



GREENWOOD ACADEMIES TRUST

Consultation Report

Change of age range from 2-11 to 3-11

Ingoldmells Academy

This report summarises the findings of the public consultation undertaken for the proposed change to the age range at Ingoldmells Academy from 2-11 to 3-11.

The proposal being consulted on is that the academy proposes not to admit 2-year-olds from 1 September 2025 due to a consistent significant decline in pupil numbers in the nursery setting, leading to financial challenges that impact the ability to provide the high level of care and education that our children deserve. By raising the admissions age, the academy will aim to create a robust Early Years unit within our main building, bringing together nursery children aged 3 and 4 years alongside our reception cohort.

The consultation ran for a period of three school weeks from 28th April 2025 and end on 19th May 2025 at 5pm.

The process involved the circulation of a letter (Appendix 1) to a wide range of stakeholders including:

- All parents of Ingoldmells Academy pupils
- All staff at Ingoldmells Academy
- The Local Authority Early Years and Child Support Team
- The Local Authority Admissions Team
- Local schools / Greenwood Academies Trust Primary Academy parents in the area

All information was also published on the Ingoldmells Academy website.

The letter included an email address to respond to the consultation.

Results from email respondents

We received three responses to the consultation by email. One from a parent, one from an ex-parent and staff member at Ingoldmells Academy and one from Lincolnshire County Council's Early Years Childcare Support Team.

Two of the responses were supportive of the proposed change and one was against the proposed change.

A summary of the responses are below:

1. Response from Parent: disagreed with this change as feel its unfair for families who struggle getting to nurseries further away from main school when they have children already at the academy. Would need to take other child to private nursery 3-4 miles away.

2. Response from ex-parent member of staff at Ingoldmells Academy: Agreed that 3-year-olds having the opportunity to attend the same site as reception children and will promote smoother transition into formal schooling. Feels that integrating nursery and reception classes, children would benefit from a familiar environment, consistent routines, and stronger relationships with staff and peers.

Also agreed that the existing nursery site should be repurposed into a specialist hub for Special Educational Needs (SEN), pastoral care, mental health support and family support work.

They believe that this dual provision would foster a more inclusive, supportive environment for all children and families, ensuring that their needs are met early and effectively. Stated that this proposal has the potential to strengthen community links, improve outcomes for children and provide much-needed services for families.

3. Response from Lincolnshire County Council Early Years and Childcare Support Team: Letter stated that they understand there has been significant drop in demand for 2-year old place and feels that as a result freeing up space currently designated for nursery will support the wider needs of the school. They feel this is a very considered approach and one they support. But they did make a suggestion that rather than changing the age range, adjust the admissions policy to indicate will only accept children from age 3 years, allowing flexibility for the future. See letter at Appendix 2.

The suggestion from Childcare Sufficiency to keep the admission age at 2 years and to alter our admissions policy to prioritise admissions for 3-year-olds over 2-year-olds comes with its own set of complications and feel this would not be a viable option.

No other email responses to the consultation were received.

Responses

We are thankful to the stakeholders who took the time to respond to the consultation.

Conclusion

After reviewing the consultation responses, the Trust has agreed to proceed with submitting a significant change proposal to the Department for Education.

Next Steps

The consultation report will be shared on the Ingoldmells Academy and Greenwood Academies Trust websites.

A significant change application will be submitted to the Department for Education – this will then be reviewed, discussed and a decision will be made.

The outcome will be published on the Ingoldmells Academy website and communicated to parents and carers.

Julie Molde
Operations Manager – Greenwood Academies Trust
30 May 2025

Appendix 1

Consultation Letters

1

Friday 25th April 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

Consultation: Proposal to increase our early years admission age at Ingoldmells Academy

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to inform you that we are consulting on an important proposal regarding the admission age at Ingoldmells Academy, specifically to increase our current admission age from 2-year-olds to 3-year-olds. This decision is underpinned by a series of considerations aimed at enhancing the educational experience for our youngest learners, alongside addressing the financial sustainability of our academy.

We have seen a consistent decline in pupil numbers in our nursery setting, leading to financial challenges that impact our ability to provide the high level of care and education that our children deserve. The funding we receive does not adequately support the staffing required to meet the statutory ratios for our nursery, which has unfortunately resulted in our finances continuing to operate at a loss.

By raising the admissions age, we aim to create a robust Early Years unit within our main building, bringing together nursery children aged 3 and 4 years alongside our reception cohort. By integrating nursery and reception staff, we can leverage their collective expertise, ultimately providing enriched learning outcomes for our early years' pupils. This integration would not only foster collaboration among our experienced staff but also enhance the learning experiences of all children involved. Our dedicated team would be able to utilise their skills more effectively to support the developmental needs of early years pupils, thus better preparing them for their educational journey ahead.

The establishment of an Early Years Unit within the main school building would free up our existing nursery space for more versatile use. This area could then support all our pupils, particularly those with additional needs, and transform into a resource for our wider community. We envision hosting parent social events, 'Stay & Play' sessions and supportive workshops, led by our Family Support Worker, Pastoral Lead, and SENCO, thereby promoting a more inclusive environment that benefits the community. We believe that these community engagements would strengthen our support network and enrich the educational experience for our children and families.

We wish to invite all parents and carers to share their views as we strongly believe that transitioning to an admission age of 3 years will not only contribute to the sustainability of Ingoldmells Academy but will also provide an enhanced educational experience and a robust support system for all our pupils.

Consultation period

The consultation period will be 3 weeks and will commence on 28th April 2025 and end on 19th May 2025 at 5pm and we look forward to receiving your views.

How to give your views


Your views are very important to us, and we look forward to receiving your comments. To submit your views, please email them to consultation@greenwoodacademies.org by 5pm on 19th May 2025.

Decision-making following consultation

Following the consultation period, the Greenwood Academies Trust will review responses and propose to submit a Significant Change application to the Department for Education (DfE).

Thank you for your continued support and engagement with our school. We look forward to hearing your thoughts regarding this proposal.

Kind regards


Miss. J. Howden
(Principal)



The Ingoldmells Academy is part of the Greenwood Academies Trust

The Greenwood Academies Trust is a company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales, registered number 08384322.
A list of Directors is available for inspection at the registered office, Greenwood House, Private Road No 2, Colwick Quays Business Park,
Nottingham NG4 2JY. Further information about us is available at <http://www.greenwoodacademies.org>



Principal: Miss J Howden
Assistant Principal: Mrs R Worthington
 Simpson Court, Ingoldmells
 Skegness, Lincolnshire, PE25 1QE
Telephone: 01754 872989
Email: admin@ingoldmellsacademy.org

Friday 25th April 2025

To whom it may concern at Early Years and Childcare Support (LCC).

Consultation: Proposal to increase Ingoldmells Academy's admission age from 2-Year-Olds to 3-Year-Olds

I am writing to inform you that we are consulting on our proposal to increase our admission age from 2-year-olds to 3-year-olds. This proposal emerges from a careful evaluation of our current provision and the pressing needs of our community and stakeholders.

Since 2020, our nursery attendance figures have reflected a steady decline in pupil numbers, which has raised significant concerns regarding the sustainability of our nursery provision. Currently, we have only one 2-year-old who is set to join us in September 2025. This decline, coupled with the limitations of our funding, has severely undermined our financial capacity to adequately staff the nursery, making it increasingly difficult to meet the legal ratio requirements. Consequently, the financial implications for our academy have resulted in a sustained loss, necessitating an urgent and strategic response.

In light of these challenges, we are proposing the creation of an Early Years Unit situated within the main school building. This innovative approach aims to combine our nursery children (aged 3 and 4 years) with our reception pupils, thereby allowing us to engage the expertise of both nursery and reception staff collaboratively. By merging these groups, we can enhance the learning environment and foster closer relationships among staff and pupils, which we believe will yield significantly improved educational outcomes for all children in our early years' provision.

The shift to an Early Years Unit will not only enable us to concentrate on educational priorities but will also free our skilled nursery and reception staff to focus on delivering a high-quality learning experience rather than navigating the complexities of childcare alone. This collaborative model aims to facilitate early identification of children's needs, allowing for timely interventions that can greatly benefit our pupils. We envisage that the combined efforts of our nursery and reception staff will create a developmental continuum that supports children as they transition from nursery to school.

Furthermore, the proposed changes will have far-reaching implications for our ability to support children with additional needs. The freeing up of the current nursery space will allow us to repurpose this area into a resource centre for pupils requiring additional support, including those with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), particularly focusing on social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) needs, as well as communication and interaction needs. This dedicated area would provide a supportive environment for pupils requiring one-to-one assistance, fostering inclusion and ensuring that all students can thrive.

Additionally, we see this new space as an opportunity to strengthen our ties with the community. We plan to utilise this area for parent and carer socials and workshops, allowing for multiple avenues of engagement and feedback from families. Establishing an open line of communication is vital for us; we wish to encourage our parents and carers to share their views and experiences, thus ensuring our early years provision remains responsive to the needs and aspirations of our community.

We strongly believe that transitioning to an admission age of 3 years will not only contribute to the sustainability of Ingoldmells Academy but will also provide an enhanced educational experience for our pupils and a robust support system for those with additional needs and we kindly ask for your support and feedback regarding this proposal.

Consultation period

The consultation period will be 3 weeks and will commence on 28th April 2025 and end on 19th May 2025 at 5pm and we look forward to receiving your views.

How to give your views

Your views are very important to us, and we look forward to receiving your comments. To submit your views, please email them to consultation@greenwoodacademies.org by 5pm on 19th May 2025.

Decision-making following consultation

Following the consultation period, the Greenwood Academies Trust will review responses and propose to submit a Significant Change application to the Department for Education (DfE).

We look forward to receiving your support on our proposal to increase Ingoldmells Academy's admission age from 2-year-olds to 3-year-olds. We are confident that this adjustment will not only benefit our current pupils but will also significantly enhance the educational environment for future generations.

Kind regards
J Howden
 Miss. J. Howden
 (Principal)



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The Greenwood Academies Trust is a company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales, registered number 03000000.
 A list of Directors is available for inspection at the registered office, Greenwood House, Priory Road, 2, Grimsby, South Humberside, Lincolnshire, NG31 2JF. Further information about us is available at <http://www.greenwoodacademies.org>

Friday 25th April 2025,

To whom it may concern at the Local Authority Admissions Team (LCC),

Consultation: Proposal to Increase Ingoldmells Academy's admission age from 2-Year-Olds to 3-Year-Olds

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to inform you that we are consulting on our proposal to an increase in the admission age at Ingoldmells Academy from 2-year-olds to 3-year-olds. This proposal comes in response to a significant decline in pupil numbers that we have observed since 2020. Our nursery attendance figures clearly illustrate this concerning trend, which poses significant challenges not only to our operational viability but also to the quality of education we are able to provide to our pupils.

The current funding arrangements that we are receiving from local authorities do not sufficiently support our financial capability to staff the nursery in accordance with legal ratios. These limitations have resulted in our academy's finances operating at a loss over the past few years. As a tangible example of this situation, we currently have only one 2-year-old child enrolled for September 2025. This singular enrollment necessitates that we pay one adult to care for this child, resulting in undue financial strain on our already limited resources. Moreover, this staffing requirement significantly hinders our ability to effectively deploy our adult support where it will generate the most substantial impact on the education of our entire pupil cohort.

In light of these pressing challenges, we are keen to establish an Early Years Unit within the main school building. This initiative would allow us to integrate our nursery children, who are aged 3 and 4 years, with our reception children. By combining these two groups, we would harness the expertise of both nursery and reception staff to work collaboratively and effectively. This collaboration is essential as it will have the potential to substantially enhance learning outcomes for our early years pupils.

Furthermore, establishing the Early Years Unit within the main school building will allow us to repurpose our existing nursery premises to better cater to the needs of all our pupils, particularly those who have additional needs. This strategic relocation of our early years provision will not only improve resource allocation but will also contribute to fostering a more inclusive and supportive environment for all our learners. It is crucial that we equip our staff, particularly those with specific skill sets, to support our early years children while still being able to contribute meaningfully to the lives of all our pupils here.

We firmly believe that engaging with our stakeholders and the broader community regarding this proposal is paramount. Therefore, we encourage all interested parties to share their views, as their feedback is vital to us and we look forward to gathering insights that will be instrumental as we consider the next steps in this process.

Consultation period

The consultation period will be 3 weeks and will commence on 28th April 2025 and end on 19th May 2025 at 5pm and we look forward to receiving your views.

How to give your views

Your views are very important to us, and we look forward to receiving your comments. To submit your views, please email them to consultation@greenwoodacademies.org by 5pm on 19th May 2025.

Decision-making following consultation

Following the consultation period, the Greenwood Academies Trust will review responses and propose to submit a Significant Change application to the Department for Education (DfE).

We look forward to receiving your support to increase Ingoldmells Academy's admission age from 2-year-olds to 3-year-olds. We are confident that this adjustment will not only benefit our current pupils but will also significantly enhance the educational environment for future generations.

Kind regards
J Howden
Miss. J. Howden
(Principal)



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The Greenwood Academies Trust is a company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales, registered number 08800222.
A list of trustees is available for inspection at the registered office, Greenwood House, Priory Road, Box 2, Gainsborough Business Park,
Gainsborough DN21 2JF. Further information about us is available at <http://www.greenwoodacademies.org>

Appendix 2

Local Authority Consultation Response

Miss J Howden
Ingoldmells academy
Simpson Court,
Ingoldmells
Skegness,
Lincolnshire, PE25 1QE

Early Years and Childcare Support
County Offices
Newland
Lincoln
LN1 1YL
01522 552752

16/05/2025

Dear Miss Howden,

Subject: Consultation - proposal to increase Ingoldmells Academy's admission age from 2-Year-Olds to 3-Year-Olds

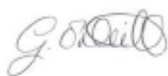
Thank you to for your letter dated 24th April outlining your proposal to raise the age range of the school to 3 years.

We understand that you have seen a significant drop in demand for 2-year-olds places. As a result, you plan to merge your nursery provision with reception, thereby freeing up space currently designated for nursery to support the wider needs of the school.

This is a very considered approach to meeting the needs of the pupils and the community and one that we support. However, we recommend that you do not raise the age range of your school. Instead, we suggest maintaining the current age range while adjusting your admissions policy to indicate that you accept children from the age of 3 years.

This will allow you to retain flexibility for the future, should the demand for younger places arise again. If you would like further discussion on this matter, please do not hesitate to contact myself or a member of the team on: childcaresufficiency@lincolnshire.gov.uk

Yours sincerely,



Geraldine O'Neill
Sustainability and Development Manager
Lincolnshire County Council