



Himbleton CE First School and Nursery

Change of Age Range Consultation Document

What is the context of Himbleton CE First School and Nursery?

- Himbleton CE First School and Nursery is an Ofsted rated 'good' school (January 2020).
- We are a small rural First school, set in a unique location bordering Worcester, Pershore and Droitwich and being easily accessible from all of these locations.
- We provide a unique curriculum offer, where outdoor education is a key feature due to our setting.
- We offer wrap around care for our children, from 8am (7.45am from September 2020) to 6pm, making us an attractive option for working parents.
- Our current school population is made up of children from within catchment, the surrounding villages, Worcester, Droitwich and Pershore. Our pupils move on to a variety of school settings in both the state and independent sector.

Why are we proposing a conversion from First to Primary?

- We aim to sustain the long-term viability of Himbleton CE First School and Nursery by making the school an attractive option to a wider variety of parents and therefore fill our capacity in all year groups over time.
- There are a number of similar changes taking place at a local level and it is our desire to align with these.
- A parental preference survey carried out in Autumn Term 2019 indicated that 74% of current parents would be in favour of a conversion to Primary.
- We aim to provide further parental choice in relation to two and three-tier educational pathways so that the needs of all pupils and families can be best met.
- We believe that we can offer a high quality educational experience for children from Nursery to the end of the Primary phase. Children remaining with us for the duration of Key Stage Two will enable us to extend our offer – we believe that transition at the end of Key Stage Two is a more logical point than part way through the Key Stage at the end of Year 4.
- Data shows that end of Key Stage Two outcomes in Worcestershire are below that of neighbouring counties where the system is predominantly two-tier. Please see table below for an example of this:

	% of pupils attaining national expectation or above at the end of Key Stage Two in RWM Combined:	
Locality:	2018	2019
Worcestershire	61%	63%
Warwickshire	67%	66%
National	65%	65%

- We believe that pupils who sit end of Key Stage Two assessments in a setting within which they are safe, secure and confident will perform well and demonstrate their ability accurately. This will provide a strong foundation for the next phase of their educational journey and an accurate baseline for secondary education.
- In recent years, the number of pupils attending from out of catchment has been consistently significant. Please see the chart below for details:

Intake year to Reception:	% of pupils from out of catchment:
2018	62%
2019	70%
2020	75%

- The number of pupils attending from the Worcester area is significant. Worcester offers a two-tier system and, as a result, we often lose pupils before the end of Year 4 so that parents can guarantee a place for their child back in the two-tier system for secondary education. In academic year 2019-20, we have already lost 2 Year 4 pupils for this reason. We wish to align with this system so as to provide our pupils with a smoother, more coherent transition to the next phase of their education and a more consistent experience.
- In recent years, we have lost a number of pupils before the end of Year 4 to move to the independent sector at the beginning of the 'junior' phase (Year 3). In academic year 2019-20, we have already lost 2 pupils for this reason. Informal feedback from parents has stated that this is because a move at the beginning of Year 5 (mid phase) is not desirable and harder to secure. However a move at the end of Year 6 to join the secondary phase would be more desirable. Therefore a change to Primary at Himbleton CE First School and Nursery would create further options for such families.
- Recent informal feedback from parents viewing the school at the start of their child's educational journey is that the fact that we only currently cater up to age 9

sometimes leads them to choose other Primary providers due to the uncertain local landscape in relation to the three-tier system.

- A conversion to Primary would allow us to grow our already experienced staff team further, enabling all children in the setting to benefit from additional skill sets and support further sustained improvement.

When would we propose conversion to Primary to take place and why?

- We would like to be able to offer provision for Year 5 from September 2021 and therefore have our first Year 6 cohort from September 2022.
- Our current Year 3 cohort has 13 pupils so we believe this would be a good year to progress with such a change.

What changes would be required to our accommodation and staffing to support a conversion to Primary?

- In September 2021, Year 5 would be housed in our conservatory teaching space each morning. They would be taught as a single year group by a teacher for core curriculum areas of English and Mathematics in the mornings for academic year 2021-22, during the transitional phase whilst there are no Year 6 children in the school.
- Minor adjustments would be made to the conservatory teaching space i.e. partition walls to separate this space further from existing classrooms and the kitchen area. A part-time teacher would be employed to deliver the morning provision for academic year 2021-22. The use of the conservatory teaching space for this period would ensure sufficient time was allowed to obtain any necessary consents for a new classroom for use from academic year 2022-23.
- Throughout academic year 2021-22 only, Years 3, 4 and 5 would be taught as a group (less than 30 based upon current cohort numbers) by a teacher with a teaching assistant for afternoon sessions. Swimming, PE, and Forest School would be taught in these afternoon sessions, as well as other National Curriculum foundation subjects. The curriculum would be carefully planned and delivered to ensure a sequential progression of skills and knowledge for all year groups and equitable access to the National Curriculum.
- Throughout academic year 2021/2022, a new classroom would be built on the school site. The build would be funded through allocation from the school's budget (both capital and revenue) and this has been factored into the 3 year budget forecast.
- The governors are currently working with education building specialists to confirm the best course of action for a new classroom. Although unlikely, if any necessary consents were not obtained, permanent conversion and extension of the conservatory teaching space or a portable classroom would be considered.

- From September 2022, Years 5 and 6 would become a separate Upper Key Stage Two class and would be taught by a full-time teacher in a newly built classroom.
- All outlined staffing costs have been factored into the school's 3 year budget forecast.

Has a secure pathway been sourced for children leaving Himbleton CE First School and Nursery at Year 6?

- Pershore High School have confirmed in writing that they would be prepared to consult on their pupil admission number in order to take children leaving Himbleton CE First School and Nursery at the end of Year 6 into their Year 7 cohort from September 2023. It is important to note that, at this stage, the outcome of this consultation is not guaranteed so parents need to be aware of this risk.
- Parents may alternatively choose to transfer their children to the feeder middle school at the end of Year 4 – at this time this would still be an available pathway.
- Parents may choose to seek a Year 7 place at an alternative school for their child when they reach the end of Year 6 at Himbleton CE First School and Nursery.
- A wider range of options would be available to families.

What impact would a change of age for Himbleton CE First School and Nursery have on other schools in the local area?

- Himbleton CE First School and Nursery currently work as part of a cluster of local schools, all of whom eventually feed into Pershore High School. Some schools within this local cluster have already completed a consultation and change to Primary status. The school would continue to work as part of this cluster, ensuring that children in this locality benefit from a collaborative approach. For example, children in Years 5 and 6 would take place in sporting tournaments and curriculum days with other pupils of the same age from across local schools.
- For local schools that have already converted to Primary, a change of age at Himbleton CE First School and Nursery would provide further opportunities for collaboration with schools of the same status.
- It is likely that a change to Primary status at Himbleton CE First School and Nursery would impact most on local middle schools who currently receive pupils from us at Year 5. However, as stated previously, our Year 4 children move on to a variety of settings. Therefore we believe that the direct impact on one particular school would be minimal and would not result in them becoming unviable. The table below shows planned destinations for September 2020 for our current Year 4 cohort to demonstrate this point:

	St. Nicholas' CE Middle School	Witton Middle School	Westacre Middle School	Independent Sector
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% of Year 4 cohort	33%	33%	17%	17%
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- The timescales that we are proposing allow time for middle schools in the area to plan accordingly.

How would we manage curriculum changes?

- Current teachers at Himbleton CE First School and Nursery are qualified to teach for the whole primary phase so we are fortunate that we already have suitably qualified staff in school.
- All current teachers have previously worked in primary schools so have relevant experience.
- Within the current staff team there are teachers with a range of specialist subjects, including Music and Science. These skills would be fully utilised in curriculum planning.
- When recruiting additional staff, a requirement would be specialisms in subjects such as Modern Foreign Languages, to ensure equitable curriculum access in comparison to other schools.
- We believe that the inclusion of Years 5 and 6 at Himbleton CE First School and Nursery would enable further enhancement and coherence of curriculum sequencing due to the fact that the school would be providing the whole Key Stage Two curriculum, rather than just half of this.
- We believe that an increase in the number of pupils at Himbleton CE First School and Nursery would enhance the breadth of opportunities that the school is able to provide.
- Himbleton CE First School would endeavour to work with local secondary schools to provide curriculum enhancement experiences for Year 5 and 6 pupils using their specialist facilities.
- Money has been ring-fenced within the budget over 3 years to fund the additional resources that would be required to deliver upper Key Stage Two curriculum requirements.