

# Provision for Merton Medical Education Services at Lavender Nursery site and closure of the nursery from September 2021

London Road, Mitcham CR4 3LB

*Please email comments to  
**[School.Consult@merton.gov.uk](mailto:School.Consult@merton.gov.uk)**  
by Monday 22 February 2021*

## **What is the purpose of this consultation?**

The purpose of this linked consultation is to allow anyone to raise questions or concerns regarding the proposal so that officers can report to the council's Cabinet with the full range of views and decide whether to proceed.

## **What is proposed?**

### **Expansion of Merton Medical Education Services into the Lavender Nursery site**

Part of Melbury College, Merton Medical Education Services offer high quality, bespoke education provision for highly vulnerable students who live in Merton and who are unable to attend mainstream school because of medical and / or mental health needs. The offer is part of the council's statutory obligation to ensure education is provided for all of its school age children. <https://www.melbury.merton.sch.uk/>

Due to a rise in the secondary school aged population and rising needs, especially in relation to mental health, student numbers have increased year-on-year, Merton Medical Education Services have outgrown their previous accommodation at the Canterbury Road campus, Morden. They are currently in temporary provision but require a permanent, suitable home.

The council has limited resources and therefore needs to make sure it can provide for this need from within its existing building stock rather than through new build.

### **Closure of Lavender Nursery (London Road)**

Lavender Nursery currently offers early education and care for children aged 2 to 4/5 years of age as part of the borough-wide offer of a range of early childhood services delivered through the borough's network of children's centres. For more information about these children's centres please visit [www.merton.gov.uk/childrenscentres](http://www.merton.gov.uk/childrenscentres)

Lavender Nursery (London Road) currently provides up to 80 part-time, term-time only nursery places for 2-year-olds who are eligible for free nursery education, and up to 48 full-time all-year-round places for children aged 2, 3 and 4 for fee-paying families. The proposal is to:

- Close the full working day, fee-paying provision (i.e. 48 full-time places)
- Find alternative venue(s) to provide the 80 part-time, term-time free places for eligible 2-year-olds

The proposed changes would not be implemented until late August 2021 to make sure families that are changing placement for September 2021 do not need to seek any short-term alternative arrangements.

Parents will be able to choose their future provision from across the wider childcare sector, as shown below.

### **Funded places for eligible 2-year-olds (part time, term time free provision)**

Merton's own service offer for eligible 2-year-olds is likely to be offered across:

- Lavender Steers Mead Children's Centre CR4 3HL

- Acacia Children's Centre CR4 1SD
- Abbey Children's Centre SW19 2JY

Families can choose to take up alternative provision from across the range of funded providers locally that deliver funded places for 2-year-olds.

Find details of childcare providers offering funded places in Merton

### **Places for 2, 3 and 4-year-olds for fee paying families (full time places)**

Alternative existing full day care is provided across:

1. the private, voluntary, or independent sector, where within a 1 mile distance there are 9 private all-year-round full day care nurseries with good Ofsted inspections (or waiting for their first inspection)
2. nursery classes in primary schools, where within a 2 mile distance there are 14 primary schools with nursery classes, some offering 30 hour funded places for 3 and 4-year-olds. (The council will continue to work with schools wanting to offer the 30 hours (extended entitlement) to meet the needs of families)
3. the childminding sector where, within a mile there are 20 to 25 childminders

Find details of providers of full day care, including free places for 3 and 4-year-olds

The council's Childcare Sufficiency Assessment report shows that the population of Merton's under-fives has decreased in recent years and is expected to continue to decrease over the next five years. This is likely to reduce the demand for childcare. The secondary aged population has increased substantially and is forecast to still modestly increase over the next five years.

It is recognised that there are generally fewer places available via the free childcare scheme for eligible 2-year-olds, hence the aim is to relocate the existing council-run 80 places to the three designated children centre sites, whilst continuing to support sufficiency across the whole childcare market.

The council is therefore confident that, in meeting the growing needs of Merton Medical Education Services, there will be sufficient childcare in the local area to meet demand

### **Impact on Tamworth Recreation Ground and paddling pool**

The paddling pool and park are independently managed. The proposal is that the area currently designated to 'Education for Nursery' becomes provision for Merton Medical Education Services. Tamworth Recreation Ground and paddling pool will not therefore be impacted by this proposal.

**Please provide comments by email to [School.Consult@merton.gov.uk](mailto:School.Consult@merton.gov.uk) by Monday 22 February 2021**

**Post to: Contracts and School Organisation, Children, Schools and Families Department, London Borough of Merton, Merton Civic Centre, Morden SM4 5DX**