

Equality Analysis Toolkit

Raising of the School Age at

**Barnoldswick Gisburn Road Community Primary School
For Decision Making Items**

7 December 2023



Question 1 - What is the nature of and are the key components of the proposal being presented?

The increasing of the school age at Barnoldswick Gisburn Road Community Primary School from 3 to 11 years to 4 to 11 years with effect from 31 December 2023.

Question 2 - Scope of the Proposal

Is the proposal likely to affect people across the county in a similar way or are specific areas likely to be affected – e.g., are a set number of branches/sites to be affected?

This relates to the Barnoldswick area only.

Question 3 – Protected Characteristics Potentially Affected

Could the proposal have a particular impact on any group of individuals sharing protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, namely:

- Age
- Disability including Deaf people
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race/ethnicity/nationality
- Religion or belief
- Sex/gender
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage or Civil Partnership Status

And what information is available about these groups in the County's population or as service users/customers?

No. The proposal is focused on provision for 3 to 4 year olds.

As evidenced in the annual LCC Childcare Sufficiency Assessment report there is more than sufficient good quality providers in the Barnoldswick area.

There should be no adverse impact upon pupils currently attending the facility. As those who are 3 will remain in the nursery, although the management arrangements will change.



Question 4 – Engagement/Consultation

How have people/groups been involved in or engaged with in developing this proposal?

On 3 March 2023, Cabinet gave approval for the local authority to publish a statutory notice to consult on the proposal to permanently raise the school's age range from 3 to 11 years to 4 to 11 years, with effect from 31 December 2023.

The statutory representation period took place from 14 September 2023 to 2 November 2023, which is longer than the minimum four week period suggested within DfE guidance 'School Organisation: Maintained Schools: Guidance for Proposers and Decision Makers', to account for the half term holiday period. This consisted of a statutory public notice being issued in the local newspaper and copies of the public notice being displayed at the school and also in local libraries, the LCC website and in the Pendle Borough Council's office.

The public notice and the statutory proposal were sent to a wide range of stakeholders, including County Councillors, parish councils and union representatives. LCC also published the information on the website. In addition to this, the school wrote to all parents and carers to inform them of this process and included all the relevant information on their website.

3 responses were received to the consultation:

Response 1.

The first reply was from local Parish Councillors who were concerned about the possible impact on local families, financial impact, the tight timescales and the availability of nursery provision in the area.

Answer

As Gisburn Road Nursery will not be closing, merely changing to Governor led provision, there is no requirement for other nurseries to absorb additional numbers because the nursery will continue with no change to its provision. The number of places offered reflects the year-on-year admission numbers seen by Gisburn Road School. If in a year of high birth rate there is a greater demand for places, then additional staff can be employed to maintain pupil to staff ratios and accommodate the additional children.

The provision will not change and so those parents who have planned for their children to start at Gisburn Road next year will not be affected and will still be offered a place as per the admissions policy.

The Governor led provision will prove more financially viable in the long run, as there is no requirement for the nursery to have a teacher leading the provision. Therefore, when a member of the teaching staff chooses to leave the school they can be replaced by a level 3 teaching assistant. This would provide considerable savings for the school.

Response 2.



Nursery is an essential element of young children learning to bond and socialise with their peers.

The removal of state nursery provision will impact on parents, usually mothers, trying to continue with their careers.

Private nursery is prohibitively expensive and can consume a large part of a full-time income for many workers.

Answer:

As previously stated, the Nursery provision is not being removed. Gisburn Road School Nursery will offer the same nursery places as before. Both 15 and 30 hour government funded places are offered. If parents receiving 15 hour funding wish to top up to a 30 hour place, then providing places are available payment for the additional 15 hours can be made. This is charged at a rate of £4.50 per hour, which is equivalent to the hourly rate school receives for the 15 and 30 hour funded places.

As far as parents and pupils are concerned, the nursery provision will not change. The Section 27 affects only the management of the provision, not the service offered.

Response 3

I am writing to you with regards to the proposed closure of Barnoldswick Gisburn Road Community Primary School nursery. I don't find the letter clear in that it refers to the age range being increased from 3-11 to 4-11 years old. Does that mean that any child currently in the nursery room that turns 4 before the 31st December will still be able to go to the school just not in the nursery room or will they not be eligible until September 2024 when their year group will be starting reception class?

Some points that I would like the council to consider during this consultation period are as follows,

- Why would the council choose to take this action half way through a school year, surely this measure would be better implemented at the end of the school year so it would have less impact of the people that it is most going to affect
- The mental impact on the children that have only just started at the pre-school (nursery), having to move into a new environment and form new relationships
- The financial burden on the parents who have just spent in excess of £200 on uniform, shoes, PE kit, book bags etc. only to be informed 2 weeks into the term that there is a proposal to close the nursery
- The LCC Childcare Sufficiency Assessment reporting that there is more than sufficient good quality providers in the Pendle area does not take into account the practicalities of moving a child to another nursery in Pendle. The likelihood is that most families with children at this nursery will live within a 2 mile radius and potentially work in this area as well. Even though the reports claims there are more than enough suitable providers it does not take into account the impracticality of driving to a nursery in Nelson with space to then drive back to work in the Barnoldswick, Earby area. From



personal experience when Kelbrook's Brook Farm nursery closed (Pre-school room) in June of this year we found it extremely hard to find a place for our daughter in this area but were very grateful to find that there were still limited places available at Gisburn Road School nursery

- What impact will this have on the staff who currently run the nursery
- Please specify what the "new on-site governor led provision" is. How will it be operated, what impact will it have on those children, will they have the same quality of support and learning opportunities
- Please provide reasons to justify the statement that "the nursery closure will not have an adverse impact on the community". With the closure of other local providers and potentially this nursery there will be a downturn in nursery places of at least 60 places. I would consider that to be an adverse impact of the community.

Answer:

This parent was contacted, directly by the School Business Manager, when this feedback was received to alleviate any misunderstandings and address concerns, immediately.

He was assured the nursery provision was not closing and would continue to provide the same Pre-school places and quality of education. The only differences would be 'behind the scenes' in the management of the Pre-school; parents and children would see no change to the provision.

All pupils currently attending preschool will be unaffected.

Question 5 – Analysing Impact

Could this proposal potentially disadvantage particular groups sharing protected characteristics and if so which groups and in what way? This pays particular attention to the general aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty:

- To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation because of protected characteristics;
- To advance equality of opportunity for those who share protected characteristics;
- To encourage people who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life;
- To contribute to fostering good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not/community cohesion;
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The school has confirmed that no children will be disadvantaged or required to attend another setting, as those who are currently using the nursery will be admitted to reception class in December 2023 because the nursery is remaining open and will remain available.

The work force will not be disadvantaged after it was clarified that no redundancies will occur. Staff will be redeployed within school.



Question 6 –Combined/Cumulative Effect

Could the effects of this proposal combine with other factors or decisions taken at local or national level to exacerbate the impact on any groups?

None anticipated.

Question 7 – Identifying Initial Results of Your Analysis

As a result of the analysis has the original proposal been changed/amended, if so please describe.

No, the original proposal has not been changed or amended.

Question 8 - Mitigation

Will any steps be taken to mitigate/reduce any potential adverse effects of the proposal?

Mitigations against the potential adverse effects of the decision to permanently raise the age range at the school are as follows:

There should be no changes at all to children, families or staff. Changes will occur only to the management of the setting.

Question 9 – Balancing the Proposal/Countervailing Factors

This weighs up the reasons for the proposal – e.g. need for budget savings; damaging effects of not taking forward the proposal at this time – against the findings of the analysis.

There should be no significant changes of pupils, families or staff arising from this proposal as it relates solely to the management arrangements for the nursery.

Question 10 – Final Proposal

In summary, what is the final proposal and which groups may be affected and how?

The proposal is to permanently raise the school's age range from 3 to 11 years to 4 to 11 years, with effect from 31 December 2023.

Question 11 – Review and Monitoring Arrangements

What arrangements will be put in place to review and monitor the effects of this proposal?



If the decision is approved to permanently raise the school's age range from 3 to 11 years to 4 to 11 years, with effect from 31 December 2023, the Authority is legally obliged to implement the proposal.

Equality Analysis Prepared By Debbie Ormerod
Position/Role Access to Education Entitlements Lead Officer.
Equality Analysis Endorsed by Service Head Aby Hardy
Decision Signed Off By
Cabinet Member or Director

For further information please contact
Jeanette Binns – Equality & Cohesion Manager
Jeanette.binns@lancashire.gov.uk

