Bath & North East Somerset Council		
DECISION MAKER:	**Cllr Michael Evans, Cabinet Member for Children Services**	
DECISION DATE:	**On or after 24th June 2017**	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE: **E 2971**
TITLE:	**Reduction of the lower age limit at Midsomer Norton Primary School**	
WARD:	Midsomer Norton North	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report: **Full proposal**		

1   THE ISSUE

1.1. It is proposed to reduce the lower age limit at Midsomer Norton Primary School from 3 to 2 in order to increase the delivery of the Early Years Entitlement offer and childcare in premises already provided on the school site.

2   RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet Member is asked to;

2.1 Approve the proposal to reduce the lower age limit at Midsomer Norton Primary School from 3 to 2.

3   RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

3.1 The school will receive funding through the Early Years Entitlement funding and parental fees in order deliver the early learning and childcare provision. This funding forms part of the Dedicated Schools Grant and therefore has no impact on non-school budgets.

3.2 The property has already been built on the school site using a Department for Education capital grant previously ran as Council operated 2 year old early education and childcare provision to deliver the exact same service.

3.3 The school has taken full advice from Human Resources on any staffing implications and relevant legislation.

4   STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS AND BASIS FOR PROPOSAL

4.1 Relevant considerations: The Council's statutory duty to provide sufficient Early Years and Childcare places for its area (Childcare Acts 2006 and 2016), Children, Equalities, Social Inclusion, Property, Impact on staff, sustainability.

5   THE REPORT

5.1 Midsomer Norton Children's Centre was built on land at Midsomer Norton Primary School in 2008 and opened in December that year. 2 year old provision has been run by the Radstock Nursery childcare provider between 2015 until 2016 and was rated Outstanding by the statutory regulator, Ofsted.

5.2 There was a close working relationship between the Children's Centre and the school, which, along with the fact that the premises are joined to the school, means that the school is ideally placed to run provision from the premises.

5.3 In order to run the provision the school has to follow the Department for Education's (DfE) guidance for lowering their age designation from age 3 to 2. The Council has to publish the proposal and decide on the proposal as this is a Community School.

5.4 Once decided the school will then change their age designation on the DfE database called Edubase and will then be subject to inspection by Ofsted for both the additional nursery provision and the school in a single inspection.

5.5 This proposal supports the Council's statutory duty to provide sufficient Early Years and Childcare places.

5.6 School admission regulations state that there is no automatic right to a place in a school's reception class for children who have attended school run nursery provision.

6   RATIONALE

6.1 Midsomer Norton Primary School already delivers Ofsted rated Good Early Years provision in their nursery for 3 and 4 year old children. By expanding the nursery to include 2 year old children their expertise, led by a Qualified Teacher, will enable the children attending to get the best opportunity for school readiness and help Bath and North East Somerset Council to meet the objective of narrowing the gap in attainment between children in the Early Years and beyond

7   OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

7.1 None

8   CONSULTATION

8.1 A statutory proposal was published and available in line with the DfE guidance (see background papers) between 5th May 2017 and 9th June 2017. It was available on the Council website, by notice in a local paper and shared by the school with its relevant stakeholders.

8.2 There were 4 replies presented either by email or in writing as required by the proposal process

8.3 All of those proposals supported or did not object to the proposal. Comments included "Brilliant idea, long overdue for the town. Best of luck with developments", "Great idea" and "I think its a very good idea and goes some way to providing a early years service which the town is currently lacking."

8.4 The School's Capital Organisation Team (SCOT) on behalf of Bath and North East Somerset Council's Education Service has no objection to the proposal on the condition that there will be no impact on the number of school places provided at the school for pupils in Year Reception to Year 6, now or in the future. Also on the understanding that the adjacent former Children's Centre accommodation is to be made available to the school to accommodate these additional Early Years age children.

9   RISK MANAGEMENT

9.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

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Background papers	Department for Education statutory guidance on "Making 'prescribed alterations' to maintained schools" https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/514548/16-04-06_FINAL_SO_Guidance__PA_Regs.pdf
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