

# School Organisation Consultation

Proposal to lower the age range of  
Heather Ridge Infant School

**February  
2025**



# School Organisation Informal Consultation

## Local authority details

<b>Local Authority</b>	Surrey County Council
<b>Address</b>	Quadrant Court 35 Guildford Road Woking GU22 7QQ

## School details

<b>Name of School</b>	Heather Ridge Infant School
<b>Category of School</b>	Infant
<b>Type of School</b>	Community school
<b>URN</b>	125017
<b>Address</b>	Martindale Avenue, Heatherside, Camberley
<b>Postcode</b>	GU15 1AY

## Introduction

This paper outlines a proposal to lower the age range of Heather Ridge Infant School, Camberley, from 4 to 7 years to 2 to 7 years.

This document explains the proposed process and timescales to make this significant change to the school.

## Proposal

Heather Ridge Infant School is a two-form entry (2FE) infant school in the borough of Surrey Heath, rated 'Good' by Ofsted in January 2023. In agreement with the school's Headteacher and Governing Body, Surrey County Council is proposing to lower the age range of Heather Ridge Infant School from ages 4 to 7 to ages 2 to 7. This will allow the school to open a school-based nursery to include 2, 3 and 4-year-olds.

Table 1 shows the proposed timeline for the changes to take place from September 2025. Dates and phases in the timeline may change based on the outcome of this consultation.

**Table 1: Proposed timeline**

<b>Phase</b>	<b>Date</b>
Consultation	25 February - 25 March 2025
Review of consultation responses	25-28 March 2025
Outcome of consultation published on <a href="http://www.surreysays.co.uk">www.surreysays.co.uk</a>	28 March 2025
Statutory notices	31 March - 5 May 2025
Lead Cabinet Member Decision	May/June 2025
Implementation	September 2025

## Making representations, objections and comments

1. This is an informal consultation which starts on 25 February 2025 and concludes on 25 March 2025.
2. Any person can make comments, agree, or object to the proposal by sending representations to the local authority through the following channels:

<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.surreysays.co.uk">www.surreysays.co.uk</a>
<b>Email</b>	<a href="mailto:schoolorg@surreycc.gov.uk">schoolorg@surreycc.gov.uk</a>
<b>Post</b>	Lauren Comer Education Place Planning Surrey County Council Quadrant Court 35 Guildford Road Woking GU22 7QQ

## Why are we proposing to change the age range at Heather Ridge Infant School?

Surrey County Council and Heather Ridge Infant School are proposing to lower the age range of the school from ages 4 to 7 years to ages 2 to 7 years, enabling the school to develop a school-based nursery for 2, 3 and 4-year-olds. This will ensure that Heather Ridge Infant School can provide education for children under the age of 4 in the area and support the government's policy on providing 15 and 30 hours of funded early years education for all eligible children.

The Childcare Act 2006 places a duty on local authorities (LAs) to secure sufficient, high-quality childcare for parents eligible for funded early education. This includes 15 hours of provision for disadvantaged 2-year-olds, 15 hours of provision for all 3 and 4-year-olds, and 15 to 30 hours of provision for children with working parents. Surrey County Council, therefore, holds a responsibility for ensuring that parents can access the early years funded entitlement for 9 months plus, 2, 3 and 4-year-olds, particularly with regard to identifying any gaps in childcare provision.

Although the admissions arrangements/process for the nursery would be separate to that of the main school, children will be able to benefit from a seamless transition from nursery into the school as they would already be familiar with the environment, routines, and staff. This proposal will therefore ensure a consistent and joined-up approach to learning for the school's youngest children.

The school will be encouraged to conduct further market research with current parents/carers and the wider community, including potential early years families, to ensure that any early years offer meets the needs of the local community.

## **Vision Statement**

Heather Ridge Infant School is passionate about providing irresistible learning for life's endless possibilities.

By incorporating a school-based nursery into Heather Ridge Infant School, the school will have better knowledge of the children as they move into their Reception year. This will allow the children to feel more confident when attending school and therefore create a less daunting experience for both the children and parents alike. Introducing a school-based nursery will provide a consistent start from nursery that blends seamlessly into Reception. Furthermore, any additional needs or requirements that children may have can be identified earlier to ensure that support is available at the earliest opportunity.

A school-based nursery will benefit from being led by a qualified teacher who will have expertise in early childhood development, ensuring that children receive a strong foundation in literacy, numeracy, and social skills. It will also ensure continuity in learning from nursery through to the main school, following a structured and age-appropriate curriculum aligned with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

The nursery will be part of the school community and will have the opportunity to use the school's resources such as the library, outdoor learning environments, and the sporting equipment.

## **Curriculum**

The teaching in the nursery will be driven by the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and safeguarding the children will be of paramount importance. Staff will timetable plenty of discovery, free-flow and child-led activities that incorporate a range of exploration, experimentation and opportunities for age-appropriate risk taking.

## **Will the proposal have any impact on the school's admission arrangements?**

Currently Heather Ridge Infant School offers 60 Reception places each year for local children. There are no planned changes to the Published Admission Number (PAN) of 60 Reception places at this time.

Heather Ridge Infant School does not currently have a nursery and therefore do not accommodate any children under the age of 4.

The current capacity of the school is 180, however, it is proposed that this will increase once a nursery opens at the school and the nursery children are added onto the school's roll.

It is proposed that Heather Ridge Infant School will initially offer a total of 52 sessions\* for 2, 3 and 4-year-olds (although this may change depending on the needs of the community and the number of families entitled to 30 funded hours) from 1 September 2025.

*\*Full-time children account for 2 sessions per day, one in the morning and one in the afternoon.*

**Table 2: Numbers on roll at Heather Ridge Infant School (correct 04/02/25)**

Year R	Year 1	Year 2
48	60	60

Please note, there is no automatic right for nursery aged children to gain a Reception place at the school. The admissions criteria for community and voluntary controlled schools, along with other individual schools' admissions criteria in Surrey, are published each year in the [schools admissions booklets](#). Heather Ridge Infant School can be found in the Primary School Booklet for Surrey Heath primary schools. Parents of children applying for a Reception place would need to apply in the normal way for admission to the infant/primary school whether their child attends the nursery provision or not.

## **Implementation Plan**

### **Finance and resourcing**

The school will receive funding per pupil in line with the Early Years pupil funding rates as set by the Department for Education.

### **Staffing**

The governing body and current staff at Heather Ridge Infant School support the proposal as they believe the school community would benefit from lowering the entry age of pupils, so that they can access nursery provision.

Heather Ridge Infant School already has a team of passionate and dedicated staff. The school also plan to draw upon expertise from a local school that has opened a school-based nursery, other local schools and nurseries, and the Surrey County Council Early Years team.

### **Capital planning and buildings**

Heather Ridge Infant School already has the accommodation and facilities for a nursery. The proposed building will have its own separate access for parents and children.

## Consultations, approvals and overall timescales

It is proposed that the age range of the school changes from the 1 September 2025. The proposed changes require a period of consultation, the publication of Statutory Notices and the agreement of Surrey County Council's Cabinet Member for All-age Learning if the proposal is to proceed.

The first stage of consultation will be informal and will open from 25 February 2025 and concludes on 25 March 2025. During this period, Surrey County Council will share its proposals with the wider professional network, schools including headteachers and chairs of governors, with unions, parent representatives, partner agencies and with the staff and parents of the school subject to the proposals.

Following the informal consultation period, it is proposed to publish a Statutory Notice for a four-week period. The publication of Notices is when the local authority formally states that it intends to implement the proposed changes. This will be the final opportunity for consultees to make their views known before a final decision is taken. Following the consultation periods officers will summarise the feedback and will report to the Cabinet Member for All-age Learning.

## Have Your Say

Surrey County Council and Heather Ridge Infant School would like to know what people in the area think about the proposal. The consultation will open on 25 February 2025.

You can respond by:

- a) Accessing the consultation online on the 'Surrey Says' website: [www.surreysays.co.uk](http://www.surreysays.co.uk) and searching for the school's consultation (school name or post code), or by scrolling through the list of open consultations.
- b) Completing the consultation response form that is available alongside this document. You can email the form or print it, complete it and send it back to the address below.

Lauren Comer  
Heather Ridge Infant School Consultation  
Education Place Planning  
Quadrant Court  
35 Guildford Road  
Woking GU22 7QQ

Email: [schoolorg@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:schoolorg@surreycc.gov.uk) with the subject: FAO Heather Ridge Infant Consultation

**All responses must be received by 11.59pm on 25 March 2025**

## What happens next?

We will hold a public meeting at the school for parents and any other interested parties to discuss the proposals and to hear the views that people have. Details of the meeting are below:

**Date: Monday 10 March 2025**  
**Time: 1:45-2:45pm**  
**Venue: Heather Ridge Infant School**

Please come along to share your views and ask questions. You do not have to have a child at the school to attend the meeting.

At the end of the consultation period, we will review all the responses received and share these with the school and publish them on the Surrey Says website.

Subject to the outcome of the consultation, we intend to publish a Statutory Notice at the school, in a local newspaper and on the Surrey Says website stating our intention to change the age range of Heather Ridge Infant School from ages 4-7 years to ages 2-7 years. There will be a four-week statutory consultation period for further representations to be received by the council.

All representations will be reviewed before a final decision is taken by the Cabinet Member for Education and Learning.