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St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School Nursery Consultation

22nd November 2024

Part of

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Introduction

Xavier Catholic Education Trust and St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School are consulting on a proposal to lower the age range of the school from 4 to 11 years to 2 to 11 years, to provide a nursery class and the creation of a Foundation Stage Unit (FSU) within the school from September 2025.

This initiative is in line with government policy to expand provision for children aged 2-5 and in particular, increase provision that can be easily accessed in local schools. To this end, St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary is applying for the DfE's School Based Nursery Capital Grant to fund the work needed to create the nursery on the school site.

This document outlines the Consultation process and timescales for lowering the school age to facilitate the nursery class and invites you to submit your views.

Background

St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School is a one form entry primary school in Englefield Green. The school is at the heart of its Catholic Community.

The Trust and Local Governing committee believe that a nursery class will benefit the children and families in the local community, through the provision of high-quality affordable childcare and quality education for children from 2 years to 11 years, enabling families to use their Government Funded Early Education childcare entitlement at one setting without top-up fees, as well as offering the possibility of extended hours childcare for working parents during and outside of school and term time hours.

A community survey carried out last year was overwhelmingly positive, with many families stating, they would use the nursery, and a clear demand for places from September.

The Proposal

The Xavier Catholic Education Trust is proposing to lower the age range of St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School from 4 years to 11 years, to 2 years to 11 years. Xavier Catholic Education Trust has followed the DfE guidance by consulting with Surrey County Council and the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton before making this proposal.

Why are we proposing to change the age range of St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School?

We propose that St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School should expand its age range from 4-11 to 2-11 to better serve our community. This change is in response to the growing demand for high-quality nursery provision within a school setting. By introducing a nursery class, we aim to provide a seamless educational journey for children, reducing the number of transitions they experience. Additionally, research indicates that parents prefer their children to start nursery with us, ensuring continuity and ease for families. This expansion will help us meet the needs of our community while maintaining the high standards of education we are known for. The Trust already has two highly successful nursery provisions at St Charles Borromeo School in Weybridge and St Joseph's Catholic Primary School in Guildford.

The increase of our Foundation Stage offer will also allow children to progress in line with their developmental age rather than chronological age, by providing fluidity between the nursery class and reception class where appropriate and enable our educationalists to deliver high quality early years and primary education, covering a rich and varied curriculum, something that we do very well.

A school-based nursery also supports the Government's Policy on providing 15 and 30 hours Funded Early Education for 2-, 3- and 4-year-olds in schools, and we will also aim to provide wrap around care outside of school hours. As additional support for parents, we will consider holiday opening of the facility in line with the existing holiday club provision in the main school.

Our Vision

Through lowering the school age to incorporate a nursery class and creating a complete foundation stage, Xavier aims to fulfil its mission to **inspire, nurture and fulfil the calling of every person we encounter and the potential of every school we serve; growing together in faith, hope and love.**

This links to the vision of St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School:

With Christ as our role model, together we can give our children the roots to grow and the wings to fly.

We aim to give children of all abilities every opportunity to develop their academic, social, emotional, spiritual, and physical aspects of learning. We will combine our outdoor resources, including forest school and playing fields, strong community links and rich and broad curriculum to develop confident, motivated, and responsible children who will be prepared for secondary school and make a positive contribution to society and their local community.

Xavier Catholic Education Trust believes that the creation of the nursery class will:

- Optimise the use of our facilities and capitalise on our expertise and knowledge of education and early years foundation stage provision, and through the provision of a qualified teacher in early years.
- Ensure quality education across the Early Years Framework - communication and language, physical development, personal, social and emotional development, literacy, mathematics, understanding the world, and expressive arts and design
- Improve children's life chances by:
 - Providing a flying start to school life with a focus on developing language, social skills and physical development within a dedicated and enabling environment
 - Welcoming families to the St Cuthbert's family at the earliest opportunity so that all children, including our most vulnerable, benefit from firm foundations to their school life
 - Identifying special educational needs and disabilities, and social, emotional and mental health needs of children, to ensure early interventions are put in place
 - Closing the gap in attainment of pupil premium children and their peers
 - Developing a love of reading through carefully selected quality texts
- Attract even more first choice applications to St Cuthbert's and help realise the associated positive impacts of this, such as financial benefits of a full school, community cohesion

through the provision of local nursery places for local children, parental involvement and outreach, reduced traffic, and long-term friendships and feeling of belonging

- Ensure the financial sustainability of the school for future generations of children in the area
- Provide continuity of education from 2 to 11 years and wrap around care for local working parents
- Align with Surrey County Council's strategy and Ofsted's preference for school-attached early years education
- Provide employment opportunities within the area

The nursery class will be located in a dance studio with its large surrounding outside space providing capacity for 26 nursery places. This area is ideally situated so that a self-contained nursery would not impact on the day-to-day running of the school, but would be able to be accessed easily by St Cuthbert's staff. Nursery children would also be able to access school facilities and outdoor spaces, as well as joining for appropriate school events.

We appreciate local families, with and without children, our neighbours, local residents, and local early years providers will have a number of questions. To help answer some of your initial queries the Trust, School Leaders and Early Years Leader have compiled a list of Frequently Asked Questions (see below).

Why are we consulting now?

Following an initial survey, which indicated a need and desire within the local community for nursery provision at St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School, the Xavier Trust are following the non-statutory consultation process as required for schools applying for the School Based Nursery Capital Grant, which also incorporates the process to make a significant change to an academy. This application is progressing in consultation with the Local Authority and the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton.

Changes to the DfE/Ofsted Regulations enabling schools to include provision for 2, 3 and 4 year olds will ensure that the nursery provision will be included within the school's inspection process.

If the Trust is successful in securing capital funding to support this project, it is hoped that the provision will open at the start of the Autumn term 2025, for children who are aged 2 and over.

Will the Proposal have any impact on the school's admission arrangements?

Currently we offer 30 reception places each year for local children. There are no planned changes to the Published Admission Number (PAN) of 30 reception places.

In line with the Schools Admission Code 2021, we are unable to provide an automatic right for children attending the nursery class to gain a reception place at the school. Parents of children applying for a reception place would need to apply in the normal way for admission to the primary school whether their child attends the nursery provision or not in line with the admission policy published on the school website. However, by attracting local families to the nursery class, we hope that the majority of families will be successful should they choose to apply to reception class at St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School.

Finance and resourcing

The provision will be financed through a combination of government funding and fees.

The nursery will be free at point of delivery, accepting early years funding covering 15 (or 30 where applicable) Funded Early Education (FEE) hours of provision for each 3 and 4 year old and 2 year olds eligible for Funded Early Education (FEET). Additionally, subject to availability, it will be possible to increase sessions on a paid basis.

The provision will be managed by staff at St Cuthbert's and Xavier Catholic Education Trust.

Capital planning and buildings

The new nursery class will be based in the dance studio within the school grounds. This location requires some alterations, such as changes to toilets, a nappy changing area as well as some extensions of the space and landscaping of the outdoor spaces. It is hoped this work will be funded by the School Based Nursery Capital Grant.

Consultations, approvals and overall timescales

It is proposed that the nursery opens, and age range is lowered from September 2025, subject to site work being completed.

This change requires a period of non-statutory consultation. running from 22nd November to 13th December. During this period, Xavier Catholic Education Trust supported by the Diocese and Surrey County Council, will share its proposals with the wider professional network, local schools, local community, partner agencies, and the staff and parents of the school.

This will provide an opportunity for consultees to make their views known before a final decision is taken. Following the consultation period, the Xavier Trust will consider responses and apply to the DfE to make a decision regarding the nursery site, taking into account the consultation responses. The decision will be published on the school's website once the funding bid outcome is available in Spring 2025.

Have your say

The Xavier Trust and St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School would like to know what key stakeholders feel about the proposal. The consultation will open on **22nd November** for three weeks. You can respond by:

- Accessing the consultation online on the school's website:
- Completing the consultation response form that is available alongside this document. You can email the form or print it, complete it and send it back to info@stcuthberts.surrey.sch.uk
- All responses must be received by **13th December 2024**

What happens next

We will hold an online public meeting for parents and any other interested parties to discuss the

proposal and to hear the views that people have. As a public meeting, anyone who wishes to may attend. The online event will be held on the 27th November 2024, at 6pm. There will be a short presentation followed by questions and answers. Please join to share your views and ask questions. You do not need to have a child at the school to join the meeting. Please use this link to join the meeting: [St Cuthbert's Consultation Meeting – Teams](#)

At the end of the consultation period, we will review all the responses received and share these with Surrey County Council and the Diocese. We will update the school community once the outcome of the bid is known which is anticipated to be Spring 2025.

Consultation response form

Also available online at <https://forms.office.com/e/maNatxiy9W>

Proposal to lower the age range of St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School, Englefield Green from 4 to 11 years to 2 to 11 years to create a Nursery Class as part of Foundation Stage Provision from September 2025, to ensure the school meets the needs of local families.

Name (optional):

Relationship with the school e.g. parent, local business:

1. **I SUPPORT** the proposal to lower the age range of St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School from 4 to 11 years to 2 to 11 years from September 2025, to facilitate a nursery class.

OR

2. **I DO NOT SUPPORT** the proposal to lower the age range of St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School from 4 to 11 years to 2 to 11 years from September 2025, to facilitate a nursery class.

My reasons are:

Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

1. Will you provide places for children in receipt of 15 and 30 hours Funded Early Education entitlement?

Yes, we offer places to children in receipt of 30 and 15 Funded Early Education (FEE and FEET) hours. All 3 and 4 year olds are eligible for 15h FEE, some 3 and 4 year olds are eligible for 30h FEE, and some 2 year olds are eligible for 15 hours FEET.

2. Can additional hours above FEE or FEET funded hours be purchased and if so, how much will it cost? Yes, after using your 15 or 30 FEE/FEET (free) hours during core hours, you may book additional core hours. Details of costs and availability will be released as plans for the nursery progress.

3. What entrances will be used? Can we come onto site to drop off within setting?

4. Parents will use the separate gate as used by the Breakfast club provision and access the Nursery directly.

5. If we attend the nursery, do we have to go to the school?

Although we hope that you will want your child to continue their education at St Cuthbert's, there is no requirement for you to apply to Reception class at St Cuthbert's

6. If we attend the nursery, do we get a priority place for the school?

No. Currently no mainstream school in England can offer priority places to children attending a school-attached nursery. All parents wishing their child to join the school in Reception class will need to apply in line with the school's admission arrangements detailed on our website each year. However, children in the Foundation Stage Unit will be able to move between the Reception class and nursery class as determined by their developmental stage, even if they will not be joining Reception class or did not attend the nursery class.

7. What areas of the school will the children have access to?

Whilst the nursery children will remain in their dedicated space for the majority of the time, the children will, on occasion, visit the main site for events such as Masses and assemblies; as well as using the school field and prayer garden.

8. Will the nursery children mix with older children and their siblings?

The nursery children will integrate with our older year groups, through (occasional) shared assemblies, concerts, sports days, other events throughout the year, our buddy and siblings' system. Nursery and Reception outdoor play areas are separate but adjacent to older years to ease transition.

9. Will there be a teacher in the nursery?

Yes, the nursery class will be run by a qualified teacher in Early Years.

10. Do you have qualified first aiders?

Yes, staff will hold Pediatric Level 3 First Aid Qualification

11. How will you manage increased traffic as a result of this change?

The addition of 26 nursery pupils will increase the number on roll at St Cuthbert's by only 10%. Additionally, indications are a high level of siblings will be accessing the nursery as one of the key benefits will be having families in one place. As a result, we are not anticipating a significant increase in traffic.

12. Where do the meals come from?

Meals will be prepared in our onsite kitchen and brought over to the nursery.

13. Will the children be expected to wear school uniform? What does my child need to wear?

Yes, nursery children have the option of wearing a Nursery polo shirt and/or sweatshirt with their own clothes. This is to provide a sense of belonging to St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary

School. Children need to wear appropriate, comfortable footwear and will need wellies kept onsite for Forest School; growing activities and to access the outdoor learning environment. Additionally, appropriate outdoor clothing will be needed for Forest School sessions during the Winter months.

14. Will it be free flow to an outdoor area?

Yes, the nursery has an outdoor sheltered play area and free-flow access will be available each day. We encourage outdoor learning and your child will be able to move freely between the inside and outside learning environment throughout all seasons. This will be replicated in the EYFS classrooms.