

Headteacher: Mrs C.V. Morley

Theale C of E Primary School

Englefield Road, Theale, Berkshire RG7 5AS

Telephone: 0118 9302239

e-mail: office@theale.w-berks.sch.uk

website: www.thealeprimary.co.uk

17th January 2024

CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSED CLOSURE OF THE NURSERY CLASS AT THEALE C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL.

Dear Parents/carers,

What are we consulting you on?

Theale C of E Primary School is a voluntary controlled school with a nursery class which currently offers part-time free early education to three and four year olds; the early years free entitlement.

The class has 26 places and offers parents morning sessions for a total of 15 hours per week, and is open only during term-times.

This consultation is about a proposal to close the school's nursery class with effect from September 2024 and as a result to raise the school's lower age range from three to four years.

Why are we doing this?

The number of children on the school roll in the nursery class has been falling in recent years and this has caused significant pressure on the school's overall budget. Over the past 6 years the numbers on the roll have shown a downward trend and we have no reason to believe that this might be reversed in the short to medium term.

School Year	Number of children enrolled in nursery
2018/2019	26
2019/2020	20
2020/2021	21
2021/2022	25
2022/2023	16
2023/2024	11

Alternative local provision.

In terms of alternative early years provision for children and parents, close to Theale there are several local schools with a nursery, including Calcot Infant school and nursery and Mrs Blands Infant and nursery. There are also a number of private nurseries.

We understand that the other local school nurseries are not full and have vacancies and so the number of children attending those nurseries may be boosted by the closure of Theale's nursery class.

Working parents of three and four year olds are entitled to 30 hours free childcare, which is double the amount of time offered by Theale. Working parents (and both parents of the majority of children in the school do work) may well want and need childcare which is offered outside school hours and terms, and is not offered by Theale.

What impact will the proposed changes have?

The proposed change will close the nursery class at Theale Primary School and raise the school's lower age range from three to four years, and this means that parents who wanted their children to attend the school's nursery from September 2024 will have to choose an alternative early years provider.

What does this mean if my child is already in the nursery class?

There will be no impact on your child as they will be moving to reception class (at Theale or another school) in September 2024.

What is the process of consultation and change?

The timeline for these proposals is outlined below:

31st December 2023 – the Governing Body confirmed that it wishes to consult on a proposal to close the schools' nursery.

17th January 2024 to 17th February 2024– the consultation period, which is one month.

19th February 2024 to 1st March 2024 – the school and the Governing Body will analyse the responses received during the consultation.

7th March 2024– the Governing Body to decide whether to proceed with closure of the nursery.

24th July 2024 – last day of nursery class, if closure agreed.

Will this decision be reviewed in the future?

The school and the Governing Body will review this decision from time to time, depending on whether there is demand within the area for the school to offer a nursery. The nursery could therefore re-open in the future, but it would need to be financially sustainable.

Having your say

We welcome feedback from everyone and this can be given as follows. The completed questionnaire (see the following page) and supplementary feedback can be shared as follows:

- Email to office@theale.w-berks.sch.uk
- In writing addressed to the Headteacher, Theale Cof E Primary, Englefield Road, Theale, Berkshire, RG7 5AS.

Your email or letter should state that you are responding to the consultation regarding the proposed closure of the nursery.

We need to receive your feedback by midnight on 17th February 2024 for us to be able to take it into account.

**CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE PROPOSED CLOSURE OF THE
NURSERY CLASS AT THEALE CofE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Q.1 Please tell us in what capacity you are responding by ticking one box

Please tick

- Parent of child at Theale’s nursery
- Parent of child not at Theale’s nursery
- Staff at Theale.
- Governor of Theale’s
- Manager/owner/staff member from another local childcare provider
- Headteacher/staff/governor of another local maintained or voluntary aided primary school
- Headteacher/staff/governor at local independent school
- Other (please state)

If you are responding as a representative of a group, please name the group clearly (e.g. governing body of xxx school) and the number of people you are representing.

.....

Q.2 Do you agree in principle to the closure of the nursery class at Theale from September 2024?

Yes/No

Any comments.....

Q.3 Before you heard about this proposal, were you planning to send a child to Theale’s nursery in the future?

.....

Q.4 If you have a child who is currently attending Theale’s (in reception or years 1 to 6) or is a former pupil of the school, did you send your child to Theale’s nursery?

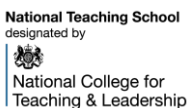
.....

Q.5 If your answer to Q.4 above is no, could you please explain why you did not send your child to Theale’s nursery (e.g. the hours were insufficient for your needs)

.....

Q.6 Would you send your child to Theale’s nursery if it was full-time during term time and you had to pay towards the additional hours which are over the 15 funded hours that we currently provide?

.....



Q.7 If the answer to Q.6 above is yes, what do you mean by full-time? During term time, would that be:
8.45am to 3.25pm / 7.50am to 5.45pm / other (please say):

.....

Any other comments:

.....

.....

.....

.....