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# Gig Mill Primary School Consultation

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Lowering the age range of  
Gig Mill Primary School -  
Dudley

**MARCH 2024**

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The Broadway,  
Norton,  
Stourbridge,  
West Midlands,  
DY8 3HL



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## **Introduction**

The Trustees of Gig Mill Primary School are consulting on its proposal to lower the age range of Gig Mill Primary School, Dudley from 3 to 11 years to 2 to 11 years, to provide child care to more parents from September 2024.

This document outlines the consultation process and timescales for lowering the school age to offer more childcare for working families and invites you to submit your views.

## **Background**

Gig Mill Primary School is a three-form entry primary school in Dudley. The school is a thriving successful school rated 'Good' by Ofsted in 2020.

The Trustees of Gig Mill Primary School believe that offering provision from age 2 will benefit the children and families in the local community, through the provision of high-quality affordable childcare and quality education for children from 2 years to 11 years, enabling families to use their Government Funded Early Education childcare entitlement at one setting.

## **The proposal**

The Trustees of Gig Mill Primary School are proposing to lower the age range of Gig Mill Primary School from 3 years to 11 years, to 2 years to 11 years. The Trustees have followed the DfE guidance by consulting with Dudley Local Authority before making this proposal.

## **Why are we proposing to change the age range of Gig Mill Primary School?**

During recent years the uptake of early years nursery places at Gig Mill Primary School has declined, resulting in the school only offering morning sessional provision. We realise this has impacted on how working parents access the provision.

We anticipate that in the future the nursery and reception class may operate as a combined Foundation Stage. This will also allow children to progress in line with their developmental age rather than chronological age, by providing fluidity between the nursery class and reception class and enable our educationalists to deliver high quality

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early years and primary education, covering a rich and varied curriculum, from 2 years to 11 years – something that we do very well.

### **Our Vision**

Through lowering the school age we will achieve our vision to be the ‘primary and nursery school of choice for our local community’.

We aim to give children of all abilities every opportunity to develop their academic, social, emotional, spiritual, and physical aspects of learning. We will combine our outdoor resources, including forest area and playing fields, strong community links and rich and broad curriculum to develop confident, motivated, and responsible children who will be prepared for secondary school and make a positive contribution to society and their local community.

We appreciate local families, with and without children, our neighbours, local residents, and local early years providers will have a number of questions. To help answer some of your initial queries the Trustees, Head Teacher and Early Years Leader have compiled a list of Frequently Asked Questions (see below).

### **Why are we consulting now?**

Following Government changes to free child care for working parents starting April 2024 the Trustees are following the consultation process outlined in ‘Making significant changes (‘prescribed alterations’) to an open academy (January 2022)’, in association with the Local Authority, to lower the school age range to enable the delivery of nursery provision to 2 year olds within the school.

Changes to the DfE/ Ofsted Regulations enabling schools to include provision for 2 year olds will ensure that the nursery provision will be included within the school’s inspection process.

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### **Will the Proposal have any impact on the school's admission arrangements?**

Currently we offer 90 reception places each year for local children. There are no planned changes to the Published Admission Number (PAN) of 90 reception places.

The capacity in the school from reception to year 6 is not impacted by this consultation.

Parents of children applying for a reception place would need to apply in the normal way for admission to the primary school whether their child attends the nursery provision or not. By attracting local families to the nursery class, we hope that the majority of families will be successful should they choose to apply to reception class at Gig Mill Primary School.

### **Buildings**

Gig Mill Primary School is fortunate that it has a purpose built nursery unit. Therefore, these proposals will not require additional building work.

### **Consultations, approvals and overall timescales**

It is proposed that the age range of the school changes from 1 September 2024. The proposed changes require a period of consultation.

This consultation on the proposal to lower the school age, is taking place between 11<sup>th</sup> March 2024 to 19<sup>th</sup> April 2024. During this period the Trustees will share its proposals with the wider professional network, local schools, local community, partner agencies, and the staff and parents of the school.

This will provide an opportunity for consultees to make their views known before a final decision is taken. Following the consultation period, the Trustees will apply to the West Midlands Regional Director to make a significant change to the school's age range, taking into account the consultation responses.

The decision will be published on the Trust and school website as soon as it has been finalised.

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## **Have your say**

The Trustees of Gig Mill Primary School would like to know what key stakeholders feel about the proposal to lower the school age range to 2-11 years. The consultation will open on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2024 for four weeks.

### **You can respond by:**

a) Accessing the consultation online on the school's website:

[www.gig-mill.dudley.sch.uk](http://www.gig-mill.dudley.sch.uk)

b) Completing the consultation response form that is available alongside this document. You can email the form or print it, complete it and send it back to:

Consultation on Lowering the School Age Range,

The Broadway,

Norton,

Stourbridge,

West Midlands,

DY8 3HL

or Email: [info@gig-mill.dudley.sch.uk](mailto:info@gig-mill.dudley.sch.uk) with the subject:

FAO Gig Mill Primary Consultation on Lowering the School Age Range.

All responses must be received by 19<sup>th</sup> April 2024

### **What happens next**

We will hold a public meeting for parents and any other interested parties to discuss the proposal and to hear the views that people have.

As a public meeting, anyone who wishes to may attend. The event will be held on the 14<sup>th</sup> March at 15.00, there will be a short presentation followed by questions and answers.

Please join to share your views and ask questions.

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## Consultation response form

(Also available online at [www.gig-mill.dudley.sch.uk](http://www.gig-mill.dudley.sch.uk))

Proposal to lower the age range of Gig Mill Primary School, Dudley from 4 to 11 years to 2 to 11 years, from September 2024, to ensure the school meets the needs of local working families.

Name .....

Relationship with the school e.g. parent, local business:

.....

1. I SUPPORT the proposal to lower the age range of Gig Mill Primary School from 3 to 11 years to 2 to 11 years from September 2024.

OR

2. I DO NOT SUPPORT the proposal to lower the age range of Gig Mill Primary School from 3 to 11 years to 2 to 11 years from September 2024.

- 3.

My reasons are:

.....

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## Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

1. What are your opening hours?

Our morning sessions are from 8:35 - 11:35 Monday to Friday

When available afternoon sessions run 12.15 -3.15 Monday to Friday

2. Do you accept childcare vouchers?

Yes. Please contact us to discuss.

3. Do you provide places for children in receipt of Funded Early Education entitlement?

Yes, we offer places to children in receipt of 30 and 15 Funded Early Education (FEE and FEET) hours. All 3 and 4 year olds are eligible for 15h FEE, and some 2 year olds are eligible for 15 hours FEET.

4. What other fees are charged if my child is eligible for FEE or FEET?

There are no additional childcare charges for FEE and FEET funded places, and unlike some nurseries, we do not charge for enrichment activities such art, music and sport as we consider these to be part of our Early Years Curriculum offer.

5. What entrances will be used? Can we come onto site to drop off within setting?

The usual nursery entrance will be used during school drop off hours and to pick up at the end of morning time.

6. Can you book term-time only or all year round?

We run term time only (38 weeks)

7. Does the Nursery open on Bank Holidays?

No, we close for Statutory bank holidays each year.

8. If we attend the nursery, do we have to go to the school?

Although we hope that you will want your child to continue their education at Gig Mill Primary School there is no requirement for you to apply to Reception class at Gig Mill Primary School.



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9. If we attend the nursery, do we get a priority place for the school?

No. Currently no mainstream school in England can offer priority places to children attending a school-attached nursery. All parents wishing their child to join the school in Reception class will need to apply in line with the school's admission arrangements detailed on our website each year.

10. What areas of the school will the children have access to?

All areas including the Nursery outdoor space, playground, hall, playing fields, growing area and forest area. Nursery children will not use the swimming pool due to its depth.

11. Will the nursery children mix with older children and their siblings?

The nursery children will integrate with our older year groups, through occasional events throughout the year eg shared assemblies, plays, sports days. Nursery and Reception outdoor play areas are separate.

12. Will there be a teacher in the nursery?

The nursery class will be run by a qualified Early Years practitioner, and the Early Years will be overseen by our Early Years Lead who is a qualified teacher.

13. What qualifications do staff have?

Early Years Lead: QTS (Qualified Teacher Status) Level 6 and above

Nursery Teachers : QTS for Early Years Education Level 6 and above.

Nursery Staff: NVQ3

14. How do you recruit? Do you allow students?

We advertise vacancies locally and through WM Jobs. We recruit in line with our Safer Recruitment Policy to ensure safeguarding of our children (please see our website for details). As a teacher training school, we welcome student teachers from the University of Birmingham and local colleges seeking experience in the early years, in addition to our regular staff.

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15. Do you have qualified first aiders?

Yes, staff hold Pediatric Level 3 First Aid Qualification

16. What food will be provided?

Free healthy snacks of fruit and vegetables will be provided throughout the day and free milk is provided to all under 5 year olds.

17. Will the children be expected to wear school uniform? What does my child need to wear?

Nursery children have the option of wearing a Nursery polo shirt and/or sweatshirt with their own clothes. This is to provide a sense of belonging to Gig Mill Primary School.

18. What else do I need to provide for my child?

Children need to bring a water bottle, wear appropriate, comfortable footwear and have a coat for outdoors.