



**Consultation on a proposal  
to extend the age range at  
Victoria Infant and Nursery  
School, Barrow from 3 to  
7 years to 2 to 7 years with  
effect from 7 January 2025**



## Introduction

The Governing Body of Victoria Infant and Nursery School has approached Westmorland and Furness Council with a proposal to extend the age range of the provision offered at the school from the current three- to seven-year-old children to two- to seven-year-old children. This would enable the school to offer nursery provision for two-year-olds.

The school is planning on providing thirty 15-hour places in the 2-year-old room. This means that there will be 15 morning sessions and 15 afternoon sessions created. There will also be benefits in terms of the offering for 3-year-old children at the setting. Children will be able to start at the setting sooner in the academic year and the actual capacity of the three year old provision will be increased further with the creation of ten full time equivalent places – ten 15-hour places in the morning and ten 15-hour places for the afternoon.

As the school's admissions authority, the Local Authority is statutorily required to consult with all relevant stakeholders on the proposal and subject to the outcome of that consultation, take a final decision on whether to approve the proposal.

## Background

The Governing Body of Victoria Infant and Nursery School would like to extend the age range to enable the school to provide nursery places for two-year-olds. In the process of developing this proposal the Headteacher, the Governing Body and the staff have undertaken research by accessing relevant training, visiting alternative EYFS settings with existing two-year-old provision and engaging in an initial consultation with parents and other local schools. This increased level of understanding has led the Governing Body at the school to believe that the establishment of two-year-old provision at the school would be of benefit both educationally and financially.

The expenditure for this proposal is minimal. The school has the capacity within its existing premises to accommodate more children without requiring any major building work. The school have applied for an early years' capital grant to support with the costs of refurbishing the proposed nursery space and provide the initial resources that would be required to enable the school to begin to offer two-year-old provision. However, the school have confirmed that funding that has been raised by the School's Parent Teacher Association will be utilised in the event that the grant application is not successful.

In terms of staffing, it is intended that one of the school's current nursery teachers would oversee the two-year-old provision under the leadership of the Headteacher. Currently, there are two Teaching Assistants at the school with the relevant qualifications and experience of supporting the consulted age range. Furthermore, if the two-year-old provision is approved, the school will seek to recruit further Teaching Assistants.

The benefits to the local community can be outlined under the following categories:

### Benefits for the Children

- Ofsted have rated Victoria Infant and Nursery School as a good school so increasing the age range of the school will allow for more children to access education of a good standard.
- An age range extension will provide opportunities for children to work with school staff from an earlier age to develop their language skills within an educational setting.
- There will be the potential for special educational needs or disabilities to be identified as early as possible ensuring children can access appropriate support at an earlier opportunity.
- The children will have access to a consistent quality learning experience without the need for transition to another setting as they move through the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

### Benefits for the Parents/Families

- Parents who have other children in the school could potentially take younger siblings to the same place saving time and reducing pollution from travel.
- A number of the PVI settings in the area are not providing childcare on Friday afternoons leaving families with childcare difficulties.
- Parents have to pay for private nursery places throughout the school holidays. This would not be the case at the school. Therefore, not having to pay for extended hours childcare in the school holidays will save parents a considerable amount of money.
- There is pre-existing demand for 2-year-old places from parents. The school received 22 expressions of interest in response to an earlier consultation exercise they held.

## What is the Local Authority consulting upon?

For the reasons set out above Westmorland and Furness Council is consulting on a proposal to extend the age range at Victoria Infant and Nursery School, Barrow from three to seven years to two to seven years with effect from 7 January 2025.

The consultation will run from 5 July 2024 until 1 August 2024.

## What happens next?

At the end of the consultation, Westmorland and Furness Council's Cabinet will consider the response to the consultation and decide whether or not to publish formal notice of the proposal. If notice of the proposal is published, then this will trigger a further four-week representation period during which all stakeholders will have another opportunity to comment on the proposal.

At the end of the representation period the Cabinet must make a decision on the proposal. If the proposal is approved, it is likely that the change would be implemented from the beginning of Spring term, 7 January 2025.

## Where can I find out more information about this proposal?

You can find out more information by following the attached link to Frequently Asked Questions documents that is available on the Council's website.

[legacy.westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk/childrensservices/schoolsandlearning/lss/school-organisation/Consultations.asp](https://legacy.westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk/childrensservices/schoolsandlearning/lss/school-organisation/Consultations.asp)

## How can I make my views known?

You can respond to the consultation by emailing, completing an online questionnaire or writing to the School Organisation Team as below.

It is not possible to respond to individual correspondence, but Westmorland and Furness Council will ensure that all points raised during the consultation process are addressed in the post-consultation report.

Please note that all comments received as part of the consultation process will be re-produced in the post consultation report. When responding to the consultation please supply your name and address of your place of residence. All comments will be redacted so that individuals cannot be identified, unless the individual or individuals hold a formal position that needs to be clearly identified.

The closing date for this consultation is **1 August 2024**. You can complete the online questionnaire here:

<https://consult.westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk/westmorland-and-furness-council/consultation-on-a-proposal-to-extend-the-age-range/>

If you would prefer, you can complete and return a hard copy of the questionnaire which is set out on the next page

# Consultation on the proposal to extend the age range of Victoria Infants and Nursery School, Barrow-in-Furness

## 1. Please indicate your relationship to the school *(tick all boxes that apply)*

I am a:

Parent/carer of a child at Victoria Infant

Member of staff at Victoria Infant

Governor at Victoria Infant

Other

If other has been selected, please specify

## 2 Please use the space below to include your comments about the proposal.

Name (please print)

Address (incl. postcode)

Please return by email to **School.Organisation.WAF@Cumbria.gov.uk**

or by post to: **School Organisation, Westmorland and Furness Council PO Box No. 305**

