

ST DUNSTAN C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL - CALNE

PROPOSAL TO CLOSE THE MAINTAINED NURSERY - RESPONSES - AS AT 20 FEBRUARY 2013

No.	Agree	Disagree	If you have ticked "disagree" where are your reasons for this?	Parent/carer of a child already attending the Maintained Nursery at the school	Parent/carer of other children attending the school	A teacher or other staff member at the school. School Governor	A Head or Chair of Governors of a cluster school	A manager of a Committee Chair of the on-site pre-school	A parent/carer of a child who would have joined the Nursery in September	Other Interested Party	COMMENTS
1		1				1					
2		1	I believe a nursery who caters for pre-school children is required at this end of town, especially with the developments of new houses i.e. Redrow and Persimmon.		1						
3		1			1						
4		1	It's the only nursery in Calne that has an outstanding qualified teacher.	1							My daughter attends the nursery at the moment and she's so happy and I have a lot of friends and family that want their children to attend the nursery when the time comes.
5		1			1						It would be nice to know the nursery was there when my son is old enough to then move on to the school with his sister.
6		1	It is a great nursery, my kids learn a lot and play with children that is a year older and make new friends every day.	1	1						Both of my kids always looking forward to going to nursery. They are/were so happy there. (Please do not close the nursery).
7		1	My daughter really enjoyed her time at nursery. She learnt an awful lot and me and my husband were very impress with the care given.		1				1		As much as I would love to see the nursery carry on I do understand that without the children attending there would be no point in keeping the nursery open. So hopefully there will be more spaces needed this year.
8		1			1						
9		1	My daughter attended the nursery in 2011/2012 year and she really enjoyed it. She has done really well with her reading & writing, it also prepared her for the school environment. I also wanted this for my son, due to start in September 2013.						1		
10		1	It is good to have a variety of options on the St Dunstan's site. My daughter attended both Sunbeams and the nursery and I hope my young son will have the opportunity to do so.	1							
11	1							1			We have plans to expand to increase provision for funded two year olds. This will free up more places for 3/4 year olds.
12	1					1					
13	1										However I would have much preferred my child to go there as my daughter did, but to to them not offering full days I had no option, but to put him into Sunbeams!

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14	1				1						
15	1				1						I agree if it is cost effective to close and it would benefit the main school. Although the transition from Nursery into Infants is much appreciated for parents. I am wondering why only 10 people need spaces when 52 used to be filled. Is there a problem with the school?
16	1					1					
17	1				1				1		
18	1					1					
19	1				1						Very sad to see this fantastic nursery close especially as the only one in Calne to have a qualified teacher running it, but totally agree with your decision.
20	1				1						
21	1						1				We are happy to support this proposal if this is what the school would like.
22	1						1				
23	1									1	
24		1	I am sure if you advertised you could fill your places. It is a shame to close as it is a lovely nursery.		1						
25	1				1						
26	1				1						
27		1							1		
28		1	It's been a part of St D's for years - the other nursery isn't and won't be part of the school.		1						
29		1	I am currently seeking a nursery place for my daughter and have been placed on a waiting list at the on site sunbeams nursery as they are currently full. I also enquired at the school about a nursery place and was told they didn't have any space and did not hold a waiting list. This was probably around 3 months ago. I am surprised at this proposal as I certainly believe there is a need for local nursery places.		1						I am sure showing a willing attitude and some advertising of this service being available locally, the school could easily fill these spaces. Maybe if the school had offered a waiting list then there wouldn't be this lull in requirement.

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30		1	I know that children have been turned away from the Nursery this year who wanted their children to go there and they were told there were not enough places available. The birth rate is increasing across the UK, so there will be more of a need for Nursery places in the coming years. I would not be happy with the school forging closer links with Sunbeams, who are already telling people that they are taking over the Nursery, as they are not bound by the same rules as staff regarding confidentiality etc and I have witnessed several comments from members of their staff on social networking sites which are detrimental to both the staff of St Dunstan, the school itself and the behaviour of the children. I do not believe that we should be recommending them as an alternative to our own Nursery. Should our own Nursery close, then the nearest Maintained Nursery is in Trowbridge and I don't think that is an adequate choice for parents in Calne.			1					
31	1					1					
32	1						1				This response is from the Chair of Governors at Cherhill C of E (VA) Primary school and is representative of the views of the whole Governing Body.
33	1				1						
34		1	I feel very strongly that I want to give my child the very best start to their education. In my opinion a highly qualified teacher and highly qualified TA, as shown in numerous research, would give the best start. If this Maintained Nursery is closed then the nearest one will be Melksham which is not a feasible daily journey. You will be removing my choice of education for my child.						1		I feel this is a very short sighted decision based solely on economics. The children in the local area are the children who most need the full expertise of a highly qualified teacher. The staff and learning environment in the alternative pre school offered on site do not offer a credible choice to any discerning parent and I certainly won't be sending my child there. I have been made aware of some very damaging social network postings by staff members of the pre school and expect appropriate action to be taken by the Council as they seem to be completely unprofessional.
35		1	I believe it is beneficial to have a teacher led Nursery in the area. The numbers currently in Nursery at St Dunstan is not a true representation of the need for this provision as parents have been told there are no places available and have been sent to other pre-schools. More children are likely to come into the area due to the new housing development. If there is no longer a need why does Sunbeams Pre-school need to expand?		1						

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36		1	Ofsted has consistently reported favourably on provision in the Nursery, most recently in May 2011 when the following was included in the Report: "The Early Years Foundation Stage provides an exciting learning environment; it is well resourced and children enjoy making the most of the well organised spaces available, particularly outdoors. Most children join the nursery with skills and knowledge which are below those expected for their age, particularly in communicating, language and literacy. They make an excellent start to their learning because of the well established routines and calm approach by knowledgeable staff. By the time they join the Reception class, they have established good skills as independent learners and have made up ground." The significance of this comment is that it identifies the benefit of the Nursery to children from disadvantaged backgrounds who come in with skills and knowledge below general age-related expectations. It is such children who benefit most from a nursery place in a setting led by a specialist qualified teacher. Since I became responsible for the Nursery in September 2009, with the School's support, I have invested considerable time and energy in developing my specialist expertise in the EYFS and have been recognised as an Early Language Lead Practitioner as an outcome of the Every Child A Talker project. Additionally, Bath Spa University has awarded me a Certificate of Participation in Professional Learning for completing the module Work-based Action Enquiry – Wiltshire Advanced Early Years Practice. At the end of January, the Government announced proposals to change the adult/child ratios in Early Years settings and to raise the qualification requirements for the adults working in them. Anne Longfield, chief executive of children's charity and nursery provider 4Children, said: "The welfare of the child must be our first concern throughout, but with highly qualified early-years teachers and a better inspection regime, there is an opportunity to review current arrangements and provide simpler information for parents and better incentives for providers to concentrate on what matters - children." I believe that closing the Nursery would: • disregard the Government's proposals noted above • disregard the achievements noted by Ofsted and the investment in raising standards even further • diminish the range of opportunity available to the children of the local community.			1					
37		1	As the only nursery with a qualified teacher I would be unhappy to see it close. My first child attended and I would like my second to also attend.						1		
38		1	The nearest maintained nurseries are at Trowbridge/Salisbury New homes being built on Sandpit lane. Sunbeams expanding for 2 year olds, the school should have the 3 year olds. Most of the intake for reception comes from nursery. Sunbeams DO NOT recommend St Dunstan to their parents, Sunbeams staff criticise the school openly on social networking sites. Ofsted rated the nursery as outstanding.			1					

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39		1	<p>The school is fortunate enough to have a team of teaching staff and TAs skilled and experienced in the teaching of early years; it would be a shame to waste this - especially since much of their training has been paid for through the school and local authority as 'in service' training. St Dunstan's most recent Ofsted report states that 'They make a good start on their learning because of the good, and often outstanding, teaching they get in the nursery and Reception classes.' Children in the nursery 'make an excellent start to their learning because of the well established routines and calm approach by knowledgeable staff'. In addition, the closure of the nursery would undoubtedly mean that some staff members within the existing Foundation Stage team would end up working outside of the age-group in which they are most experienced. Whilst the proposed closure suggests it is in part due to the fact that there are other Foundation Stage facilities within the locality, it is fair to say that none of them benefit from being led by an experienced nursery teacher, including Sunbeams, who, it is proposed, will move into the St Dunstan Nursery building. Ofsted attributed much of the success in the Foundation Stage to the environment and resources: 'The Early Years Foundation Stage provides an exciting learning environment; it is well resourced and children enjoy making the most of the well organised spaces available, particularly outdoors.' Whilst Sunbeams would continue to enjoy the benefits of the outdoor space, which comes with the existing Dunstan Nursery building, our own children won't see these benefits, nor will they see the benefits of the extensive and expensive resources from the closing nursery, as there are not the facilities to store them within the school building – at least, not making it practical to access on a regular basis. The nearest maintained nurseries, if our nursery closes, are in Trowbridge and Salisbury, therefore making it logistically impossible for nursery-aged children in Calne and the surrounding area to access a school nursery. With that in mind, it is also true that the children within the St Dunstan nursery benefit from being with other children of the same age, rather than being mixed with much younger children, who's needs are very different, through attending such a pre-school. With the new government initiative to fund places for 2 year olds, it would surely be beneficial to both the Dunstan Nursery and Sunbeams Nursery for the latter to take the 2-year-olds, whilst the school maintain their excellent standards in developing the curiosity and love of learning in 3-year-olds. Historically, Sunbeams have not recommended the school nursery for 3-year-olds, so this would surely</p>			1					

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			provide a mutually beneficial solution. I would also suggest that part of the reason for the fall in numbers for the academic year 2012/2013 is due to the fact that advertising of Dunstan Nursery has been limited and also the fact that parents of prospective nursery children were turned away for this academic year (heard directly and indirectly from the parents of these children), thus the figure of '10' is not a true representation of the need for this facility. Parents have also shown dismay at the fact that their young child/ren will not be able to attend St Dunstan Nursery in future years, especially when older siblings have thrived as a result of joining our school community at a young age. Prior to the current academic year, falling numbers may also be attributed to the closure of the afternoon nursery session; many parents require the flexibility of having morning and afternoon sessions available in order to arrange their childcare. That said, numbers are certain to rise with the development of homes on Sandpit Lane and a generally increasing birthrate nationwide. Finally, I propose that overall falling numbers will not be helped by the closure of our nursery; figures in recent years show that very few children enter their reception year via Sunbeams, with the main provider of each reception cohort being our very own nursery.								
40		1	The needs (social) of the local community, immediately and long term should be carefully considered in any decision. Childcare Sufficiency Survey dated September 2012. The occupancy percentages for this month show that currently there are spaces across Calne Community Area in both childminders and group settings however, in the North of Calne the choice is more limited. There is some possibility of expansion in 3 different group settings creating more spaces for 2 year olds. For families living within St Dunstan catchment area, accessibility is paramount. • Ofsted Report 2011 "Most children join the nursery with skills and knowledge which are below those expected for their age, particularly in communicating, language and literacy. They make an excellent start to their learning because of the well established routines and calm approach by knowledgeable staff. By the time they join the Reception class, they have established good skills as independent learners and have made up ground." How certain can LA be that this progress can be achieved through alternative providers? We know that being behind at a young age has a significant impact on future life chances for all young people. • Funding for Maintained nursery places was determined by the Local Authority – this may need to be revisited to ensure sufficient guaranteed, quality assured free entitlement places in this community area. • St Dunstan School should not be financially disadvantaged for providing nursery care. Is there more that the LA and school could do to promote the nursery or secure better outcomes for children, clearly evident in the 2011 Ofsted. • Query to LA as to decision making process regarding housing of both maintained and voluntary pre school provision, overlaid with new funding arrangements				1				
	18	22		3	18	9	4	1	6	1	42

No. 13 did not tick a "I am" box

NOTE: Some people have ticked more than 1 box so total to say "I am:"