

**Copy of First informal consultation response with petition sign by
Parents/Carers/families previously sent to St Anne's**

Response to St Anne's RC Primary re Nursery Provision

The Governors, Staff and Parents at Pennywell Early Years Centre are extremely concerned about a proposal to establish a 26 place (52 p/t) nursery class at St Annes RC Primary School.

The area is already served by a broad variety of nursery settings and providers. Currently within the Central Sunderland locality there is nursery provision at: -

South Hylton Primary
Grindon Infants
Pennywell Early Years Centre and Children's Centre
St Cuthberts Primary RC
St Joseph's RC Primary
Millfield Nursery
Highfields and Sunshine Daycare
Grindon Independent School
Playdays Playgroup
Springboard Nursery
All Seasons Daycare

Plus 29 Childminders

This far exceeds the 145 places mentioned in the questionnaire)

Many of these providers have vacancies for 2007/2008 and despite admitting children termly throughout the year, only Highfields predicts a full roll. St Joseph's RC Primary and St Cuthbert's RC Primary offer 65 p/t places between them and have vacancies for the coming year. Like many others, they are never full to capacity. If St Anne's were to also offer nursery education this would only increase the amount of unused places. How does this sit alongside the Government's and Authorities policy of reducing "surplus" places.

The Extended Schools Agenda means all early years providers offer fully integrated education and care from 8am to 6pm throughout the year. As Sunderland is a pilot for the flexible attendance project, how will St Anne's be able to match provision elsewhere without a further capital spend or changes to their staffing structure?

The Centre at Pennywell has been extensively developed to meet the needs of the local children and their families. It has become a centre for excellence and identified by Ofsted as an "Outstanding" school. Staff have great expertise in matching personalised learning programmes to individual need within a beautifully resourced environment. It would therefore be a complete waste of public funds for Children's Services to support the development of another nursery, in direct competition only a stone's throw away.

Many children attend PEYC prior to receiving their education "entitlement"; we accommodate babies from 4 months rising to 5 years old. This is a continuous, seamless provision where transition is supported in a very positive way. There is much continuity

and consistency. Children whose parents chose St Anne's Primary School would have less opportunity for this if they were to transfer at 3 years.

As Nursery Education is non-statutory the argument for religious instruction is not a legal requirement and it may be more appropriately offered through the provision of "Liturgy" at St Anne's Church?

The Governors, staff and parents oppose this development and will be seeking support from the Local Authority, Children's Services, Councillors and MP.