

COPY OF DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Cover Note

DP No.	DP 414	
School	Dundonald Primary School (401-1587)	
Proposal	Proposal that the 26 full- time place nursery unit should be modified to a 52 part-time place nursery unit with effect from 1 September 2016, or as soon as possible thereafter.	
Minister's Decision	Approved	
Date of Decision	19th April 2016	
Minister's Comments	n/a	
Additional Notes	n/a	
Information Redacted	Some information and personal data may have been removed in line with the principles of the Freedom of Information and Data Protection Act.	
	Key	Details
	■	redaction
	*	refers to less than five cases where data is considered sensitive
	#	means figure has been suppressed to prevent disclosure of sensitive information under rules of disclosure

**FROM: Lorraine Finlay
Area Planning Policy Team**

DATE: 13 April 2016

To: JOHN O'DOWD MLA see copy distribution list below

**DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL No. 414 DUNDONALD PRIMARY SCHOOL (PS)
26 FULL-TIME PLACE NURSERY UNIT BE MODIFIED TO A 52 PART-TIME
PLACE NURSERY UNIT**

Issue:	Development Proposal (DP) No. 414 published by the Education Authority on 26 November 2015 which proposes: That the 26 full- time place nursery unit should be modified to a 52 part-time place nursery unit with effect from 1 September 2016, or as soon as possible thereafter.
Timescale:	Urgent. 2016 Admissions process is ongoing.
Financial Implications:	There are no capital costs associated with this proposal.
FOI Implications:	The content of this submission is likely to be fully disclosable.
Statutory Duties Implications	None
Legislation Implications:	None.
Presentational Issues:	It is likely that there will be local media interest in your decision. A draft Press Release will be provided for your approval following your decision.
Recommendation:	It is recommended that you : (i) Approve DP 414 - That the 26 full- time place nursery unit should be modified to a 52 part -time place nursery unit with effect from 1 September 2016, or as soon as

possible thereafter.

(ii) Agree that this submission (with appropriate redactions) can be made available on the Department's website once the Education Authority and the school have been notified.

CONTENTS

Maps	Paragraph number
Introduction and Background	1
Case for Change	16
Consultations	17
Sustainability Assessment	20
Other Considerations	29
Conclusion	37
Recommendation	42

Attachments

Appendix A: Copy of Published Development Proposal

Appendix B: Case for Change

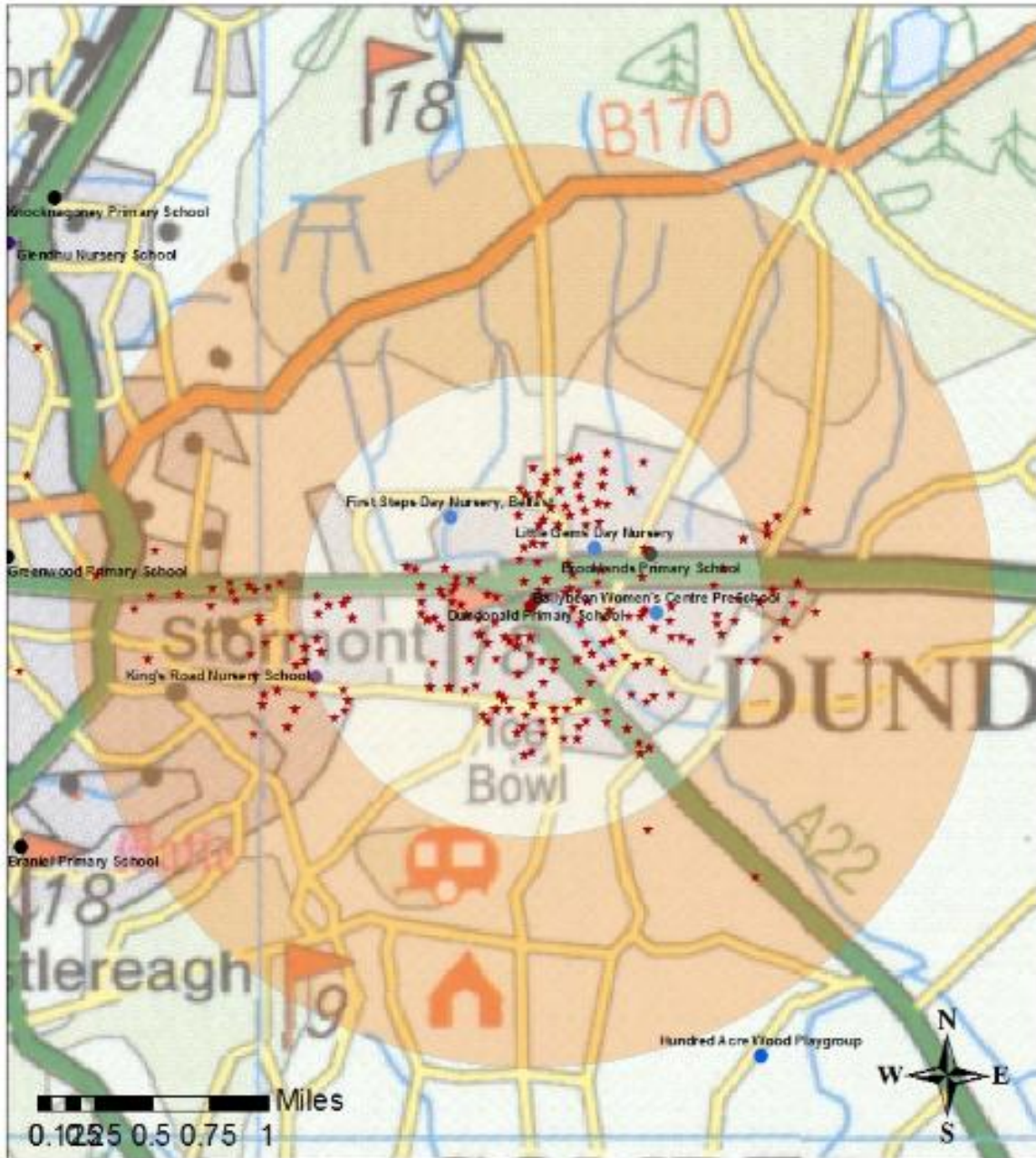
Appendix C: EA responses to objections received by them on proposal

Appendix D: DE Statistics and Comments (including letter of support)

Appendix E: Education and Training Inspectorate Comments

Dundonald PS – pupil distribution

Dundonald Primary School

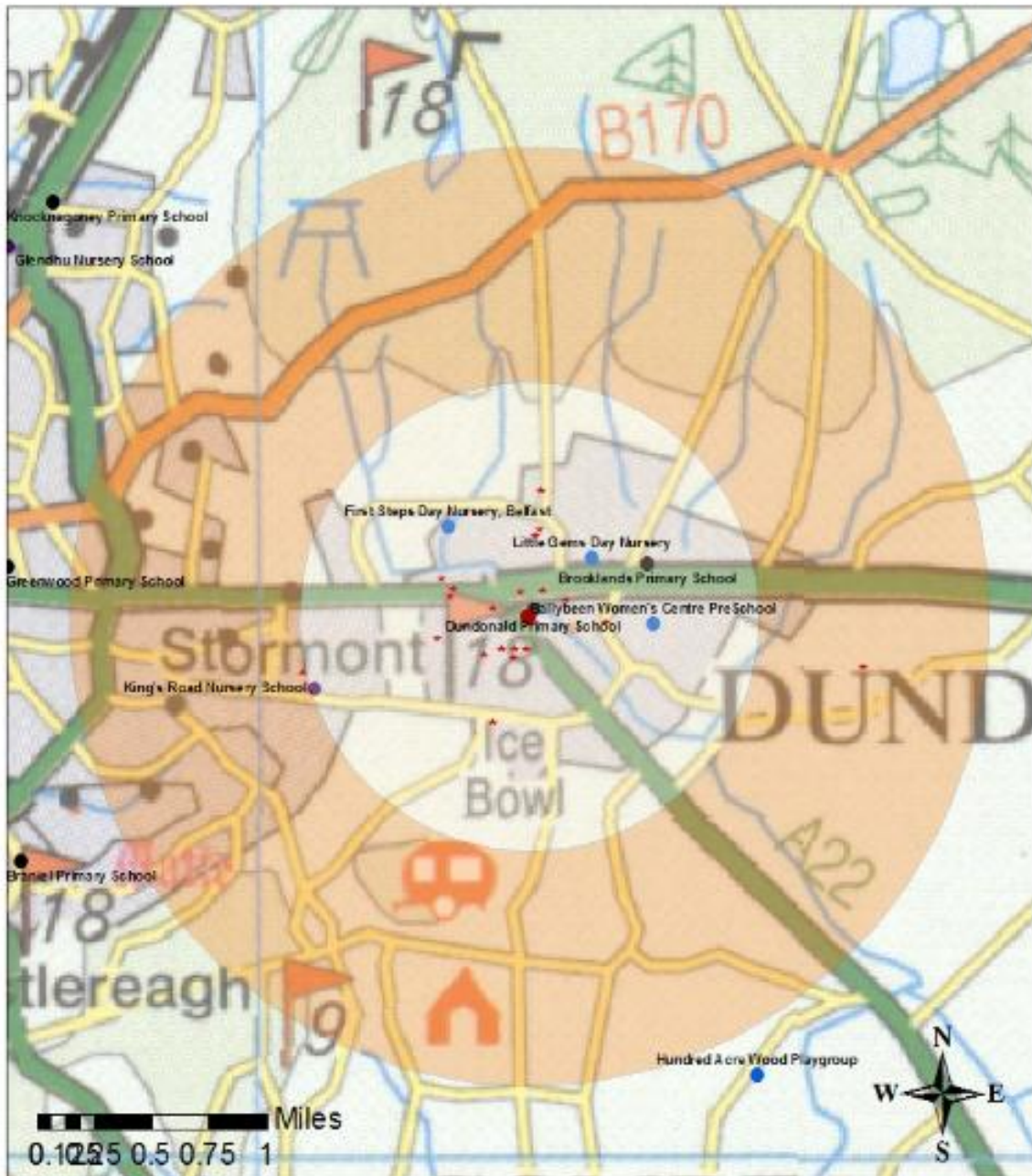


- Key**
- Dundonald Primary School
 - ★ Pupil Location
 - Buffer Distance in Miles**
 - 1.00
 - ◇ 2.00
 - Pre-schools
 - Nursery Schools
 - Primary Schools with Nursery Units



Dundonald PS – Nursery Unit pupil distribution

Dundonald Primary School - Nursery Unit Pupils

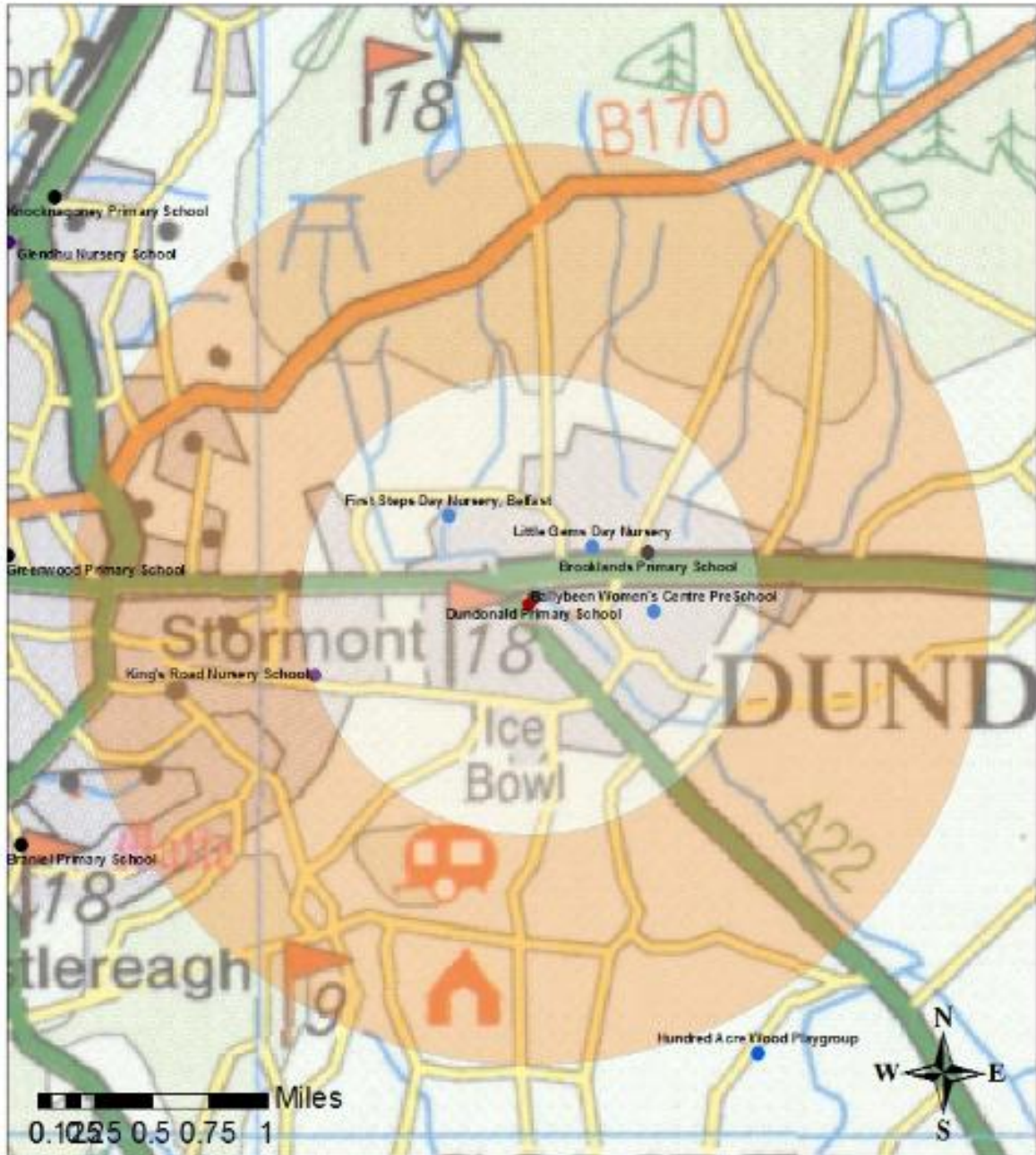


- Key**
- Dundonald Primary School
 - + Nursery Unit Pupils Location
 - Buffer Distance in Miles**
 - ◇ 1.00
 - ◇ 2.00
 - Pre-schools
 - Nursery Schools
 - Primary Schools with Nursery Units



Alternative pre-school provision

Dundonald Primary School



- Key**
- Dundonald Primary School
 - Buffer Distance in Miles**
 - ◊ 1.00
 - ◊ 2.00
 - Pre-schools
 - Nursery Schools
 - Primary Schools with Nursery Units



INTRODUCTION

1. The Education Authority (EA) published DP No 414 on 28 January 2016 which proposes that the 26 full-time place nursery unit at Dundonald PS should be modified to a 52 part-time place nursery unit with effect from 1 September 2016, or as soon as possible thereafter.
2. The statutory 2-month objection period ended on 28 March 2016. A copy of the proposal is included in **Appendix A.**

BACKGROUND

Dundonald Primary School

3. Dundonald Primary is located at Church Green in the centre of Dundonald and the majority of children attending the school come from the local area. The primary school has an approved enrolment of 780 with an admission number of 116. Statistics for 2015/16 show 773 pupils (including 22 pupils with Special Educational Needs stage three) at the school and that 20.96% of the school's pupils are entitled to Free School Meals.
4. The school building opened in 2006 and the nursery unit, situated in a specially refurbished building in the grounds of the primary school, started in September 2011. The nursery unit currently offers 26 full-time places. The unit has always been at full capacity.

Area

5. On the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2010 the Graham's Bridge area is placed 350 out of 890 (1 being most deprived and 890 being least deprived).
6. Map 2 provides detail of the location of alternative pre-school provision within a two mile radius of Dundonald PS.

7. A Development Proposal is also currently with you for consideration to modify a 26 part- time place nursery unit to 52 part-time place nursery unit at Loughview Integrated Primary School, which is within a five mile radius of Dundonald PS. The objection period for this DP ended on 26 January 2016. If approved, this would increase the proposed provision in the area for the 2016/17 as set out below:

- **two mile radius** - No change
- **five mile radius** - 2197 places for 2310 children (95.1%)

Temporary Flexibility

8. A request for temporary flexibility for one additional place in Dundonald Nursery Unit has been approved by the Department for the 2016/17 academic year. There have been no other requests for Temporary Flexibility from local statutory providers.

Level of need for pre-school provision

9. The overall provision for both 2014/15 and 2015/16 within a two mile radius is significantly lower than the planning figure of 95%, suggesting under provision in the area. This is borne out by the fact that numbers of first preference applications outweigh the overall number of places available in the area, and that children in the area were left unplaced at the end of the admissions process.

10. In determining need, the Department generally assumes a level of provision at 95% of target age children, predicated on the application rate for pre-school places, which was 92%, however the level of provision within local areas may be higher or lower, based on historic patterns of demand and assessment of ongoing need.

11. The numbers of pre-school places and associated percentages are measured against the Year One enrolments for 2014/15 and 2015/16 as indicated.

The statistical information available in relation to the level of funded pre-school provision is as follows:-

Level of Provision - Two mile radius of Dundonald Primary School

2014/15 (Source: 2014 School Census)

Level of provision – 221 pre-school places for 288 P1 children (76.7%)

Reception provision – none

Statutory nursery places filled by under 3s - none

2015/16 – (Source: Provisional 2015 School Census figures)

Level of provision – 219 pre-school places for 293 P1 children (74.7%)

Reception provision – none

Statutory nursery places filled by under 3s - ■

2016/17 (As proposed)

245 places for 293 P1 children (83.6%)

Level of Provision - Five mile radius of Dundonald Primary School

2014/15 (Source: 2014 School Census)

Level of provision – 2055 pre-school places for 2180 P1 children (94% excluding Reception provision)

Reception provision – 6 places in St. Mary's PS, Comber

Statutory nursery places filled by under 3s - ■

2015/16 – (Source: Provisional 2015 School Census figures)

Level of provision – 2147 places for 2310 P1 children (92.9% excluding Reception provision)

Reception provision – 2 places in St. Mary's PS, Comber

Statutory nursery places filled by under 3s – 6

2016/17 (As proposed)

2171 places for 2310 children (94%)

Policy Context – Early Years

12. The 2011-2015 Programme for Government (PfG) includes a commitment to ensure that at least one year of pre-school education is available to every family that wants it.

13. To meet the PfG commitment, the Department of Education (DE) and the EA plan to provide sufficient pre-school provision in local areas to meet demand for places. Planning decisions are made on the basis of providing sufficient places for approximately 95% of target age children across the north of Ireland; although this figure may be higher or lower within local areas in order to take account of historic and predicted demand for pre-school provision. While the figure of 95% is higher than the average annual application rate, it provides for flexibility in the initial allocation of places to accommodate parental preference.

14. Learning to Learn – A Framework for Early Years Education and Learning, was published on 7 October 2013. One of its key actions included placing a moratorium on any new or additional full-time provision or conversion from part-time to full-time (defined as over 4.5 hours) in advance of a review of the current levels of full-time provision, existing research and the needs of children being served by it. This proposal is compatible with the moratorium.

15. A key action under the Learning to Learning framework is the removal of reception provision. The impact of the removal of reception places would have a minimal affect on the levels of pre-school provision in this area.

CASE FOR CHANGE

16. The case for change for this proposal is included in full at **Appendix B**. It sets out the rationale for the proposal as follows:

- Demand for pre-school places in the area has steadily grown and it is becoming increasingly difficult to provide places for these children.
- In 2014/15 there were 240 first preference applications for 222 available places. In 2015/16, there were 246 first preference applications for 222 available places i.e. places do not match demand.
- Dundonald Primary School has no sustainability issues.
- Part- time places at a pre-school setting provide the same level of education as full-time places.
- Changing the status of the nursery unit from full-time to part-time will have no impact on the education of the children attending.
- There are no financial implications
- There are no additional staffing costs – existing staff/support staff would remain.
- No transport costs associated.
- The nursery unit currently has dedicated accommodation – no additional accommodation will be required.

CONSULTATIONS

Pre-publication Consultation

17. The Education Authority has provided evidence of consultation with Boards of Governors and Trustees, staff and parents of pupils from schools likely to be affected by the proposal. The EA received three responses, none of which were supportive of the proposal. Details are included in the Case for Change at **Appendix B**.

Two month objection period

18. The Education Authority (EA) published DP No 414 on 28 January 2016. The statutory two-month objection period ended on 28 March 2016. The Department received one letter of support for the proposal. Details are included in **Appendix D**.

Education Authority Comments

19. The EA have advised that the modification of current provision from 26 full-time to 52 part-time places will allow the Authority to respond to increasing demand for pre-school places in the Dundonald area as outlined in the case for change document.

SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT

20. The Sustainable Schools Policy (SSP) does not apply to pre-school provision. However, it is important when considering this change in statutory pre-school provision that the host school is assessed. The following is an assessment of Dundonald PS against the six criteria in the SSP.

Quality Educational Experience

In relation to primary provision, the SSP indicators highlight KS2 attainment levels, no more than two composite classes, a minimum of 4 teachers, the ability of the school to cater for Special Educational Needs (SEN) pupils, availability of curricular and extra curricular activities, quality of the physical environment for learning and quality of pastoral care arrangements.

21. When Dundonald PS was inspected by the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) in May 2013 the Nursery Unit provision was evaluated as good as was the quality of the children's achievements and standards. In addition to this the quality of provision for learning was evaluated as very good.

Stable Enrolment Trends

The SSP adopts the enrolment thresholds as recommended in the Bain Report. These are minimum thresholds and apply to grant-aided schools in all sectors. A rural primary school's minimum enrolment threshold is 105 pupils. Ideally a primary school should have 7 classrooms (1 per year group). If this is not possible then it should have composite classes with no more than 2 year groups.

22. Dundonald PS has an approved enrolment of 780 and an admission number of 116. The school enrolment has increased by just over 25% in the last five years and has exceeded its admission number in two of the last three years (Table 1) with

the school significantly oversubscribed at first preference stage in September 2015 with 137 applications (Table 2).

Table 1 – Dundonald PS enrolments

Year	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Enrolments	616	650	696	732	773
P1 intake	106	109	119	114	123

Table 2 – Dundonald PS - P1 applications

Sept	Applications				
	1st Pref	2nd Pref	3rd Pref	Others	Total
2015	137	■	7	■	146
2014	106	■	0	■	110
2013	115	5	5	0	125

Sound Financial Position

The SSP recommends that a school's annual finance indicates that it can live within its delegated budget and will be able to continue to do so. Where there is a deficit, the school's 3-year plan should indicate that it can be reduced or recovered.

23. Dundonald PS held a cumulative surplus of £188,000, or 9.1% of available delegated resources, at 31 March 2015 and is projected to have a closing surplus of £173,000 at 31 March 2016. The most recent Annual Area Profile (June 2015) indicates that the school has also been in surplus during the period 201/12 through 2013/14.

Strong Leadership and Management

The SSP highlights a number of indicators in relation to the BoG, staff and pupils. These include: BoG -views, skills and experience of the BoG. Staff - management (both curricular and organisational), attendance, turnover, morale. Pupils – behaviour, attendance and involvement in school management. A school development plan must be in place (and monitored).

24. The 2013 Inspection Report states that the overall quality of leadership and management of the school is 'very good';

‘The Principal provides very effective, strategic leadership and clear realistic direction for the development of the school and nursery unit. He is highly committed to the pastoral and academic needs of all the children. In this work he is supported effectively by the Vice-principal. The school development planning processes are clear, well structured and effective in bringing about improvement.’

‘The governors keep themselves fully informed about all aspects of the life and work of the school and provide effective support and challenge to the Principal and staff. They attend training regularly and ensure that all aspects of school life are kept under review.’

‘Based on the evidence presented at the time of inspection, the parents, staff and school community can have a high degree of confidence in the effectiveness of the governance arrangements.’

Accessibility

The SSP highlights the need for reasonable distance and travel time to school and also suitable transport arrangements. It highlights travel times of less than 30 minutes for primary pupils.

25. Map 1 confirms that the majority of the Dundonald PS pupils live within a two mile radius.

Strong Links with the Community

The SSP refers to the degree and quality of parental involvement, contribution of the school to the community, presence of other features (nursery or specialist provision) and use of school buildings outside formal education.

26. In the Inspection Report of 2013 the Education and Training Inspectorate stated that *‘the school and nursery unit has highly effective arrangements in place for communicating with the parents on their children’s progress and informing them of curricular developments to help them support the children’s learning through, for*

example, workshops and written guidance. The school and nursery unit benefits from the additional support provided by the Parent Teacher Association.'

Sustainability Assessment

27. Dundonald PS's enrolment is well above the minimum enrolment threshold set out in the Sustainable Schools Policy. The quality of education provided by the primary school has been assessed as 'very good' and the nursery unit has been assessed as 'good'.

28. There are no immediate financial concerns about this school. The 2013 ETI Inspection Report states that the overall quality of leadership and management of the school is also 'very good'. The school has strong links with the community as confirmed by the ETI. The school is fully meeting the criteria of the Sustainable Schools Policy.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

29. DE comments are attached in full in **Appendix D**. Demand for pre-school provision in the area has grown and the EA reports that it has become increasingly difficult to provide sufficient places. In each of the last four years for which information was available, the number of first preference applications in the area was higher than the number of places available (Tables 3 and 4 refer to applications in the area and in Dundonald PS).

Table 3 – area applications

Year	1st preference applications	Number of places	Shortfall
2014/15	240	222	18
2013/14	227	211	16
2012/13	247	212	35
2011/12	230	188	42

Table 4 - applications to Dundonald PS Nursery Unit

September	Number of Places	1st Preference applications
2015	26	66
2014	26	75

2013	26	66
2012	26	76
2011	26	35

30. In the 2015/16 year, four children in the area remained unplaced at the end of the pre-school admissions process. It is anticipated that an ongoing, large scale, housing development in the area will lead to increased pressure in the very near future, as the Millmount Village development on the Comber Road is planned to increase the number of new homes in the area by over 1000.

31. The Pre-School Education Advisory Group (PEAG) has advised that there is no scope to increase the number of available places by expanding non-statutory provision, as all providers in the area are either already currently operating at full capacity or have advised the EA they do not wish to have their allocation of funded places increased. The EA has therefore concluded that the most appropriate course of action is to request the expansion of statutory provision in the area, by increasing pre-school provision at Dundonald PS from 26 full-time places to 52 part-time places.

32. Given the currently high level of first preference applications, it is unlikely that the approval of this proposal would displace any current good quality provision in the area.

33. There would be no additional costs as the existing teaching/support staff would remain and the current nursery unit has dedicated accommodation and this would continue i.e. no additional accommodation is needed.

34. The Nursery Unit in Dundonald PS was evaluated as 'good' after their inspection in May 2013. The ETI are supportive of the change in the pattern and number of enrolments in the Nursery Unit.

SEELB Primary Area Plan

35. The SEELB Primary Area Plan (June 2014) states that Dundonald PS is currently considered to be sustainable and viable within the local area context.

Special Educational Needs (SEN) pupils

36. The EA has also advised that children with SEN, particularly those with a Statement of SEN, will be provided for, supported and managed effectively in the context of any potential change to provision i.e. to part-time provision.

CONCLUSION

37. There are no concerns regarding the future viability of Dundonald PS. Both the DE Early Years Team and the ETI are supportive of the proposal. From the information provided it is evident that the current demand for nursery places in the area far exceeds the number of places available.

38. The EA has identified that the most appropriate course of action is to modify the pre-school provision at Dundonald PS from 26 full-time places to 52 part time places, thus increasing the availability of places in the area to meet the demand from local parents.

39. On balance and taking account of the information supplied, the evidence supports the modification of the current 26 full-time place nursery at Dundonald PS to a 52 part time place nursery.

RECOMMENDATION

40. Based on the evidence outlined in this submission, it is recommended that you:

- (i) Approve DP 414 as follows:
That the 26 full- time place nursery unit should be modified to a 52 part -time place nursery unit with effect from 1 September 2016, or as soon as possible thereafter.
- (ii) Agree that this submission (with appropriate redactions) can be made available on the Department's website once the school and the EA have been notified.

41. A draft press release will be provided for your consideration when you have made your decision.

42. Attached for your consideration are the following:

Appendix A: Copy of Published Development Proposal

Appendix B: Case for Change


Appendix C: EA responses to objections received by them on proposal

Appendix D: DE Statistics and Comments (including letter of support)

Appendix E: ETI Comments



LORRAINE FINLAY

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EDUCATION AUTHORITY

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL No 414

Notice is hereby given that a proposal under Article 14 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 has been submitted by the Education Authority to the effect that:

The Education Authority proposes that the 26 full time place nursery unit at Dundonald Primary School should be modified to a 52 part time place nursery unit with effect from 1st September 2016 or as soon as possible thereafter.

A copy of the Proposal may be inspected at offices of the Education Authority, South Eastern Region located at Grahamsbridge Road, Dundonald, Belfast, BT16 2HS between the hours of 9.00 am and 4.30 pm.

Any objections to this Proposal should be lodged with the Area Planning Policy Team, Department of Education, Rathgael House, Balloo Road, BANGOR, Co Down, BT19 7PR or emailed to dps@deni.gov.uk within two months of the date of publication of this notice.



NOTE: The Department of Education and the Education Authority operate a regime of openness under the Freedom of Information Act. Letters of objection and information supplied to the Department of Education and to the Education Authority may be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, if requested. (A fee may be charged for supplying this information).

Gavin Boyd
Chief Executive

CASE FOR CHANGE – Supporting Information**SUMMARY / OVERVIEW**

EDUCATION AUTHORITY AREA	South Eastern
DP NUMBER	414
PROPOSER	Education Authority - South Eastern Region Contact: [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
SCHOOL(S) NAME	Dundonald Primary School – Nursery Unit
SCHOOL REFERENCE	401 1587
TYPE	Primary
MANAGEMENT	Controlled
DP PUBLICATION DATE	w/c 25 January 2016
PROPOSAL	The Education Authority proposes that the 26 full time place nursery unit at Dundonald Primary School should be modified to a 52 part time place nursery unit with effect from 1st September 2016 or as soon as possible thereafter.

STATUTORY CONSULTATION

BY THE AUTHORITY	<p>I confirm that the schools which the EA (SER) considers might be impacted by this proposal were consulted on 28 October 2015.</p> <p>Letters were forwarded to the Board of Governors, staff and parents of Dundonald Primary School to ask their opinion of the development proposal.</p> <p>SIGNED:   DATE: 15/1/16 .</p>
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BACKGROUND

Pre-school education is a non-compulsory phase of education. Whilst it is a Government commitment to ensure that at least one year of pre-school education is available to every family that wants it, there is no guarantee that a funded place will be available at a parent's preferred pre-school provider.

Research in the UK and US shows that good quality pre-school education has important benefits for individuals, families, communities and society and the economy as a whole. Children who experience good pre-school education, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds or with special needs, are better prepared for school, learn more quickly and have fewer emotional or behavioural difficulties in later life. In addition, parents have greater opportunity to work, undertake study or training, or care for other dependants

Through the application process for pre-school places the Education Authority has identified a problem in the Dundonald area, i.e. there is insufficient capacity to meet the level of demand.

The Authority has identified the most appropriate course of action is to modify the pre-school provision at Dundonald Primary School from 26 full time places to 52 part time places. This will increase the availability of places in the area to meet the demand from local parents.

RATIONALE FOR PROPOSAL

Demand for pre-school places in the area has steadily grown and it is becoming increasingly difficult to provide places for these children.

Table 1 below shows the provision in the area for 2014/2015:

Table 1 - 2014/15 Application & Admission			
Name of Pre-School	Number of Places	1st Pref App	Total Adm
Brooklands Nursery Unit	78	63	78
Dundonald Nursery Unit	26	75	26
King's Road Nursery School	52	62	52
Ballybeen Women's Centre Playgroup	17	8	17
First Steps, Dundonald	9	1	9
Little Gems Day Nursery	40	31	40
TOTAL	222	240	222

The data shows that the number of 1st preference applications for pre-school provision in the Dundonald area is in excess of the available places.

This is not a new situation – demand for places within a pre-school setting has been increasing over recent years as supported by Table 2 which details the application / admission history for the area from 2011/2012 to 2013/2014.

Table 2 - Application & Admission History				
Name of Pre-School	Number of Places	1st Pref App	Total Adm	
2013/14				
Brooklands Nursery Unit	78	66	78	(includes 2 underage)
Dundonald Nursery Unit	26	66	26	
King's Road Nursery School	52	67	52	
Ballybeen Women's Centre Playgroup	17	5	15	
First Steps, Dundonald	0	0	0	
Little Gems Day Nursery	38	23	38	
TOTAL	211	227	209	
2012/13				
Name of Pre-School	Number of Places	1st Pref App	Total Adm	
Brooklands Nursery Unit	78	76	78	
Dundonald Nursery Unit	26	76	26	
King's Road Nursery School	52	72	52	
Ballybeen Women's Centre Playgroup	18	14	18	
First Steps, Dundonald	0	0	0	
Little Gems Day Nursery	38	9	37	
TOTAL	212	247	211	
2011/12				
Name of Pre-School	Number of Places	1st Pref App	Total Adm	
Brooklands Nursery Unit	78	76	78	
Dundonald Nursery Unit	26	35	26	
King's Road Nursery School	52	82	52	
Ballybeen Women's Centre Playgroup	16	13	16	
Sleepy Hollow	16	24	16	
First Steps, Dundonald	0	0	0	
Little Gems Day Nursery	0	0	0	
TOTAL	188	230	188	
Note: Figures as at conclusion of the Open Enrolment Procedure				

The 2015/2016 applications process shows that demand for places continues to be a problem – see table 3 below.

Table 3 - 2015/16 Applications		
Name of Pre-School	Number of Places	1st Pref App
Brooklands Nursery Unit	78	53
Dundonald Nursery Unit	26	65
King's Road Nursery School	52	71
Ballybeen Women's Centre Playgroup	17	17
First Steps, Dundonald	9	5
Little Gems Day Nursery	40	35
TOTAL	222	246

It is evident from this data that the number of places does not match demand and the Authority has determined that the best course of action is to modify the full time places at Dundonald Primary School to part time.

Area Planning Impact

This proposal has no impact on Area Planning.

Dundonald Primary School has no sustainability issues.

EDUCATIONAL IMPACT

It has been determined that part time places at a pre-school setting provide the same level of education as full time places.

Changing the full time status of the nursery unit to part time will have no impact on the education of the children attending.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Finance – There is no financial implications.

Staffing – Existing teaching / support staff would remain – no added costs.

Transport – No costs associated.

Accommodation – the nursery unit presently has dedicated accommodation and this will continue and no additional accommodation is needed.

STATUTORY CONSULTATION

The Education Authority carried out consultation with the Board of Governors, parents and Staff of Dundonald Primary School on the 28th October 2015. A copy of the report on the consultation is attached.

Schools and groups that may be affected by DP414 were also consulted on this date.

Education Authority responses to objections received by them on proposal

The Education Authority proposes that the 26 full time place nursery unit at Dundonald Primary School should be modified to a 52 part time place nursery unit with effect from 1 September 2016 or as soon as possible thereafter.

Report on Preliminary Consultation

1. Request for Development Proposal

The Education Authority proposes that the 26 full time place nursery unit at Dundonald Primary School should be modified to a 52 part time place nursery unit with effect from 1 September 2016 or as soon as possible thereafter.

2. Consultation with schools affected by the proposal

In accordance with Article 14 of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986 a copy of the proposal was sent, on 28 October 2015, to schools which might be affected by the proposal. Comments were invited from the Boards of Governors and Trustees, staff and parents of pupils to be returned to the Board by 20 November 2015.

A total of 20 schools were forwarded the draft proposal for their comments along with Section 75 consultees.

3. Responses

There were three responses to this proposal.

Brooklands Primary School
Dundonald Primary School
[REDACTED] Parent

Brooklands Primary School

The Governors wish to express concerns over the Development Proposal. As a result of this proposal this could lead to an excess in the number of places in the Dundonald area – and leave empty places in Brooklands Nursery Unit. This would have a significant negative impact on the already difficult budget. We would suggest that the rationale of the application is more about increasing the number of places at Dundonald PS rather than alleviate the excess of applications in the Dundonald area.

EA response:

There is ongoing increased demand for pre-school provision in the area and the Education Authority has brought DP414 forward to ensure there are sufficient places available to meet this demand.

Dundonald Primary School

Although we welcome an increase in provision, we do not believe removing full time places is the way forward.

We believe that changing from full time to part time will have an impact on the education of those attending.

Given this increased numbers of pupils and pupils with Special Educational Needs in our nursery, governors would be very anxious for the health and well-being of our current two staff members, dealing with complex needs with no extra support.

Although the public perception of extra nursery places will be welcomed in the community as a real need, we believe this draft proposal is not a satisfactory solution to what will be a long term problem. The better solution to meeting current demands would be to provide 52 full time places at Dundonald Primary in line with private full time provision in the area.

The children are better prepared for a longer primary school day at a full time nursery.

Many children entitled to FSM would no longer get a meal.

The draft proposal is obviously the cheapest option but most definitely not in the best interest for the children of Dundonald.

EA Response:

There is ongoing increased demand for pre-school provision in the area and the Education Authority has brought DP414 forward to ensure there are sufficient places available to meet this demand.

Extract from the Department of Education Learning to Learn document:

Available evidence from the Effective Pre-School Provision in NI (EPPNI) found no discernable difference in children's cognitive development at the start of primary school between those who attended full-time and those with part-time attendance, yet the Department is regularly asked to approve development proposals for new full-time provision or conversion from part-time to full-time. There is a need to review the position on full-time provision.

On this basis there is no evidence to support a 52 full time nursery unit.

██████████ Parent

Staff are working very hard and doubling the number of pupils would put them under enormous pressure which may affect excellent quality of service they are providing. I hope that the proposal is going to be rejected.

EA response:

There are a number of schools operating 52 part time nursery units successfully and there is no reason to expect Dundonald Primary School not to do so as well.

As stated above the Department sees no benefit in full time provision over part time.

DE Statistics and Comments (including letter of support)

Respondent	Comments
Parent	<p>As a working parent of an only child who lives in a rural area, I am at a significant disadvantage and feel discriminated against when applying for a pre-school place this year.</p> <p>The criteria of many nurseries gives priority to those with siblings who attend the attached Primary school or have previously attended the nursery/school. The sub-criteria then gives preference to those who lives closest to the school. Therefore eldest/only children are often left without a place that is a suitable/preferred choice.</p> <p>If the number of places at Dundonald nursery are increased, I believe that eldest/only children of many families will have a greater opportunity/chance of receiving a place in a quality pre-school setting. I consider the social benefits for an 'only child' to experience education in a group environment are very important to their well-being and learning.</p>

Pre-school Provision within a One Mile Radius of Dundonald PS

	Distance in miles	2011/12		2012/13		2013/14		2014/15		2015/16	
		T	F	T	F	T	F	T	F	T	F
Pre-School											
Ballybeen Centre	0.7	15	15	17	17	15	15	16	16	17	17
First Steps	0.8	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	9	8	6
Little Gem	1.2	-	-	44	37	48	38	45	40	47	40
Total		15	15	61	54	63	53	72	65	88	65

T = Total F = funded

	Distance in miles	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	Approved
Nursery School							
King's Road	2.1	52	52	52	52	52	52
		52	52	52	52	52	52
Nursery Unit							
Dundonald	-	26	26	28	26	26	26f/t
Brooklands	0.7	77	78	78	78	77	26f/t 52p/t
Total		103	104	106	104	103	104

Distance as per Multimap

Nursery School by Age

	2011/12			2012/13			2013/14			2014/15			2015/16		
Age	2	3	4	2	3	4	2	3	4	2	3	4	2	3	4
King's Road	0	43	9	0	40	12	0	52	0	0	46	6	0	43	9
Total	0	43	9	0	40	12	0	52	0	0	46	6	0	43	9

Nursery Unit by Age

	2011/12			2012/13			2013/14			2014/15			2015/16		
Age	2	3	4	2	3	4	2	3	4	2	3	4	2	3	4
Dundonald	0	26	0	0	26	0	0	28	0	0	26	0	0	26	0
Brooklands	■	73	0	0	78	0	■	76	0	0	78	0	■	74	0
Total	■	99	0	0	104	0	■	104	0	0	104	0	■	100	0

P1 Admissions in Alternative Provision (within 1 mile Buffer)

School	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	Approved Admission
Dundonald	106	109	119	114	123	116
Brooklands	60	69	87	79	72	95
Total	166	178	206	193	195	211

Special Education Team

Special Education Team (SET) notes the EA's comment under 'Educational Impact' that changing the full-time status of the nursery unit to part-time will have no impact on the education of the children attending. In addition, the EA has given assurance that children with Special Educational Needs (SEN), particularly those with a Statement of SEN, will be provided for, supported and managed effectively in the context of part-time provision. On this basis, SET would have no objection to the DP.

Finance

As at 31 March 2015, Dundonald Primary School held a cumulative surplus of £188K. The Education Authority's January 2016 Monthly Expenditure Monitoring Reports (MEMR) provides the latest financial position of Dundonald Primary School. This return indicates that as at January 2016 the 2015-16 budget allocation was £2,064K and the Education Authority have projected a closing surplus of £173K at 31 March 2016.

Early Years Team

The Pre-School Education Advisory Groups (PEAG) in the Education Authority are responsible for ensuring that there is adequate pre-school provision in local areas

based on an assessment of need. The Education Authority (EA) has advised that it has identified a shortfall in the Dundonald area, i.e. there is insufficient capacity to meet the level of demand.

In the 2015/16 year, four children in the area remained unplaced at the end of the pre-school admissions process. It is anticipated that ongoing large scale housing development in the area will lead to increased pressure in the very near future, as the Millmount Village development on the Comber Road is planned to increase the number of new homes in the area by over 1000.

The PEAG has advised that there is no scope to increase the number of available places by expanding non-statutory provision, as all providers in the area are either already currently operating at full capacity or have advised the EA they not wish to have their allocation of funded places increased. The Authority has therefore concluded that the most appropriate course of action is to request the expansion of statutory provision in the area, by increasing pre-school provision at Dundonald Primary School from 26 full-time places to 52 part-time places.

Relevant Policy areas

Under the Programme for Government 2011-16 DE is committed to ensuring that at least one year of pre-school education is available to every family that wants it. The EA advises that four of the 39 children who remained unplaced at the end of the admissions process for the 2015/16 academic year were from the Dundonald area.

Learning to Learn – A Framework for Early Years Education and Learning - was published on 7 October 2013. Among its key actions is placing a moratorium on any new or additional full-time provision or conversion from part-time to full-time (defined as over 4.5 hours) in advance of a review of the current levels of full-time provision, existing research and the needs of children being served by it. This proposal is compatible with the moratorium.

EA Comments

The EA have advised DE that all non-statutory providers in the area are at full capacity or do not want to increase their allocation of funded places. EA anticipate that future additional provision will be required in light of new housing in the area due to ongoing large scale development of land along the Comber Road area (known as Millmount) in Dundonald.

Of the 39 children that remained unplaced at the end of the admissions process in 2015/16, the EA advises that four (10%) were from the Dundonald area. Children not placed in Dundonald Nursery Unit in 2015 were placed in a range of settings within the two and five mile radii, as well as Millisle Nursery Unit which is outside the five mile radius.

Demand for pre-school provision in the area has grown and the EA reports that it has become increasingly difficult to provide sufficient places. In each of the last four years for which information was available, the number of first preference applications in the area was higher than the number of places available.

Year	1st preference applications	Number of places	Shortfall
2014/15	240	222	18
2013/14	227	211	16
2012/13	247	212	35
2011/12	230	188	42

ETI

In response to this proposal, ETI have advised that it supports the proposed change in pattern and number of enrolments at the Nursery Unit.

It stated that the increase in the number of places on offer in Dundonald Primary School Nursery Unit to 52 part- time places will facilitate a greater number of children

accessing pre-school education in the area in line with the aim to provide a pre-school place for all children whose parents wish them to have a place.

Provision levels

In determining need, the Department generally assumes a level of provision at 95% of target age children, predicated on the application rate for pre-school places, which was 92%, however the level of provision within local areas may be higher or lower, based on historic patterns of demand and assessment of ongoing need.

The numbers of pre-school places and associated percentages are measured against the Year One enrolments for 2014/15 and 2015/16 as indicated.

The statistical information available in relation to the level of funded pre-school provision is as follows:-

Level of Provision - 2 mile radius of Dundonald Primary School

2014/15 (Source: 2014 School Census)

Level of provision – 221 pre-school places for 288 P1 children (76.7%)

Reception provision – none

Statutory nursery places filled by under 3s - none

2015/16 – (Source: Provisional 2015 School Census figures)

Level of provision – 219 pre-school places for 293 P1 children (74.7%)

Reception provision – none

Statutory nursery places filled by under 3s - ■

2016/17 (As proposed)

245 places for 293 P1 children (83.6%)

Level of Provision - 5 mile radius of Dundonald Primary School

2014/15 (Source: 2014 School Census)

Level of provision – 2055 pre-school places for 2180 P1 children (94% excluding Reception provision)

Reception provision – 6 places in St. Mary's PS, Comber

Statutory nursery places filled by under 3s - ■

2015/16 – (Source: Provisional 2015 School Census figures)

Level of provision – 2147 places for 2310 P1 children (92.9% excluding Reception provision)

Reception provision – 2 places in St. Mary's PS, Comber

Statutory nursery places filled by under 3s – 6

2016/17 (As proposed)

2171 places for 2310 children (94%)

A key action under the Learning to Learning framework is the removal of reception provision. The impact of the removal of reception places would have a minimal affect on the levels of pre-school provision in this area.

Other planned Development Proposals

The Department is aware that Loughview Integrated Primary School, which is within a five mile radius of Dundonald PS, has also submitted a proposal to the EA to modify provision at the setting from 26 to 52 part-time pre-school places. If approved, this would increase the proposed provision in the area for the 2016/17 as set out below:

2 mile radius

No change

5 mile radius

2197 places for 2310 children (95.1%)

The overall provision for both 2014/15 and 2015/16 within a 2 mile radius is significantly lower than the planning figure of 95%, suggesting under provision in the area. This is borne out by the fact that numbers of first preference applications outweigh the overall number of places available in the area, and that children in the area were left unplaced at the end of the admissions process.

Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) local birth rates and population predictions

Officials have also considered NISRA local birth rates and population predictions to identify potential future trends:

- Birth statistics by academic year for all wards which fall at least partially within a 5 mile radius of Dundonald PS indicate a small decrease of 39 (-1.4%) in the pre-school cohort between September 2016 admissions and September 2018 admissions (2771 to 2732).
- Population projections for 3 year olds for the Castlereagh Council for the same period predict an increase of 14 (1.7%) from 813 to 827, and then remain relatively constant from until 2023, with an annual fluctuation of no more than 3.

Whilst these figures can only be indicators of the future pre-school population and do not fully take into account population migration and other factors (such as the large scale housing development noted above), they suggest that the overall demand for pre-school places in the local area is likely to slightly increase over the next few years.

Temporary Flexibility

A request for temporary flexibility for 1 additional place in Dundonald Nursery Unit has been approved by the Department for the 2016/17 academic year. There have been no other requests for Temporary Flexibility from local statutory providers.

Special Educational Needs

Early Years team is aware that the Special Education Team have considered this proposal and will be providing input advising that they are content that children with SEN, particularly those with a Statement of SEN, will be provided for, supported and managed effectively under the proposed provision.

Consultation Responses

In accordance with Article 14 of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986 a copy of the proposal was sent, on 28th October 2015, to schools which might be affected by the proposal. Comments were invited from the Board of Governors and Trustees, staff and parents of pupils.

Responses were received from 2 schools and 1 parent.

Brooklands Primary School

The Governors of the school have expressed concerns that this proposal could lead to an excess number of places in the Dundonald area – and leave empty places in Brooklands Nursery Unit. They claimed this would have a significant negative impact on the already difficult budget. They further suggested that the rationale of the application is more about increasing the number of places at Dundonald PS rather than alleviating the excess of applications in the Dundonald area.

Dundonald Primary School

Dundonald Primary School has welcomed the increase in provision but consider that removing full-time places is not the way forward. The response states that, given the increased numbers of pupils and pupils with Special Educational Needs in the nursery, governors would be anxious for the health and well-being of the current staff having to deal with complex needs with no extra support.

Dundonald PS stated that increasing provision to 52 full-time places would be preferable, preparing children for a longer school day in primary school; and ensuring that children entitled to Free School Meals would receive a meal. They claimed that while the proposal is the cheapest option, it is not in the best interests of the children of Dundonald.

. Parent

This parent expressed his hope the proposal would be rejected, stating that staff work very hard and doubling the number of pupils would put them under enormous pressure and may affect the quality of the service already provided.

EA response to Consultation responses

In responding to the comments above, the EA stated that there is ongoing increased demand for pre-school provision in the area and the EA has brought DP 414 forward to ensure that there are sufficient places available to meet this demand. EA considered that there are a number of schools operating a 52 part-time nursery unit successfully and believe there is no reason to expect Dundonald Primary School not to do so as well.

Impact on other provision

The EA has advised that there is insufficient capacity within the voluntary sector to meet current and anticipated levels of demand in the area and the approval of additional statutory places is needed in order to meet the Programme for Government commitment.

The approval of this proposal would lead to 83.6% and 94% pre-school provision within the two and five mile radii respectively, still less than the usual planning figure of 95%. Given the currently high level of first preference applications, it is unlikely that the approval of this proposal would displace any current good quality provision in the area.

An increase in the number of two-year olds accessing statutory provision is possible in the short term while the new provision beds in, however, this could be mitigated by making minor adjustments to the number of voluntary/private pre-school places funded. Given the projected population growth in the area and the advice of the PEAG that voluntary and private providers in the area are unable to expand to provide places beyond the current level, it appears that this proposal is necessary to ensure that sufficient pre-school provision in the area is available in the longer term.

Key points to note

- The overall provision for both 2014/15 and 2015/16 within a 2 mile radius is significantly lower than the planning figure of 95%, at 76.7% and 74.7% respectively.
- In the wider 5 mile radius, the level of provision in both the 2014/15 and 2015/16 school year was slightly below the usual 95% rate. (94% and 92.9% respectively).
- Even with the proposed increase the provision levels are still less than the 95% planning rate (83.6% within 2 miles and 94.1% within 5 miles)
- The number of first preference applications received has been consistently higher than the number of places available in the area;
- 10% of the children unplaced at the end of the admissions process for 2015/16 were from Dundonald (██████████);
- The EA anticipate a considerable increase in demand in the area due to large scale housing development in the Dundonald area (1000 houses in Millmount village);
- The EA has advised there is insufficient capacity within the voluntary sector to meet current and anticipated levels of demand in the area and the approval of additional statutory places is needed in order to meet the Programme for Government commitment.
- It is unlikely that the approval of this proposal would displace any current good quality provision in the area.

Overall recommendation

Based on the evidence and information available, the Early Years Team supports the development proposal to modify the 26 full-time nursery places in Dundonald Nursery Unit to 52 part-time places.

This recommendation is made on the basis that the proposal would help to address the current and projected shortfall in pre-school provision in the area and would assist in meeting the Programme for Government commitment to ensure that at least one year of pre-school education is available to every family that wants it.

2 mile radius

Nursery School

King's Road NS

Primary School with Nursery Unit

Dundonald Primary School

Brooklands PS

Voluntary/Private

Ballybeen Women's Centre

PreSchool

Little Gems Day Nursery

First Steps Day Nursery, Belfast

Primary School without Nursery Unit

Campbell College Junior School

Gilnahirk PS

Tullycarnet PS

5 mile radius

Nursery School

McArthur NS

Glendhu NS

Ravenscroft NS

Sandbrook NS

Bethlehem NS

Holy Rosary NS

Hollywood NS

Newtownards NS

Knockbreda NS

Castlereagh NS

Glenbrook NS

Primary School with Nursery Unit

Euston Street PS

Rosetta PS

Elmgrove PS

Nettlefield PS

Orangefield PS

Greenwood PS

Knocknagoney PS

Dundela Infants School

St Malachy's PS, Belfast

St Matthew's PS, Belfast

Scoil An Droichid

Comber PS

Braniel PS

Cairnshill PS
West Winds PS
Loughview Integrated PS

Voluntary/Private

St Colmcille's PreSchool Playgroup
Little Ducks
Flutterbies Playgroup
Forge Integrated Playgroup
Belmont Playcare
Wee Care Day Nursery
Hillcrest Pre-School
Bright Sparks, Belfast
Child's Play Day Nursery, Belfast
Mount Oriel Playgroup
Hundred Acre Wood Playgroup
Little Bunnies Playgroup
The Playcentre at Manor Court
St Bernard's PreSchool Education
Centre, Belfas
Bees Nees Early Years Centre
Little Doves Community Playgroup
PlayAWay Childcare Centre,
Newtownards
Crawfordsburn Playgroup
Tiggers Palace Day Nursery
Jiminy Crickets PreSchool
Cregagh PreSchool Playgroup
Toddlein Playgroup
St Finian's Playgroup
Happy Feet Pre-school
The Learning Tree
Primary School without Nursery Unit
Belmont PS
Harding Memorial PS
Strandtown PS
Victoria Park PS
Holy Rosary PS
St Michael's PS, Belfast
St Joseph's PS, Holland Drive
Forge Integrated PS
Downey House School
Strathearn Prep Dept
Newtownards Model PS
Holywood PS
Cregagh PS
Victoria PS, Newtownards

Lisnasharragh PS
Knockbreda PS
Moneyrea PS
Lead Hill PS
Londonderry PS
Andrews Memorial PS
St Patrick's PS, Holywood
St Mary's PS, Comber
St Bernard's PS, Belfast
St Finian's PS
Regent House Prep Dept
Sullivan Upper School, Prep Dept

Wards used in population figures.

Ballyhackamore
Ballyhanwood
Ballynafeigh
Ballyrainey
Bangor Castle
Belmont
Botanic
Bradshaw's
Brae
Bryansburn
Carrowreagh
Central (Ards
LGD)
Cherryvalley
Clandeboye
Comber East
Comber North
Comber West
Conlig 1
Craigavad
Crawfordsburn
Cregagh
Cultra
Downshire
Dufferin
Duncairn
Dundonald
Galwally
Gilnahirk
Glen
Graham's
Bridge
Gregstown
Harbour
Hillfoot
Holywood
Demesne
Holywood
Priory
Island
Knock
Lisbane
Lisnasharragh
Loughries
Loughview
Lower Braniel

Moneyreagh
Movilla
Newtownbreda
Orangefield
Princetown
Rathgael
Ravenhill
Rosetta
Scrabo
Shaftesbury
Silverstream
Springhill
Stormont
Stranmillis
Sydenham
Tullycarnet
Upper Braniel
Whitehill
Whitespots
Windsor
Wynchurch

Education and Training Inspectorate comment

PHASE	Primary School : Nursery Unit
EA	EA: South Eastern Region
DP REFERENCE NUMBER (S)	DP 414 - Dundonald Primary School
PROPOSAL (S)	Modification of enrolment in Nursery Unit Provision
DATE OF RECEIPT OF DP (DI)	
DATE OF RETURN OF DP (DI)	22.02.16
DATE OF RETURN to APPT Via ACI	22.02.2016
ACI DIRECTORATE TITLE	Wendy Crawford
NAME OF DE CONTACT AND DATE AS STATED ON EMAIL	██████████
Note about this response: (where relevant)	

EDUCATIONAL PROVISION

Dundonald Primary School - modification of Nursery provision

Proposal to change from 26 full- time to 52 part -time Nursery places from September 2016.

ETI KNOWLEDGE

Dundonald Primary School was inspected in May 2013 and the Nursery Unit provision was evaluated as good.

RATIONALE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF ETI EVIDENCE

The Department of Education's Early Years policy is to provide a pre-school place for all children whose parents wish them to have a place. The increase in the number of places on offer in Dundonald Primary School Nursery Unit to fifty-two part- time places will facilitate a greater number of children accessing pre-school education in the area.

The Nursery Unit in Dundonald Primary School offers good quality pre-school provision.

RECOMMENDATION

The ETI support the change in the pattern and number of enrolments in the Nursery Unit.