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Job reference: 2026 enquiry 61

Address: Fartown Trinity Methodist Church, Spaines Road, Fartown, Huddersfield, HD2 2SD

Date: 31-10-2026

Extra notes: **design and access report**

change of use from vacant former church (use class F1f) to form nursery (use class Ef) with outdoor play area and associated new mezzanine for tuition centre (use class F1a) and associated car parking.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Statement

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the change of use and internal adaptation of the former Fartown Trinity Methodist Church, Spaines Road, Fartown, Huddersfield. The proposal comprises the establishment of Wonder Bees Nursery – Early Years and Nursery at ground-floor level with associated external play area, together with the construction of a new mezzanine floor to accommodate a tuition centre.

The development seeks to bring the existing vacant building into beneficial fresh use following the congregation ceased on 1-9-2025 through the provision of complementary childcare and educational facilities serving the local community.

The proposal has been developed around three principal objectives:

- To establish a safe, stimulating and welcoming environment for early-years childcare.
- To provide additional educational accommodation through a new mezzanine floor over the existing double height space within the existing building volume.
- To make effective use of the existing building while minimising unnecessary external alterations and preserving its contribution to the surrounding area.

The design seeks to balance the functional requirements of the proposed uses with the structural constraints of the existing building, the need for appropriate safeguarding, inclusive access and the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

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1.2 Planning Context

The application will be assessed against the adopted Kirklees Local Plan and other relevant material considerations, including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The principal local policies considered relevant are:

- LP1 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development.
- LP2 – Strategic Place Shaping.
- LP7 – Efficient and Effective Use of Land and Buildings.
- LP9 – Supporting Skilled and Flexible Communities and Workforce.
- LP20 – Sustainable Travel.
- LP21 – Highways and Access.
- LP22 – Parking.
- LP23 – Core Walking and Cycling Network.
- LP24 – Design.
- LP26 – Renewable and Low-Carbon Energy, where applicable.
- LP27 – Flood Risk, where applicable.
- LP28 – Drainage, where applicable.
- LP30 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity, where applicable.
- LP47 – Healthy, Active and Safe Lifestyles.
- LP48 – Community Facilities and Services.
- LP49 – Educational and Health Care Needs.
- LP51 – Protection and Improvement of Local Air Quality, where applicable.
- LP52 – Protection and Improvement of Environmental Quality.
- LP53 – Contaminated and Unstable Land, where applicable.

The precise application of individual policies will depend on the final design, the site's planning history and the confirmed lawful existing use. The national policy assessment is based on the NPPF published in August 2026 and updated in September 2026.

1.3 Description of Development

The proposed development comprises:

- The establishment of an early-years nursery (ages from a few months up to 4.5 years old) at upper ground-floor level.
- The construction of a new mezzanine floor for a tuition centre.

- Associated internal alterations and circulation arrangements.
- Appropriate access, sanitary, staff and supporting facilities.
- Safeguarding and access-control measures separating the nursery from other building users.
- A multi purpose hall is also provided at the lower ground floor where the nursery can use for additional indoor play area if required, however, it will mainly be used during evenings and weekends to respect the safeguarding for the nursery

Any external alterations, car parking or other associated external play areas are specifically identified on the submitted drawings.

2. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

2.1 Site Location

The application site is the former Fartown Trinity Methodist Church on Spaines Road, Fartown, Huddersfield. The building occupies an established position within the wider Huddersfield urban area, in a locality containing residential properties and community services.

The site benefits from an existing building envelope and associated infrastructure, providing an opportunity to accommodate new uses without the need for an entirely new building. The congregation ceased worship at the church in September 2025. The proposed development offers an opportunity to establish a new fresh use for the building.

2.2 Existing Building

The existing building provides a substantial internal volume capable of accommodating childcare and separate educational activities. Its existing structure offers an opportunity to create additional floorspace through the proposed new mezzanine rather than extending the building unnecessarily.

The principal design challenge is to accommodate the mezzanine without compromising the functionality of the nursery below. The design therefore respond to the existing structural arrangement, internal clearances, circulation and the location of windows and other openings. The proposed structural solution preserves a practical and usable nursery layout on the ground floor while providing suitable additional accommodation above for tuition centre but strategically located high

enough to take advantage of the existing windows so that views and natural ventilation can be achieved.

2.3 Surrounding Area

Fartown and neighbouring Birkby form part of the established urban area of Huddersfield. The proposed nursery and tuition centre would introduce childcare and educational activities into this existing setting. The uses are capable of operating compatibly with neighbouring residential and community uses, subject to appropriate arrangements for access, car parking, noise, opening hours and the movement of users. The combined activity of the nursery and tuition centre will be considered when assessing the development's likely effects.

3. DESIGN VISION: WONDER BEES

3.1 Vision and Philosophy

Wonder Bees is intended to provide a welcoming early-years environment in which children are encouraged to explore, discover, learn and grow. The design philosophy is founded on the belief that young children learn through play, curiosity, interaction and positive experiences. The internal environment is therefore being stimulating without becoming visually overwhelming, with clear circulation, appropriate natural light, suitable materials and spaces that support both group activities and quieter learning.

The proposed tuition centre will complement this educational objective by providing additional accommodation for structured learning and supplementary educational activities and also being used as an after school club where appropriate. Together, the two uses will establish a facility focused on childcare, development and learning.

3.2 Design Objectives

The principal design objectives are to:

- Create a welcoming and easily understood entrance.
- Provide a secure and coherent nursery environment.
- Make efficient use of the existing building.
- Introduce the mezzanine in a structurally appropriate manner.
- Provide suitable access and circulation for both uses.
- Maintain appropriate separation between children and other building users.

Provide a comfortable internal environment with suitable lighting, ventilation and acoustic conditions. Minimise unnecessary external alterations. Incorporate inclusive access and practical operational arrangements. The design demonstrates that the building can accommodate both uses safely and effectively.

4. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Upper Ground-Floor Nursery

The upper ground floor is proposed to accommodate Wonder Bees Nursery, providing childcare and early-years learning facilities. The detailed arrangement will respond to the nursery's proposed age range, capacity, staffing and operational requirements. The layout provides appropriate accommodation for children's activities, supervised play, rest, staff administration, storage, sanitary facilities and circulation usining the already formed cellular rooms. Provision made for food preparation or serving and other supporting activities are also proposed.

The nursery have sufficient usable space to support the intended number of children without overcrowding or compromising supervision. The detailed design demonstrates that the proposed capacity can be accommodated safely and that appropriate facilities can be provided in accordance with the applicable childcare requirements. Should the nursery provision outgrow its accommodation, since the separate block on the first floor has double volume and additional separate mezzanine can be considered later in future.

Based on floor areas

- The 0-2 years will accommodate circa 19 children
- The 2-4 years will accommodate circa 64 children
- **Total circa** **83 children maximum**

Also based on circa 83 children, 7no WC and 6no WHB has been provided.

Based on the staff ratio,

- 0-2 years will be circa 1 staff to 3 children and equates to 6 staff
- 2-4 years will be circa (without qualifying teacher) 1 staff to 8 children and equates to 8 staff
- 2-4 years will be circa (with qualifying teacher) 1 staff to 13 children and equates to 5 staff
- **Total circa** **between 11-14 staff maximum**

4.2 multi purpose hall

A multi purpose hall is also provided at the lower ground floor where the nursery can use for additional indoor play area if required, however, it will mainly be used during evenings and weekends to respect the safeguarding for the nursery

4.3 Nursery Environment

The main primary entrance is from Spaines Road where a meet and greet reception will be provided for open day or events only. However, due to busy Spaines Road, the majority daily drop off will be via the car park via the dedicated secondary rear access. The internal environment to be welcoming, comfortable and appropriate to young children. The design makes appropriate use of natural light and provide suitable ventilation and thermal comfort. Pastel shad colour, graphics and child-friendly finishes be used to create a recognisable Wonder Bees identity.

The design also includes quieter spaces where appropriate and ensure that circulation routes remain clear and easy to supervise. The building's existing windows to be used effectively to provide natural light and views out wherever practicable.

4.4 New Mezzanine Tuition Centre

The proposal includes a new mezzanine floor within the existing building double height volume to provide accommodation for a tuition centre. The new mezzanine will increase the building's usable educational floorspace without necessarily increasing the external footprint. The proposed arrangement seeks to retain the ground floor for nursery use while accommodating tuition activities above.

The design establishes a practical relationship between the two uses, including suitable separate access, circulation, sanitary facilities and management arrangements. The tuition centre to be capable of operating without uncontrolled access to the nursery.

4.5 Structural Feasibility

The new mezzanine will requires structural intervention and designed in response to the existing building. The structural engineer had establishes the proposed loading, support positions and spanning arrangement.

The design seeks to preserve the nursery's usable open planned space and avoid unnecessary central columns within principal activity areas. Where a relatively long

clear span is required, the implications for steelwork, connections, foundations, construction cost and installation had been assessed. The planning drawings identifies the mezzanine footprint and principal structural arrangement sufficiently to demonstrate that the proposal is realistically achievable.

4.6 Relationship Between the Uses

The nursery and tuition centre are complementary uses but operationally distinct uses. The final design provides appropriate separation between them. The nursery have a secured boundary treatment and controlled access. Tuition-centre users do not need to pass through nursery activity rooms to reach their accommodation. The arrangement also provide suitable circulation, staff supervision and emergency escape routes. The design demonstrates that the two uses can operate simultaneously without compromising safeguarding, access or the effective functioning of either facility.

5. DESIGN QUALITY AND EXTERNAL APPEARANCE

5.1 Retention of the Existing Building

The design approach prioritises the retention and adaptation of the existing building. This approach avoids unnecessary demolition and seeks to make effective use of the building's existing structure and enclosed volume. The proposal is consistent with the objective of using land and buildings efficiently.

The overall site area is circa 1190sqm.

Levels	**existing**
Lower ground	170
upper ground	555
mezzanine	100
total	**825**

Levels	**proposed**
Lower ground	170
upper ground	555
new mezzanine	185
total	**910**

therefore additional new floor areas created is circa 85sqm

5.2 External Alterations
The proposed development principally concerns the internal adaptation of the existing building. Any new entrances, windows, external lighting, signage or plant to be designed to complement the existing building and surrounding area. The Wonder Bees identity to be expressed through appropriate signage and graphics that provide a welcoming appearance without creating visual clutter. The external play area is required and a timber fencing circa 1800 high is to be provided around the play area for safeguarding.

5.3 Internal Design
The internal arrangement to be coherent, legible and appropriate to the two proposed uses. The design considers the relationship between rooms, the position of supporting structure, access to windows, ventilation, acoustic separation and the movement of occupants. The mezzanine does not create an unnecessarily dark or poorly ventilated nursery below. The final arrangement provides a comfortable environment for children, staff, parents, tutors and other users.

5.4 Local Plan Policy LP24 – Design
LP24 is central to the assessment of the proposal. The design responds to the existing building and seeks to accommodate the new fresh uses through a practical internal intervention. The layout, circulation, structural arrangement and access provisions demonstrates that the additional floorspace can be integrated without compromising the building's functionality or the quality of the nursery environment.

6. ACCESS AND INCLUSIVE DESIGN
6.1 General Principles
The development provides safe, convenient and inclusive access for children, parents, staff, tutors and visitors. The design considers the needs of people with mobility, sensory and other access requirements. There is an existing platform lift at the rear that is capable of being used by wheelchair users when needed. There are also areas to store baby prams within the rear foyer.

6.2 Nursery Entrance
The nursery entrance provides controlled access and allow staff to manage arrivals and departures effectively. A main reception or controlled-entry point to be provided where appropriate at the primary entrance for main events and visitors, however, a similar dedicated secondary entrance at the rear is also provided to receiving kids when dropped off from the car parking area. External drop-off and collection

arrangements do not obstruct the highway or create unsafe pedestrian movements since it is within the compound demise. A new stair access is also provided so that it respect the safeguarding of the multi-purpose hall, even though they will be used during evenings and weekends.

6.3 New Mezzanine Separate Access

The tuition centre has suitable existing access to the mezzanine.

6.4 Parking and Transport

The application identifies the existing and proposed car parking arrangements and assess the combined requirements of the nursery and tuition centre. The assessment considers staff parking, parent drop-off and collection, tutors, visitors and any overlap between operating periods. The development provides safe access and appropriate arrangements for pedestrians and cyclists. The availability of public transport and the site's accessibility by walking and cycling has been considered.

7. SAFEGUARDING AND SECURITY

7.1 Secure Nursery Environment

Safeguarding is a fundamental consideration in a building accommodating young children alongside a separate tuition activity. The nursery operates as a clearly defined and secure area with controlled access. The design prevents unauthorised entry and avoid uncontrolled public circulation through children's accommodation. A separate safeguarding report is provided.

7.2 Arrival and Collection

The nursery operator has established clear procedures for the arrival and collection of children. The entrance and circulation arrangement provides sufficient space for parents and staff without creating congestion or obstructing escape routes. The building layout supports supervision and the identification of authorised visitors.

7.3 Security Design

Appropriate lighting, clear sightlines and controlled access to be incorporated into the design. The security measures proportionate to the proposed use and integrated into the wider operational arrangements.

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8. FIRE SAFETY AND ACOUSTIC CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 Fire Safety

The introduction of a new mezzanine creates additional considerations relating to means of escape, fire separation, detection, alarms and the protection of the supporting structure. The design has taken into account of the number and characteristics of occupants, particularly young children who may require assistance during evacuation.

8.2 Acoustic Separation

The new mezzanine provides suitable acoustic separation between the tuition centre and nursery below. External noise to be considered where operating hours, outdoor activity or arrivals and departures could affect neighbouring residents.

9. SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

9.1 Reuse of the Existing Building

The proposal seeks to make effective use of an existing building rather than requiring an entirely new development. Retaining the existing structure can reduce demolition waste and the demand for new materials, although the actual environmental benefit depends on the extent of structural alteration. The new mezzanine will create additional educational accommodation within the existing envelope.

9.2 Energy Efficiency

The design considers opportunities to improve energy efficiency through suitable lighting, heating controls, ventilation and insulation where alterations to the building fabric are proposed.

9.3 Drainage and Flood Risk

The site is located in a zone 1 and low probability of flooding.

9.4 Biodiversity

The need for ecological assessment will depend on the nature of the proposed works. Internal works alone have limited ecological implications, but alterations affecting the external areas ie, trees or potential habitats may impact on biodiversity.

10. LOCAL PLANNING POLICY ASSESSMENT

10.1 LP1 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

The proposal seeks to bring an existing building into beneficial use and provide facilities for childcare and education within an established urban area. The development has the potential to deliver social benefits while making use of existing built infrastructure.

10.2 LP2 – Strategic Place Shaping

The development would introduce new community-oriented activities into an existing building. The proposal provides an opportunity to adapt a former place of worship to contemporary needs while retaining the building's role as a useful local facility. The design responds to the building's context and create a welcoming environment for its intended users.

10.3 LP7 – Efficient and Effective Use of Land and Buildings

LP7 is a principal policy for the proposed development. The retention of the existing building and the introduction of a new mezzanine makes more effective use of the available internal volume. The proposal provides additional educational floorspace without necessarily increasing the building's external footprint. This approach is consistent with the objective of using land and buildings efficiently, provided that the structural, access, safety and amenity requirements are satisfactorily addressed.

10.4 LP9 – Supporting Skilled and Flexible Communities and Workforce

The nursery provides childcare that may assist parents and carers to access employment, education and training. The tuition centre provides additional space for educational activities and skills development. The proposal has the potential to support working families and the educational needs of the local community.

10.5 LP20 – Sustainable Travel

LP20 is relevant to the accessibility of the development by sustainable modes of transport. The application considers the site's connections to walking, cycling and public transport.

10.6 LP21 – Highways and Access

LP21 is relevant to the safety and suitability of access and the potential effect of the development on the highway network. The combined operation of the nursery and tuition centre must be considered when assessing arrivals and departures. The

development does not create unacceptable highway safety effects or inappropriate obstruction of neighbouring streets.

10.7 LP22 – Car Parking
LP22 is relevant to the adequacy and design of car parking provision. The car parking assessment has taken into account of staff, parents, tutors and visitors, including any overlap between nursery collection and tuition-centre activities.

10.8 LP23 – Core Walking and Cycling Network
LP23 may be relevant to pedestrian and cycle accessibility. The development supports safe pedestrian access and consider appropriate cycle parking where justified by the scale and nature of the use.

10.9 LP24 – Design
LP24 is central to the assessment of the internal and external design. The proposal seeks to integrate the mezzanine within the existing building while retaining a functional nursery layout below. The design provides suitable circulation, access, natural light, ventilation and acoustic conditions.

10.10 LP26 – Renewable and Low-Carbon Energy
LP26 may be relevant where the development includes energy-related improvements or new building-services equipment. The design considers appropriate energy-efficiency and low-carbon measures in proportion to the scope of the works.

10.11 LP27 and LP28 – Flood Risk and Drainage
These policies are relevant where the site's flood-risk designation or proposed works trigger additional requirements. Since the site is within zone 1, it has low flooding risk.

10.12 LP30 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity
LP30 is relevant where the proposal may affect ecological interests. The need for ecological assessment to be determined by the actual works and any potential effects on protected species or habitats.

10.13 LP47 – Healthy, Active and Safe Lifestyles
The nursery would provide an environment for supervised play, learning and social development. The tuition centre would provide accommodation for educational activities. The proposal has the potential to support wellbeing and positive social

interaction by providing accessible facilities within the local community. The layout should provide safe and inclusive environments for the intended users.

10.14 LP48 – Community Facilities and Services

LP48 is a principal policy consideration. The proposal establishes childcare and educational activities within a building that historically served a community function. The development offers an opportunity to retain a useful building through adaptation to contemporary needs.

10.15 LP49 – Educational and Health Care Needs

LP49 is relevant to the tuition-centre element of the proposal. The mezzanine provides additional accommodation for educational activities. The proposal makes use of an existing building to create learning space within the established urban area.

10.16 LP51 – Local Air Quality

LP51 may be relevant if the development is likely to affect local air quality through traffic generation, plant or other emissions. Separate air quality report is provided.

10.17 LP52 – Environmental Quality

LP52 is relevant to potential effects on neighbouring occupiers. The assessment considers noise, disturbance and other environmental effects arising from the operation of the nursery and tuition centre. Appropriate design and management arrangements should ensure that the proposed uses can operate without unacceptable harm to the surrounding area. Separate noise report is provided.

10.18 LP53 – Contaminated and Unstable Land

LP53 is relevant if the site is affected by contamination or ground instability. The external area is not affected and therefore the soil contamination is minimal.

11. NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (NPPF)

The development to be assessed against the NPPF published on 17 August 2026 and updated on 29 September 2026. The following national policy themes are relevant.

11.1 Sustainable Development and Decision-Making

The NPPF establishes the importance of sustainable development and decision-making in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The proposal seeks to provide childcare and educational facilities

within an existing building. The social benefits of the development to be considered alongside the design, access, structural and environmental implications.

11.2 Effective Use of Land and Existing Buildings

The NPPF supports making effective use of suitable existing land and buildings. The proposed new mezzanine would provide additional educational accommodation within the existing building envelope. The proposal therefore offers an opportunity to increase the usefulness of the building without automatically requiring a corresponding increase in its external footprint.

11.3 High-Quality Design

The NPPF's design policies support development that responds appropriately to its context and achieves a high standard of design. The proposed internal arrangement to be functional, legible and suitable for both uses. The new mezzanine to be integrated without compromising the nursery below.

11.4 Healthy and Inclusive Communities

The NPPF supports appropriate community facilities and development that contributes to health and wellbeing. The nursery provides childcare and early-years learning, while the tuition centre provides additional educational accommodation. The proposal has the potential to support families, learning and social interaction. The development provides safe and inclusive environments that are accessible to the intended users.

11.5 Sustainable Transport and Highway Safety

The NPPF's transport policies require consideration of sustainable travel, safe access and the effects of development on the highway network. The application assesses the combined transport demand of the nursery and tuition centre.

11.6 Environmental Quality

The NPPF requires development to consider the effects on neighbouring occupiers and the surrounding environment. The proposal addresses noise transmission between floors, external activity, traffic movements and any relevant building-services impacts.

12. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

12.1 Principle of Development

The proposed development establishes childcare and educational activities within an existing building in an established urban area. The proposal offers the opportunity to make more effective use of existing floorspace and provide facilities for the local community.

12.2 Structural Feasibility

The new mezzanine is an internal intervention. The design demonstrates that the proposed floor can be supported without compromising the nursery's usable space or the building's structural integrity.

12.3 Safeguarding and Operational Separation

The layout demonstrates that the nursery can operate as a secure and controlled environment. The tuition centre have appropriate access and circulation without creating uncontrolled movement through nursery accommodation.

12.4 Access and Fire Safety

The application demonstrates that the new mezzanine can be accessed separately and that the proposed arrangement is capable of accommodating safe escape routes and the necessary fire separation.

12.5 Transport and Parking

The combined operational requirements of the nursery and tuition centre identifies the available car parking and explains how the anticipated arrivals and departures can be managed safely. A separate transport and travel plan reports are provided.

12.6 Neighbouring Amenity

The design considers noise between floors, external activity and the movement of users. Any necessary mitigation to be incorporated into the design or operational arrangements.

13. CONCLUSION

The proposal seeks to bring the former Fartown Trinity Methodist Church into beneficial fresh use through the establishment of Wonder Bees Nursery at upper ground floors level and a new mezzanine tuition centre above. The development would make more effective use of an existing building and provide childcare and educational accommodation within the established urban area.

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The design approach seeks to balance the needs of both uses with the requirements for structural feasibility, safeguarding, inclusive access, fire safety, acoustic performance and neighbouring amenity. The proposal delivers social benefits by supporting early-years development, childcare and educational activities for the local community. The application to be assessed having regard to the benefits of the proposed uses, the efficient reuse of the existing building and the extent satisfies the relevant local and national planning requirements. Our client seeks Kirklees Council support so Wonder Bees can turn into reality.

Prepared by

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