



BARTON PARK
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Together, we grow

Consultation

Proposal to lower the age range of
Barton Park Primary School

Consultation opens:

Wednesday 09/02/2022

Consultation closes:

Wednesday 09/03/2022

1. Introduction

This paper outlines a detailed explanation of the proposed change to lower the age range of Barton Park Primary School, the rationale behind the change, the potential impact of the change and the process and timelines involved.

2. Background

Barton Park Primary School opened as a new school in September 2020, serving the new development of Barton Park in Oxford City. In February 2022 the school joined the River Learning Trust.

The Trust who originally opened Barton Park Primary School, had previously decided to work with a partner organisation to open the nursery provision on site. However, these plans have since stalled and the partner provider has been unable to fulfil this commitment. As such, the nursery provision is currently unused and the school is now seeking to open this provision directly. The school will be taking 3 and 4 year old children from April 2022, and would like to also take 2 year olds from September 2022.

3. Proposal

The proposal is to lower the age range of the school from 3-11 to 2-11 from September 2022.

4. Why are we making this proposal?

When Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) initially consulted on the opportunity for a new primary school in Barton Park in 2013, the education specification was for a school that could cater for 3-11 year olds. As such the school was initially registered as a 3-11 provision when it opened in September 2020.

In the Barton Park area, there is an identified need for additional 2 year old places: the DfE identified 18 children living in the area in summer 2021, but only 8 of these children secured a place at an early years provision. The -as yet unopened- nursery provision at Barton Park Primary School has been factored into OCC's sufficiency assessment for two year olds, and the delay to opening this provision means parents in the area may be finding it hard to find local nursery provision. OCC has stated that it is therefore keen for Barton Park Primary School to extend its new provision to also accommodate 2 year olds. In order to do this, the age range of the school needs to be lowered.

The benefits of Barton Park opening two year old provision includes:

- Increased access to early education provision for the local community
- Parents with children attending both school and nursery provision have the opportunity to access this on a single site
- Meeting the needs of parents in the area to enable them to work
- Improving outcomes for children: research shows that children who attend high quality preschool provision tend to do better throughout school, particularly in reading
- Ensuring that the numbers of children entering Barton Park Primary School at school age are maintained
- As a result of increasing demand in the area it is unlikely that other pre-school providers would experience a reduction in numbers

5. How will this new provision work?

The nursery provision can accommodate up to 30 children at any one time, but the precise number of two year old children the nursery can accommodate will depend upon the staffing structure, which may change over time.

At present the proposal is for there to be a minimum of eight 2 year old places available during term time only. Additional places may become available, but will only be considered after places for 3 and 4 year olds have been allocated (indicatively 22 places). Places will be allocated on a termly basis, and the deadline for when to apply and the notification date will be published on the school's website, but will generally be half a term before the intended start date.

Places will be prioritised based on:

- 1) Children who have a valid code for free early years' entitlement and who live in the catchment area of the school with a sibling on roll
- 2) Children who have a valid code for free early years' entitlement and who live in the catchment area of the school
- 3) Children who live in the catchment area of the school with a sibling on roll at the school
- 4) Children who live in the catchment area of the school
- 5) Other Children (including those with a valid code for free early years' entitlement, but who do not live in the catchment area of the school)

Within each criteria children will be ranked by date of birth, the oldest first.

6. Why are we consulting?

In line with the Department for Education's guidance [Making significant changes to an open academy](#), the lowering of the school age range is considered a *Significant Change* and the decision needs to be confirmed by the Secretary of State, through the Regional School Commissioner's office, with the change noted in the school's Supplementary Funding Agreement. The decision process requires there to be a four week consultation period to allow interested stakeholders the opportunity to comment on or object to the proposal.

7. Impact of proposal

- Will the change impact the schools admissions arrangements?

No; admissions to the school are separate from admissions to the nursery. Children on roll in the nursery will not have any priority over other children and they must apply to the school in the normal admissions process through the Local Authority.

- What financial implications are there?

The school will need to staff and effectively resource this new provision. This will be funded through place funding, a combination of funding from Oxfordshire County Council for children who are eligible for the 2 Year Old Free Entitlement and from paid places.

- Are any adaptations to the building required?

No; the school building includes a nursery provision (81.9m²) that has three toilets and an accessible toilet / changing facilities that can accommodate up to 30 children at any one time.

- **Without an Ofsted judgement, how can parents be confident this provision will be high quality?**

As Barton Park Primary is a new school it has not yet had an Ofsted inspection. However, the school is part of River Learning Trust which operates 28 schools across Oxfordshire and Swindon, including 19 primary schools, 13 of which have nursery classes, and four of these nurseries include provision for 2 year olds. The Trust has a wealth of knowledge in delivering effective nursery provision and the RLT Early Years Support and Challenge Partner is working with the school as it seeks to establish this new provision for 2, 3 and 4 year olds.

- **How will opening nursery provision for two year olds at Barton Park Primary School impact on other pre-school providers in the area?**

Barton Park is a new housing development in Oxford City. As part of the plans for meeting the needs of the new development, the school was planned with a nursery provision on site, and the capacity was planned into the County's Sufficiency Assessment. However, this provision has not yet opened and there is a demonstrable need for additional places that the existing market is not able to meet. The DfE identified 18 funded 2 year olds living in the Barton Park area in Summer 2021. Of those, 8 found places at a variety of providers. The remaining 10 do not appear to have found places to date. It is therefore considered that the introduction of 2 year old places at the school will not impact on the existing pre-school providers in the area.

8. Getting involved with this consultation

This consultation will be open for the statutory required 4 weeks, and will close on **Wednesday 9 March at 3pm**.

You can respond to the consultation by completing the [online form](#) or emailing the governors at office@bartonpark.org

Or you can write to the Governors at:

Barton Park Primary School, Barton Fields Road, Oxford. OX3 9WN

A hard copy of this document can be requested from the office. Please phone: 01865 415800.

9. What happens next?

At the end of the consultation period, the governors of Barton Park Primary School will review all of the responses received and take views into consideration. A summary of the process and any responses will be reported to the River Learning Trust Board.

Subject to the responses and the decision of the Local Governing Body for Barton Park Primary School, River Learning Trust will liaise with the Regional Schools Commissioners Office to seek to make a variation to the school's funding agreement and adjust the age range of the school.

If the approvals are all received in time, then the school plans to open a 2 year old provision from September 2022.