



Rationale for the proposed closure of the nursery provision at Trinity Academy Akroydon

Background

Trinity Academy Akroydon (TAA) joined the Trinity Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) on 4 February 2017. The academy is under roll and, overall, is currently at 82% capacity.

The academy has reduced its PAN; to 45 in 2020 and then to 30 in 2021. The uptake for nursery places has continued to fall year on year, with just eight places available during the academic year 2021-22.

The Trust (MAT) has been considering all aspects of provision, first looking at reducing the PAN and now the current nursery. The local governing body (LGB) of the academy is now consulting on the closure of the nursery, as part of a business case to change the school age from a 3-11 age range (which it currently is) to 4-11 i.e. to close the nursery.

Process

The first thing to emphasise is that any decision on the nursery has not yet been made. The purpose of the consultation is to gauge the feelings of stakeholders, once the reasons behind the proposed closure have been explained. Following the consultation, the LGB will meet again and make a recommendation. This will go to Trinity MAT's Board of Directors, who make the final decision. Following this decision, permission still has to be sought from the Regional Schools Commissioner's (RSC) Office, before the provision can be closed. In summary, any potential closure will not happen this academic year.

Rationale

The main challenge faced by maintaining the nursery provision is financial i.e. costs (predominantly staffing) are higher than income – in short, it is costing the rest of the school money and is not sustainable.

The other main point to note is that, prior to consultation, we have liaised with local nurseries and we have been assured that there is additional capacity in them to ensure our community has the provision it needs. We currently have fewer children on our waiting list than the eight places currently available, and all local providers consulted have confirmed capacity to offer these children a place in their provision. To clarify, local, high-quality nursery places are available and will be able to absorb the eight nursery places that would be withdrawn by Trinity Academy Akroydon.

As the Trust (MAT) develops its plans to offer a science pathway throughout a pupils journey, there are plans to develop the current nursery space at Trinity Academy Akroydon into a state-of-the-art science laboratory that can be used to enhance the curriculum offer of pupils at the academy and local schools.

Finally, the Trust is committed to ensuring that, in the event of the closure of the nursery, all staff will be relocated to other areas of the school. This is important to us, as a considerate employer, and we guarantee that no jobs will be lost as part of any closure process.

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