

[CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSED CLOSURE OF THE NURSERY AT STAR ACADEMY SANDYFORD](#)

What are we consulting you on?

Star Academy Sandyford is an academy, within the Academy Transformation Trust, with a nursery class which currently offers part-time free early education to three and four-year olds (the early years free entitlement). The class has 30 places and offers parents morning sessions for a total of 15 hours a week, and is open only during school term-times. This consultation is about a proposal to close the academy's nursery class with effect from September 2024 and as a result to raise the school's lower age range from three to four years.

We are consulting with staff, parents, the local community and talking to Stoke on Trent County Council.

The consultation closing date is 5.00pm on the 3rd May 2024.

Why are we doing this?

The number of children on the academy roll in the nursery class has been falling in recent years and unused school places have an immediate cost for schools through reduced budgets and the falling numbers in recent years has caused significant pressure on the school's overall budget. This pressure is predicted to continue and worsen because of excess places in the local area and declining birth rates over the last few years.

As at the date of this consultation, the school has received 7 applications for nursery in September 2024. This follows having only 9 pupils on roll this academic year and 13 on roll from the year before.

Alternative local provision

In terms of alternative early years provision for children and parents, in our local area, there are schools with a nursery and we understand there are places available. Some also offer working parents of three and four - year olds the 30 hours free childcare entitlement, which is double the amount of time offered by Star Academy. There are also a number of private nurseries.

What impact will the proposed changes have?

The proposed change will close the nursery class at Star and will raise the academy's lower age range from three to four years, and this means that parents who wanted their children to attend the school's nursery from September 2024 would have to choose an alternative early years provider.

What does this mean if my child is already in the nursery class?

There will be no impact on your child as they will be moving to reception class in September 2024.

Will this decision be reviewed in the future?

The academy, the Governing Body and the Trust will review this decision from time to time, depending on whether there is demand within the area for the academy to offer a nursery. The nursery could therefore re-open in the future, but it would need to be financially sustainable.

What is the process of consultation and change?

The timeline for these proposals is outlined below:

11th April 2024 – the Governing Body and the Trust confirmed that it wishes to consult on a proposal to close the academy's nursery.

12th April to 3rd May 2024 – the consultation period begins, which is 3 weeks.

6th May to 7th May 2024 – analysis of the responses received during the consultation.

8th May 2024 – A decision of whether to proceed with a significant change request to the DfE with a view to close the nursery will be made.

19 July 2024 – last day of nursery class, if closure agreed.

Having your say

We welcome feedback from everyone and this can be given as follows:

- Complete the questionnaire that follows below and return it to the school office;
- Complete the questionnaire using this link <https://forms.office.com/e/85UMrVTwSw>
- Complete the questionnaire by using this QR code below;



- Send an email to the academy office sta-office@atrust.org.uk
- In writing addressed to the Principal and sent or delivered to the academy office.

Your email should state in the subject and main body of the email that you are responding to the consultation regarding the proposed closure of the nursery. Additionally, your letter should state that you are responding to the consultation regarding the proposed closure of the nursery.

We need to receive your feedback by 5.00pm on the 3rd May 2024 for us to be able to take it into account.

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Q.1 Please tell us in what capacity you are responding by ticking below:

	Please tick
Parent/Carer with a pupil(s) at Star Academy	
Parent/Carer that has applied for a nursery place for September 2024	
Member of school staff	
A member of staff, who works at Star but are not employed by Academy Transformation Trust	
Member of the local community with no pupils at Star Academy	
Member of staff at a local primary school with a nursery (not Star Academy)	
Member of staff at a local private nursery	
Local Councillor	
Other (please specify)	

2. Please indicate your response to the consultation for the proposed closure of the nursery:

I agree with the proposal

I disagree with the proposal

If you disagree, please give your reasons why or any other comments: