



## **Consultation**

# **Loughton Manor First School – Proposed change of age range**

### **Proposal**

This four-week consultation, running from **1 June 2026 to 28 June 2026**, seeks views on a proposal to change the age range at Loughton Manor First School from 3 to 7 years to 2 to 7 years.

### **Background**

Loughton Manor First School is a community infant school located in Loughton, providing education for children aged 3 to 7 years, with early years provision delivered by the school. The school operates a popular nursery class and, according to the Spring 2026 school census, had 26 children aged 3 and 4 attending nursery sessions.

The school's most recent Ofsted inspection took place in July 2024, with the school judged as Good overall, and Outstanding for early years provision.

For September 2026, 51 children have been allocated a place in Reception (Year R) at the school, 11 of whom currently attend the school nursery.

### **Why is this change being proposed?**

The Government is committed to expanding school-based nursery provision across England as part of the extended early education and childcare entitlements, which were fully implemented from September 2025. These entitlements enable eligible working parents to access up to 30 free hours per week (over 38 weeks per year) for children aged from 9 months until compulsory school age.

Loughton Manor First School is located within the Sunshine Family Centre area. While this wider area is currently projected to have a surplus of places for two-year-olds, it covers a large geographical area. In Loughton itself, there is limited provision for two-year-olds, with only three providers, including the school.

The school has undertaken a parental survey and believes there is additional local demand for two-year-old places. At present, the school is legally unable to offer provision for children aged two without a formal change to its age range. The school is therefore proposing to lower its age range to age two.

If approved, the school intends to provide at least five additional places for two-year-olds from September 2026, increasing to ten places in 2027/28. The school has appropriately qualified staff and sufficient nursery space to accommodate the expanded provision.

## **Benefits**

The school and its governing body believe the proposal would bring a number of benefits to both the school and the local community, including:

- supporting the government's early years expansion agenda
- increasing the availability of early years places at a school with Outstanding early years provision (Ofsted, July 2024)
- increasing local choice and accessibility of provision for families in Loughton and the Sunshine Family Centre area
- supporting staff recruitment and retention by providing enhanced professional opportunities
- enabling children to join the school earlier, which may increase future applications for Reception and support the school's long-term sustainability
- allowing existing families with children already attending the school to access provision for younger siblings in one setting, making things easier for families
- enabling staff to identify and respond to children's needs earlier than they are currently able to; supporting improved developmental outcomes.
- supporting the council in fulfilling its statutory early years sufficiency duty

## **Admission to the expanded nursery**

Admission to the expanded nursery provision would continue to be managed by Loughton Manor First School. As is currently the case, parents would still need to make a separate application to Milton Keynes City Council for a place in the Reception class.

## **Capital and planning**

If the proposal is approved, minor internal works will be required, including improvements to indoor and outdoor spaces and facilities to ensure suitability for expanded nursery provision. These works would be funded from the school's existing capital budget.

The proposal would not affect the school's Published Admission Number (PAN) or overall capacity and would have no impact on classroom space for statutory-aged pupils.

## **What are the next steps?**

This consultation seeks views from parents and staff directly involved with Loughton Manor First School, from other local schools and any other interested parties.

We are keen to hear as many views as possible about this proposal. Please go online and complete the web form by using this [link](#).

If you are unable to access the online form, you may respond by email to [sufficiencyandaccess@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:sufficiencyandaccess@milton-keynes.gov.uk)

This consultation will close on **28 June 2026**. Following this, the council and the school's governing body will consider the responses and determine if the proposed change in age range should be implemented.

If approved, the school would be able to offer places to children aged two from September 2026, subject to completion of necessary capital works and relevant Ofsted registration requirements.

**Who has this consultation been sent to?**

- All parents and staff at Loughton Manor First School
- All schools in Milton Keynes
- Early years providers within a two mile radius
- Local MPs
- Ward Councillors
- Parish/Town Council