

Head Teacher
Mr S Farrington
BA (Hons)



The William Alvey CE School

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Consultation report – 11th December 2024

Proposal

The William Alvey School consulted on a proposal to open a Pre-school for three and four year olds, on the Alvey school site, in September 2025.

Lincolnshire County Council have indicated there is a local need for increased, high quality, early years provision. The William Alvey School is keen to meet this need so that local children and their families have choice, and access, to a high-quality Pre-school. The proposed Pre-school will be fully led and managed by the William Alvey School.

The consultation

This consultation began informally. School began the process by having an initial meeting with representatives of Lincolnshire County Council's Early Years team in September 2024. These colleagues indicated there was a local need for a quality Pre-school. Our local authority colleagues also indicated the William Alvey had sufficient space, and expertise, to meet this need.

The school then consulted our parent body to establish if there were enough parents who would use the Pre-school. We received confirmation from 28 parents that they would, including 16 saying they would use this service in September 2025.

This process established a local need and a potential client base. This led to the school formally undertaking a consultation of local stakeholders. This consultation was emailed to over 600 stakeholders, including:

- All parents/carers at the Alvey
- All staff at the Alvey
- All Governors and Trustees at the Alvey
- The Early Years team at Lincolnshire County Council
- Lincolnshire County Council
- Sleaford Town Council
- The Lincolnshire Diocese
- Local nurseries

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This proposal was advertised via the school's website and our Facebook page. It has also been featured in Lincolnshire Live.

The William Alvey School's consultation asked the following question:

Do you support the William Alvey School opening a Pre-school for 3 and 4 year old children in September 2025?

Respondents were invited to complete a google form to answer this question.

The survey was open from Monday 11th November 2024 to Monday 2nd December 2024.

Feedback

The William Alvey School received 170 responses to our consultation. As you can see in the table below, there were 134 responses (80%) in favour and 34 (20%) against.

Response from:	Positive Votes	Negative Votes	
Lincolnshire County Council	1		
Sleaford Town Council	1		
Staff at the Alvey	42	2	
Governors	4		
Parent/Carer at the Alvey	74	11	
Eslaforde Nursery	1		
Little Gems Nursery	1		
Woodside Nursery		1	
Sleaford Day Nursery		2	
Sleaford Methodist Pre-School		15	
Any other	12	3	
	136	34	170

77 respondents took the time to make additional comments – 44 in favour and 23 against.

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Governing body meeting on the 10th December 2024

The William Alvey governing body met on the 10th December 2024 to consider the consultation feedback. Governors carefully considered both the positive views expressed, as well as those objecting to the proposal.

When reviewing the positive comments in favour of opening a Pre-school, governors agreed they largely reflected the initial views they had, which led to this proposal being introduced.

The governors then reviewed the number of objections raised, who they came from and the themes arising from the 23 respondents who left more detailed feedback. Their findings, and responses, are listed below:

1. **15/23 detailed objections (65%)** were based around concerns about job losses for local Early Years providers and the view that there is already enough Early Years provision in Sleaford.

Governors' response

- Governors' have sympathy with people being understandably concerned about their jobs and their businesses. However, governors concluded that their over-riding duty is to the whole community, who would benefit from the offer of a Pre-school in the area.
- Governors pointed out that it is factually incorrect to say there are enough Early Years providers in Sleaford. Lincolnshire County Council's support for this proposal, and their confirmation of local need for more Early Years supports this view. This view is also supported by the fact that successful Early Years local providers have long waiting lists. Governors noted that two of these successful local providers (Little Gems and Esforde Nursery) support our proposal.

2. **6/23 (26%) objections were based around parking and traffic related issues.**

Governors' response

- Governors again sympathised with these concerns but concluded that the benefits of opening a Pre-school far outweighed these objections. Governors noted the school's ongoing attempts to encourage alternative ways for the community to travel to and from school (e.g. the walking bus, the encouragement offered to children and parents to walk, ride bikes and scooters).

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- Governors noted that some of the traffic issues will be minimised by the announcement that free standing CCTV cameras will soon be installed by Lincolnshire County Council outside school.
 - Governors also observed that if the Pre-school does open, the overall number of children attending the Alvey will be at best the same, and more likely lower than in the recent past, because of the nationally falling birth rate.
3. **2/23 (9%) – objections said there is not enough space in the current school estate to allow the opening of a Pre-school.**

Governors' response

Governors concluded that this is simply not the case as school has two vacant classrooms that could be utilised for the Pre-school

Governors' decision – 10th December 2024

Having considered the consultation feedback, and the original motivation to open a Pre-school, the governing body unanimously agreed to move forward with the proposal to open a Pre-school at the Alvey in September 2025. The next step in this process involves the school submitting a bid for the 'School Based Nurseries Capital Grant.' If successful, this will enable the school to improve the current outdoor learning area for children attending the Pre-school in September 2025. The submission of this bid, irrespective of its success, also registers the school's intention to open a Pre-school in September 2025 with the Department for Education.

The governors' support for moving forward with this proposal was based on many factors, the most significant of which are detailed below:

- Lincolnshire County Council have offered their support to this proposal and confirmed there is a local need for it.
- The governors, and school leaders, are confident they will be able to offer a high quality Pre-school, staffed with qualified teachers from the Alvey. They believe this will be of great benefit to parents and children in the local community. They also believe children attending the Alvey Pre-school will benefit from a smoother transition into school when they move into the Alvey's Reception classes.

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- The Pre-school will be run by existing staff members at the Alvey in space that is available to use, meaning there will be no requirement to extend the current school site or incur additional cost to do that.
- Plans are being developed to extend the outdoor learning space for our Reception children, which will be used by our Pre-school children. This will improve the learning experience of all children in the Early Years.
- Plans are being developed to ensure Pre-school children will have access to pre, and after school care, as well as holiday care.
- Governors know that other local Early Years providers currently have waiting lists that a Pre-school at the Alvey will ease.