



Proposal to change the age-range at
Ulverston
Church of England (V.A.)
Infant School
from 4-7 to 4-11 years

A Consultation Paper

Enquiries to:

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Ulverston CE Infants Consultation Changing age-range from 4-7 to 4-11 years

Consultation Document Summary

This consultation document is about a potential change for primary education at Ulverston CE Infant School. The suggested change is that Ulverston CE Infant School becomes an all-through primary school catering for children aged 4-11 with no transfer at age 7 to other primary schools for key stage 2 provision as currently happens. The consultation period for this starts on Monday 22nd October and finishes on Friday 30th November 2012.

The Governors of Ulverston CE Infants want to hear your views on the possibility of change. We hope you will take the time to let us know what you think. If you would like any other information please contact;

Bernadette Calvey (Head Teacher) at the school.

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What is being proposed?

Currently children who attend Ulverston CE Infant School transfer to other primary schools for their Key Stage 2 provision. This is difficult when parents want to access Church of England schools as there isn't any within the town of Ulverston and this means parents have to apply for KS2 places in Church Primaries outside of Ulverston in the surrounding villages.

Based on feedback from parents who currently have children at Ulverston Infants and parents who have, in the past, also found it difficult planning for a Key Stage 2 place for their child the Governors feel we should review the situation, consult with all interested parties and then make a decision as to whether the weight of public opinion is in favour of the age-range changing.

We are also not able to offer what parents are asking for, i.e. provision from 4-11 years of age, when they are making their decision about which schools to apply for.

On this basis, the decision has been taken, by the governors, to consult those most closely associated with the school about provision for the future. The aim of the consultation exercise is to gather views of the local community on whether the present arrangements:

- could be varied to enhance educational opportunities
- represent the best use of available resources
- provide the best fit with the wishes of the parents

This paper is aimed at parents, staff, governors, and everyone else with an interest or stake in primary education in the area. It is intended as a basis for discussion during the consultations. We are also consulting with neighbouring

schools, the Local Authority, the Diocese, the PCC, the Department of Education, trade unions, MPs, neighbours in our local community and the children at our school.

This formal consultation period runs from 22nd October 2012 to 30th November 2012. During this period we would be very pleased to receive your comments on the return slip at the end of this paper.

In terms of content, the paper:

- describes briefly the current provision
- sets out the wider context
- indicates some important factors to consider
- outlines the consultation and decision-making processes.

The main purpose of this consultative document is to encourage a reasoned debate and to gather your views. It is important that local opinions are expressed so that they can inform decisions when they are eventually taken.

Background and current provision

Ulverston CE Infants has been a provider of Infant education in Ulverston for over 115 years. Up until a few years ago children leaving year 2 generally went to Sir John Barrow Junior School in the town, although some children each year went to other local schools. A few years ago Sir John Barrow amalgamated with Dale Street Infants and became Sir John Barrow Primary School. This means that children completing their KS1 education at Church Walk now go on to a Primary school for their KS2 education.

Ulverston CE Infants School is also the only educational provision which is situated north of the A590; all other Ulverston schools are situated to the south of the town which means that families living in the north of Ulverston have little geographical or local choice.

The school currently has five separate classrooms that are used to provide a generously spaced learning environment for three classes which are organised into three separate year groups. As our numbers have fallen over the last few years we now have the chance to consider providing all-through primary provision and the opportunity to use the space we have more effectively.

Some important factors to consider

Transfer between schools at age 7

Any transition in learning causes additional barriers in children's progress, reducing these incidences of transition could have a beneficial effect on progress.

All-through primary schools

Both the county council and Carlisle Diocese have a preference for all through primary schools as opposed to separate Infant and Junior schools. All-through primaries allow a natural sense of progression for children through their primary education. This is important both in social and curricular terms. Provision which is based on as few points of transfer as possible offers clear advantages.

School's Net capacity/Pupil numbers

At present our school's net capacity is based on an intake of 30 Reception children. We have 90 places over three year groups. If we were to move to primary status we would have to limit our intake to 15-18 children, but they would then stay for seven years. This will not increase our overall numbers greatly but would allow for greater stability.

This decreased Published Admissions Number would have an impact if the number of children wanting a place in Reception exceeded 15-18. They would need to find an alternative place in neighbouring schools. Neighbouring schools have been invited to contribute to the Consultation process. The other consideration is that there will still be an Infant School in the town for those parents wanting separate Infant School provision, as Croftlands Infant School has capacity.

Mixed-age teaching

Having seven year groups in 5 classrooms would mean that we have to have mixed-age teaching in school. We would be able to accommodate 5 classes with probably no more than two year groups in each. Good teaching can work very effectively for children in such mixed age learning. One of our rooms is smaller than the others, it is proposed that this is used for an intake of 15 Reception children only; thereby still connecting with the good outdoor provision we have in place, but also being taught as a discreet year group and key stage.

Stages of development

We propose that extending our age range by one school year each year, e.g. year 3 in 2013, year 4 in 2014, year 5 in 2015 and year 6 in 2016, would be the best approach.

And finally

This consultation paper tries to explain the main issues involved simply and briefly. Its purpose is to stimulate discussion rather than cover all the issues exhaustively. Any request for further information should be directed to Bernadette Calvey. We have a frequently asked questions document as a summary which is available from school.

Details of the consultation arrangements are given below. This is an important issue for everyone involved in our school, anyone who may be involved, anyone in our local community and anyone else who maybe affected by changes.

We want to hear the opinion of everyone involved, positive as well as those with issues related to the potential changes. We have organised a public meeting to be held in the Parish Centre next to school on Monday 12th November 2012 at 5:15 p.m. This meeting will also be published in the local press.

Making changes to Maintained Schools and the School Organisation and Governance Regulations

The provisions of the School Organisation and Governance Regulations mean that, if the governors of a Voluntary Aided school propose to change the age range of their school, their proposal must be published in a statutory notice. The Governing Body will make this decision based on the outcomes of the formal consultation period. There are five stages to the statutory process which must be followed.

1) Consultation -22nd October 2012 to 30th November 2012

The issue of this documentation marks a period of consultation during which the views of interested parties are sought and which will be considered before any move to the more formal stage of the process. In other words a decision to publish a notice will be taken based on the views of everyone consulted.

2) Publication -18th January 2013

Dependent upon the outcome of the consultation, a decision to publish a statutory notice must be made by the Governors of Ulverston CE Infant School.

3) Representation -18th January 2013 to 1st March 2013

Statutory notices for changes of age-range allow a six week period for anyone to submit their comments on the proposals. There is another opportunity for people to express their views either supporting or objecting to the proposals.

4) Decision-11th April 2013

Within two months after the end of the representation period, the County Council must make a decision on the proposal.

5) Implementation

If the proposal is approved the change in age range may take place from 1st September 2013 when Year 2 pupils would no longer need to transfer to another school for Key Stage 2 provision.

Thank you for your time in reading this document and in any response to it, we look forward to hearing from you.



“To Church Walk I will stay in your building love from Grace” Age 5

Please return this slip to school:

Name _____

Connection to school _____

DO YOU AGREE WITH THE PROPOSAL TO CHANGE AGE-RANGE AT ULVERSTON CE INFANTS FROM 4-7 years to 4-11 years.

Delete: YES/NO

Comments

Signed _____