



Community Inclusive Trust

Poplar Farm School
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1st September 2022

Consultation to close Little Linchfield Pre-School

Introduction

[Linchfield Community Primary School](#) is a two-form entry school that currently has 342 children on roll.

Linchfield joined the [Community Inclusive Trust](#) in October 2020. CIT is a Multi Academy Trust comprising of mainstream primary schools and special schools across Lincolnshire, Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire.

In September 2016 following a positive consultation with stakeholders, the school opened Little Linchfield Pre-School aimed at children from 3 to 5 years old (opening hours of 9am to 3pm, term time only). This was also in response to the need to secure future school admission numbers (Linchfield is one of five primary schools in Deeping) and to utilise the new Early Years classroom block that was due to be constructed and completed by the autumn of 2018.

Prior to opening, the Local Authority evaluated the local need for nursery places. Due to the proximity of Carousel Nursery to the school site (their building is actually located within the school grounds) it was agreed that the Pre-School could operate as a PVI business (Private, Voluntary or Independent) and would not be classed as a designated LA Nursery Class.

The provision (term time only) offers up to 30 hours per week childcare. Financially the Pre-School must operate independently and school cannot use its main budget to subsidise the venture.

In an attempt to increase pre-school numbers, the CIT Communications team have extensively marketed the provision over the past two years by regularly advertising in local publications and there is a large banner promoting the Pre-School attached to the school fence. Little Linchfield is also promoted via the school's own social media pages and the school's newsletter, as well as having their own Little Linchfield Facebook page. However, it has become evident that local demand for childcare is seeking more than Little Linchfield currently offers. Parents, in particular those that are working, are choosing provisions that offer longer hours (7am to 6pm) and are open all year round.

Little Linchfield Pre-School needs a minimum of 18 children to be financially viable.

A Multi Academy Trust for:

GANF - Ambergate Sports College | GANF - Sandon School | Isaac Newton Primary School
SSS - The Garth School | SSS - The Priory School | Boston Endeavour Academy
Woodlands Academy | Poplar Farm Primary School | Caythorpe Primary School
Chapel St Leonards Primary School | Greenfields Academy | St Paul's Community Primary School and Nursery | Foxfields Academy | Bowman Academy | Linchfield Community Primary School | Bingham Primary School | LEARN Teaching Centre



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Over the last year, the number of children accessing Little Linchfield Pre-School has dropped significantly with just 7 parents/carers provisionally booking places for September 2022. Therefore, the business is not financially viable.

Proposal

One solution to ensure the financial success of the provision, would be to extend the opening hours and weeks. However, this would have an impact on the school's leadership team who would ultimately have responsibility for the Pre-School's management and safeguarding responsibilities, including during the school holidays.

Serious consideration has been given to expanding the Pre-School, however it is not recognised as one of the school's priorities. Instead, efforts are being made to establish a good working relationship with Carousel Nursey with the intention that this partnership will ensure that parents of children attending Carousel will apply to Linchfield for school places.

It is therefore proposed that due to the low numbers and the financial burden, the Trust and school are proposing to permanently close the pre-school.

Consultation question:

1. Should Little Linchfield Pre-School close?

To leave your responses to this consultation, please use the following link:

<https://forms.office.com/r/ypwrKkkfbV>

Alternatively, you can email your feedback to: jacki.bartram@citacadamies.co.uk

Or, you can post your feedback to: Jacki Bartram, C.I.T Academies, Helmsley Road, Grantham, NG31 8XF.

This consultation will commence on Thursday 1st September, and close on Wednesday 28th September 2022.

Thank you.



Daran Bland
Director of Development, Operations & Governance
Community Inclusive Trust

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