



**Proposal to discontinue Spencer Nursery School, Spencer Road, Mitcham Junction,
Surrey, CR4 4JP URN
Full Proposal – January 2019**

1. The Proposals

The London Borough of Sutton, is proposing to discontinue Spencer Nursery School, Spencer Road, Mitcham Junction, Mitcham, Surrey, CR4 4JP, a maintained nursery school URN:102955; with effect from 31 March 2020.

This proposal is linked to proposals by the London Borough of Sutton to make prescribed alterations to Hackbridge Primary School to enable them to deliver the early years provision on the Spencer site. The local authority's intention is that the proposals will ensure that the provision at the Spencer Nursery site will remain unchanged to families and there will continue to be joint management of the Spencer Nursery provision and Hackbridge Primary School when Hackbridge Primary School converts to academy status.

2. Local Authority Details (as proposer)

London Borough of Sutton, Civic Offices, St Nicholas Way, Sutton, Surrey, SM1 1EA,

3. Date of implementation

The proposals are planned to be implemented on 31 March 2020.

4. Objections and Comments

Any person may object to or make comments on this proposal by sending them to Laura Byrnes, London Borough of Sutton, People Directorate, Civic Offices, St Nicholas Way, Sutton, SM1 1EA or by emailing laura.byrnes@sutton.gov.uk by 14th February 2019.

5. Reason for Closure

- 5.1. Spencer Nursery School is currently federated with Hackbridge Primary School, this means that they share the same governing body and have shared leadership arrangements.
- 5.2. Hackbridge Primary School have indicated their desire to become an academy and an Academy Order for Hackbridge Primary School has been issued. However, maintained nursery schools cannot become academy schools and it would not be possible therefore

for Spencer Nursery School to join an academy trust with Hackbridge Primary School. Sutton Borough Council and the leadership and governance of Hackbridge Primary School and Spencer Nursery wish the existing partnership arrangements to continue when Hackbridge Primary School becomes an academy. The proposal to discontinue Spencer Nursery is necessary to enable joint management and governance of Spencer Nursery School and Hackbridge Primary School to continue when Hackbridge Primary School becomes an academy.

- 5.3. Spencer Nursery School would not be sustainable if it is not able to continue as a federated school with Hackbridge Primary School. In recent years, maintained nursery schools have been subject to reductions in funding from Government. Most recently, the Early Years National Funding Formula introduced in 2017 placed a number of new requirements on how local authorities must fund early years providers. One requirement is to implement a universal base rate for all childcare provider types by 2019/2020 at the latest. This will mean a reduction of per-pupil funding for maintained nursery schools. To support the transition to the universal base rate, Government made a commitment to provide supplementary funding for maintained nurseries until 2020. As yet, there has been no indication that the Government will maintain this funding post-2020. It is highly likely that without this funding the Nursery will be unsustainable in its current form.
- 5.4. The local authority expects that the benefits of the proposals to close Spencer nursery School whilst making alterations to the registration at Hackbridge primary school will be as follows:
 - 5.4.1. Both settings can continue to work together to provide a sustainable and high quality 0-5 years childcare and education offer for the local area which is currently well utilised by families.
 - 5.4.2. Children attending Spencer Nursery can continue to benefit from enhanced transition arrangements where parents choose Hackbridge Primary School when their child transitions to Reception, where the leadership is the same.
 - 5.4.3. Early Years staff across both settings are provided with focused continual professional development and career development opportunities within the age range, ensuring high-quality practice across the 0-5 age range.
 - 5.4.4. The financial cost of the required leadership can be shared across the settings, which is especially beneficial to Spencer Nursery as the smaller of the settings.
 - 5.4.5. Administration procedures can also be further aligned between the two settings if Spencer Nursery was to become part of Hackbridge Primary School, thereby streamlining additional costs and enabling Spencer Nursery to remain competitive as an affordable childcare provider.
 - 5.4.6. The strong links between the two schools will enhance the teaching and learning for all early years children that attend and provide opportunities to share expertise and resource.

6. Pupil Numbers and admissions

- 6.1. Spencer Nursery School has up to 36 full-time childcare places for children aged 2- 5-year-olds.

- 6.2. On the Spencer Nursery School site, there is an early years nursery that provides full time childcare for children aged 0-2 years that is registered separately with Ofsted on the Early Years Register. The proposal to close Spencer Nursery School does not affect the delivery of the childcare for children aged 0-2-year-olds attending the early years nursery.

7. Displaced Pupils

- 7.1. As the proposal to close Spencer Nursery as a Maintained Nursery is entwined with the proposal to make prescribed alterations to Hackbridge Primary School, there is no intention of displacing any pupils at either Spencer Nursery School or Hackbridge Primary School.
- 7.2. The alterations proposed in the changes to the registration of Hackbridge Primary school are intended to ensure the continuity of childcare provision at Spencer Nursery in its current form and children currently attending Spencer Nursery School will continue to attend at the Spencer Nursery Site under the management of Hackbridge Primary School on and after the 1st April 2020.
- 7.3. New parents seeking a place at Spencer Nursery can continue to apply for a place, following the existing admissions process. There is no intention to change the admission arrangements for either Spencer Nursery or Hackbridge Primary School as part of this proposal. Admissions arrangements can be found on either Spencer Nursery School website or Hackbridge Primary School website

8. Impact on the community

- 8.1. The provision of childcare for local families in the Hackbridge area will continue to be delivered in the same way that it is now, therefore there is no impact to the community.

9. Quality and Quantity of Alternative Provision Accessibility and Convenience of Alternative Provision

The proposals will ensure that the same quantity and quality of provision remains available at Spencer Nursery and the same expertise and specialism continues to be available, as the current arrangements for places and staffing at Spencer Nursery will continue after the implementation of the proposals.

There will be no change in the accessibility and convenience of provision for parents.

Signed: Kieran Holliday, Head of Pupil Based Commissioning, London Borough of Sutton,
Civic Offices, St Nicholas Way, Sutton, Surrey, SM1 1EA.

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