

PROPOSAL TO CHANGE THE AGE RANGE OF: HONITON PRIMARY SCHOOL

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School and Local Authority details:

Honiton Primary School
Clapper Lane
Honiton
Devon
EX14 1QF

Local Authority: Devon County Council, County Hall, Topsham Road, Exeter, Devon, EX2 4QD

Change of Age Range

Devon County Council is proposing to change the age range of Honiton Primary School from 3-11 to 2-11 years of age with effect from 22 April 2025.

Proposal and Evidence of demand

Honiton Primary School is a Community School maintained by Devon County Council for ages 3-11 with a Nursery Class for children aged 3 and 4 years of age.

The proposal is to extend the provision to also take 2 year olds. There is demand in the area for provision for 2 year olds and Devon County Council is projecting an increase in demand for early years places as a result of the Government's increased childcare funding entitlements for working parents. The following changes to childcare funding for working parents are the key drivers for change:

- From April 2024, most working parents of 2-year-olds have been able to access 15 hours per week entitlement; this is in addition to the more disadvantaged families that will continue to get 15 hours a week of funded provision.
- From September 2024, most working parents of children aged 9 months up to 3-years-old can access 15 hours per week.
- From September 2025, most working parents of children aged 9 months up to when the child starts at school can access 30 hours funded childcare per week for 38 weeks of the year.

Parents/carers of children in the Nursery Class will still need to make a separate application to Devon County Council for a place in the reception class.

Objectives:

Extending the age range of the school will allow children to attend local early years provision and help meet demand in the local area. The proposal will enable a smooth transition into the Reception class and early support for any child who may require additional support. The school would be able to establish the strongest links possible with families from the outset working to support them from a younger age.

The school would be able to support more parents and carers in finding high quality, flexible provision in the local area and offer a wider parental choice. The school will be able to support children from 2 years old to develop the skills ready to start in the reception class. Being able to offer places from 2-years-old will provide greater consistency and continuity for children before starting at school and enable staff to make a more significant impact through earlier identification of their needs. By enabling children to start in the nursery at two-years-old a transition point for some children will be removed. It is commonly accepted that when transitioning learning can be detrimentally impacted.

Education standards

Honiton Primary School is an Ofsted 'Good' School (December 2023). Ofsted identified that children get off to a flying start at the school with well thought-out provision in the early years foundation stage promoting learning effectively. Ofsted reported that the Nursery and Reception years are a hive of activity with a strong culture of 'no time wasted for learning'. The curriculum prepares children well for Year 1.

Inspection reports are available via: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

The effect on other Schools, Academies, and educational institutions in the area:

It is not considered that there will be an adverse impact on other local early years providers or other educational institutions. Devon County Council's Early Years and Childcare service have reviewed sufficiency data to ensure this proposal does not have a detrimental impact on other early years providers in the area.

Other schools, academies and local early years providers have been consulted with and no responses have been received from them.

Project Costs

No capital funding is required.

Planning consent is not required.

It is envisaged that this proposal will be cost neutral as the Early Years funding will be received where children are eligible and by parental subscription where they are not.

Implementation and any proposed stages for implementation:

The proposal, if approved, will be implemented with effect from 22 April 2025.

Effect on existing pupils

The proposal will not affect the capacity of the school, nor the Published Admission Number (PAN) for school aged children and will not put pressure on existing classroom space.

Pre-publication Consultation

A pre-publication consultation took place between 16 January 2025 to 13 February 2025.

Three responses were received.

Devon's neighbouring Local Authorities are routinely consulted. One response has been received from Cornwall County Council with no objection given that the school is at considerable distance to the Cornish border and understanding the need for additional 2-year old provision and the role some schools will play in creating some of the required additional provision.

A response was received from Honiton Town Council who considered the proposal at their Full Council meeting and agreed to support the proposal to extend the age range.

A further response was received from a Devon County Councillor in support.

Response to formal representation period

You can object to or comment on the proposals by:

Emailing: schoolconsultations@devon.gov.uk

Writing to: Shona Meek, Strategic Planning Children's Services, Room 120, Devon County Council, County Hall, Topsham Road, Exeter, EX2 4QD.

by the closing date of midnight on 24 March 2025.

All responses will be considered by Devon County Council and will be shared with the school's leadership team and governors, unless you request otherwise.

Please see Devon County Council's Privacy Notice:

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/privacy/privacy-notices/privacy-notice-for-representations-to-school-organisation-statutory-consultations/>

Please note that all responses will be properly considered by Devon County Council, the school's leadership team and Governing Body, but we will not send individual responses to any specific points raised.