

Stakeholder Consultation on St Mary's Under Fives joining Marlborough St Mary's Primary School

17.11.2025



Introduction

This document provides supporting information on the proposal for St Mary's Under Fives pre-school to join Marlborough St Mary's Primary School. Before any major decision can be made about the future of a nursery and its associated provision, there must be consultation with those people likely to be affected by the change. The purpose of this document is to consult with St Mary's Under Fives and Marlborough St Mary's Primary School and all others with an interest in the future provision of education for children in the area.

The outcome of this consultation will provide guidance and relevant information to support St Mary's Under Fives and Marlborough St Mary's Primary School with their decision-making. This consultation is a statutory requirement of the process to seek a change to the age-range of Marlborough St Mary's Primary School, and for the proposed transfer of St Mary's Under Fives. The outcome of this consultation is not binding on any of the parties involved.

This document gives background information and asks for your views. It is important that we gather your views and responses and ask for your help and support with engaging in this consultation.

Stakeholders

The stakeholder groups for this consultation have been identified as:

- Parents/Carers of pupils at the settings
- Staff working at the settings and any staff due to be employed at the school from the next academic year
- Governors and Trustees from both settings
- Local Authority
- Local schools and settings who might be affected or have an opinion on the change
- Local, and Marlborough residents
- Diocese

Context

St Mary's Under Fives Pre-school

St Mary's Under Fives is a 28-place setting, open every day from 9am until 3pm which educates, and cares for, children from 2 to 4 years. It is a friendly and welcoming pre-school offering a range of activities catering for toddlers through to school age. Children are supported to learn through play in stimulating, fun and interesting environments ensuring they are given the opportunity to build upon these foundations.

The pre-school was inspected by Ofsted in January 2024, and it was judged to be 'good' in all areas. Kind and nurturing staff happily welcome children and they make time for families to share any information to ensure their children's needs can be met. Children are happy and settled and staff have created an ambitious curriculum which they tailor around the children's needs.

Marlborough St Mary's Primary School

At Marlborough St Mary's Primary School, teamwork is valued and by working together, everyone can develop to the best of their ability. The inclusive ethos and Christian values of love, respect, friendship, courage, fairness and perseverance underpin everything. St Mary's Church and the school serves a very diverse community and by working and worshipping together everyone can be enabled to achieve great things.

The school was inspected by Ofsted in January 2025 and though an ungraded inspection, the school was judged to be "exceptional". The school's vision is of an inclusive, happy and successful school at the heart of the local community. Together, families and staff help children to become confident, independent learners that care for themselves, each other, and the surrounding environment.

"Together we believe, learn and achieve"

Wiltshire Council:

The newly titled "Our Wiltshire Plan 2025 - 2035: A Community Centred Approach" is the council's framework and principle strategic document, setting out what it wants to achieve over the coming years. The three principles of the plan are: Together, Open, and Fair and its priorities are:

- Supporting people throughout their lives
- Ensuring safe and resilient communities through safeguarding and enforcement
- Delivering opportunities for our young people and a child-friendly Wiltshire:

31. Ensure sufficient local childcare provision from 8am to 6pm across the county to meet the needs of all parents

3.2 Provide support, challenge and training to deliver Quality Early Years Provision (childcare and nurseries judged to be at least Good by Ofsted) in all settings

3.3 Ensure that children's outcomes (as measured by 'Good Level of Development') are in line with government targets set out in the Best Start in Life Strategy

3.4 Early identification and intervention to support effective Early Years inclusion for those with SEND via a robust support offer to providers

3.5 Ensure a good match for the supply and demand of school places

3.6 Ensure children of compulsory school age can access their entitlement to education, increasing attendance and reducing suspensions and exclusions

3.7 Empower leaders at all levels to be ambitious and aspirational so all pupils receive the highest quality education

3.8 Improve quality of education and educational outcomes for pupils who are disadvantaged

3.9 Provide enriching activities and nutritious meals to eligible children during Easter, summer and Christmas holidays through the Holiday Activity and Food (FUEL) programme

3.10 Coordinate a strategic approach to school improvement and raising standards in schools

- Enhancing and protecting our environment for future generations
- Promoting healthier lives

- Helping the economy work for everyone
- Creating well maintained, safer roads, and more accessible, greener transport (including public transport)
- Building homes and infrastructure fit for communities
- Making culture for everyone.

See https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/media/2684/Our-Wiltshire-Plan-2025-2035-A-community-centred-approach/pdf/OurWiltshirePlan_2025.pdf?m=1762423420657

Proposal

We are seeking to expand the school's provision and enhance the educational offer for our community by creating a single school from 2 years through to 11 years. We strongly believe that bringing the two settings together will:

- Offer greater choice for families as the result of the creation of more nursery places and the extension of the nursery's opening hours from 8:00 - 18:00.
- Provide effective and available nursery provision to the local community whilst at the same time supporting school readiness and cohesion for pupils entering the setting's reception.
- Provide nursery experience and socialisation to children who currently may have limited experience due to being at home before entering reception.
- Provide high-quality, and extended, provision in line with the National and Local Government priorities by utilising additional funding for nursery provision.
- Offer greater opportunities for family support by providing onsite opportunities to work with other agencies.
- Secure academic progress, support and challenge, child by child, through a continuum of learning from 2 years to 11 years.
- Offer shared resourcing and opportunity, including improvement of the learning environment through refurbishment and potential development of the current nursery building.
- Take advantage of the strength of a well-established, "exceptional" (Ofsted 2025) school which enables increased training for staff, greater financial security and assurance, support for school improvement, HR provision, Health and Safety and safeguarding.
- Ensure increased stability for staff through improving the capacity of both settings together: creating a larger EYFS team; adding capacity for supporting vulnerable pupils through a 'team around the child/family' approach; opportunities for wrap-around care; and enabling greater opportunities to plan, learn and deliver learning together.
- Share knowledge, experience, expertise and skills: each of these can be maximised for each child through a continuum of provision and learning
- Support the school's future by ensuring a consistent intake of children, year on year.

Why are we considering this?

We are aware of how well-loved and respected both the pre-school and the school are within the Marlborough community, and we feel it is our vision and our duty to ensure that both remain secure and sustainable to serve our community for many years to come.

We know that it is imperative that we get Early Years education right for all our children and we want to ensure that we can do everything in our power to enable high-quality, purposeful

and inclusive learning that will underpin the learning journey of all children for the rest of their lives.

We strongly believe that we can provide that continuity of learning for all children, grounded within a strong community, building this together for an exciting future together as one school. The 'best start in life' ethos is shared by the nursery and school; and developing a shared vision will bring significant benefits to children from 2 years through to 11. In addition to the educational benefits, we are seeking to ensure this provision enables a cohesive approach to working with, and alongside families: building stronger relationships and trust between home and school, enabling all to flourish and belong.

Impact and Aims

As set out above, we believe that there are significant benefits for children, their families and the wider community by moving forward with this proposal. The expected benefits will:

- support children's outcomes.
- offer continuity of high-quality education and wrap-around care.
- secure a shared ethos, vision and values.
- promote community cohesion.
- enable retention and recruitment of skilled staff.
- facilitate sustainability; and
- yield financial security and stability.

Next Steps

At the close of the consultation period, all feedback will be considered and a response document will be shared with stakeholders. This document will, having considered all responses, set out the final decision of the collective partners as to whether to apply to the Department of Education (DfE) for a School-Based Nursery. The consultation documentation, responses and outcome will be shared with the Department of Education as part of the process. As stated at the opening of this document, the consultation, whilst a requirement, is not binding and final decisions on the application to transfer St Mary's Under Fives will be made independently by the partners to this consultation stated above.

If this proposal is accepted and approved by the DfE, we will write to you with more detail about what it looks like for pupils, families, staff and governance. If the proposal goes ahead, there would be a separate TUPE consultation for all staff affected by the change.

Consultation

We hope that our reasons for this proposal and consultation are clear, and we would like to seek your views on the following areas:

Key Questions

- Do you support the proposal for St Mary's Under Fives Pre-school to join Marlborough St Mary's School?
- What positives would you identify from this proposed change?
- Do you have any concerns about the proposal?
- If you do not support the proposal, what is the basis for your objection?

- Have you any further comments you would like to share with us?

Stakeholder Engagement – how do I respond?

Responses can be made:

- via the online form link in the letter or on our website
- by emailing or
- writing to the school

Please note, all responses must be received by midday on **Tuesday 9th December**.

A copy of this consultation document can be accessed on the school website and paper copies will be available from the school office.

Meeting/Drop-in Session

To support the consultation process we are providing a face-to-face meeting/drop-in session for anyone who may like to attend including: parents, carers and guardians; staff of the Nursery and the School; and other key stakeholders involved in the consultation.

The meeting will be held in the school hall, between 2:45 and 4:30pm on 26th November

Indicative Timeline

Stage	Date	Process	Action
1	17.11.25	Publication	The proposal will be published on 17.11.2025 until 9.12.2025 A copy of the proposal has been sent to all stakeholders identified Responses are made only through the methods set out in the consultation document and must be received by midday on 9.12.2025
2	17.11.25	Consultation	The consultation period will run until 9.12.2025
3	11.12.25	School Based Nursery Application	Deadline for applicants to fully submit applications with all supporting documents
4	Dec 2025 → March 2026	Checks	Compliance checks, evaluation, moderation and quality assurance
5	Spring 2026	Decision	Applicants notified of outcome and project initiation
6	1.9.2027	Implementation	If approved, the new arrangements are due to be in place before 1.9.2027 If the proposal is accepted, the Local Authority, pre-school and the school will work together to ensure that all admissions are handled effectively and efficiently.

Our sincerest thank you for your consideration of, and participation in, this important consultation. Your views are extremely important to us, and we very much look forward to hearing from you.

Dan Crossman Dan Knight & Louise Barry

Headteacher Co-chairs of Governors