



EXWICK HEIGHTS PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Consultation on change of age range to allow for nursery places at Exwick Heights Primary School from September 2025

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to outline proposed changes to the provision at Exwick Heights Primary School for nursery children which requires a lowering of the school's age range by 1 year. The Local Governing Body of the school have decided that it should consult on the proposed changes in line with legal requirements and wishes to receive the views and comments of all stakeholders in the community.

The consultation period will run for 3 weeks from Monday 10th February 2025 to Monday 3rd March 2025. The Local Governing Body of the school will consider all comments received during the consultation period. We are consulting with all relevant stakeholders as required by law when making changes to school age range arrangements.

What change is being proposed?

Currently, Exwick Heights has a 32 place (per session) Pre-school for children aged 3 to 4 years which is part of our Early Years Unit. Due to the school moving to a PAN of 60 from this academic year, our Year 1 pupils will be taught in the main school building from September 2025. Therefore, from September 2025, we are proposing lowering the age range at Exwick Heights Primary School to 2 years old. This will enable us to run our Early Years Unit building with a Nursery room, Pre-school room and two Reception classes.

This will make the school's age range 2-11 years, rather than the current 3-11 years. Please note that there is no change proposed to our determined admission arrangements. The school's determined admission arrangements for school entry to Reception remain unchanged and there is no change to the fact that a nursery place does not in any way guarantee a place at the school, as is documented in our admissions policy on our website.

Why is the school making this change?

From September 2025 we will begin the process of teaching our Year 1 pupils within the main school building, freeing up space within our current Early Years Unit building to expand our early years provision to 2-year-olds.

Redesignating the primary school will allow for siblings of similar ages to be taught in the same setting from the age of 2, whilst providing wraparound care.

The change will also enable us to increase the total number of pre-school places available and provide capacity to extend provision to deliver the Government's increase to 30 hours of free education and childcare for children from 9 months as of September 2025.

We believe this will have a significant benefit for children's early years development by guaranteeing that there is increased continuity between the Nursery, Pre-school and primary setting which will consequently provide effective transition for the youngest learners at our school. The highly skilled staff members will ensure that there is a difference in provision and planning for the children who are 'just two' and those who are approaching their third birthday, whilst in a school setting. All staff will be knowledgeable about the typical development and characteristics of effective learning for two-year-olds whilst having a clear understanding of expectations and tracking processes of the attainment of the three- and four-year-old children. Parents/Carers will be successfully engaged in their children's learning at school, allowing for a seamless transition to Reception.

In October 2023, Exwick Heights Primary School was inspected by Ofsted and His Majesty's Inspectorate awarded the school good or outstanding in all of the key areas. Ofsted stated *"Warm relationships between staff and children mean children in the early years settle well. Within adult-led activities, staff model new learning and help children to develop language. For example, in mathematics, children learn the properties of a square before going on a shape hunt."* The 2-year-olds will be integrated into this Early Years provision, allowing them to make similar rapid progress but at an earlier age, ensuring high quality early intervention for all learners.

In an Ofsted Early Years Report, Sir Michael Wilshaw called for more school-based provision to teach 2-year-olds the basics of literacy and numeracy. The report highlighted a significant gulf in attainment between children from disadvantaged families and their more affluent peers, which grows as children progress through their first years of schooling. It is anticipated that this divide will not be evident if Exwick Heights Primary School were to be redesignated to become a 2-11 provision as Ofsted (2023) wrote about the school *"The school has an ambitious curriculum in place to help pupils build their knowledge well. Across all subjects, the essential knowledge the school wants pupils to know and remember is identified and sequenced well. Training is prioritised to develop staff expertise. This helps staff to teach the curriculum effectively. Teachers use a variety of strategies to help pupils learn. Pupils build their knowledge and make links with what they have learned before."* Highly skilled practitioners, many with degrees, would ensure that this is a setting that Parents/Carers can recognise and access easily whilst knowing that their children will make at least good progress.

Will the proposed change result in any educational impact on the existing primary school provision?

We have conducted a thorough assessment of the resources needed and effects on the existing primary school provision and we do not see that there will be any adverse impact on any existing level of provision. The school will be able to successfully manage this change, allowing for one nursery classroom and an outdoor space to be developed for the 2-year-olds. This will be situated next to the current Reception classrooms and outdoor learning area, allowing for an Early Years Foundation Stage unit within the primary school. The Headteacher at the primary

school has significant experience of working within the early years and the Early Years Leader and Assistant Head is also very experienced. This combined with the fact that the other Early Years staffing will remain unchanged will ensure high quality teaching and learning for the Nursery children.

Will the proposed change result in additional traffic near the school at drop off and pick up times?

The Nursery sessions will begin at 9.00am and finish at 12.00 with the afternoon session running from 12:00 to 3.00pm which is the same as the sessions currently run in the pre-school.

Any increase in capacity will inevitably result in an increase in the number of users accessing the school. However, a good proportion of the increased capacity is expected to be taken up by existing children or siblings of existing children and therefore this will minimise the additional traffic issues.

What will the impact be of providers of nursery provision locally?

The proposed increase to 30 hours free education for children from 9 months old is expected to result in a shortfall of nursery places in the area. The proposal is therefore likely to have a small impact on other providers in the short term but no impact over the medium to long term.

How can you ask questions, get more information & comment on the proposal?

If you have any questions, please contact the school on 01392 209030 or by email to admin@exwickheights.devon.sch.uk If you wish to make a response to this consultation, then please email the school on the same email address or alternatively write to the school at:

Exwick Heights Primary School,
Exwick Lane,
Exeter,
EX4 2FB

We will be allowing 3 weeks for receiving responses, so all responses must be received by 4.00pm on Monday 3rd March 2025 to be considered by the Governing Body when making its decision.