

**SPRINGVALE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

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## Foundation Stage Consultation

**Monday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2020**

Dear families,

In my previous leadership roles I have led schools that have moved from separate nursery and reception provision to a team-based EYFS unit approach with great success, especially in my first Headship at Shawlands. Since arriving at Springvale, our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) has made good progress and received excellent feedback on pupil wellbeing, care, guidance and standards of education. Previously we have never felt the need to consider a unit approach to our EYFS, however, I am worried that the period of closure has seen many of our current nursery (F1) children miss out on vital foundation skills that could create gaps in their confidence levels or abilities moving forward. I also think that our nursery staff, and their knowledge of the children, could be very beneficial to help them to settle again when we return, in what is likely to be an unusual and testing time.

Therefore over the past couple of weeks myself, governors, leaders and the EYFS staff have formulated a plan to work as a unit for the forthcoming academic year. This plan would allow us to appoint an additional teaching assistant, meaning that staffing ratios would increase from 1:14 to 1:11. This change would help to improve the provision in the EYFS unit, as more staff would be organising, planning and targeting a range of engaging learning experiences. These planned learning experiences would be child focused, exciting, challenging, and age-appropriate.

We also look to adjust the timings of the day to support the new team approach. Nursery would change from the current morning session of 8.30am-11.30am and the current afternoon session of 12.30pm to 3.30pm to a morning session starting at 8.40am and finishing at 11.40am, and the afternoon session starting at 12.10pm and finishing at 3.10pm.

Reception children (F2) would start at 8.40am and finish at 3.10pm. This would allow parents with older siblings to drop/collect, and get to the rear doors for older pupils, in a timely manner. These new timings would also free up our entire staff team to attend all safeguarding briefings and staff meetings, thus improving the partnership work with their colleagues- a crucial aspect of a team that communicates well.

We would also change the reception lunchtime, so that they can access their meals in a quieter environment, and get the support they need to learn vital social and dining skills before ending their play slightly earlier. We would allow them to stay out a little later on a Friday lunchtime to enjoy our famous weekly disco!

There would still be times of the day when pupils would be exclusively within their age group of nursery or reception- some aspects of indoor or outdoor provision or story time, for example. Parents' evenings would be based around a 'drop in' to see the unit and speak to the whole team of staff rather than just one teacher. You would also have the opportunity to talk to specific staff in more detail where required or requested.

We believe this is the best time to implement these plans due to:

- The need for additional support to all children, who have missed a large proportion of crucial learning time.
- The benefit of a familiar staff and environment for our youngest learners.
- The timings promoting an improved and more relaxed lunchtime for our nursery children (for 30 hours, or children who attend all day and pay extra, etc- lunch club would still be available at £2.50 for the half hour session)
- It allows our staff team to work more effectively with better communication systems.
- The children receiving a well-planned, challenging, exciting and child-focused provision, led by a larger team of adults.

- Parents with older siblings can access both areas of school safely and in good time.
- An additional adult in the EYFS setting improves safety and provision for all the children.
- The curriculum will be significantly enhanced.

We are very confident that this change would have a positive impact, and we hope to share further details with parents soon. We initially wanted to seek your views, as we believe that parent voice and consultation is part of Springvale Primary's ethos.

Therefore if you have any views that you wish to share with us, specifically around the new timings of the day and the new approach to teaching and learning then please get in touch by **Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2020**.

An experienced EYFS consultant would be involved in the setting up and early monitoring of this project.

### **Uniform in the EYFS unit**

Most EYFS units, like the one we are suggesting, work on F2 children in uniform and F1 children with the choice of uniform or not. This is because some families are unlikely to gain a place in F2 and do not want to spend money on a school uniform that may not provide value for money. Any feedback on uniform is also welcomed, before we plan the next stage of developing our EYFS unit.

We look forward to working together with parents, and children, to create an exceptional EYFS unit that we can all be incredibly proud of.

**Kind Regards**

**Mr L McClure**

**Headteacher**