



# Woodford Halse

## C.E. Primary Academy

Ready, Resilient, Respectful and Reflective

High Street  
Woodford Halse, NN11 3RQ  
Tel: 01327 265900  
Head of School: Miss Alison Crockford  
[general.enquiries@woodford.innovatemat.org](mailto:general.enquiries@woodford.innovatemat.org)  
[www.woodfordhalseacademy.net](http://www.woodfordhalseacademy.net)

Dear Parents/Carers and Community,

### **Formal Consultation to lower the age range at Woodford Halse CE Primary Academy to include from 2 years in our Nursery Setting- term time only.**

Woodford CE Primary Academy is an 'Ofsted Good' rated school. It is a larger than average village primary school with 265 on roll. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language and from minority ethnic backgrounds is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is above the national picture with the number who have an education, health and care plan (EHCP) close to the national average. Woodford Halse joined Innovate Multi Academy Trust in September 2014 to ensure sustainability and continued high quality education for all pupils and staff.

The Governors of Woodford Halse CE Primary Academy and Innovate Multi Academy Trust are moving forward together with a proposal to lower the age range of the school from 3-11 years to 2-11 years aged children in our Nursery Setting, term time only.

We are working with The Department for Education and West Northamptonshire Council, and hope that this will take effect from September 2025. We have at the forefront of our minds the needs of every child at Woodford Halse Primary Academy and how we can continue to strive to best meet their educational needs and provide them with the enriched experiences needed to achieve their full potential.

We want to seek the views of everyone within the school and communities in a period of consultation.

### **Woodford Halse CE Primary Academy**

#### **Mission:**

A great Christian school with the children and community at its heart.

#### **Values:**

We aim to be ready, resilient, respectful and reflective.



**'All things are possible for those that believe' ... Mark 9:23**



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Through our values of readiness, resilience, respect and reflectiveness we aim to ensure our children are happy, fulfilled and challenged in all they do. Children will be confident to step out into the world with deeper faith and understanding of themselves, others and their environment.

### **Vision:**

The school will embrace its individuality to deliver a curriculum that inspires children to achieve through the values of readiness, resilience, respect and being reflective. That curriculum will be led by creative thinking and contextual learning. It will deliver the national curriculum but not be defined by it. Our curriculum will ensure children are ready for their next step both academically and in regard to skills for life.

As a school we will ensure children have depth to their understanding of Christianity and other faiths and the values this brings. We will ensure they are informed and ready to make their own choices about faith and responsibility to society.

At the heart of the community we will embrace our locality and make it part of our everyday learning.

Our thematic approach will allow children to learn about the past and use that learning to solve problems of the future across all areas of the curriculum, thus creating citizens of the world.

The learning environment will be inspiring to all. Allowing them to show what they can achieve whilst being inspired by others.

As a school the education offered will go beyond the boundaries of a 9 to 3.30 system and draw upon both extra-curricular development and strengthening learning beyond the walls of the classroom.

Children's learning will be focused on the interests of the children alongside the expectations of the curriculum.

As a school we will adopt a no excuses approach in all we do.



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## **Why are we proposing to lower the age range of the School?**

The introduction of 2-year-olds will further strengthen the quality of education provided at the school by achieving better outcomes for children who will have access to a teacher who has a Degree in Early Childhood Studies – birth to 8 years with Qualified Teacher Status and NVQ Level 3 staff.

The school plans to open the 2-year-old provision for the same hours as the school is currently open to continue to meet the needs of families who have children in both the school and Nursery as drop off and pick-up times would be inline with each other.

The children attending the Nursery will gain a place at the school and will have benefited from being pupils of the school from a much earlier age. The school would like the opportunity to have educated these children directly from the start of their early education entitlement meaning a smoother transition into the school should the decision be made by parents to apply.

In 2018, The Department for Education stated that ‘the first few years of a child’s life are critical to shaping their future development, and our ambition is to provide equality of opportunity for every child, regardless of background or where they live, because we know that good early years’ education is the cornerstone of social mobility’. This announcement was in-line with the Government’s commitment to increase the number of early years’ places delivered within primary schools following previous Ofsted recommendations.

Steven McIntosh, Save the Children Director of UK Poverty, said, ‘High-quality child-care, led by graduate early years’ teachers, can ensure children are ready for school. All of our little ones should have access to nursery care led by an early years’ teacher’. (August 2018).

The Childcare Act 2016 placed a duty on local authorities to secure 30 hours of free childcare for working families with 3 and 4-year-olds from September 2017. Woodford Halse Primary Academy offers this and further lowering of the age range offers even greater flexibility for working families.



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### What are the benefits for the proposed change?

There are many reasons why we are proposing to lower the age range at Woodford Halse Primary Academy. The main ones are summarised below:

- Woodford Halse Primary Academy is graded as a 'Good School' with Ofsted. We are confident of providing a further high-quality early years' education for all aged pupils.
- The proposals are in response to recommendations made by Ofsted, The Department for Education and Save the Children to encourage more primary schools to establish their own nursery provision, allowing more children to access high quality provision with a qualified teacher, improving their outcomes throughout life.
- To meet the requirements of working families and the introduction of the new funding available for Sept 2025 - Up to 30 hours for eligible working families in England with a child from 9 months old up to school age.
- Children will become pupils of the school, allowing access to Early Years Provision within a Good graded school and will be used to the school environment, teaching staff and ethos.
- Education will be provided by an adult who has a degree in early childhood studies and who will also be supported by an NVQ level 3 person; thereby improving individual pupils' early learning and development opportunities.
- Experienced staff appointed to work within the EYFS will have access to training alongside colleagues across the whole of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, and vice versa. There may be opportunities to work within all year groups, sharing expertise; benefiting children throughout the school. There will also be opportunities to work with other preschools/nurseries that are based with primary schools within our Academy Trust. Thus, providing further high-quality professional development for staff.
- Children and families in the Nursery will have access to support services within the school and Academy Trust which may include 'Special Needs' support, Family Support Workers, Health visitors, speech and language provision, well-being etc.
- Children will have access to extra curriculum resources such as the library, as well as being included in school events such as Harvest, Christmas, Easter, and special school events.



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### **How will the proposed change benefit pupils of Woodford Halse CE Primary Academy?**

If the proposal is approved, the change could bring many benefits for pupils. The main ones are summarised below:

- Woodford Halse CE Primary Academy will be able to build upon the high-quality education provided for their current pupils between the ages of 3-11 years. Children will have access to a carefully planned curriculum which will meet the needs of the children and community.
- Our current school curriculum already has Foundation Stage as part of the early years planning using Development Matters milestones from birth.
- Our experienced 3 - 4-year-old Nursery teacher has a Degree in Early Childhood Studies from birth to 8 years with qualified teacher status. Our school also has two staff members who are NVQ level 3 trained.
- There will be a continuation of the school's strong whole school curriculum intent throughout the school with high-quality texts supporting children's oracy and English development.
- The curriculum at Woodford Halse Primary Academy places a high emphasis on using the environment to stimulate and enhance learning. The classroom and outdoor provision, including a large field, playground, Forest School area and beautiful village location has been planned to focus on physical development and communication and language development and will therefore support all children as they progress through each key stage.
- There will be opportunities for continuity for pupils who choose to enroll for primary provision at Woodford Halse Primary Academy to remain in an environment with which they are familiar – from 2 years through to Year 6 should they wish. Existing networks will be in place and they will be taught by teachers and school leaders who know them well and have developed relationships with them and their families from a young age.
- Research strongly supports the idea that children who access educational settings as young as possible perform better academically and thrive socially. Here's why –

**Children are viewed as unique individuals:** teachers concentrate on what the children CAN do, rather than what they CAN'T do. Teachers focus on instructing each child according to their own strengths.



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**The pace of learning is individualised:** Teachers tailor the curriculum and instruction for each pupil.

**Promoting co-operation:** Children are more likely to co-operate than compare. The spirit of co-operation and caring makes it possible for children to see each other as individuals, as opposed to competitors.

**Children develop a sense of family with their classmates:** From an early age children generate a family of learners who support and care for one another. Older children have the opportunity to be mentors/buddies and take leadership roles. They model more sophisticated approaches to problem solving, helping younger children to accomplish tasks they would not be able to do independently. This dynamic increases the older child's level of independence and competence, while increasing the younger child's spirit of belonging in a community of learners.

**Self-esteem blossoms:** Children are socially and psychologically healthy because they promote friendship and provide extended contact with adults and peers of varying ages.

Pupils who attend Woodford Halse Primary Academy Nursery will not be disadvantaged when deciding on their transition to primary education. They will have the same choice as those in other early years provisions.

### **What are the potential issues arising from the proposed change?**

There will be challenges to address before the 2-year-old provision can be opened, these include:

- The outdoor space will need adapting for accessibility.
- A re-structure of the furniture and resources will be required to ensure the provision is of high-quality.
- Redeployment and possible further recruitment of staff will need to commence to ensure highly qualified teaching staff are in place for September 2025 and to ensure correct ratios for supervision. All policies and procedures will be followed, including any relevant training and safer recruitment.



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## **Submission of feedback to the consultation**

It is important that all stakeholders and other interested parties are given the opportunity to express their views in order for Woodford Halse CE Primary Academy to consider these before making a final decision.

**The 4 week consultation period will begin from:  
Monday 18th November to 5pm on Monday 16th December 2024**

The purpose of this document is to provide you with information and to give you the opportunity to express your views.

Feedback can be given via email, no later than 5pm on Monday 16th December 2024 to Lindsey Evans via the Consultation Officer at [consultations@innovatemat.org](mailto:consultations@innovatemat.org)

A drop-in session to discuss any views in person has been organised for: Monday 9th December from 3.30pm to 4.30pm at Woodford Halse Primary Academy. This is open to all.

**All responses to the consultation will be fully considered by Woodford Halse Primary Academy and Innovate Multi Academy Trust.**

### **What are the next steps?**

Monday 18th November 2024 consultation starts

Monday 9th December 2024 drop-in sessions for any views (Book an appointment as per above)

Monday 16th December at 5pm consultation ends

January - Consultation analysis report circulated

**If the decision is made to go ahead with the proposal:** On the 1st September 2025 the school's age range will be lowered to 2 years.





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### **Consultation List:**

- Pupils and Parents on roll at Woodford Halse CE Primary Academy
- Staff at Woodford Halse CE Primary Academy
- Peterborough Diocese
- Local Councillors
- Woodford Halse Parish Council
- Local community groups who might be affected by the proposal
- Any other interested party, including parents in the area

The consultation document will also be published on the School Website for the four-week consultation period <https://www.woodfordhalseacademy.net/>

Yours faithfully,

Miss Alison Crockford – Head of School at Woodford Halse Primary Academy

Mrs Terry Lifford – Woodford Halse Primary Academy Chair of Governors

Mrs Lindsey – CEO of Innovate Multi Academy Trust



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