

Report Title:	King's Court First School
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information?	<i>NO - Part I</i>
Member reporting:	Cllr Natasha Airey, Lead Member for Children's Services
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet 23 February 2017
Responsible Officer(s):	Alison Alexander, Managing Director and Strategic Director Adult, Children and Health Services Kevin McDaniel, Head of Schools and Educational Services
Wards affected:	Old Windsor

REPORT SUMMARY

1. As a result of falling number of children accessing nursery provision at King's Court First School, in Old Windsor, the Governing Body have asked the Royal Borough to consider the future of the school's nursery class. Consequently consultation and an assessment of need versus supply has taken place.
2. This report summarises the assessment which confirms that demand does not currently exist in the area.

1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION: That Cabinet notes the report and:

- i) **Approves, in principle, the request from King's Court First School Governing Body that the age range at the school changes so that it serves children aged 4-9 years old, rather than aged 3-9 years old, from September 2017.**
- ii) **Authorises the Lead Member for Children's Services and the Managing Director & Strategic Director of Adult, Children and Health Services to publish a proposal to change the age range, and to determine the proposal following the end of the representation period.**
- iii) **Requests that officers, in partnership with the school, keep the demand for early years provision in Old Windsor under review, and bring forward proposals to re-open the nursery class or otherwise provide early years' provision on site as needed, using the school's existing accommodation.**

2. REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Background to the proposal

- 2.1 The Governing Body of King's Court First School, in Old Windsor, have asked the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead to consider the future of the school's nursery class, including the possibility of its closure in September 2017. King's Court First School is a community school, and as such the local authority must approve any proposal to change the age range of the school, closing the nursery class.
- 2.2 The number of children attending the 26 place nursery class has fallen sharply over the past few years, as shown in *Table 1 – Nursery numbers at King's Court*. A 26 place nursery can accommodate up to 52 children, with 26 places in the morning and 26 places in the afternoon.

Table 1 – Nursery Numbers at King's Court¹

2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
52	49	42	38	40	37	38	27

¹This shows the highest number of nursery children on roll at any point during the year.

- 2.3 Over the eight year period, 2009-2017 the number of children in the nursery as a proportion of the children of the relevant age group living in the area has fallen. In 2016 it had reached 43%, against 84% in 2009. This fall is due to:

- **Children starting in Reception earlier.**

Since 2010 there have been changes to the rules around school admissions. Most children now start Reception at the start of the academic year, when some have only just turned four years old, instead of in the following January or April. This has reduced the number of children in nursery classes.

- **New early years providers opening in Old Windsor.**

Until June 2014, there were only two main providers of early years education in Old Windsor, the King's Court nursery class and Old Windsor Pre-school, providing 56 places for children aged 2 to 4. Recently, provision has increased, with an additional 60 places for children aged 2 to 5 at Poppies Day Nursery (opened June 2014), and 50 places for children aged up to 5 at The Old Windsor Montessori House of Children (opened October 2015).

- **Fewer children being born in the Old Windsor area.**

The number of children being born in the Royal Borough is now falling, with 1,651 children born in 2014/15, compared to 1,863 in 2011/12. The trend is less clear in the Old Windsor (partly because the small numbers in the area mean that there is more statistical 'noise'), but there were 50 births in 2014/15, compared to 59 in 2012/13.

Table 2 – Births in Old Windsor, by year of intake into Nursery, age 4¹

2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
61	58	48	42	48	59	42	50

¹e.g. into National Curriculum Year Group N2, which is the one before Reception.

- 2.4 Taken together these factors have reduced the nursery class numbers by half. Consequently, the King's Court First School Governing Body have determined that the nursery class is no longer financially viable.

Alternative options

2.5 King's Court First School have considered some alternative options:

- **Taking in two year olds to increase numbers.**

The nursery class currently takes three and four year olds, but could also take in some two year olds, both those eligible for government funding and those whose parents might be willing to pay. This would require some changes to the buildings to make them suitable, e.g. areas for resting. In addition, the staffing ratios need to be higher for two year olds, which results in additional revenue costs. These could offset any gain from having more children.

- **Providing 30 hours per week of free entitlement to early education.**

From September 2017, the government will be introducing the 'extended 30-hour entitlement'. This will give parents of three and four year olds entitlement to 30 hours of early years education free for 38 weeks of the year if they meet the criteria. The government estimates that this will lead to a 28% increase in hours funded by the free entitlement in the Royal Borough, potentially leading to a shortage of provision. The Governing Body at King's Court has concluded that they could only provide a term-time offer and so the nursery would not attract sufficient numbers under the extended entitlement to improve their viability.

- **Future re-opening of the nursery if/when demand rises.**

It is possible that demand for nursery class places in Old Windsor will rise again in the future and/or that the extended 30-hour entitlement (or other model of provision) becomes more deliverable at the school. The class could be closed and then re-opened at a future date.

Impact on children currently at the nursery

2.6 If the nursery class does close in September 2017, then the families of children currently on roll at the nursery and born on or after 1st September 2013 would need to find a place at another nursery provider in time for the start of the new academic year.

2.7 Children on roll at the nursery and born between 1st September 2012 and 31st August 2013 would be moving up into Reception in September 2017, either at King's Court or at another school, and so would not be affected directly.

2.8 Any children starting in the nursery class in the remainder of the 2016/17 academic year would, if the proposal goes ahead, need to find a place at another provider in September 2017.

The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment

2.9 Under the Childcare Act 2006, the Royal Borough is required to assess whether there is sufficient childcare, including early years education, to meet demand in its area. The local authority has contracted Coda Consultants to research and produce the 2016 Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) for the Royal Borough, see *Appendix A – Childcare Sufficiency Assessment for Old Windsor*.

2.10 In summary, the analysis notes that, at present, 69% of children aged 0 to 4 are theoretically able to access an early years education place. If the nursery class at King's Court closed, then this would reduce to 64%. This compares to

a borough average of 47%. Many parents do not use any childcare for their children aged 0 to 4 and it is likely, therefore, that the 140 places at the three main private providers (Old Windsor Pre-school, Poppies and House of Children) and the local registered childminders would be able to absorb the demand from a closed nursery class. Poppies Day Nursery has recently had a planning application approved, which will allow it to increase the number of places from 60 to 70.

- 2.11 The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment does not directly model the potential impact of the extended 30-hour entitlement on demand on the Old Windsor area, but does note that, of the 7 eligible parents responding to the survey, the majority were interested in accessing the extended entitlement. All of those stated that they would like to access such provision at a maintained school nursery class. This does suggest that there would be some demand for an extended 30-hour entitlement at King's Court.

Impact on staff

- 2.12 The nursery class currently has two full time nursery nurse roles. These roles would no longer be needed if the proposal goes ahead. See Section 11 for more details.

Use of accommodation

- 2.13 The nursery class at King's Court First School is housed in the school's Foundation Unit, together with the Reception age children. If the nursery class closes, then the school will have an additional space to use for teaching and learning in the main school.
- 2.14 In the future, it is possible that demand for early years provision could rise again, allowing the school to re-open its nursery class or a private provider to open on the site. The borough should not need to fund any additional accommodation to allow this to happen, and any new provision would not necessarily have to be in the same space as the current nursery class. The school's modular building or the converted bungalow could also be used, for example, which could address any safeguarding issues around having a third party provider on site.

Consultation

- 2.15 The governing body of the school met on 15 September 2016 and approved a request that the Royal Borough carry out public consultation on a proposal to close the nursery class. The Royal Borough began public consultation on Friday 7th October 2016. That consultation has now finished. The process and analysis of the responses is set out in more detail in Section 8. In summary:
- A response rate of 6.3% was achieved.
 - 53% of respondents are against the proposed closure, including 76% of parents responding.
 - 43% of respondents are in favour, including 82% of staff and governors responding.

Options

- 2.16 The Royal Borough agrees that, as things currently stand:
- The underlying demographics and the opening of new providers locally mean that demand for the nursery class at King's Court is unlikely to rise.
 - The nursery class is partially contributing to financial difficulties at the school.
 - There is sufficient early years provision in Old Windsor to meet the current local demand.
- 2.17 The Royal Borough notes that:
- The funding of nursery provision is set to get more generous.
 - If other local early years providers decide to implement the extended 30-hour entitlement, and so offer more hours to fewer children, this could increase the demand for places at King's Court.
 - There is the potential for King's Court to offer the extended 30-hour entitlement in a way that is attractive to local parents by also opening in holiday periods.
 - Underlying demand may rise in the future.
- 2.18 In conclusion, the Royal Borough agrees that the short term the demand for the King's Court Nursery Class is low, making its financial viability uncertain. The Royal Borough believes, however, that there may be opportunities for the class to re-open in the future, using existing school accommodation. Demand should, therefore, be kept under review and discussed with the school as appropriate.
- 2.19 The options are given in *Table 3 – Summary of options*.

Table 3: Summary of options

Option	Comments
Approves, in principle, the request from King's Court First School Governing Body that the age range at the school changes so that it serves children aged 4-9 years old, rather than aged 3-9 years old, from September 2017. This is the recommended option.	This allows the borough to proceed to the next step of the closure process.
Authorises the Lead Member for Children's Services and the Managing Director & Strategic Director of Adult, Children and Health Services to determine the closure proposal following the end of the representation period. This is the recommended option.	This will allow the Royal Borough to swiftly consider any representations made in response to the publication of a formal proposal for the closure of the nursery class at King's Court, and decide whether to proceed.
Requests that officers, in partnership with the school, keep the demand for early years provision in Old Windsor under review, and bring forward proposals to re-open the nursery class or otherwise provide early years' provision on site as needed, using the school's existing accommodation. This is the recommended option.	This will ensure that the Royal Borough and the school can respond to any increase in demand for early years provision in Old Windsor.
Does not approve the publication of a proposal to change the age range at King's Court First School from September 2017. Not recommended.	This would retain the nursery class at the school. Financial modelling suggests that the school could have a deficit of £48k in 2019/20.

3. KEY IMPLICATIONS

Table 4: Key Implications

Outcome	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date of delivery
To carry out the formal process to change the age range at King's Court First School in time for 1 September 2017.	1 July 2017	1 May 2017	N/A	N/A	1 September 2017

4. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

- 4.1 Schools receive funding for nursery classes based on the number of children attending. On the current rates, a nursery with just 26 children attending for their full 15 hours entitlement per week would receive £61,703 per annum from the Early Years Funding Formula. The estimated annual staffing costs would be £61,072, which takes into account the required ratio of 1 nursery nurse for every 13 children.
- 4.2 Although the staffing costs and income break even at 26 children, a nursery class will have additional overheads, such as books and equipment, utilities, maintenance and accommodation costs. This leaves a shortfall in funding, which many early years providers cover by charging parents (at higher rates) for hours over and above the 15 hours entitlement.
- 4.3 A school with a nursery class can also cover the shortfall by using the main school budget. At King's Court First School, the school runs a combined nursery and Reception class (i.e. a Foundation Unit), and so there is some natural overlapping of costs. Nevertheless, the school believe that they need to now close the nursery class, in order to avoid running a deficit budget and reducing the funding for teaching and learning in other year groups.
- 4.4 King's Court First School has carried out some financial modelling for the school budget going forward, based on projected numbers under various scenarios. This modelling assumes that the nursery numbers (currently 27 in 2016/17) could be between 19 and 31 in 2017/18, and between 22 and 37 in 2018/19. If there are no other changes in demand then, based on the local demographics, these are reasonable projections.
- 4.5 The Royal Borough has been working with King's Court to help refine their budget modelling. This work suggests that the school could end up with a deficit in 2019/20, but this is not entirely due to the nursery class, i.e. the school would still be projected to have a deficit in 2019/20 even if the nursery class closes. The figures are a deficit of £48k if the nursery class continues, and £28k if it doesn't.
- 4.6 There are, however, some aspects that have not been modelled in these estimates.

The impact of the extended 30-hour entitlement

- 4.7 The government expects the extended 30-hour entitlement to increase the number of funded hours taken up by children in early years providers, including nursery classes. In the borough, this increase could be as much as 28%, thereby reducing the number of spare places in the system. Evidence from the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment for Old Windsor suggests that there will be at least some demand for the extended entitlement locally.
- 4.8 At present, King's Court's Governing Body don't feel that offering the extended 30-hour free entitlement, as a term-time only offer, would be attractive to parents. If, however, one or more of the other private providers in the village did offer the extended entitlement, then they could be offering more hours to

fewer children, which would then increase demand at the other providers, including King's Court. The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment for Old Windsor suggests that, presently, none of the main early years providers in the village are planning to offer the extended 30-hour entitlement from September 2017.

- 4.9 Alternatively, King's Court could consider a more flexible offer to meet the needs of working parents. This could include being open in school holidays, especially during the summer, when parents are very challenged in finding quality provision for their children. The school would be able to charge for hours outside of term-time to cover the costs.
- 4.10 This would be a significant change to the current nursery offer that the school is not (currently) in a position to offer. With a term-time only offer, however, the governing body believe that the nursery would not attract sufficient numbers under the extended entitlement to improve their viability.⁴

The new Early Years National Funding Formula

- 4.11 The government has consulted recently on changes to the way in which early years providers, including school nursery classes, are funded. The proposed changes are intended to encourage providers to implement the extended 30-hours entitlement, as there is no legal requirement for them to do so.
- 4.12 The consultation did not start until 11th August 2016, by which point most of the fieldwork for the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment had already been completed. It is likely, therefore, that providers in Old Windsor did not have any details about the new proposals when indicating that they did not expect to be offering the extended 30-hour entitlement.
- 4.13 The consultation ended on 22nd September 2016, and a response from the government is expected by the end of the year. The main proposals are a significant increase in the funding each early years provider receives per hour/per child; and moves to ensure that, all else being equal, the level of funding per hour/per child is the same across all settings in a local authority area.
- 4.14 Initial work on these proposals by the Royal Borough suggests that school nursery classes will benefit from these proposals. The break even point on income and staffing costs (excluding consideration of other overheads) could be reduced to 24 children, rather than the current 26.
- 4.15 The proposed changes to the Early Years National Funding Formula have now been agreed by the Schools Forum. The changes result in better funding for nursery classes, helping with viability at King's Court, even without any increase in children.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Childcare Act 2006 places a number of duties on local authorities with regard to early years provision. These include:
- Section 6, which places a duty on English local authorities to secure sufficient childcare for working parents.

- Section 7 (as substituted by section 1 of the Education Act 2011), which places a duty on English local authorities to secure early years provision free of charge. Regulations made under section 7 set out the type and amount of free provision and the children who benefit from the free provision.
 - Section 7A (as inserted by the Children and Families Act 2014). Regulations made under section 7A make provision about how local authorities should discharge their duty under section 7.
 - Section 9A (as inserted by the Children and Families Act 2014). Regulations made under section 9A limit the requirements local authorities can impose when they make arrangements to deliver early education places for two-, three- and four-year-olds.
 - Section 12 which places a duty on English local authorities to provide information, advice and assistance to parents and prospective parents.
 - Section 13, which places a duty on English local authorities to provide information, advice and training to childcare providers.
- 5.2 These regulations require the local authority to, as far as reasonably practicable, ensure that there are sufficient childcare places for working parents.
- 5.3 King's Court First School is a community school, which means that the local authority can propose 'prescribed alterations', including the changing of the age range of the school. In doing so, the borough must follow the statutory process set out in the Department for Education's *Making 'prescribed alterations' to maintained schools*:
- **Stage 1.** Publication of proposal(s) and notice.
 - **Stage 2.** Representation period of four weeks.
 - **Stage 3.** Decision on the proposal within two months of end of Stage 2.
 - **Stage 4.** Implementation, on the date set out in the proposal.
- 5.4 There is a 'strong expectation'¹ that local authorities will consult (as done) before publishing proposals.
- 5.5 If Cabinet does approve the closure of the nursery class for September 2017, it is proposed that officers proceed with the statutory process, and publish a proposal in March 2017. It is also proposed that the decision required at Stage 3 is delegated from Cabinet to the Lead Member for Children's Services and the Strategic Director for Adult, Children and Health Services. Regulations set out what the borough has to consider in relation to Stage 3.

¹ Page 25, *Making 'prescribed alterations' to maintained schools*, Department for Education, April 2016

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

Table 6: Risk Management

Risks	Uncontrolled Risk	Controls	Controlled Risk
That there are insufficient early years places for residents of Old Windsor following closure of the nursery class at King's Court First School.	Medium	To continue to monitor the demand for and supply of early years provision in Old Windsor in line with statutory duties. To bring forward proposals to increase provision as needed, including possibly re-opening the nursery class at King's Court.	Low

7. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

- 7.1 These proposals may involve redundancies for the two Nursery Nurses from 31st August 2017. A formal consultation process with the affected staff and relevant trade unions will take place. Opportunities may exist for redeployment to other schools if governing bodies wish to appoint. This could reduce the redundancy costs to King's Court First School, although the school would have to pay any salary protection costs if the appointment is on a lower grade.
- 7.2 There are no property and assets implications arising from this report.
- 7.3 An initial screening for the Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out, and has found that there are no implications arising.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Public consultation on the proposal to close the nursery class at King's Court First School ran from Friday 7th October 2016 to Thursday 10th November 2016. A consultation letter (*Appendix B – Proposed closure of the nursery class at King's Court First School*) was produced and distributed, electronically or in hard copy, to parents, staff, governors and other interested parties, as set out in *Table 4: Summary of consultation document distribution* below. The

consultation was available on the borough’s website, together with an online response form.

Table 7: Summary of consultation document distribution

Who	Where	No. distributed
Parents, staff, governors	King’s Court First School	280
Parents	Early Years Providers	120
Headteacher	Early Years Providers	3
Headteacher	St Peter’s C of E Middle School	1
Residents	Old Windsor Library & York House	40
Councillors & residents	Old Windsor Parish Council	20
Representatives	Unions & Professional Associations	9
Others	Oxford Diocese Portsmouth Diocese Mr A Afriyie MP	3
TOTAL		477

- 8.2 The consultation was also mentioned in the local newspaper.
- 8.3 30 responses were received, including 29 responses via the online survey and one via email. This represents a response rate of 6.3%, which is a reasonable response rate.
- 8.4 Each respondent was asked to indicate their views on the proposal to close the nursery class at King’s Court (Yes, No, Don’t know, No view), with the results as set out in *Table 8: Summary of outcome of consultation*.

Table 4: Summary of outcome of consultation

Respondent category	Yes, I support the proposal	No, I do not support the proposal	Don’t know, I am unsure.	No view, I have no view.
Parents of children currently in the nursery class at King’s Court	1	6	0	0
Parents of other children at King’s Court	3	5	0	0
Parents of children at other schools or early years providers	0	1	0	0
Parent of child not at any school or nursery	0	1	0	0
Governors at King’s Court	4	1	0	0
Staff at King’s Court	5	1	0	0
Not given	0	0	0	1
Total	13	16	0	1
	43%	53%	0%	3%

Note that a small number of respondents fall into more than one category. To avoid double-counting they have been assigned to one respondent category, in the order of Parent, Governor, Staff, Other.

- 8.5 The majority of respondents (53%) are against the closure of the nursery class. There is a clear split between governors and staff (of whom 82% are in favour of the closure) and parents (of whom 76% are against the closure). This includes a small number of parents of children who are at other schools/early years providers, or who are not yet in education.
- 8.6 Each respondent was also asked whether they had intended for any of their children to attend the King's Court nursery class in the future. Nine respondents said they were, as set out in Table 5: Potential future nursery class children from the consultation.

Table 5: Potential future nursery class children from the consultation

To start nursery in:	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Number of children	1	6	1	2

- 8.7 Clearly, these numbers are not very large and they don't suggest that future intakes into the nursery will be higher than at present. This could be a reflection of actual demand, or of the relatively small number of responses received.
- 8.8 The main issues raised by respondents were (with the number of respondents making this point in brackets):

In favour of keeping the nursery class open

- The nursery class is an excellent setting offering a strong foundation for education and development (7).
- The nursery class is key preparation for starting at the school (5).
- The closure will reduce the choice for parents (4).
- Places at the other settings in Old Windsor are less affordable, which will impact on low-medium income families (4).
- Closure would be a loss to the village community (4).
- Want to send their child to the nursery in future (4).
- It is difficult to find alternative nursery places in the area (3).
- It is helpful to have the nursery at the same site as King's Court, as this makes it easier to drop children off (2).
- Lots of young families are moving into the area, who want to send their children to the nursery class (1).
- The nursery offers free half-day sessions, not available elsewhere (1).
- This decision is premature, and should not be made until the number of applications for 2017 is known (1).
- May reconsider sending child to the main school, if the nursery class closes (1).

Suggestions on how to keep the nursery class open

- The nursery class could reduce the number of sessions it offers from two, to one (2).
- Should offer the extended 30 hour entitlement: who else will? (2).
- The nursery class should offer full-time provision, to make it more attractive (1).
- No further early years settings should open in Old Windsor (1).

In favour of closing the nursery class

- The nursery class is unviable, and will continue to be (4).
- The funding for the main school is subsidising the cost of keeping the nursery class open, and this should not be the case (4).
- The existing and forecast demand is too low, with a very small waiting list (3).
- Funding for nursery classes is not keeping up with costs (2).
- Falling standards may account for falling numbers (1).
- Closure will lead to the loss of staff (1).
- Could make it easier to manage the Reception children in the Foundation area space (1).

8.9 The individual (anonymised) consultation responses can be read in Appendix C: Individual consultation responses.

9. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Table 9: Timetable for implementation

Date	Details
March to April 2017	Publication of proposal and representation period.
Late April 2017	Determination of proposal.
September 2017	Nursery class closes

9.1 Implementation date if not called in: 1 March 2017

10. APPENDICES

Paper

- Appendix A: Childcare Sufficiency Assessment for Old Windsor.
- Appendix B: Proposed closure of the nursery class at King's Court First School (Consultation document).

Electronic

- Appendix C: Individual consultation responses.

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Government guidance

- *Making 'prescribed alterations' to maintained schools*, DfE Guidance, April 2016.
- *An early years national funding formula*, DfE Consultation, August 2016.

Other

- *Equality Impact Assessment initial screening*.

12. CONSULTATION (MANDATORY)

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Commented & returned
	Lead Member/ Principal Member/Deputy Lead Member		
Alison Alexander	Managing Director		
Russell O'Keefe	Strategic Director		
Andy Jeffs	Strategic Director		
	Section 151 Officer		
	Head of HR		
	Other e.g. external		

REPORT HISTORY

Decision type: Non-key decision	Urgency item? No
Report Author: Ben Wright, Education Planning Officer, 01628 796572	

Appendix A – (interim) Childcare Sufficiency Assessment for Old Windsor

interim analysis via:

- **Childcare Providers Survey**
- **Core and Supplementary Parents questionnaire**

Area = Old Windsor Ward

1 Findings – Childcare Providers Survey

1.1 *Reported* provision/supply in the Old Windsor ward is evidently as presented below:

Type of Provision	Provider Name	Reported Capacity/Supply
Early Years Childcare Provision		
Maintained Nursery	Kings Court First School	26
Pre-School/Playgroup	Old Windsor Pre-school	36
Private Day Nursery	Poppies Day Nursery	60
Private Day Nursery	Windsor Montessori House of Children*	50
Total		172
Registered Childminders		
Childminder	Sam Laing	3
Childminder	Beata Baumgart	3
Childminder	Jacqueline Barrett	3
Childminder	Amy Ashby	3
Childminder	Jessamy Stevens	3
Childminder	Janet Corrigan	3
Childminder	Diana Colbourne	3
Childminder	Wendy Jury	3
Total		24
Children's Centre		
Children's Centre	Old Windsor Children's Centre	n/a
Out of School Childcare Provision		
Holiday Playscheme	Charters Leisure Centre – BA Sports	50

* Opened in October 2015

Berkshire Health Authority data from 2015 indicated that at 31st August 2015 there were 262 0 – 4 year olds resident in the Old Windsor locality.

Therefore the table overleaf indicates that *in theory* there was – in summer 2016 – an early years childcare place (including provision accessible via registered childminders)

accessible to (a relatively healthy) 69% of the resident 0 – 4 population within the Old Windsor locality...

Type of formal childcare	Number of Providers	Number of Registered Places		
Nursery class in a Maintained school	1	60		
Nursery class in an Independent sector setting	0	0		
Day nursery – full or part-time	2	62		
Pre-School/Playgroup	1	36		
Children’s Centre Nursery full daycare	n/a	n/a		
Nursery School	0	0		
Registered Childminder	8	24		
Total	12	182	Estimated number of 0-4 year olds resident in ward	Percentage of 0-4 year olds theoretically able to access an early years childcare place
			262	69%

Additionally, from a demographic perspective...

Data supplied by the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead in September 2018 indicated that a *net* number of 18 new houses/dwellings are set to be sited in the Old Windsor locality over the forthcoming period. An accepted yield formula applied by a number of UK local authorities with regard to the planning of their sufficiency of *school* places is an **additional 4 children per 100 new (family) houses per year group** will be generated for pre-school/primary age children.

If this formula was applied in terms of calculating the additional children aged 2, 3 and 4 years that may be requiring an *early years childcare* place in the Old Windsor locality at the conclusion (and occupation) of the net developments– it can be reasonably *estimated* that the cumulative new housing units could lead to a requirement of approximately three early years childcare places in that area.

- 1.2 Three *repeated* trends (observed since 2014) that were stated by early years childcare providers and registered childminders were:

*“There is now a greater demand for **more flexibility** in terms of places and provision”.*

*“There seems to be a greater demand now, for **part-time places**”.*

*“Parents seem to **prefer childminders as an option**, with more frequency now”.*

- 1.3 The following was noted from the three early years childcare providers located in the ward in response to the question: **Would you consider offering the increased 30 hours free entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds, when this initiative becomes live in the Royal Borough in September 2017?**

0 stated – yes

2 stated – no *“...because it will not be financially viable”.*

1 stated – no, we will not have enough capacity

(It can be noted that the ward’s eight registered childminders stated:

3 stated – yes

3 stated – no, I will not have enough capacity

2 stated – don’t know

- 1.4 1 of the 3 early years childcare providers located in the ward stated that they currently do have vacancies at their setting/provision.

- 1.5 Similarly (only) 1 of the 3 early years childcare providers located in the ward have stated that they currently do have a waiting list, at a total of 20 places.

- 1.6 In terms of the question: **Compared to now how much higher or lower do you expect demand for childcare places you provide to be the next *two years*?**

The following responses were provided by the three early years childcare providers:

1 stated higher – but not significantly

1 stated about the same

1 stated significantly lower

(Only) one of the early years providers stated that they did have plans to expand their capacity over the next two years *“by 10 places”.*

... And the following responses were provided by the eight registered childminders:

3 stated higher – but not significantly

3 stated about the same

1 stated lower – but not significantly

1 stated ‘I’d rather not say’

1.7 In terms of the question: **How long do you expect to continue to be providing childcare?**

The following responses were provided by the three early years childcare providers:

1 stated less than 2 years

2 stated longer than 5 years

And the following responses were provided by the eight registered childminders:

2 stated less than 2 years

2 stated up to 3 years

2 stated up to 3 years

2 stated up to 4 years

2 stated 'can't say'

- 1.8 Two of the three early years childcare providers stated that they believed there was sufficient childcare provision for 0 – 4 year olds who are resident in the ward. One of the providers however disagreed and stated that – in their opinion – there was not sufficient childcare provision for 0 – 4 year olds who are resident in the ward.

2 Findings – Core and Supplementary Parents Survey

- 2.1 **For the core survey...** The majority of the (seven) parents (66%) who live in the ward stated that they **did not use childcare – formal or informal.**

(However... **for the supplementary on-line survey...** The majority of the (eight) parents who live in the ward stated that they **only formal childcare** and that this is what they prefer to access in the future...)

- 2.2 **For both surveys...** the majority of eligible parents who live in the ward are stating that they would be interesting in accessing the increased free entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds and **all** of these parents are stating that they would like to access such provision at a maintained school nursery class.

Ben Wright
Education Planning Officer
The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead
ben.wright@rbwm.gov.uk
01628 796572



Friday 7th October 2016

To parents/carers of children at King's Court First School

Dear Parent/carer

CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED CLOSURE OF THE NURSERY CLASS

The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead is seeking your views on a proposal by the Governing Body of King's Court First School to close their nursery class at the end of the current academic year.

What is the proposal?

The proposal is that, from September 2017, King's Court First School will no longer have a nursery class.

What does this mean if my child is already in the nursery class?

If your child was born between 1st September 2012 and 31st August 2013, then your child will be moving up into Reception in September 2017, either at King's Court or at another school. The proposal will not, therefore, affect your child directly.

If your child is in the nursery now, but was born on or after 1st September 2013, then if the proposal goes ahead then you will need to find a place for your child at another nursery provider for next September.

Can I still apply for a place in the nursery class?

King's Court will continue to accept applications for children to start in nursery in January or April 2017, but if the proposal goes ahead these children will need to find a place at another provider in September 2017.

Why are the school proposing the closure?

The number of children attending the nursery class has fallen sharply over the past few years. The school had 52 nursery children in Summer 2010, but is expecting just 27 in Summer 2017. The numbers are falling because:

- Children can now start in Reception at an earlier age.
- New early years providers have opened in Old Windsor.
- Fewer children are being born in the Old Windsor area.

Alison Alexander - Managing Director & Strategic Director of Adults, Children and Health Services
Town Hall, St. Ives Road, Maidenhead, SL6 1RF

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: @RBW



: @rbwm

The school has modelled likely future demand and it is unlikely that the number of nursery children will rise again to 50 or above.

Schools receive funding for nursery classes based on the number of children attending. With low numbers, that funding is not sufficiently covering the cost of providing the nursery class and so the main school budget is covering the shortfall. This is reducing the funding for teaching and learning in the other year groups. The headteacher and governors believe that this situation is not sustainable in the long term.

What alternatives have the school considered?

The headteacher and governing body have considered whether the nursery class could increase its numbers by taking younger children, but feel that the current buildings are not appropriate. Also, the staffing ratios are higher for two year olds, which mean that there would be additional costs, offsetting any gain from having more children.

What will be the impact on staff?

The nursery class currently has two full time nursery nurse roles. These roles would no longer be needed if the proposal goes ahead.

How can I make my views known about this proposal?

The Royal Borough needs your views on the proposed closure of the nursery class at King's Court First School. Parents, staff, governors, other local schools and other nursery and childcare providers are all being consulted. Your views are vital, so please take time to be a part of this consultation. Tell us what you think by:

- Completing the online response form at <https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/consultations>.
- Emailing us at windsor.places@rbwm.gov.uk.
- Writing to me at Ben Wright, School Places and Admissions Team, Zone B, Town Hall, St Ives Road, Maidenhead, SL6 1RF.

The closing date for your comments is **Thursday 10th November 2016**.

What happens next?

After this consultation, the Royal Borough's Cabinet will consider a report on 15th December 2016. At this meeting, councillors will take your views into account before making a decision on whether or not to proceed with the proposal. The Governing Body of King's Court First School will also meet to consider the outcome of the consultation.

If, in partnership with the governing body, Cabinet decides to go ahead with the closure, then the proposal will be formally published, giving you a further four week opportunity to object to and/or comment on the proposal. Following this, the Royal Borough will then make a final decision in February on whether or not to proceed.

If you have any queries about the proposal, then please do not hesitate to discuss these either with the Headteacher, Karen Littlewood, or myself. I can be contacted by email at windsor.places@rbwm.gov.uk or on 01628 796572.

Yours sincerely



Ben Wright
Education Planning Officer
The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead