



Consultation Letter
Lowering the school age at St Pius X Catholic Primary School
from 4-11 to 3-11



The Executive Board of Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust in partnership with the governing committee of St Pius X Catholic Primary School, are proposing a change to the age range of the school from 4-11 to 3-11.

As part of the process, we would like to hear your views on the proposal. Currently children who join St Pius X at the age of 4, come from a variety of settings within the locality. Under the new proposals, children aged 3 and upwards, would formally become part of the same structure as the school within our new Foundation unit.

Proposal

To lower the age range of St Pius X from 4 to 11 years to 3 to 11 years from September 2026, to ensure the school meets the needs of local families and children.

Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust in partnership with the Local Governing Committee of St Pius X is consulting you on a proposal to lower the admissions age to enable us to open a nursery unit. This proposal will allow us to meet the needs of our local community in relation to early years education and will ensure a consistent setting and approach to learning for our youngest children.

Why are we proposing to lower the entry age of the children joining our school?

We want to support the government's policy on providing early years education for children in the local area through a secure, stimulating, and high-quality early years nursery setting. This will complement our existing provision for children in our reception class. In addition to this the nursery will initially offer the following:

- Parents will be able to claim the universal entitlement for 3-4 year olds
- Eligible working parents will be able to claim the early years additional entitlement for 3-4 year old children
- Nursery places will be available Monday to Friday
- Nursery provision will raise the standards of the children entering our Reception class

Our aim is that local children attend nursery and then successfully transition to our reception class. This will enable learning opportunities to be maximised across the early years for children from 3 to 5 years of age.

Please note there is no automatic right for nursery aged children to gain a reception place at the school. Parents of nursery aged children would need to apply in the normal way for admission to the primary school.

Will the proposal have any impact on the school's admission arrangements?

Currently, we offer 15 reception places, each year, for local children. It is proposed that we would offer up to 15 full-time places in the nursery. The number of children has been determined by the governing body in consultation with the Local Authority.

The current number on roll is 75; these numbers do not include nursery children. Please note there is no automatic right for nursery aged children to gain a reception place at the school. Parents of nursery aged children would need to apply in the normal way for admission to the primary school.



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Do the governors and staff support the proposal?

Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust in partnership with the Local Governing Committee of St Pius X and staff support the proposal, as they believe our school community and future pupils would benefit from the lowering of our school age to allow for nursery provision.

Will there be extra traffic and how will you reduce the impact of this?

There may be a small increase in traffic. However, initial enquires indicate that the nursery would be mainly filled by siblings of those children already coming to St Pius X or families living within walking distance of the school.

What are the next stages in the process?

Responses will be received throughout the consultation period, which begins on Thursday 2nd April 2026 at 9:00 am and ends on Friday 1st May 2026 at 9:00 am. These will be analysed, and the school will publish the outcome on its website.

How can I respond to this consultation?

Please complete the consultation response form below and return it to the school. Alternatively, please email the school.



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Response to Our Lady and St Joseph’s Nursery Consultation form:

I am:	(√ / x)
A parent of a child at the school	
A parent of a pre-school aged child	
A local school with a nursery	
A local school without a nursery	
Another school within our Trust	
A close neighbour of the school	
A member of the local community	
A local faith group	
A local community group	
Other please specify	

I am in favour of St Pius X Catholic Primary School, Consett lowering its school age to accept 3 year olds and open a nursery.

YES / NO (please delete as appropriate)

Comments:

Please return the above form via email (stpx@stpx.bwcet.com) or by posting directly to the Head Teacher, St Pius X Catholic Primary School, Thornfield Road, The Grove, Consett, Co. Durham, DH8 8AX to be received by 9:00 am on Friday 1st May 2026.