

**Record of  
Executive  
Decisions  
published  
21/May/2021**



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21 May 2021

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<b>Decision Taker:</b> School Organisation Committee of Cabinet	<b>Appropriate Scrutiny Committee:</b> Children, Education and Skills Scrutiny Committee
<b>Date decision in force:</b>	31 May 2021
<b>Date of decision:</b>	20 May 2021

### **Title and author(s) of written report:**

Proposal to Discontinue Hetton-le-Hole Nursery School – Report of the Executive Director of Neighbourhoods

### **Full description of decision:**

Note the responses to the statutory and pre-publication consultations and consider the statutory proposal which is:

To discontinue (close) Hetton le Hole Nursery School, Victoria Street, Hetton le Hole, DH5 9DG and associated provisions from 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021.

Under the provisions of the relevant legislation, the Authority may approve published proposals with or without modification or may reject them.

The Committee approved the proposal as detailed above.

### **Suggested reason(s) for Decision:**

In recent years the Nursery has become financially vulnerable. The Nursery has a deficit budget that has increased each year over the previous five years. The Nursery's financial deficit exceeded £200k at the close of the 2020/21 financial year and, based on current staffing structures combined with projected numbers on roll, the deficit is projected to continue to increase in future years. The Nursery has been subject to falling rolls in recent years which has impacted on the available funding at the setting. The falling rolls and the statutory requirements relating to staffing ratios, combined with current funding rates and methodology has previously resulted in the Nursery being unable to implement a structure and delivery model that can operate within the financial model required of a maintained nursery school. On that basis it has been identified as unviable as a long-term provision.

To safeguard the wider sufficiency of nursery places in the Hetton Ward, for both current and future cohorts of children, the Council has proposed that Hetton le Hole Nursery and its separately registered childcare provision are

discontinued from 31st August 2021. In addition to the surplus places already available at other early years providers and school nursery classes in the ward, additional alternative places for 2, 3 and 4-year olds (including both 30 hours provision and disadvantaged 2-year-old places) will be offered at Hetton Primary School.

**Alternative options considered and rejected:**

- Retain Hetton le Hole as a Local Authority Maintained Nursery Provision
- Amalgamate Hetton le Hole Nursery with another nursery provider
- Federate Hetton le Hole Nursery with Houghton Nursery and Mill Hill Nursery
- Discontinue provision at Hetton le Hole Nursery on August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022
- Re-locate Hetton le Hole Nursery School to an alternative site
- Parent/ Carer Proposals

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**Is this a key decision:** Yes

**Does the Decision contain Confidential/Exempt Information:** No

**Declarations of Interest and Dispensations:** None