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www.stmaryscephprimary.co.uk  
Headteacher: Mr. M. Piper

26<sup>th</sup> June 2024

Dear Parents, Carers and members of the community,

26<sup>th</sup> June 2024 Consultation to extend the age range of St Mary's Church of England Primary School from 3-11 to 2-11 year olds

This is a proposal to extend the age range of our school so that we are able to offer up to 5 places for 2 year olds. The places will be for children eligible for 15 hours of free early education or parents/carers who wish to pay for a place for their child.

As you will know the aim of our Nursery provision currently is to prepare our children for starting school and supports with the transition into Reception year. The proposed 2-year old provision will be part of the school's current Nursery and will enable even more development opportunities for local children providing a route into our school and continued close working relationships with school staff.  
2 year old sessions

Existing arrangements for the number of children catered for in the morning and afternoon sessions in the Nursery will remain but with 5 places for 2 year olds within the morning sessions. All children within the Nursery will benefit from high quality play-based curriculum with the familiar staff who are part of the staff team at the school under the overall management of Mr Piper as Head Teacher.

Impact on School

We are confident that this change will have a positive impact on school. The school is well established as part of the Durham and Newcastle Diocesan Learning Trust and has a dedicated challenge, improvement and support partner from the Trust as well as access to support networks across many areas including an Early Years Network to support staff. The change will help continue to ensure a smooth transition for those children who then move from our Nursery into Reception and greater transition and support into the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Process

Once the public consultation period has finished, a summary of the feedback will be submitted to the Department for Education as part of our application to request that they agree to the school lowering its age range as set out above. Subject to the outcome of this consultation, and the Department for Education granting its consent, we would aim for school having an age range of 2- 11 by 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024 at the latest.



Durham and Newcastle Diocesan Learning Trust is a company limited by guarantee (Company Number 10847279) and exempt charity registered in England and Wales at the Cai Building 4th Floor, Coble Dene, Royal Quays, North Shields, Tyne And Wear, United Kingdom, NE29 6DE.

Public consultation

We wish to invite views on this proposal and this consultation starts today 26<sup>th</sup> June 2024 and will run until Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2024. Comments and questions can be sent to the following email address between these dates: [office@stmarysprimary.co.uk](mailto:office@stmarysprimary.co.uk).

Should they be required, we can set up individual consultation meetings by phone or virtually to discuss any particular queries on request. We will endeavour to answer all queries which are not addressed above and all comments and queries will be taken into account by the Academy Council and the Trust in deciding whether to proceed with this proposal to lower the age range of the school.

Yours sincerely,

Mr M Piper  
Headteacher



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