

Statutory Proposal to change the Age Range at Necton VA Primary School

1. Local Authority details

Norfolk County Council
County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich, Norfolk NR1 2DL

2. School details

Name	Necton VA Primary School
Type	Voluntary Aided
Address	School Road, Necton, Swaffham Norfolk PE37 8HT
Age Range	4 – 11 years
Capacity	210 pupils; Numbers on roll 1 June 2023 = 189
Ofsted	Last Ofsted; 30 November 2021 Rating; Good

The school currently has an admission number of 30 places offered at Year Reception (YR).

3. What changes are proposed?

This proposal is to extend the school's age range from 4 - 11 to 2 –11 years, from 1 September 2023. Currently the school takes children into the Reception Class at the start of the school year after their fourth birthday. The admission number of the school will remain at 30 pupils in Year Reception.

The school is looking to run a maintained nursery for 3 and 4 year olds for 26 places (am and pm sessions). The places for 2 year olds each morning and afternoon, will be phased over the next 12 months.

4. Why do we want to do this (evidence of demand)?

Our proposal to admit children from 2 – 4 years into an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision is due to the closure of many providers in the area, in recent months. The Governing Body wish to ensure that there are high quality educational experiences available to meet the needs of children in our community. There will be no material alterations to the places offered for 4 years olds at the school as a result of the age range change.

An initial consultation was delivered, as set out by the DfE statutory guidance 'Making significant changes (prescribed alterations) to maintained schools', January 2023. This was held from 24 April to 9 June 2023. A total of 408 consultation documents were sent to governors, staff and parents at Necton VA Primary School and key stakeholders. A consultation event was held on 4 May, virtually, where 1 parent attended. The consultation focused primarily on the proposal to change the age range from 4 – 11 years, to 3 – 11 years. However the option of extending the age to include 2 year olds was also consulted on.

23 people took part in the consultation. All those who took part in the consultation strongly agreed or agreed with the proposal. The consultation report including the consultation proposal, is available at Appendix 1.

Governors considered the consultation report at their meeting on 19 June 2023 and concluded that given the positive support to include 2 year old provision, they would proceed with this change.

5. Objectives, including how the proposal would increase educational standards and parental choice.

The governors want to;

- Provide a 26 place (AM and PM) early years foundation stage provision for 2 – 4 year olds
- Ensure provision is provided locally to meet the needs of parents

This proposal offers parents access to more EYFS places in Norfolk, reducing the travel time for children living locally.

We recognise the true value of an excellent early start and are passionate about EYFS provision for children in the pre-statutory age range. Children who attend this school-based provision will access the full support of a school and continuous education from 2 years to 11 years, within an environment that is specifically designed for this stage and breadth of development. The research behind school-based Nurseries eg DFE 'Good Practice in Early Education' supports these benefits.

We believe that all our children will benefit greatly from the experience of socialising and developing relationships with even younger children. We aim to include our Nursery not only in our daily school running, but also in key celebrations, worship-based opportunities, performances, and events from across the school.

The suggested nursery provision will run in line with school's academic term times. Funded sessions are proposed to run either for a morning only session from 8:45am to 11:45am, or a full day session from 8:45am to 3:15pm with our lunchtime club from 11:45am to 12:15pm. The afternoon session will commence at 12:15pm and end at 3:15pm.

The school will offer 15-hours and 30-hours per week funded Early Education for 3 and 4 year-olds on this timetable. To support our families and other providers, we will look to offer appropriate split-funded spaces for pupils eligible for 30-hours funding.

6. Will there be any effect on other schools, academies and educational institutions within the area

We are aware that many local EYFS providers have had to close recently, especially the provision in Necton, which is why we have considered this proposal. We are also aware of the impact of the recent decline in demography across the county and the impact of parental preference. However, we believe that local children should have access to local education provision and will work with Norfolk County Council and local schools to review the impact of EYFS provision in our area.

7. Project costs and an indication of how these will be met, including how long term value for money will be achieved.

Governors have identified XX space which needs no/some resource

Long term value for money will be achieved as there is greater capacity to meet the needs of children with the provision of EYFS locally.

8. Will the proposed change result in additional traffic near the school

We are fortunate to have sufficient car-parking on the local highways to accommodate an increased number of pupils being dropped-off at any one point. Our session times proposed

match our current schooling hours, therefore there will not be increased traffic at times outside of the current schooling day.

9. Will this definitely happen?

No. There is a statutory process we must follow to make this type of change to schools.

10. Related proposals

The proposal is not related to any other proposal.

11. How can I make my views known?

Any person may object to, express support for, or make comments on the proposals by contacting Norfolk County Council by:

- Emailing schoolreview@norfolk.gov.uk
- Writing to: School Organisation Team, FREEPOST, 1H 2076, Floor 8, Bay 34, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich, NR1 2BR. You don't need a stamp.

12. What happens next?

The following table sets out the key dates for the consultation and decision making. At any point the proposal may be withdrawn. The dates set out below meet the Department for Education requirements for consultation on school organisation proposals.

School organisation process	Date
Public Notice published	26 June 2023
Statutory consultation (representation stage)	26 June – 21 July 2023
Decision required, no later than	31 August 2023
If approved, change of age starts	1 September 2023

**Consultation Report to Governors,
Necton VA Primary School**

The proposal;

- **To change the age range at Necton VA Primary School from 4 - 11 to 3 – 11, from 1 September 2023. The published admission number (PAN) for the main school will not be affected by this proposal.**
- **As part of this consultation, we were also seeking views about provision for children aged 2 and above.**

Reason for the proposed change	The proposal is to admit children of age 3 into a Nursery Foundation Stage provision due to the closure of many providers in the area, in recent months. The Governing Body wish to ensure that there are high quality educational experiences available to meet the needs of children in our community. There will be no material alterations to the places offered for 4 years olds at the school as a result of the age range change.
Consultation details	<p>The consultation was delivered, as set out by the DfE statutory guidance ‘Making significant changes (prescribed alterations) to maintained schools’, January 2023. A consultation was held from 24 April to 9 June 2023. A total of 408 consultation documents were sent to governors, staff and parents at Necton VA Primary School and key stakeholders. A consultation event was held on 4 May, virtually, where 1 parent attended (1 child is eligible for 3-year-old provision, and 1 child is eligible for 2-year-old provision). The points discussed were;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rationale for why the Governors have considered this and presented this proposal to the community • The desired outcome that Governors have for a successful Nursery at Necton Primary school • Possible hours for each session that would be offered • Additional provision for extended say – before Nursery and after Nursery sessions • The vision for the EYFS curriculum and how this will extend to additional classes in Nursery • The values of the school and how these will be embedded in all aspects of the Nursery provision; respect, peace and good attitudes
Number of responses	23

Summary of views expressed in favour of the proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefit children in the area, as well as same setting when transition to Reception (7) • Good for Necton, the school and local children (7) • Need to keep preschool provision in the area, especially given recent closures in Necton area (4) • Benefit from the school's approach to learning (2) • I would be interesting in my child attending (2)
Summary of views on 2 year old provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports children with transition to school, as already based there (4) • Support the principle, but concerns about the impact on other providers (3) • Good to have 2 year places, starting early education in education setting, with other local children (3) • Support for parents who work and/or need support (2) • Will help the school thrive and help 2 years learn and progress (1) • Need to include 2 year places to make the Nursery provision more viable (1)
Summary of views expressed against the proposal/no opinion	There were no views expressed disagreeing with the proposal.
Resource implications	If agreed, the use of the Community Facility Powers will enable Governors to provide more flexibility for the early years provision and ensure it is sustainable service. This flexibility will be more cost effective for governors to provide the service.
Commentary	The consultation has been run in accordance with the DfE guidance. The response rate is low at 5% (23 responders). However, all those who took part in the consultation strongly agreed or agreed with the proposal. 18 of the 23 responders answered the question about provision for 2 year olds. There was support from those who answered this question. Governors have considered 2 year old provision, in light of the positive comments made during the consultation.
Recommendation	<p>To proceed with the public notice stage of school organisation to;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) change the age range at Necton VA Primary School from 4 - 11 to 2 – 11, from 1 September 2023. The published admission number (PAN) for the main school will not be affected by this proposal.

The governors of Necton Primary School give permission for a public notice to be issued on the proposal to change the age range at Necton VA Primary School from 4 - 11 to 2 – 11, from 1 September 2023.

Signed _____ Date _____

Chair of Governors



NECTON CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Belong, believe, thrive, achieve.
Rooted in Christ, we learn, grow and flourish.

HEADTEACHER: Mrs Vicki Long CHAIR OF GOVERNORS: Mrs Jane Barley

CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSAL TO CHANGE THE AGE RANGE FOR CHILDREN ADMITTED TO NECTON VA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Introduction

This consultation is being undertaken to advise you of the proposal from the Governing Body of this school, and to invite you to tell us what you think of this proposal. The proposal is:

- **To change the age range at Necton VA Primary School from 4 - 11 to 3 - 11, from 1 September 2023. The published admission number (PAN) for the main school will not be affected by this proposal.**

As part of this consultation, we are also seeking views about provision for children aged 2 and above. Please share your views about this in the comments section for that question.

Why Change?

Necton VA Primary School currently has an age range of 4 – 11. The proposal to admit children of age 3 into a Nursery Foundation Stage provision is being considered due to the closure of many providers in the area, in recent months. The Governing Body wish to ensure that there are high quality educational experiences available to meet the needs of children in our community. There will be no material alterations to the places offered for 4 years olds at the school as a result of the age range change.

This consultation ends at 12 noon on 9th June 2023

Further information

We are holding a live information session, virtually, on Thursday 4th May 2023 from 9:15am until 10:15am. At this session, we will offer further information about the proposals and what we are planning this to look like for families, for September. Mrs Eaglen, our EYFS Leader and Mrs Long, our Headteacher, will lead this information session. A member of our school governing body will also be present.

If you would like to attend this information session, please email the school office to let us know and request the Teams meeting link: office@necton.norfolk.sch.uk

We also have information about this proposal, published on our school website. You can find this by clicking the link here: <https://www.necton.norfolk.sch.uk/Proposed-Nursery-for-September-2023/>



PROUD TO BE A
MUSIC MARK
SCHOOL



Your views

How far do you agree or disagree with our proposal to change the age range of Necton VA Primary School from 4-11 to 3-11 years, from 1 September 2023?

Please tick a box:

Strongly agree		Disagree	
Agree		Strongly disagree	
Neither agree or disagree		Don't know	

Why do you say this? Please write in the box below:

Do you have any views about provision for children aged 2 and upwards? Please write in the box below.

Are there any other comments or suggestions you would like to make to help us with this decision and in planning for the future provision of the children? Please write in the box below.

We would like to hear from many different people as your views help us to decide whether or not we make these changes. We will also use any personal information to understand how different groups of people feel about our proposal to change the age range at Necton VA Primary School.

We will process any personal information we receive from you in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (Regulation (EU) 2016/679), the Data Protection Act 2018 and Necton Primary School's data protection policy and guidelines. This means that Necton Primary School will hold your personal data and only use it for the purpose for which it was collected, being this consultation.

We won't identify individuals when reporting back our findings and under our record management policy we will keep this information for five years. We will also, under normal circumstances, not pass your personal data on to anyone else. However, we may be asked under access to information laws to publish or disclose some, or all, of the information you provide in response to this consultation, including any personal information. We will only do this where such disclosure will comply with such relevant information laws which include the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

Please tell us who you are, (tick all that apply):

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pupil | <input type="checkbox"/> School governor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parent / Guardian | <input type="checkbox"/> Local resident |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Member of the Parent Teacher Association | <input type="checkbox"/> Local business |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Member of staff | <input type="checkbox"/> Local sports group |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Local community group |

Other (please specify): _____

What is your postcode? _____

Your views will help us decide if this proposal goes ahead. You can tell us your views by:

- accessing our online survey: <https://norfolk.citizenspace.com/childrens-services/necton>
- or completing this questionnaire and returning it to:

Jane Barley, Chair of Governors, Necton VA Primary School
via the school office (email: office@necton.norfolk.sch.uk)

Thank you for the time you taken to share your views about this proposal.

Appendix B – Analysis of consultation responses

Summary analysis of responses									
Total number of responses = 23									
Method of response									
Online			Letter				Email		
22							1		
Respondent									
Pupil	Parent/ Guardian	Member PTA	Staff	Governor	Local resident	Local business	Local sports group	Local community group	Not answered
15			2		4				4
Response Analysis – How far do you agree or disagree with our proposal to change the age range of Necton VA Primary School from 4-11 to 3-11 years, from 1 September 2023? *please note respondents could tick all categories that apply									
		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know		
Total		21	3						
Pupil		14	1						
Parent/Guardian									
Member of the PTA									
Member of Staff		2							
Governor									
Local resident		4							
Local business									
Local sports group									
Local community group									
Other		1	2						
Summary of views supporting the proposals – 21 respondents									
I feel that this would be a great addition to Necton primary and the community of Necton. Our concern as a school would be a financial one as this would decrease our nursery intake as we enrol pupils from the Necton area. We have seen a decline in numbers when another local school opened a nursery provision. (Headteacher)									
I would be very interested in my son attending here before starting school the following year and I know there's a few others who are interest too.									
I feel that this can benefit younger children.									
For me there are two points. One is that with closure of other local settings, another provision is much needed. The other is that whilst existing settings do an incredible job, I believe that under your team's guidance, being used to frameworks, lesson planning and evidence gathering, early years children could really benefit from attending at an earlier stage in their development.									
This should of happened years ago. The proposal makes sense to any child going to going to the school when reaching the age for reception. This will ensure easy transfers to school as the child is already on the ground.									
This would be fantastic for the local school and children. Very much needed.									
Necton and the surrounding villages, need a local preschool. Preschools as the start of a child's early education. It's important for children to develop the skills they need to grow throughout their lives. With improved social skills they will be better able to communicate they needs, wants, and cooperate.									
I Believe that opening the age range from 4-11 to 3-11 will be very beneficial for all the children that have been affected by closures recently in									

Necton and surrounding areas. I believe it will give the children a chance to learn more and grown and get ready for the big step to Primary school when it comes round.	
I think it is important for there to be a nursery in Necton, it is a valuable community asset. It will allow children to go to Nursery with other children that are likely to be in their cohort when they officially start school. Having the Nursery within the school seems logical as the children will be used to the school environment to a certain extent.	
Good for the community; the younger children will benefit by continuing up through the school and the parents will know the school from the start. Parents will also have the convenience of bringing their children to the same venue as there is no other nursery in Necton.	
The village needs a preschool given the closure of little oaks this leaves a big void in children's social skills and is the grass roots of there education.	
I moved to the village a few years ago. However as the children were settled at their local nursery I left them there. My child has now got a place in reception for September 2023. It would make it a lot easier to have both children at the same place.	
As most schools have attached nurseries and pre school, it will benefit the school as some children will have older siblings and having them in the same school will help parents to get them to school on time at the same setting.	
I think it's important for children to start school early so they can get their interaction and socialise with children and teachers	
Because my son has attended Little Oaks for the past year, he still has one year left of Pre-school before he will go to school next year. It would be lovely for him to stay with the same friends he has made and to continue attending pre-school in Necton before hopefully going to school there.	
I believe it is very important for the kids development to start in a teacher led environment especially for the Little Oaks children.	
I strongly agree to the proposal of changing the age from 4-11 to 3-11 as this will really benefit the 3 year olds transitioning from Preschool to School. By being in the same building the children will get used to the environment, other children, staff and routines.	
As a single mum (since my child was 4 months) I have been super nervous around Nursery and School. I've wanted to make the whole experience as happy and safe as possible. By providing the early provision in your school you will most definitely be making the whole experience for both parents and children more seamless and supportive.	
Having a pre school setting will relieve pressure from parents/carers for travel and timings to pick up older children. More importantly this will set up a fantastic foundation for the children before beginning reception. It also means YR teacher can crack on as communications are clearer and easier to access.	
I agree with this because I think it will help with the education and also wont be such a big change nursery to reception.	
I have a 3 year old child that I would like to put into the school come September.	
There are no other local facilities for 3 year olds (Parish Council)	
Given the current falling demographics this seems a sensible way of expanding the potential feeder capacity of the school and contributing to it longer term sustainability (NCC)	
Summary of views against the proposals – No respondents	

Do you have any views about provision for children aged 2 and upwards– 18 respondents	
We are currently exploring this option and would have concerns as above but would also support (Headteacher)	
This would not impact us directly but I know others who would like the provision from 2yrs	
Whilst we have now 'missed the boat' for this proposal, I would have no hesitation in sending my children on a part time basis to your setting at this age.	
I definitely think age of 2 should have places with this proposal my reason for this is good early age for starting early education and knowing already in the school grounds again will help when starting reception.	
I Think it would be beneficial for aged 2 children to be able to attend a nursery setting. I am a working mum and I have guilt about not having enough time at present to help teach and learn and grow. My daughter turns 2 in January 2024 and I would love for her to be able to go into a setting with other children to be able to develop. Due to the lack of childcare and closures around due to no fault of the settings I have been unable to put her in a setting. I think the help with the Early years learning would help progress children and would help then settle when it comes to transition with school also.	
I think that it would be a mistake not to include 2 year olds if you want to make the nursery for 3 years olds viable. If 2 years olds aren't included they will likely go to other nurseries where they are included and then there will be less chance of them moving over when they turn 3. I also think that the argument that it is a valuable community asset applies to both 2 and 3 year olds.	
These children will know the school from a young age and their confidence will be boosted as they transition through each key stage.	
Again I believe that this is a vital service for the community and will help the school thrive.	
Most nurseries and pre schools accept children from the age of 2 so i have no problem with having 2year old.	
Yes I think it's a good idea as it think it's a good ages for children to start learn and interact with other children also it gives the opportunity for parents to work.	
I would for 2 year old places to be available. I also have a daughter who turns two later this year, before we found out Little Oaks was closing, I had my heart set on her being able to start pre-school next year so she would be able to do a couple of terms with her brother before he starts school. My son started pre-school only a couple of months after he turned 2 and he progressed so much with his speaking and learning, it has been amazing.	
I think it is a positive idea. The earlier the start the better.	
Especially if you lower the age to 2 as well, you will be able to reach out to many other children and parents needing support.	
Having foundation skills will give the children an amazing start. Knowing the staff and building will also ease anxiety for school start up.	
I believe this would be a good idea to include 2 year olds.	
If you can provide for ages 2 years plus this would be beneficial to allow people to return to work to generate more household income. (Parish Council)	
Would need to be looked at against the impact on other 2 year old providers in the area. (NCC)	

<p>We have several children at Sporle pre-school who live in Necton, so this does have the potential to impact upon the pre-school's intake. However, we firmly believe that schools are the right places to run nurseries, and are currently working towards getting nurseries at our three schools, and believe that local children should attend their local schools and nurseries. More choice of nursery is good for Parents/Carers.</p>	
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All those who took part in the consultation were asked if they had any other comments or suggestions they would like to make to help us make this decision and in planning for the future provision for children – 15 respondents

<p>Please do this! We have been so happy with the school (reception and yr1) so would love to introduce our son to the school as soon as possible.</p>	
<p>I think it's commendable that your already busy team is taking time to consider provisioning support for these children, who otherwise may find it quite difficult to access a pre-school setting.</p>	
<p>You have amazing staff at Necton - expansion is great idea and means if your current staff want to expand to early years more career prospects for them. With all the new houses been build in village as a village we will need more education settings too.</p>	
<p>There are other schools in the area that have a nursery incorporated within their school setting. With many pre schools closing and places becoming hard to find for nursery age children; this would be fantastic for a lovely school and a growing community.</p>	
<p>Preschool is an important part of any child's early years education, they develop so many skills that help a child's emotional, social, and personal, growth and development. It can only help with their transition to move onto school, having it based all in one place would surly make the transition for children easier.</p>	
<p>Would the potential nursery be blended with reception class or would it be separate? Would the government early years funding still be in place?</p>	
<p>Would the children be required to do full school hours for the nursery Monday to Friday 9-3. I think the opening of this would be so beneficial to the community and school and the children.</p>	
<p>I think it would be a brilliant addition to the school and really hope that you are able to go ahead with it</p>	
<p>Yes, due to having a 2 year old. I would find it very beneficial to have both children at the same child care setting.</p>	
<p>Having familiar staff from the pre school working with pre assisting children would benefit the settling in.</p>	
<p>I'm a little bit concerned because I don't know where my child would go if we lost the nursery and I think the staff are absolutely brilliant, but I'm sure if he's accepted next door, staff would be good as well. It's good because I like the children already at the main school and it prepares them for when they go up in the years.</p>	
<p>I also have some other friends who's children turn 2 this year who I know would use the setting if it became available. It is such a shame Little Oaks is closing, it would be brilliant to have something to replace it with the same age range of children.</p>	
<p>It would be incredibly positive especially for the Little Oaks children. They will be going up to primary school in the coming years. They are very attached to the staff and would love for them to be there too.</p>	
<p>Having possible lines of development for childrens' physical, intellectual, language, emotional and social learning (PILES) and specific activities for</p>	

children's needs towards PILES. These provisions will make a huge impact for parents, children and staff at Necton.	
The Parish Council are happy to support your proposal and are happy to discuss ways we can support	

List of stakeholders who were sent the consultation document

Parents, Governors and Staff at Necton Primary School
 Nicholas Hammond Academy
 Academy Transformation Trust
 Castle Acre C of E primary Academy
 DNEAT
 Nar Valley Federation of Church Academies
 Cherry Tree Academy Marham Infant and Junior Schools
 Cherry Tree Academy Trust
 Heartwood C of E VC Primary and Nursery
 Narborough C of E Primary Academy
 Necton VA Primary School
 Sporle Church of England Primary Academy
 Swaffham Church of England Primary Academy
 Councillor Mark Kiddle-Morris
 Clerk to Necton parish Council
 Councilor Nigel Wilkin
 Breckland District Council
 George Freeman MP
 Sara Tough NCC
 Necton Little Oaks
 Sporle Pre School
 Great Dunham Early Birds
 First Steps Pre School
 Teenie Icen Day Nursery
 Swaffham Playgroup
 Beeston Early Starters
 National Education Union Norfolk
 Diocesan Director of Education
 Diocese of Ely
 Diocese of East Anglia
 Educate Norfolk – (Secondary)
 Educate Norfolk – (Primary)
 Unison
 NAHT
 NASUWT
 NEU (ATL section)
 Voice the Union
 GMB
 ASCL
 Suffolk County Council