

Appendix A - Responses to the consultation on lowering the age range at Colham Manor Primary School

If you answered 'No' or 'Don't know' to the proposal to lower the age range at Colham Manor Primary School, please tell us why

Response 1: Its too early for children aged 2 to start school

Response 2: We are a private nursery that takes 2 year old children and will not be able to keep open without them

Response 3: Lowering the age for primary schools to accept 2-year-olds raises significant concerns about the developmental, emotional, and educational impact on young children. Here are several reasons why this approach is problematic:

1. Developmental Appropriateness:

Two-year-olds are at a critical stage of early childhood development, where their needs are primarily emotional, social, and physical. They are still mastering basic motor skills, language development, and socialization. Placing them in a structured primary school environment, which is designed for older children, risks overwhelming them. It could hinder their natural developmental milestones, as the school system may not have the flexibility or expertise to cater to such young children.

2. Emotional Readiness:

Young children, particularly at the age of two, require high levels of emotional support, consistent nurturing, and a secure environment to thrive. Most are not yet emotionally ready to be away from their primary caregivers for extended periods in an academic setting. Forcing children into such an environment prematurely can lead to stress, anxiety, and separation issues that could negatively affect their mental well-being.

3. Lack of Specialized Care:

Primary schools are not typically equipped with the resources or trained personnel to handle the specific needs of toddlers. Early years education requires specially trained professionals who understand the complexities of early childhood development, including potty training, nap times, and responsive caregiving, which are integral to the well-being of 2-year-olds. Without this specialized care, the children's emotional, physical, and cognitive needs may be overlooked.

4. Disruption to Established Early Years Education:

The early years foundation stage (EYFS) system, which governs nursery and pre-school education, is specifically designed for children under 5. These environments provide a play-based, child-centered approach to learning, which is essential for very young children. Shifting them into a more formal primary school setting would disrupt this crucial period of learning through play, which fosters creativity, social skills, and a love for exploration.

5. Social Impact on Older Students:

Integrating 2-year-olds into a primary school environment also presents challenges for older students. The needs and behaviors of toddlers are vastly different from those of children in key stages 1 and 2. Teachers and staff would be forced to divide their attention between a much younger and older cohort, potentially lowering the quality of education and care for all students involved.

6. Potential for Burnout Among Teachers:

Primary school teachers are trained to handle students who are typically aged 4 and above. Introducing much younger children could place an additional burden on staff, leading to increased stress and burnout. Primary school teachers may not have the skills to handle the specific demands of toddlers, such as managing frequent crying, toileting needs, and the emotional volatility that comes with this age group.

7. Long-Term Academic Consequences:

Early exposure to formal education settings can lead to burnout and disinterest in learning later in life. Children who start too early in structured environments may lose their natural curiosity and intrinsic motivation for learning, which are essential for long-term academic success.

Response 4: Children of 2 years old need lots of care and nurturing, schools having a hands off approach will not support these children's emotional wellbeing. We already have many young children struggling with their emotional and mental health, this will not support them.

From a business element, this will lead to many private nurseries having to close due to a lack of children as well as losing staff to work in the schools. There is already a staffing crisis in early years and this will make it worse, it will have a huge impact on sustainability for the private sector.

Private nurseries closing will have a knock on effect for parents who need childcare from 8-6pm all year round when there is already a lack of childcare places in the borough.

Response 5: I think the teaching dynamics will change

Response 6: I feel that these schools are just doing this to earn more money, don't have the children's interest to heart. 2 year olds need a lot more attention I.e nap times, nappy changes, different curriculum to 3/4 year olds, more adult supervision

Response 7: As a local Childminder I think this will be very hard for such small children to be in a school setting and have their very young needs met. Also schools are only open 38 weeks of the year and parents will use this service to go to work so who will look after the children within the school Holidays?

Response 8: Too young, child needs nurturing

Response 9: Children aged 2 may have significantly different developmental needs compared to those aged 3. Younger children often require more attention and care, which could lead to distractions or disruption in the school environment. This may affect the overall learning experience for older students. Expanding the age range may require additional investments in

facilities, equipment, and staff to properly cater to the younger children. This could stretch the school's budget or resources, impacting the quality of education and care for all students

Response 10: why would you channel children like this , you all are practically going mad.

Response 11: 2 year old is too young

Response 12: Because they can't cope with the students they have and needs aren't being fulfilled of students

Response 13: As schools are predominantly education based 2-year-olds should be in a caring environment which offers learning through play. 2-year-olds need comfort which would include cuddles and closeness to the adults. My observations of schools, teachers, teach and don't have time for the care side of things needed.

Response 14: 2 year olds are too young to be in a school environment

Response 15: They are too young, they need more 1 to 1 nurturing. They need more personal care than staff could provide. How would this work for working parents ?

Response 16: The 2year old are too young they spend already a lot off time at school

Response 17: Think it will lower the learning standard for 3-4 year olds . The age gap is great at this age .

Response 18: Two is not appropriate age to start nursery

Response 19: I believe 2 is too young. Children of that age should still be allowed to stay at home and bond with family members

Response 20: Can the school facilitate the number of children? The building they are in will need more staff due to ratios of 1-4. It will need its own entrance as parents will pick up at different times, including when the rest of the school is in class.

Response 21: School internal and external facilities already in a poor shape. Outside Play areas are worst that prison exercise yard, hardly anything for children to play outside with. Play area in KS1 has been demolished in the summer and rubbish still on the playground 3 months later. School is clearly struggling and on daily basis pestering parents for "donations". Whoever running the school should not run a bath...nevermind a school.

If you answered 'Yes' to the question 'do you think this proposed change will disadvantage any residents in Hillingdon?', please tell us why

Response 1: Private preschools/nursery's will be low on numbers to stay open

Response 2: The proposed change to lower the age for primary schools to accept 2-year-olds in Hillingdon could disadvantage local residents in several ways:

1. Strain on Resources and Overcrowding

Primary schools are already structured to cater to children aged 4 and above, and many schools in Hillingdon may already be working with limited resources and class sizes close to capacity.

Accepting 2-year-olds would place additional strain on these resources—classroom space, teaching staff, and funding. This could lead to overcrowded classrooms and reduced attention for each student, affecting the quality of education for all children, including older students already enrolled.

2. Loss of Focus on Core Primary Education

Primary school teachers are trained to teach key curriculum subjects and manage the emotional and educational needs of children aged 4 to 11. By requiring them to care for 2-year-olds, schools risk diluting their focus on core educational outcomes. Residents of Hillingdon may see a decline in academic standards as teachers are stretched to manage the vastly different needs of toddlers and older students simultaneously.

3. Impact on Existing Early Years Providers

Hillingdon has a network of nurseries, pre-schools, and childminders who are specifically trained to care for very young children. Lowering the age for primary schools could undermine these providers, leading to closures or reduced enrolment in local nurseries. This shift could destabilize the early years sector in the borough, reducing choice and quality of childcare options for local families.

4. Reduced Specialization in Early Years Care

Nurseries and childminders provide environments that are designed specifically for the emotional, physical, and developmental needs of 2-year-olds. These settings offer play-based, nurturing care that focuses on building social skills, early language development, and emotional resilience. If 2-year-olds are placed in primary schools that are not tailored to their developmental stage, they may miss out on crucial early years experiences, leading to developmental delays. This could disadvantage Hillingdon families who rely on high-quality, specialized early years education.

5. Increased Burden on Families

While on the surface, allowing 2-year-olds into primary schools might seem convenient for parents, it could actually create additional burdens. Primary schools are not equipped with the flexible hours and specialized care that nurseries or childminders provide. For example, primary schools typically have shorter hours and may not offer the same level of one-on-one attention or services like potty training. This could result in parents needing to seek extra support outside of school hours, creating logistical challenges and additional costs.

6. Potential for Reduced Quality of Education Across the Borough

The introduction of younger children into primary schools may reduce the overall quality of education for children across the board. With resources and teacher time stretched, children in Hillingdon could see less personalized attention, fewer extracurricular activities, and a general decrease in the quality of their learning environment. This could result in lower academic achievement and a less enriching school experience for all students, particularly those who rely on strong primary education foundations.

7. Social and Emotional Risks for Toddlers

Primary school environments are structured to meet the needs of older children, and toddlers may struggle in these settings. Two-year-olds require more emotional support, flexible

schedules, and age-appropriate activities that focus on play and discovery rather than formal learning. Exposing them to the more rigid structure of primary schools too early may lead to increased anxiety, behavioral issues, and difficulties adjusting, which could have long-term impacts on their emotional well-being. This puts Hillingdon's youngest residents at risk of not getting the nurturing care they need.

Response 3: Working families who need all year round, 8-6pm child care for their children, will be disadvantaged when private nurseries close due to sustainability and they are struggling to find quality affordable childcare

Response 4: Local childminders and playgroups will suffer immensely

Response 5: it could put a strain on existing resources, including space, staff, and funding. This might limit availability for older children (aged 3-11), potentially reducing the quality of education or services offered to them.

Response 6: Children at the early years are suppose to enjoy their childhood, not to channel them in to main stream they cannot handle 30 hours in any given period

Response 7: Because children will be at a disadvantage. School is poorly run

Response 8: The hours that the schools offer are generally 9 - 11 and 1-3. There will be an increase in parents attending the setting, thus more travellers to the venue. If schools start taking 2 years olds they will be disadvantaging the PVI sector by not only taking the children they would usually need staff which would mainly come from the PVI sector. There is a crisis in the sector already for staff and lack of funding this could push settings to close as they will not have the staff/child ratios to operate.

Response 9: Working parents. The children.

Response 10: The bond between parents is very important. At two years they will mis the parents

Response 11: Residents children attending new proposed class will be disadvantaged as most school facilities is in very poor condition and shape. Why add more children to school that is falling apart and is in poor shape and state.

Parents already stugling to park around the school for drop off and pick up time. Residents around the school been complaining to school about parents parking in resident ONLY parking places for years now and school does nothing! So more children means more parking issues for residents. As a resident living next to school I'm against it!

A comment to this question, that was in support of the proposal, was:

Lowering the age will give parents more opportunity for meaningful childcare and support the children in become school ready sooner.

Any other comments on the proposal:

Response 1: We are owners of a private preschool in Hillingdon borough and if 2 year olds went straight to nursery school we would have to close

Response 2: Instead of lowering the age for primary school entry, the better solution is to strengthen early years education through the expansion of nurseries and specialized early years units. This proposal focuses on:

- Expanding access to high-quality early years care.
- Enhancing training for early years educators.
- Improving coordination between nurseries and primary schools.
- Providing financial support to parents for quality childcare.
- Emphasising play-based learning tailored to toddlers.
- Offering flexible childcare hours to accommodate working parents.

By maintaining age-appropriate learning environments and supporting families, this proposal ensures that both toddlers and school-age children in Hillingdon receive the best possible care and education at the right stages of their development.

Response 3: I feel this would be beneficial as there are so many 2yr old's currently wanting spaces in nurseries and the nursery's cannot always accommodate this due to space, staffing or waitlists, I think this would be beneficial to parents seeking spaces for their children

Response 4: Children need to be loved

Response 5: its a very sensitive period of any child, they need to develop in warm and stimulating surrounding, you are playing with their emotions and expect them to grown up too quickly. People in government are fools in doing so

Response 6: [REDACTED] the school is ruined

Response 7: As I have said, this will have a serious impact on the PVI sector. The borough has said there is a lack of places and although this will offer places for 2-year-olds, the lack of funds will be serious to PVI cashflows.

Response 8: We need to give more help and support to families to help and encourage them to return to work. Good quality childcare is not always easy to find. The advantage of this is that the child would follow on through the whole school.

Response 9: An excellent idea for local children.

Response 10: Colham Manor already does fantastic work , to help support early years further would be brilliant.

Response 11: I believe it will be easier for parents to come back full time to work having support from government. Rent and live is too expensive for only one parent to work. Having parents working required more clubs and entertainment for kids which is too expensive too.

Response 12: There are many 2 year olds who are disadvantaged of starting school while's their parents are active tax payers and not benefiting. If this proposal is approved, it will relieve parents some time to work and do other chores and activities to the benefit of the family and the government at large

Response 13: We will be having another child in January this sounds like a great idea for us

Response 14: This is a brilliant idea and will help alot of parents to get back to work without worrying about how much childcare would cost

Response 15: I think it's a great initiative and definitely benefit for working parents like us

Response 16: My Daughter is 2 and there are no good nurseries in the area, as my son is already in the school this would help a lot and I know many other parents in the same situation.

Response 17: Reject proposal as school is not fit for existing children, nevermind more children attending it. Most importantly where those extra parents will park they cars? Of course on resident only streets/bays! It's a big fat NOT APPROVED by me and my family!

Response 18: More local nursery's should do the same

Response 19: If Colham manor was to lower their age for nursery I could enrol my son into nursery now rather than in January

Response 20: I think it would provide a great service to the local community and allow parents to have better mornings; only needing to drop off at one school/nursery.

Appendix B - Responses to the consultation on lowering the age range at Field End Infant School

If you answered 'No' or 'Don't know' to the proposal to lower the age range at Field End Infant School, please tell us why

Response 1: Its too early for children aged 2 to start school

Response 2: We are a private preschool in Hillingdon borough and the majority of our children are 2 years old and without them we will have to close

Response 3: Lowering the age for primary schools to accept 2-year-olds raises significant concerns about the developmental, emotional, and educational impact on young children. Here are several reasons why this approach is problematic:

1. Developmental Appropriateness:

Two-year-olds are at a critical stage of early childhood development, where their needs are primarily emotional, social, and physical. They are still mastering basic motor skills, language development, and socialization. Placing them in a structured primary school environment, which is designed for older children, risks overwhelming them. It could hinder their natural developmental milestones, as the school system may not have the flexibility or expertise to cater to such young children.

2. Emotional Readiness:

Young children, particularly at the age of two, require high levels of emotional support, consistent nurturing, and a secure environment to thrive. Most are not yet emotionally ready to be away from their primary caregivers for extended periods in an academic setting. Forcing children into such an environment prematurely can lead to stress, anxiety, and separation issues that could negatively affect their mental well-being.

3. Lack of Specialised Care:

Primary schools are not typically equipped with the resources or trained personnel to handle the specific needs of toddlers. Early years education requires specially trained professionals who understand the complexities of early childhood development, including potty training, nap times, and responsive caregiving, which are integral to the well-being of 2-year-olds. Without this specialized care, the children's emotional, physical, and cognitive needs may be overlooked.

4. Disruption to Established Early Years Education:

The early years foundation stage (EYFS) system, which governs nursery and pre-school education, is specifically designed for children under 5. These environments provide a play-based, child-centered approach to learning, which is essential for very young children. Shifting them into a more formal primary school setting would disrupt this crucial period of learning through play, which fosters creativity, social skills, and a love for exploration.

5. Social Impact on Older Students:

Integrating 2-year-olds into a primary school environment also presents challenges for older students. The needs and behaviors of toddlers are vastly different from those of children in key stages 1 and 2. Teachers and staff would be forced to divide their attention between a much younger and older cohort, potentially lowering the quality of education and care for all students involved.

6. Potential for Burnout Among Teachers:

Primary school teachers are trained to handle students who are typically aged 4 and above. Introducing much younger children could place an additional burden on staff, leading to increased stress and burnout. Primary school teachers may not have the skills to handle the specific demands of toddlers, such as managing frequent crying, toileting needs, and the emotional volatility that comes with this age group.

7. Long-Term Academic Consequences:

Early exposure to formal education settings can lead to burnout and disinterest in learning later in life. Children who start too early in structured environments may lose their natural curiosity and intrinsic motivation for learning, which are essential for long-term academic success.

In summary, lowering the age for primary schools to accept 2-year-olds undermines the importance of specialised early childhood care and education. It disregards the unique developmental needs of toddlers and may harm both the younger children and the primary school system as a whole. Early childhood education should remain separate, with a focus on nurturing, play, and age-appropriate learning experiences.

Response 4: Children of 2 years old need lots of care and nurturing, schools having a hands-off approach will not support these children's emotional wellbeing. We already have many young children struggling with their emotional and mental health, this will not support them.

From a business element, this will lead to many private nurseries having to close due to a lack of children as well as losing staff to work in the schools. There is already a staffing crisis in early years and this will make it worse, it will have a huge impact on sustainability for the private sector.

Private nurseries closing will have a knock-on effect for parents who need childcare from 8-6pm all year round when there is already a lack of childcare places in the borough.

Response 5: I think that this is a very young age for children to be away from their parents and that this can impact on their development.

Response 6: I think very young to go into a school setting. 2 year olds need a lot more one to one. Sleeping times, nappy changes, some still need to be fed, potty training. Then what happens when they only get 15 hours. Who collects them for working parents??????

Response 7: Children do not need to be in a school environment from the age of 2. Children's needs and development is not being considered. If early years was funded correctly, we would have more childcare options. Also it is going to affect the childminders in the area.

Response 8: Two is too young to be in an institution

Response 9 As a local Childminder I think this will be very hard for such small children to be in a school setting and have their very young needs met. Also schools are only open 38 weeks of the year and parents will use this service to go to work so who will look after the children within the school Holidays?

Response 10: It will impact on PVI's business

Response 11: Children are in the education system till they are 18 as it is. At 2 years old they need a home from home environment. Where they can get a hug, have a nap ect.... It's obvious the schools just want the funding not what's best for the child!

Response 12: There won't be adequate teachers or helpers to look after the younger children

Response 13: As schools are predominantly education based 2 year olds should be in a caring environment which offers learning through play. 2 year olds need comfort which would include cuddles and closeness to the adults. My observations of schools, teachers, teach and don't have time for the care side of things needed.

Response 14: no i don't think ite needed

Response 15: Because if this goes ahead, it will affect all local preschools and nurseries and potentially put a lot of people out of work

Response 16: There are still lots of early years settings with places for 2 year olds I know of and giving priority to mainstream will end up putting them out of business

Response 17: Will have a very negative impact on private preschools causing closures and hundreds of job losses impacting on families and lives and mental health

Response 18: 2 Year olds are far too young to be in a school environment

Response 19: I don't believe the school environment is the correct setting for 2 year olds. Schools and staff are already incredibly stretched. 2 year olds will need changing facilities, sleeping facilities and completely different resources from older children. Schools are not equipped to deal with their needs.

Response 20: The school is not geared up for teaching two year olds. They need space, facilities and trained staff. The ratios of children to adult in a nursery environments are too high. Schools already cannot cope with children entering the state education system at age three and some are not even toilet trained. The Borough does not have sufficient funds to take on this more intense level of education and support for these children. Teachers are already on their knees and struggle to cope with current demands.

If you answered 'Yes' to the question 'do you think this proposed change will disadvantage any residents in Hillingdon?', please tell us why

Response 1: Us and any private preschool/nurserys

Response 2: The proposed change to lower the age for primary schools to accept 2-year-olds in Hillingdon could disadvantage local residents in several ways:

1. Strain on Resources and Overcrowding

Primary schools are already structured to cater to children aged 4 and above, and many schools in Hillingdon may already be working with limited resources and class sizes close to capacity. Accepting 2-year-olds would place additional strain on these resources—classroom space, teaching staff, and funding. This could lead to overcrowded classrooms and reduced attention for each student, affecting the quality of education for all children, including older students already enrolled.

2. Loss of Focus on Core Primary Education

Primary school teachers are trained to teach key curriculum subjects and manage the emotional and educational needs of children aged 4 to 11. By requiring them to care for 2-year-olds, schools risk diluting their focus on core educational outcomes. Residents of Hillingdon may see a decline in academic standards as teachers are stretched to manage the vastly different needs of toddlers and older students simultaneously.

3. Impact on Existing Early Years Providers

Hillingdon has a network of nurseries, pre-schools, and childminders who are specifically trained to care for very young children. Lowering the age for primary schools could undermine these providers, leading to closures or reduced enrolment in local nurseries. This shift could destabilize the early years sector in the borough, reducing choice and quality of childcare options for local families.

4. Reduced Specialization in Early Years Care

Nurseries and childminders provide environments that are designed specifically for the emotional, physical, and developmental needs of 2-year-olds. These settings offer play-based, nurturing care that focuses on building social skills, early language development, and emotional resilience. If 2-year-olds are placed in primary schools that are not tailored to their developmental stage, they may miss out on crucial early years experiences, leading to developmental delays. This could disadvantage Hillingdon families who rely on high-quality, specialized early years education.

5. Increased Burden on Families

While on the surface, allowing 2-year-olds into primary schools might seem convenient for parents, it could actually create additional burdens. Primary schools are not equipped with the flexible hours and specialized care that nurseries or childminders provide. For example, primary schools typically have shorter hours and may not offer the same level of one-on-one attention or services like potty training. This could result in parents needing to seek extra support outside of school hours, creating logistical challenges and additional costs.

6. Potential for Reduced Quality of Education Across the Borough

The introduction of younger children into primary schools may reduce the overall quality of education for children across the board. With resources and teacher time stretched, children in Hillingdon could see less personalized attention, fewer extracurricular activities, and a general decrease in the quality of their learning environment. This could result in lower academic achievement and a less enriching school experience for all students, particularly those who rely on strong primary education foundations.

7. Social and Emotional Risks for Toddlers

Primary school environments are structured to meet the needs of older children, and toddlers may struggle in these settings. Two-year-olds require more emotional support, flexible schedules, and age-appropriate activities that focus on play and discovery rather than formal learning. Exposing them to the more rigid structure of primary schools too early may lead to increased anxiety, behavioral issues, and difficulties adjusting, which could have long-term impacts on their emotional well-being. This puts Hillingdon's youngest residents at risk of not getting the nurturing care they need.

Response 3: Working families who need all year round, 8-6pm child care for their children, will be disadvantaged when private nurseries close due to sustainability and they are struggling to find quality affordable childcare

Response 4: Childminders who are offering a home to home service

Response 5 Local childminders and playgroups will suffer immensely

Response 6: They are taking away from Childminders & Nursery's

Response 7: I am a childminder and it would seriously effect my business

Response 8: The hours that the schools offer are generally 9 - 11 and 1-3. There will be an increase in parents attending the setting, thus more travellers to the venue. If schools start taking 2 years olds they will be disadvantaging the PVI sector by not only taking the children they would usually need staff which would mainly come from the PVI sector. There is a crisis in the sector already for staff and lack of funding this could push settings to close as they will not have the staff/child ratios to operate.

Response 9: already a busy school , lowering the age will increase the amount of traffic and there are already provisions in the community more suited to the 2-3 year age group than a large school

Response 10: Again, this would affect a lot of local small nurseries preschools in the Hillingdon borough and put a lot of peoples businesses at risk

Response 11: Will have a very negative impact on private preschools causing closures and hundreds of job losses impacting on families and lives and mental health

Response 12: Quality of education and care will drop. You are talking of a provision which is open 9 to 3 and no longer hours. The government said that education provisions should provide wrap around care so parents can work. This doesn't allow this!

Any other comments on the proposal:

Response 1: Lots of private preschools and nursery's in the borough would not be able to survive

Response 2: Instead of lowering the age for primary school entry, the better solution is to strengthen early years education through the expansion of nurseries and specialized early years units. This proposal focuses on:

- Expanding access to high-quality early years care.
- Enhancing training for early years educators.

- Improving coordination between nurseries and primary schools.
- Providing financial support to parents for quality childcare.
- Emphasising play-based learning tailored to toddlers.
- Offering flexible childcare hours to accommodate working parents.

By maintaining age-appropriate learning environments and supporting families, this proposal ensures that both toddlers and school-age children in Hillingdon receive the best possible care and education at the right stages of their development.

Response 3: If the care is only going to be term time school hours only how does it support parents who need full time care? Have you considered how it is going to affect childminders in the area and other nurseries? What staff will there be and what qualifications will they hold? How many 2 year old children?

Response 4: I feel this would benefit local families that struggle to get a nursery space as the demand for 2yr spaces in nurseries is increasing and this cannot always be accommodated due to space staffing or waitlist

Response 5: This will have a major impact on small PVI business which could cause closures, meaning unemployment for staff and affecting the roll out of the 9 month old funding.

Response 6: I cannot see School staff being happy about nappy changes and potty training 30 children every day. Have they got the facilities for nap time, are they going to be able to help every child do coats and shoes. Help them to eat, how many staff per ratio will there be! What if a child has an accident because no one was watching? Whose bright idea was this?

Response 7: As I have said, this will have a serious impact on the PVI sector. The borough has said there is a lack of places and although this will offer places for 2-year-olds, the lack of funds will be serious to PVI cashflows.

Response 8: I personally don't believe this would be any advantage to 2-year-olds as the majority of these children Will be leaving their parents for the first time and putting them in a nursery school setting could be really overwhelming with the different age ranges and the size difference then to a small nursery setting where they can get a lot more one-to-one time with key workers rather than one teacher and a TA

Response 9: Will have a very negative impact on private preschools causing closures and hundreds of job losses impacting on families and lives and mental health

Response 10: It will immensely help working parents if Field end infant school starts taking students from the age of 2

Response 11: My son attended field end nursery before he started reception there. The staff are outstanding in the nursery and any children that attend the nursery will be well looked after and cared for.

Response 12: My 2 year old currently goes to a different private nursery, this will help in reducing time at drop off and him feeling secure with his sister in the infant school

Response 13: My middle daughter who is in year 1 has been in Field end since nursery and i find the school to be fantastic. The teachers are so kind and really encourage a community feel in

this school. Lowering the age range would only have a positive impact on the surrounding community.

Appendix C - Responses to the consultation on lowering the age range at Minet Infant and Nursery School

If you answered 'No' or 'Don't know' to the proposal to lower the age range at Minet Infant and Nursery School, please tell us why

Response 1: I think it's too young to be in a school environment and it will make local child minders potentially give up as not enough work and those who then need longer provisions eg working until 6 will have even less choice than they have now.

Response 2: It's too early for child to start school

Response 3: Lowering the age for primary schools to accept 2-year-olds raises significant concerns about the developmental, emotional, and educational impact on young children. Here are several reasons why this approach is problematic: 1. **Developmental Appropriateness:** Two-year-olds are at a critical stage of early childhood development, where their needs are primarily emotional, social, and physical. They are still mastering basic motor skills, language development, and socialization. Placing them in a structured primary school environment, which is designed for older children, risks overwhelming them. It could hinder their natural developmental milestones, as the school system may not have the flexibility or expertise to cater to such young children. 2. **Emotional Readiness:** Young children, particularly at the age of two, require high levels of emotional support, consistent nurturing, and a secure environment to thrive. Most are not yet emotionally ready to be away from their primary caregivers for extended periods in an academic setting. Forcing children into such an environment prematurely can lead to stress, anxiety, and separation issues that could negatively affect their mental well-being. 3. **Lack of Specialized Care:** Primary schools are not typically equipped with the resources or trained personnel to handle the specific needs of toddlers. Early years education requires specially trained professionals who understand the complexities of early childhood development, including potty training, nap times, and responsive caregiving, which are integral to the well-being of 2-year-olds. Without this specialized care, the children's emotional, physical, and cognitive needs may be overlooked. 4.

Disruption to Established Early Years Education: The early years foundation stage (EYFS) system, which governs nursery and pre-school education, is specifically designed for children under 5. These environments provide a play-based, child-centered approach to learning, which is essential for very young children. Shifting them into a more formal primary school setting would disrupt this crucial period of learning through play, which fosters creativity, social skills, and a love for exploration. 5. **Social Impact on Older Students:** Integrating 2-year-olds into a primary school environment also presents challenges for older students. The needs and behaviors of toddlers are vastly different from those of children in key stages 1 and 2. Teachers and staff would be forced to divide their attention between a much younger and older cohort, potentially lowering the quality of education and care for all students involved. 6. **Potential for Burnout Among Teachers:** Primary school teachers are trained to handle students who are typically aged 4 and above. Introducing much younger children could place an additional burden on staff, leading to increased stress and burnout. Primary school teachers may not have the skills to handle the specific demands of toddlers, such as managing frequent crying, toileting needs, and the emotional volatility that comes with this age group. 7. **Long-Term Academic Consequences:** Early exposure to formal education settings can lead to burnout and disinterest in learning later in life. Children who start too early in structured environments may

lose their natural curiosity and intrinsic motivation for learning, which are essential for long-term academic success. In summary, lowering the age for primary schools to accept 2-year-olds undermines the importance of specialized early childhood care and education. It disregards the unique developmental needs of toddlers and may harm both the younger children and the primary school system as a whole. Early childhood education should remain separate, with a focus on nurturing, play, and age-appropriate learning experiences.

Response 4: Children of 2 years old need lots of care and nurturing, schools having a hands-off approach will not support these children's emotional wellbeing. We already have many young children struggling with their emotional and mental health, this will not support them. From a business element, this will lead to many private nurseries having to close due to a lack of children as well as losing staff to work in the schools. There is already a staffing crisis in early years and this will make it worse, it will have a huge impact on sustainability for the private sector. Private nurseries closing will have a knock-on effect for parents who need childcare from 8-6pm all year round when there is already a lack of childcare places in the borough

Response 5: As a local Childminder I think this will be very hard for such small children to be in a school setting and have their very young needs met. Also schools are only open 38 weeks of the year and parents will use this service to go to work so who will look after the children within the school Holidays?

Response 6: I think they are too young to be in a school setting

Response 7: More staff will be needed more class room space needed and will be over crowded

Response 8: Because they don't take care as much as other nursery do and make the kids knowledgeable and teach them. Lots of stuff with fun

Response 9: I believe this is way too early for children to start school

Response 10: Schools are predominated education based and 2 year olds should be in a caring environment which is totally play based.

Response 11: Because I don't think it's fair on the staff or older children

Response 12: 2 Year olds are far too young to be in a school environment

Response 13: They're too young

If you answered 'Yes' to the question 'do you think this proposed change will disadvantage any residents in Hillingdon?', please tell us why

Response 1: The proposed change to lower the age for primary schools to accept 2-year-olds in Hillingdon could disadvantage local residents in several ways:

1. Strain on Resources and Overcrowding

Primary schools are already structured to cater to children aged 4 and above, and many schools in Hillingdon may already be working with limited resources and class sizes close to capacity. Accepting 2-year-olds would place additional strain on these resources—classroom space, teaching staff, and funding. This could lead to overcrowded classrooms and reduced attention for each student, affecting the quality of education for all children, including older students already enrolled.

2. Loss of Focus on Core Primary Education

Primary school teachers are trained to teach key curriculum subjects and manage the emotional and educational needs of children aged 4 to 11. By requiring them to care for 2-year-olds, schools risk diluting their focus on core educational outcomes. Residents of Hillingdon may see a decline in academic standards as teachers are stretched to manage the vastly different needs of toddlers and older students simultaneously.

3. Impact on Existing Early Years Providers

Hillingdon has a network of nurseries, pre-schools, and childminders who are specifically trained to care for very young children. Lowering the age for primary schools could undermine these providers, leading to closures or reduced enrolment in local nurseries. This shift could destabilize the early years sector in the borough, reducing choice and quality of childcare options for local families.

4. Reduced Specialization in Early Years Care

Nurseries and childminders provide environments that are designed specifically for the emotional, physical, and developmental needs of 2-year-olds. These settings offer play-based, nurturing care that focuses on building social skills, early language development, and emotional resilience. If 2-year-olds are placed in primary schools that are not tailored to their developmental stage, they may miss out on crucial early years experiences, leading to developmental delays. This could disadvantage Hillingdon families who rely on high-quality, specialized early years education.

5. Increased Burden on Families

While on the surface, allowing 2-year-olds into primary schools might seem convenient for parents, it could actually create additional burdens. Primary schools are not equipped with the flexible hours and specialized care that nurseries or childminders provide. For example, primary schools typically have shorter hours and may not offer the same level of one-on-one attention or services like potty training. This could result in parents needing to seek extra support outside of school hours, creating logistical challenges and additional costs.

6. Potential for Reduced Quality of Education Across the Borough

The introduction of younger children into primary schools may reduce the overall quality of education for children across the board. With resources and teacher time stretched, children in Hillingdon could see less personalized attention, fewer extracurricular activities, and a general decrease in the quality of their learning environment. This could result in lower academic achievement and a less enriching school experience for all students, particularly those who rely on strong primary education foundations.

In summary, lowering the age for primary schools to accept 2-year-olds could significantly disadvantage residents of Hillingdon. It risks overcrowding schools, straining resources, lowering the quality of education, and negatively impacting both younger and older children. Additionally, it could harm the local early years sector, increase financial burdens, and create social and emotional challenges for toddlers who are not ready for a primary school environment.

Response 2: Working families who need all year round, 8-6pm child care for their children, will be disadvantaged when private nurseries close due to sustainability and they are struggling to find quality affordable childcare

Response 3: Local childminders and playgroups will suffer immensely

Response 4: More traffic, parking

Response 5: The hours that the schools offer are generally 9 - 11 and 1-3. There will be an increase in parents attending the setting, thus more travellers to the venue. If schools start taking 2 years olds they will be disadvantaging the PVI sector by not only taking the children they would usually need staff which would mainly come from the PVI sector. There is a crises in the sector already for staff and lack of funding this could push settings to close as they will not have the staff/child ratios to operate.

Response 6: I think it will affect the children and the staff as there will be more responsibilities on the staff and the children might get missed

Comments to this question that approved the proposal were:

Response 1: Minet Infant and Nursery School Is very nice place for our children to be placed ,I think nursery's care and facilities are really in high standard and it will be very beneficial if our children have oppportunity to attend the nursery from year 2 .

My son is turning 2 after couple of weeks and could be amazing if he goes to Minet Infant and Nursery School as my eldest daughter attend Reception there .Its close and convenient for me and my family to drop and pick up them together

Response 2: My youngest will be 2 in a few months time which can definitely benefit me.

Response 3: Educating children earlier helps them now and prepares them for a brighter future. Parents and the economy also benefits now as well as in the long run.

Any other comments on the proposal:

Response 1: Instead of lowering the age for primary school entry, the better solution is to strengthen early years education through the expansion of nurseries and specialized early years units. This proposal focuses on:

- Expanding access to high-quality early years care.
- Enhancing training for early years educators.
- Improving coordination between nurseries and primary schools.

- Providing financial support to parents for quality childcare.
- Emphasising play-based learning tailored to toddlers.
- Offering flexible childcare hours to accommodate working parents.

By maintaining age-appropriate learning environments and supporting families, this proposal ensures that both toddlers and school-age children in Hillingdon receive the best possible care and education at the right stages of their development.

Response 2: I feel this would be beneficial to the area as currently there are limited spaces at nurseries due to staffing, demand and waitlists so I feel this would be a good idea to have the age lowered in school to support more families

Response 3: I think this idea is brilliant for the children's. They will progress more if they will start nursery early.

Response 4: This will benefit many children as this will promote continuity of care for the children as they will attend the school from 2 - 11 years. It allows them to feel a sense of community and belonging as well as develop stronger relationships with children and adults!

Response 5: I think, Children when they younger age to join school (nursery) is a lot advantage for them for their future to develop their knowledge, social life with whole school people, addition to learn and when they used to more the more they gone be ready for their education system.

Response 6: As I have said, this will have a serious impact on the PVI sector. The borough has said there is a lack of places and although this will offer places for 2 year olds, the lack of funds will be serious to PVI cashflows.

Response 7: I think it's really great for 2 year olds to be offered this opportunity especially since they're at their peak 'discovery' stage, they're learning so much already and especially with it being a tech era, I definitely think it's a great opportunity for children to socialise with each other and get out of those screens for once