

Herrick Primary School – Temporary Nursery Closure

Consultation Document

Overview

Herrick Primary School is considering a temporary closure of their nursery provision for the 2023/2024 academic year (August 2023-July 2024).

This proposal has the support of the school's Governing Body and the Local Authority's Pupil Place Planning team. However, we would value the opinion of parents and other interested parties before any final decision is taken.

Why we are consulting

We would like your views on:

- Whether you support or oppose the proposed temporary closure of the nursery provision.
- Any comments you may have to explain why you support or oppose the temporary closure of the nursery provision.

Background information

Herrick Primary School is a school maintained by the local authority and is situated in the northeast of the city, relatively close to the border with Leicestershire County Council.

The school comprises 7 year groups (ranging from Reception to Year 6) and currently has a published admissions number of 60 pupils per year group. The total capacity of the school is therefore currently 420 pupils. The school also has a nursery provision which can accommodate 30 children per session and can offer 60 part time places if it were to operate morning and afternoon sessions. However, due to low demand, the school operates morning sessions only and the current capacity is 30 part time places.

Reason for temporarily closing the nursery provision

In recent years the school has received fewer applications for nursery places and this makes it extremely difficult for the school to deliver the required provision. For example, the nursery could have less than 10 pupils starting in September 2023, leaving up to 20 unfilled (part time) spaces available. This is based on enquiries to date and, whilst it is likely that some more places will be taken up, there will be several unfilled places in September 2023. Last year, in September 2022, there were 12 unfilled spaces (part time) of which 7 were filled in January 2023, leaving 5 places remaining unfilled to date.

Recent census data and pupil forecasts demonstrate there is a lack of demand, for nursery places currently in the area. In addition, whilst nursery education is very good for children's learning, nursery education is not a legal requirement.

Herrick Primary School		Nursery Class Take-up 15 Hour places (3&4YOs)
AY 2019/20	Aut-19	30
	Spr-20	50
	Sum-20	50
AY 2020/21	Aut-20	33
	Spr-21	37
	Sum-21	43
AY 2021/22	Aut-21	18
	Spr-22	24
	Sum-22	31
AY 2022/23	Aut-22	18
	Spr-23	25
	Sum-23	25

The general decline in the birth rates in the City is affecting the demand for places. The provision at Herrick Primary is currently for part time places and therefore will also be affected by lack of demand from working parents who are entitled to 30 hours of funded childcare and who may require flexible childcare (full day; part weeks; all year round).

School funding is allocated by the Government on a per pupil basis. Because the demand for nursery places is low, the funding the school receive would not be enough to provide a teacher and resources for the nursery and put pressure on the school and their resources to provide education for other pupils in the school.

Therefore, the governing board of the school and the Local Authority propose to temporarily close the nursery provision at Herrick Primary School for the 2023/2024 academic year.

Nursery capacity in Leicester

Leicester City Council's Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2019, which can be accessed via [Nurseries and childcare \(leicester.gov.uk\)](https://www.leicester.gov.uk/nurseries-and-childcare/), includes the Market Position Statement for funded places which shows that the North Cluster and the City as a whole, had a surplus of funded places for 3 and 4 year olds.

There have been some closures and some new provision since 2019, the net effect of which is a small decrease in capacity in the cluster. Assuming that Herrick Primary does temporarily close its nursery, there will be a further decrease in capacity. However, the reduction in available places is not considered significant enough to affect the overall market position for funded places which is still expected to remain at a surplus for the North Cluster and the City as a whole.

It is clear to the Local Authority that Herrick Primary could help safeguard their financial future by temporarily closing their nursery provision and sufficient nursery places would remain available both across the city as a whole and within the local area.

Responses:

Question 1

Please select one of the following options:

- a) I support the proposed temporary closure of the nursery provision in Herrick Primary School for the 2023/2024 academic year.
- b) I oppose the proposed temporary closure of the nursery provision in Herrick Primary School for the 2023/2024 academic year.

Question 2

If you wish, please provide comments as to why you support or oppose the temporary closure.