of PAN and change of feeder links at Pershore High for 2023 to admit all pupils in year 7 in pyramid.

### **Impact**

- Middle school September 2022 year 5 intake would be required to make three school applications in three years (and three transport applications where applicable)
- Rapid change for Abbey Park First and Pinvin C.E. First which will jump from R-Y4 to R-Y6 on roll in single year.

**Option 3: Emergency variation to admissions changes resulting in limited time for consultation with stakeholders before the change is implemented. No intake into Middle schools in 2022. All changes and accommodation would need to be made by 2022. All changes made by September 2023.**

2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Year 5	Year 5	Year 5	Year 5	Year 5
Year 6	Year 6	Year 6	Year 6	Year 6
Year 7	Year 7	Year 7	Year 7	Year 7
Primary	Middle	High		

### **School changes**

- All First schools to convert for September 2022
- Emergency variation in admission arrangements for Abbey Park Middle and St Nicholas Middle School so that there is no intake in September 2022. School closure of Abbey Park Middle and St Nicholas Middle from September 2023.
- Change of age range and removal of year 5 intake for St Barnabas for September 2023..
- Increase of PAN and change of feeder links at Pershore High for 2023 to admit all pupils in year 7 in pyramid

### ***Impact***

- This will require emergency variation to admissions changes but will mean clearer pathway for pupils in year 5 in 2022
- Rapid change for First schools – several require accommodation changes so it may be difficult to manage
- This gives families the least amount of time before changes are made.

### **Who is being consulted?**

The consultation will be made available to:

- Parents and carers of pupils attending / known to the school
- Staff, Governors, Board Members of school and other local schools
- Local Parish, District and County Councillors
- Immediate neighbours of individual schools
- Local Member of Parliament
- Cabinet Member Responsible for Children and Families
- Cabinet Member Responsible for Education
- Unions
- Any other local stakeholder

### **How to respond to the consultation?**

#### **Consultation Phase – Monday 11<sup>th</sup> October to Friday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2021**

During the consultation phase anyone with an interest can express their views on the options expressed in this document and the individual school consultations.

It is very important that all those involved or have an interest have a say, we welcome your views.

All of the information available is accessible from the [Worcestershire County Council Pershore Review webpage](#) or the [school website](#).

The seven week consultation period commences on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> October and closes at noon on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2021. It is very important that all those wishing to respond to these proposals do so within this timeframe.

We are holding consultation event(s) to allow our stakeholders to learn more about our proposals and give the opportunity to provide feedback. A summary of events can be found in on page 2 of this document.

## **What happens next?**

### **How the decision will be made**

At the conclusion of this consultation period individual the Governing Body will consider any issues that have been raised before deciding whether to publish or submit statutory proposals to make changes.

The Governing Body will consider evidence from various sources in order to reach a considered view on the merits of the proposal. In particular the following factors:

- the response to the public consultation;
- the quality of education provision at the schools;
- demand for places at the school and in the local area;
- funding to cover the capital costs of the proposed change has been secured, and that there are no issues with the school's current budget and/or finances. In the case of expansions, academies must show they have sufficient funding for additional pupils, until lagged funding is received.

### **Submission of formal proposals**

The proposers will take note of issues raised during the consultation. At the conclusion of the consultation period a decision will be made whether to submit a formal proposal to the decision makers, requesting their support.

### **Governing Body Decisions**

If the Governing Bodies decide to support the proposals, they will need to be satisfied that the appropriate fair and open local consultation period has been carried out and they have given full consideration to all the responses received. Before making any changes GBs should ensure that:

- they have consulted with the LA to ensure the proposal is aligned with local place planning arrangements;
- they have secured any necessary funding;
- they have identified suitable accommodation and sites;
- they have secured planning permission and/or agreement on the transfer of land where necessary. The proposal can be approved subject to planning permission being granted;
- they have the consent of the site trustees or other land owner where the land is not owned by the GB;
- where a school is designated as having a religious character, they have the consent of the trustees of the school, the diocese or relevant diocesan board, or any other relevant faith body, where appropriate; and
- the admissions authority is content for the published admissions number (PAN) to be changed where this forms part of expansion plans, in accordance with the School Admissions Code.

### **Related proposals**

Where proposals appear to be related to other proposals, the decision-makers must consider the related proposals together. A proposal should be regarded as related if its implementation (or non-implementation) would prevent or undermine the effective implementation of another proposal.

The Local Authority will, as far as possible, seek to coordinate all proposals.

**It is very important that all those involved have a say. Please submit your comments by noon on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2021 by completing the online response form available on the school website and [WCC website](#). If you are unable to access the online response form you can obtain a paper copy from the school office.**

**Relevant documents:**

Cabinet Member Decision on Change of Age Ranges & Policy: [Cabinet Member Decision on Change of Age Ranges & Policy](#)

Cabinet Report: Responding to Change of Age Range requests from Maintained Community Schools or Change of Age Range Consultations form other types of Schools Jan 2020: [Cabinet Report: Responding to Change of Age Range requests](#)

School Sufficiency and Organisation for the Pershore Area September 2021: [School Sufficiency and Organisation for the Pershore Area](#)

HeadTeacher Board record of decision Avonreach Multi-Academy Trust Change of Age ranges for The Orchard, Inkberrow, Norton-Juxta-Kempsey and Pershore High Dec 2018 [\[ARCHIVED CONTENT\]](#) ([nationalarchives.gov.uk](http://nationalarchives.gov.uk))