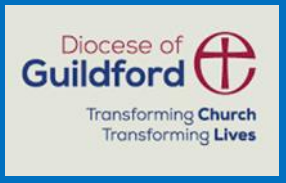
Consultation Analysis

(Consultation)

Consultation on the proposed extension of the age range at Ewhurst C of E Infant School





SURREY
COUNTY COUNCIL

Consultation Analysis (Consultation) Proposal to extend the age range at Ewhurst C of E Infant School

Introduction

This report is an analysis of responses gathered on the proposal to extend the age range at Ewhurst C of E Infant School. If the proposal was agreed it would mean that the school would extend its age range to become Ewhurst C of E Primary School, offering an education to children from Year Reception through to Year 6. The proposed extension of age range at Ewhurst C of E Infant School would come into effect from 1 September 2026.

Surrey County Council (SCC) published a consultation from 1 July to 26 September 2025.

This paper is an analysis of the responses received during the consultation notice period. Statutory notices will be published on 1 October 2025. Analysis of the responses during the statutory notice period will be added to this paper and will be submitted to the Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Lifelong Learning as part of the Lead Cabinet Member report, for consideration in the decision to determine the statutory notices

Consultation Summary

The aim of the consultation was to seek views on the proposal from all interested parties, including the families of pupils who attend Ewhurst C of E Infant School, the families of pupils who may attend the school in the future, other local schools and the local community.

The consultation was open from 1 July to 26 September 2025. The associated documentation was published on the Surrey County Council 'Surrey Says' website and circulated to local stakeholders. Responses were invited via an online form, with the alternative of email or postal options provided.

Two public meetings were held at Ewhurst C of E Infant School on 9 September 2025.

Key points from the consultation responses:

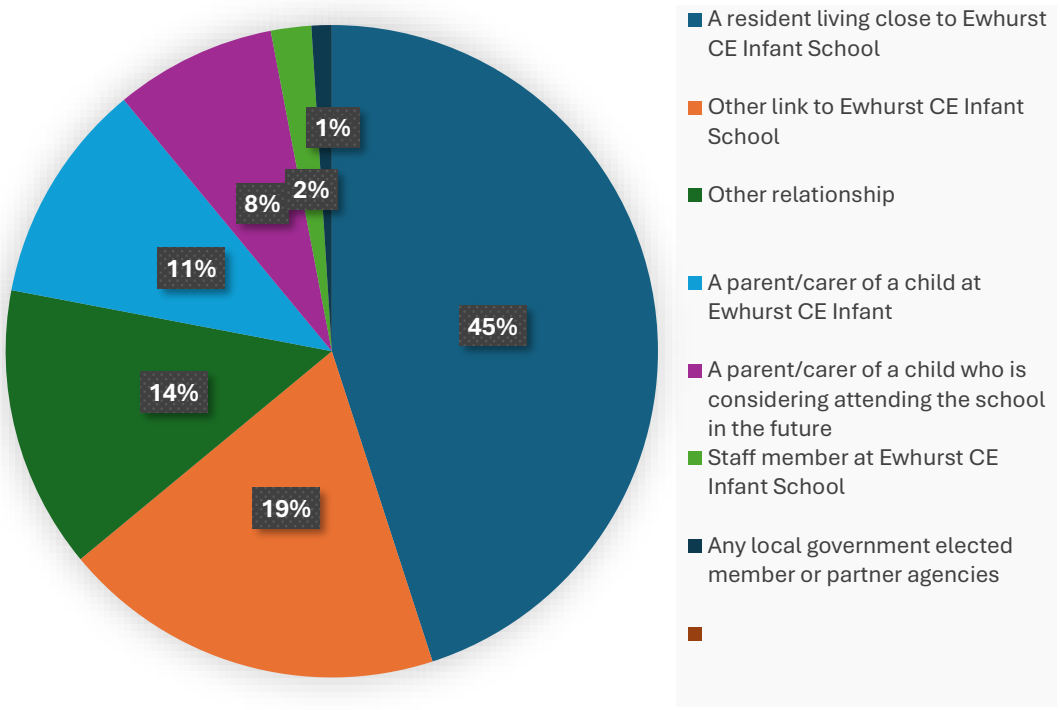
- There were **250 responses** to the consultation.
- There was a significant margin of agreement with the proposal: **95% supported the proposal, 3% did not support the proposal and 2% stated they did not know.**
- 45% of all responses were from residents living close to Ewhurst C of E Infant School and 19% of all responses were from parents/carers of a child at Ewhurst C of E Infant School or parent/carer of a child who is considering attending the school in the future.

Consultation

Quantitative Analysis

In total, there were **250** responses to the consultation regarding the proposal to extend the age range at Ewhurst C of E Infant School. 238 **(95%)** respondents were in support the proposal, 8 **(3%)** respondents were not in support of the proposal, and 4 **(2%)** respondents stated they were unsure.

The chart below shows the distribution of respondents to the consultation.



Qualitative Analysis

Respondents to the consultation had the opportunity to add comments at the end of the survey. Out of the 250 responses received, 186 comments were made on the proposal. These comments have been broadly themed and then separated into 9 possible tags. Each response could have more than one tag attached. The overall frequency of each of the tags provides an indicator of respondents' feedback regarding the proposal.

Sub theme	Tag	Number of responses	Prevalence (% out of 250 total responses)	Prevalence (% out of 186 comments)
Positives	Continuation of primary education	90	36%	48%
	Community	59	27%	32%
	Sustainability of the school	35	14%	19%
	Positive experiences of the school	30	12%	16%
	Access to local education	10	4%	6%
	Reduced travel and environmental factors	7	3%	5%
Negatives	Traffic and parking	6	3%	4%
	Vertical streaming	5	2%	3%
	Impact on local schools	3	1%	2%

Key themes from the consultation

Positive impacts

Of the 95% of respondents who agreed with the proposal to extend the age range at Ewhurst C of E Infant School, many spoke favourably of the proposal, with comments noting that it is a *"terrific idea",* "*great plan"* and *"absolutely essential for the young children living in and around Ewhurst"*. Respondents commented that the proposal is *"much needed for the local area*" and *"extremely good for the school, the children, the parents, the village".*

Continuation of primary education

90 of the comments agreed that the continuation of primary education was a positive impact of the proposed extension of the age range at Ewhurst C of E Infant School. Many respondents supported the proposal of the infant school becoming a primary school, as it would mean their children could remain in the same school throughout their primary education. One comment noted that *"Extending the age range at*

Ewhurst would be life changing for our family" and another observed that the *"proposed extension to a full primary simply makes sense."*

"If this had been an option when my child attended the school, we would've very happily stayed until year six."

"This proposal will have a very positive impact on the community by removing the current levels of anxiety felt by parents at the Year2/Year3 transition."

"Our child is thriving at Ewhurst School and we would love for him to be able to complete his primary school education there."

Community

59 of the responses to the consultation referred to the important role that Ewhurst C of E Infant School plays, being described as the *"heartbeat of the community".* One respondent commented that the school is a *"an integral part of our village and is key to the continued success and wellbeing of our community",* whilst another respondent reflected that *"the school has been at the heart of our village for nearly 180 years".* In response to the proposed extension of age range at the school, one responder stated*, "the whole community stands to benefit".*

"Ewhurst is a great school and has great community links. It would make an excellent small village primary school".

"…it brings the community together".

"(The school) is a part of the framework and identity of the village and to lose this would damage the community".

"It is the lifeblood of the village and its continuation is essential. This proposal will help to secure the future that the school and children deserve".

Sustainability

35 of the comments made on the proposal agreed that extending the age range at Ewhurst C of E Infant School would improve the school's long-term sustainability and would make the school "*more attractive to families and viable in the long term".* One respondent commented that they believe the proposal will *"allow Ewhurst CE School to thrive again",* whilst another stated that they *"support securing a schools future and making them more sustainable going forward"*

"…by retaining more pupils locally, the school can secure its long-term sustainability, ensuring it remains a thriving, invaluable resource for Ewhurst for many years to come".

"I believe this to be the only viable solution to the continued existence of the school".

"An excellent proposal which will give the school chance to grow its numbers again".

Positive experiences of the school
30 respondents to the consultation referred to their positive experiences at Ewhurst C of E School. Respondents mentioned the terms *"brilliant", "an asset"* and *"excellent reputation"* when expressing their positive thoughts on the Ewhurst C of E Infant School in relation to the proposal. One comment declared "*there is something special about the school"*, and another described the school as having a *"really great environment and atmosphere".*

Comments also referred to the impact the proposal would have on the school, with one respondent stating that the school *"would be wildly popular if it became a full primary".*

"…by becoming a Primary school this would allow (him) to build on the strong academic foundation already provided by the school and mean that he continue to build on the friendships he has already made".

"This is a lovely caring school and should be thriving".

"It is a fantastic school and a great starting block for any child".

"It has always had a very special offering and we were so disappointed to then have to find another school when they left after Year 2".

Access to local education
10 respondents to the proposal expressed the importance of the opportunity for children to access local education, with this being *"welcomed by parents in the village".* One respondent stated that they would appreciate having "*the amenities of a primary school nearby for our community",* whilst another commented *"I believe it is important for children who live in and near to Ewhurst to have the opportunity to continue learning within their community from reception to year 6".*

"I fully support this application in order to maintain this local village school in order that local children and parents can be offered a local provision in which they can travel sustainably to"

"Ewhurst should continue to have access to a village school to benefit local residents".

Reduced travel and environmental factors
5% of comments observed that the proposed extension of age range of Ewhurst C of E Infant School would have a positive impact on travel and environment in the local area, as children could attend their local school. One respondent observed that it means "*reduced travel cost, reduced pollution and contribution to climate change."* Respondents referred to the current lack of junior provision in Ewhurst, forcing families to travel further afield, stating that *"this in turn increases the amount of traffic and pollution in our rural village."*

“This (proposal) will stop families having to deal with one child in Ewhurst and another in Cranleigh so that must be good for the environment reducing car journeys into Cranleigh.”

“Local children and parents can be offered a local provision in which they can travel sustainably too by walking and cycling etc rather than using road transportation.”

Negative impacts

A small percentage (5%) of respondents to the consultation answered that they “did not support the proposal” or “did not know”. When analysing the comments made by this group of respondents, the key themes identified were concerns regarding vertical streaming, traffic and parking, and the impact of the proposal on other local schools.

Vertical streaming
5 respondents expressed concern regarding the proposal that classes would be taught in vertical groups if the age range of the school is extended. Several respondents maintained that they agreed with the proposal to extend the age range of the school in theory but had reservations about how the vertical teaching would work in practice. One respondent commented *“I do have concerns about the mix of age and ability in the joint classes”.* Conversely, another respondent spoke positively about vertical streaming and the benefits this can bring, stating “*I think that a two-year spread would be good for each class because it would enable the more able to be better stretched and the less able to repeat necessary lessons”.*

Traffic and parking
6 of the 186 comments made in response to the proposal referred to concerns regarding local traffic and parking, with reference being made to the village being a “*major cut through”* and local car parks already being *“often full”.*

“Consideration regarding parking and volume of traffic needs to be given as a high priority”.

“I have no objection in principle to the proposal to extend the age range of pupils attending the school on the basis that there is to be no extension to the size of the building. However, I am concerned that this will generate the need for additional car parking at the school”.

Impact on local schools
3 responses to the consultation expressed concern regarding the impact of the proposal on local schools, with one responder commenting that the proposed extension of age range at Ewhurst C of E Infant School *“risks destabilising the existing primary provision”.*

“Approving additional KS2 places in an already oversupplied context threatens to cause long-term harm to the local school system”.

“The problem of low pupil numbers would just be passed across to Cranleigh Primary School. Cranleigh Primary School are already struggling with pupil numbers and would be further impacted if Ewhurst became an all through Primary”.

Public Meetings

Two public consultation meetings took place at Ewhurst C of E Infant School on 9 September 2025. Themes arising from the public meetings reflected the themes from the responses to the consultation.