

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Lead Member for Children's Services
Date:	26 March 2024
Title:	The Future of Ampfield Church of England Primary School
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

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Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide feedback on the statutory public notice period and obtain final approval for the proposed closure of Ampfield Church of England (Aided) Primary School, Ampfield.

Recommendation(s)

2. That approval is given under Section 15 of the Education & Inspections Act 2006 for the closure of Ampfield Church of England (Aided) Primary School with effect from 31 August 2024

Executive Summary

3. Following a request from the governing body, on 14 July 2023 a pre-publication consultation on the future of Ampfield Church of England Primary School was approved by the Director of Children's Services and the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services. This consultation ran from 29 September 2023 until 3 November 2023. Public meetings were held at Ampfield Church of England Primary School on 9 October 2023 and John Keble Church of England Primary School, on 10 October 2023. Ampfield CE Primary and John Keble CE Primary Schools are Federated. These meetings allowed parents and other stakeholders to put forward their views on the consultation directly to officers, offer alternate proposals and ask any questions.
4. Feedback from that consultation was considered in a report to the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services Decision Day on 24 January 2024 and approval was given to proceed to the publication of a Public Notice recommending closure of Ampfield CE Primary School. This report sets out the feedback received during the Public Notice period and recommends that closure of the school be approved with effect from 31 August 2024.

Contextual information

5. Ampfield CE Primary School is an 84-place primary school for pupils aged 4-11 (12 children per year group). The school had 20 pupils on roll as of February 2024, with 9 children in year 6 set to leave at the end of the current academic year. The County Council aims to provide local places for local children as far as is possible, to ensure schools can meet the demand from local communities and to reduce journeys to school.
6. The new National Curriculum is a knowledge-based curriculum in which children are taught sequences of knowledge, which can present some challenges. Whilst teaching the national curriculum in mixed age classes is not unusual, teaching across more than one key stage, or across 3 or 4 year groups is both complex and challenging. This is made more difficult in that each teacher “stands alone” as they have no year group or even key stage partner with whom to work. Ofsted judged the school to be Good following an inspection in June 2018.
7. Ampfield Church of England Primary School is federated with John Keble Church of England Primary School located in the village of Hursley approximately two miles away by road. John Keble Church of England Primary School is rated as Good by Ofsted following a short inspection in October 2017. This reinforced the previous Ofsted judgement of Good in June 2013. John Keble Church of England Primary School is also facing declining pupil numbers. There are 133 pupils on roll for the current 2023/24 academic year against a capacity of 210 pupils (Published Admission Number of 30).
8. A reduction in the birth rate nationally over recent years together with a lack of housing developments within the Ampfield catchment area has led to falling school rolls. Ampfield CE Primary School has one of the lowest numbers on roll in the county and has had a consistently low intake in recent years. The table below shows how the numbers in the school have changed over the past three years, with the 2023/24 numbers shown from the start of term in September 2024. The total number on roll set to reduce further as the larger cohorts leave the school.

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
YR	7	2	2	3
Y1	1	12	2	3
Y2	5	2	8	1
Y3	4	5	2	6
Y4	6	8	5	2
Y5	4	6	11	2
Y6	10	5	7	9
Total	37	40	37	26

9. Of the primary age pupils currently living in Ampfield, only two children attend Ampfield Church of England Primary (as of September 2023). This indicates that many parents are already choosing a school other than Ampfield Church of England Primary for their children. It has historically been the case that for the school to be full it has needed to attract children from out of its catchment area. Of the primary school age children currently living within the Ampfield catchment area, eight chose to attend Cupernham Junior and five to attend John Keble Church of England Primary School.
10. The pupil forecast for Ampfield Church of England Primary School shows a continued fall in pupil numbers based on the historic trend of recruitment for reception year pupils. The forecast which derives from birth and vaccination data shared by the NHS, suggests that there are a maximum of six pupils each year living in the catchment of the school over the next five years and historic patterns suggest that not all parents living in catchment will choose to send their child to the school.
11. Several options have been considered in recent years to support Ampfield CE Primary School, including the Federation with John Keble CE Primary School, which was introduced in 2013, enabling the schools to share one governing body and leadership team. An alternative option would be academisation. It was concluded that the low number of families living in catchment and the low number of families making a preference for the school mean that concerns around the provision of education and the national curriculum would not be solved by conversion to an academy. It is also highly unlikely that a sponsor could be found due to the low pupil numbers and financial position of the school.

Finance

12. The table below shows the budgetary position for the Ampfield CE Primary School up until the financial year 2025/26.

<i>Financial year</i>	<i>Number on roll</i>	<i>In Year position (+surplus / -deficit) £</i>	<i>Cumulative position (+surplus / -deficit) £</i>
<i>Balance from 2022/23</i>			+69,262
<i>2023/24</i>	37	+20,103	+89,365
<i>2024/25</i>	26	-22,860	+66,506
<i>2025/26</i>	20	-38,044	+28,462

13. The forecast assumes that the school will continue to run two classes each year.
14. Set out in the table below is the budgetary position for the John Keble CE Primary School up until the financial year 2025/26.

<i>Financial year</i>	<i>Number on roll</i>	<i>In Year position (+surplus / -deficit) £</i>	<i>Cumulative position (+surplus / -deficit) £</i>
<i>Balance from 2022/23</i>			+98,139
<i>2023/24</i>	151	-18,835	+79,304
<i>2024/25</i>	132	-29,259	+50,045
<i>2025/26</i>	119	-56,965	-6,920

15. The forecast assumes the school will continue to run six classes each year. The Local Authority will continue to support the school with the on-going management of their budget, considering any future changes to the school's circumstances.
16. Both schools receive a lump sum of £129,040 with Ampfield CE Primary receiving additional sparsity funding of £32,919. Future inflationary pressures, government funding and the actual pupil in-take into year R are the primary risks to the current forecasts for each school.
17. Assumptions have been made on the future number on roll, pay and non-pay inflation based on the latest information available, and that both schools continue to run with their existing classroom structures.

Performance

18. In June 2018 Ampfield CE Primary School was categorised "Good" by Ofsted. This was the same Ofsted judgement that the school received in March 2014.
19. Under previous inspection arrangements and when the curriculum requirements were different, schools have been able to provide what was then considered an acceptable level of education in a two-class structure. Given the current inspection framework and the knowledge-based curriculum, which requires key knowledge to be taught in sequence, maintaining the required standards has become a significant challenge.
20. Hampshire Inspection and Advisory Service (HIAS) has supported Ampfield CE Primary School for over four years and will continue to support the school going forward. Subject inspectors have supported teachers and subject leaders with their curriculum development. Support has also been provided to leaders in coaching teachers to teach to develop their practice.
21. The low number of pupils in the school presents leaders and governors with challenges around delivering the curriculum, effective leadership and management of the workload and wellbeing of individual staff. There are also implications for children of attending a school of this size, not least the social and emotional effects of a reduced peer group or, of being the only child in the school in a year group. Wider opportunities, such as participation

in sports teams, requires a substantially larger cohort.

Consultation and Equalities

22. A pre-publication consultation was conducted from 29 September to 3 November 2023 which included an on-line survey and two public meetings, one at Ampfield Church of England Primary School and one at John Keble Church of England Primary School. People and groups consulted included the parents of the pupils attending Ampfield Church of England Primary School and John Keble Church of England Primary Schools, the Member of Parliament, Parish Councils, local councillors, and Trade Unions (Appendix A).
23. In total 41 responses to the informal consultation were received from different sources including email, online survey and from the drop in events. Five responses were received via email (Appendix B). 34 responses were received via the online survey and two written at the drop-in events. (Appendix C). 21 did not support a closure, 13 responses received were in support of a closure, three were unsure and four were not offering a view about the closure. The comments received during the pre-publication consultation process are shared in full at Appendix B and were considered by the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services at his Decision Day on 19 January 2024, prior to the publication of the Statutory Public Notice.
24. The Statutory Public Notice period took place between Friday 26 January and Friday 1 March 2024 and a copy of the Public Notice is attached at Appendix E. The notices were displayed at the school, circulated to stakeholders, and published in the Hampshire Independent and on Hampshire County Council's public notice portal: [Public notices | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/public-notices)
25. In total 14 responses were received from 12 different individuals. The comments received during the consultation process are shared in full at Appendix B. Common themes are outlined below including commentary:
Comment - Cannot see why there is a consultation on closure. Decline since new Headteacher in post. HCC has shown no thought or concern for the parents or children. Situation poorly handled and executed.
Response – every effort was made to provide the community with an opportunity to comment on the consultation.

Comment - Child with SEN attends the school and has made significant improvement since joining. Worried any change will damage the children's education, their happiness, their health and all to save a little money. Ampfield is a special school and should be supported as such.
Response - Two people commented on how the school caters for children who cannot cope in larger settings and how the SEND support at Ampfield CE Primary School had enabled their children to thrive. There were concerns about the impact a closure would have on individual children with SEND. Ampfield CE Primary School does not specialise in

SEND and is therefore not funded as such but it does have the teacher to student ratio that only comes with a small school.

Comment - Concerns about losing a school in Ampfield. What conversations about SEN school/ Ownership/ Test Valley Borough planning dept have been had? Site cannot be left to decay. One respondent wrote to propose his independent SEN school as a future user of the building.

Response - Hampshire County Council aims to provide local schools for local children. However, at Ampfield CE Primary School only two children currently attend from within the catchment area and pupil forecasts are such that this is unlikely to change over the coming years. Future use of the site, which is held by the Diocese, will be fully considered once a decision has been taken on the proposed closure of Ampfield CE Primary School. SEND will form a part of those discussions.

Comment - Proposing the closure is delayed so Friends of Ampfield can help to market the school. Concerns around where children from new developments will go, current pupils, and impact on parental preference.

Response - It is the responsibility of individual schools to publicise their school within the local community and in recent years the school has done that through open days, involvement in the church fete in the summer, holding regular church services and links with local pre-schools. However there has been a significant drop in the birth rate both nationally and across Hampshire and therefore many schools are now experiencing much lower demand for school places. All new housing is included in school forecasts and allocated to the catchment school for that housing.

Comment – What about Admissions and transport assistance. What are the implications for John Keble? Will all students and staff move over?

Response - The closure of Ampfield Church of England Primary School can be mitigated by the proposed relocation of pupils on roll in years 1-6 in September 2024 to John Keble Church of England Primary School if parents wish to have their children educated at that school. Alternatively, parents can apply for other school places at any time and those applications will be processed in accordance with the school's published admissions policy.

Parents of children who will be Year R in September 2024, could name John Keble Church of England Primary School as one of their preferences on their main round application form. Any transport issues arising will be managed in-line with the County Council's School Transport policy.

Staff affected by a closure will be provided with redeployment support, in anticipation of them securing alternative employment in another Hampshire school.

Comment – Concern that mixed age classes are not a reason to close the school. Teaching in mixed age classes creates a lively atmosphere of interdependence, cooperation, and kindness.

Response – The proposal for closure relates to low numbers on roll rather than the need to have mixed age classes. Many Hampshire schools very successfully run mixed age classes, but at Ampfield Church of England Primary School there is a need to mix one class across three (KS1) or four (KS2) year groups which impacts on the breadth of curriculum that can be offered at the school.

Comment – One respondent wrote with their full support for the proposal.

Equalities

26. Some protected characteristics have been identified as equality impacts:

Age – A negative/low public impact has been identified for some children aged between 4 and 11 years as if the school were to close, the primary aged children would be required to attend an alternative provision. Parents and children may have to travel further to receive their education, though some will be eligible for School Transport. As a majority of the children who attend Ampfield Church of England Primary School live outside of the catchment area, the impact of travel distance may be a mix of positive and negative, depending on where each child lives. Moving to an alternative school will increase the opportunities for pupils to learn and play with children their own age. A negative/low impact has also been identified for staff members. Hampshire County Council's Education Personnel Service will work with and support all members of staff in line with all appropriate policies, regardless of their age, to assist with finding alternative employment elsewhere if required.

Religion or belief - Ampfield School is a Church of England primary school with a religious characteristic. Some parents select this school as a preference due to this, so a negative/low public impact has been identified. The Local Authority and Diocese are reassured that there are two other such schools local to Ampfield, although these would need to be applied for in line with published arrangements and places cannot be guaranteed. It is recognised that staff employed at Ampfield Church of England Primary School may have chosen employment due to religion or belief and therefore the impact has been assessed as negative/low for staff. Hampshire County Council's Education Personnel Service will work and support all members of staff in line with all appropriate policies, regardless of their religion or belief, to assist with finding alternative employment elsewhere if required.

Poverty - The closure of Ampfield CE Primary School and the subsequent relocation of pupils to John Keble CE Primary School will not necessarily increase the overall use of the motor vehicle for the school run, and therefore cost of travel, as a majority of children are already travelling to school from outside of the catchment area. All children's eligibility for School Transport will be assessed in line with the School Transport Policy and all eligible children will be provided with School Transport assistance.

Rurality - It is proposed that the John Keble Church of England Primary School catchment area will be extended to incorporate the existing Ampfield Church of England Primary School catchment area, subject to future

approvals. This has identified a negative/low public impact due to the rural nature of Ampfield Village. Further detail is provided under the 'legal implications' section below. The closure of Ampfield CE Primary School can be mitigated by the proposed relocation of pupils to John Keble Church of England Primary School if parents wish to have their children educated at the school. School transport will be available for those children who are eligible for assistance. Each child's transport eligibility will be assessed, in line with the School Transport policy, based on their home address and the school they attend.

Legal Implications

27. Any proposal that requires a school to close will need to consider the statutory guidance [Opening and Closing Maintained Schools](#) updated in January 2023. Ampfield Church of England Primary School is designated as a rural primary school as referred to in the Designation of Rural Primary Schools (England) Order.

28. The guidance states that the Council should adopt a presumption against the closure of rural schools. However, this does not mean that a rural school will never close, but the case for closure should be strong and a proposal must be clearly in the best interests of educational provision in the area. When producing a proposal to close a rural primary school, the proposer must consider:

The likely effect of the closure of the school on the local community;

The likely effect of the closure of Ampfield Church of England Primary School on the local community is considered to be low as few local families are choosing to send their children to the school. It can be mitigated by the proposed relocation of pupils on roll in years 1-6 in September 2024 to John Keble Church of England Primary School if parents wish to have their children educated at that school. Alternatively, parents can apply for other school places at any time and those applications will be processed in accordance with the school's published admissions policy. Parents of children who will be Year R in September 2024, could name John Keble Church of England Primary School as one of their preferences on their main round application form.

The proportion of pupils attending the school from within the local community, i.e. is the school being used by the local community;

Ampfield Church of England Primary School is not the school of preference for the majority of its community. As of September 2023, only two children that were on roll at the school lived in the catchment area.

Educational standards at the school and the likely effect on standards at neighbouring schools;

Running one class across three (KS1) or four (KS2) year groups, as is necessary currently to teach the 20 children on roll, impacts on the breadth of curriculum that can be offered at the school. As mentioned earlier in the report, this causes challenges for the teaching staff as they are having to cover multiple sequences of the curriculum simultaneously and is beginning to impact on the educational standards at the school.

The low number of pupils in the school presents leaders and governors with challenges around effective leadership and management of the workload and wellbeing of individual staff. There are also implications for the social and emotional effects of a reduced peer group or, of being the only child in the school in a year group. Wider opportunities, such as participation in sports teams, requires a substantially larger cohort.

Closing Ampfield will have no impact on educational standards at neighbouring schools. John Keble CE Primary School, which is the proposed new catchment school for the Ampfield area, is rated Good by Ofsted.

Whether the school is now surplus to requirements (e.g. because there are surplus places elsewhere in the local area which can accommodate displaced pupils, and there is no predicted demand for the school in the medium or long term);

There are surplus places within the planning area and due to declining birth rates, the predicted demand for school places in the long term is low. Displaced children will have the opportunity to apply for a place at any other local school of their choosing.

Any increase in the use of motor vehicles which is likely to result from the closure of the school, and the likely effects of any such increases;

As of September 2023, only two in catchment children attended the school. This meant that the other 24 children on roll at the time attended from out of catchment and travelled into Ampfield for school. The closure of the school would not therefore necessarily increase the use of motor vehicles.

Any alternatives to the closure of the school (including academy conversion, federation, or extending the school to provide local community facilities);

A number of alternatives have been considered by the local authority and diocese and it is concluded that the closure of Ampfield Church of England Primary School provides the best opportunity to stabilise the educational offer for children in Ampfield.

Ampfield CE Primary School is already federated with John Keble CE Primary School. Academisation was considered by the County Council and The Diocese of Winchester. It was concluded that the low number of families living in catchment and the low number of families making a preference for the school mean that concerns around the provision of education and the national curriculum would not be solved by conversion to an academy. It is also highly unlikely that a sponsor could be found due to the low pupil numbers and financial position of the school.

Future use of the site, which is held by the Diocese, will be fully considered once a decision has been taken on the proposed closure of Ampfield CE Primary School. Community use will form a part of those discussions.

Transport implications i.e., the availability, and likely cost of transport to other schools and sustainability issues;

Pupils living within the existing catchment for Ampfield could be entitled to local authority funded transport if they are eligible under the School Transport Policy, to what becomes their nearest school should Ampfield Church of England Primary School close. As a majority of the children who attend Ampfield Church of England Primary School live outside of the catchment area, the impact of travel distance could be a mix of positive and negative, depending on where each child lives. It is not possible to calculate

the likely cost of transport to other schools as it is dependant of where each child lives and which school they choose as an alternative to Ampfield Church of England Primary School.

The size of the school and whether it puts the children at an educational disadvantage e.g., in terms of breadth of curriculum or resources available;
The school currently has 19 children on roll (as at March 2024) therefore it is only operating two classes, one for Key Stage 1 pupils and the other for Key Stage 2 pupils. Running one class across three (KS1) or four (KS2) year groups impacts on the breadth of curriculum that can be offered at the school. As mentioned earlier in the report, this causes challenges for the teaching staff as they are having to cover multiple sequences of the curriculum simultaneously.

The overall and long-term impact on local people and the community of the closure of the village school and of the loss of the building as a community facility;

No decision has been made about the future of the Ampfield Church of England Primary School site. The Diocese of Winchester holds the building and land and therefore any future use of the site would be at their discretion.

Wider school organisation and capacity of good schools in the area to accommodate displaced pupils;

Pupil numbers in the planning area are forecast to reduce over the coming years therefore, it is anticipated that there will be places available at good schools in the area, including at John Keble Church of England Primary School.

Personnel Implications

29. A procedure has been developed in the event that a decision to close the school is made. This procedure has been consulted upon with affected staff and trade unions ahead of a decision being made so that it can come into effect immediately if necessary.
30. The school, with support from Education Personnel Services, will work through the necessary legal steps to bring employment of staff at the school to an end on the grounds of redundancy with effect from 31 August 2024. Simultaneously and for the duration of the period following the decision, until 31 August 2024, staff affected will be provided with redeployment support, in anticipation of them securing alternative employment in another Hampshire maintained school or within the County Council during this period.

Admissions

31. The number of pupils offered a place for Year R in September 2023 for Ampfield Church of England Primary School was four (against a PAN of 12). The number of pupils offered a place for Year R in September 2023 for John Keble Church of England Primary School was 15 (against a PAN of 30).
32. The Year R main admissions round in Hampshire opened on 1 November 2023, with a closing date of 15 January 2024. Parents and carers could

make amendments to any application up to 15 January 2024. Any applications received after 15 January 2024, are considered late applications. All applications will be processed in line with published policies. So far, no applications for a place in year R at Ampfield Church of England Primary School have been received from Hampshire families.

33. Children currently attending Ampfield Church of England Primary School and those who will still be on roll in years 1-6 in September 2024, could be accommodated at John Keble CE Primary School which has been agreed by the school. Parents can express preferences for other school places at any time and those applications will be processed in line with published policies.

Transport

34. Subject to the outcome of this report any transport issues arising will be managed in-line with the County Council's School Transport policy.

Conclusions

35. All efforts have been made to support Ampfield C of E (Aided) Primary by the County Council and the responses received throughout the consultation process have been valued and considered. Despite these efforts and in a climate of low pupil numbers, the ongoing challenges the school faces cannot be allowed to continue beyond this academic year.
36. Approval is sought to proceed with the closure of Ampfield Church of England (Aided) Primary School with effect from 31 August 2024.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	No
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	No
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes
OR	
This proposal does not link to the Strategic Plan but, nevertheless, requires a decision because:	

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents	
<p>The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)</p>	
<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

Equalities Impact Assessment:



Equality Impact Assessment

What is an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) and why does the County Council do them?

The [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) (PSED) is an obligation within the [Equality Act 2010](#) ("the Act"), which asks public authorities, like Hampshire County Council, to give 'due regard' to equality considerations, in particular to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

This includes assessing the impact of policies and practices on individuals and communities with a protected characteristic, as defined in the Act and some other specific groups. The County Council uses EIAs to ensure it has paid 'due regard' to equalities considerations when there are changes to a service or policy, a new project or certain decisions.

EIA author	Position & Department	Contact
Amy Chambers	Project Officer Children's Services	amy.chambers@hants.gov.uk Tel:03707 798802

Title:	The Future of Ampfield Church of England Primary School (2023)
Related EIAs:	None

EIA for Savings Programme:	No
Service affected	Children's Services - Ampfield Church of England Primary School
Description of the service/policy/project/project phase	<p>Ampfield Church of England Primary School is a small rural school located to the south-west of Winchester. It is federated with John Keble Church of England Primary School which is approximately two miles away in the village of Hursley. Ampfield Church of England Primary School currently has a Published Admissions Number (PAN) of 12 and a total capacity of 84 pupils across its seven year groups. At the time of writing this EIA, the school has 26 pupils on roll, 2 of whom live in the Ampfield catchment area. Because of the low numbers of children on roll, they are currently operating a KS1 class of 7 pupils and a KS2 class of 19 pupils. A reduction in the birth rate nationally over recent years together with the slowing down of house building in some areas has led to falling school rolls. Ampfield CE Primary School has one of the lowest numbers on roll in the county and has had a consistently low intake in recent years. The low number of pupils in the school presents leaders and governors with challenges around delivering the curriculum, effective leadership and management of the workload and wellbeing of individual staff. There are also implications for children attending a school of this size, not least the social and emotional effects of a reduced peer group or, of being the only child in the school in a year group. Ofsted judged the school to be Good following a visit in June 2018 and it is anticipated that the school will be inspected again before July 2024. The new National Curriculum is a knowledge based curriculum in which children are taught sequences of knowledge, which can present some challenges. There is concern from governors that the school will be unable to sustain the quality of this delivery to groups of children across a considerable age range, resulting in an unsatisfactory Ofsted judgement. This view is shared by the Local Authority and the Diocese.</p>
New/changed service/policy/project	<p>Earlier this year, the full governing body of the Ampfield CE Primary School and John Keble CE Primary School Federation, the Local Authority and the Diocese of Winchester met to discuss the education outcomes for children and the future financial viability of Ampfield CE Primary School. As a result of this meeting the Governing Body wrote to the Local Authority seeking their support for a consultation to be held with the local community on</p>

the potential closure of Ampfield CE Primary School. If the proposal to close Ampfield CE Primary School is approved, then the school would close as of 31 August 2024 after the current academic year ends. John Keble CE Primary School would expand their catchment area to include Ampfield CE Primary School and children currently attending Ampfield Church of England Primary School and those who will still be on roll in years 1-6 in September 2024, could be accommodated at John Keble CE Primary School which has been agreed by the school. Parents can express preferences for other school places at any time and those applications will be processed in line with published policies. There are some children on roll at Ampfield Primary School who struggled to obtain a school place elsewhere. Of the examples given, this was children in the upper year groups who had either moved into the area or changed schools. Due to falling numbers on roll, there are increasingly surplus places in local schools, particularly in the lower year groups. John Keble CE Primary School has spaces available in all year groups. The Hampshire County Council Human Resources department will work with and support all members of staff in line with all appropriate policies to assist with finding alternative employment elsewhere. Future use of the site, which is held by the Diocese, will be fully considered once a decision has been taken on the proposed closure of Ampfield CE Primary School.

Engagement

The closure of Ampfield Church of England Aided Primary School is being proposed due to continuing challenges the school are facing, therefore the public notice will recommend the closure of Ampfield Church of England Primary School with effect from 31 August 2024.

Recent Consultation/Engagement:

The Director of Children's Services, in discussion with the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services, approved a period of public consultation on the proposed closure of Ampfield CE Primary School from 31 August 2024. Where a Local Authority proposes to make significant changes to a school, including closure, it must follow relevant guidelines as set out by the Department for Education.

This initial consultation ran from Friday 29 September 2023 until Friday 3 November 2023, and included two public meetings. The meetings were held on:

- 09 October between 7-8.30pm at Ampfield Church of England Primary School
- 10 October between 7-8.30pm at John Keble Church of England Primary School

In line with the two public meetings that were held, the proposal was included on the Hampshire County Council's

(HCC) consultation website: <http://consultations.hants.gov.uk/active.aspx>

During the consultation period, the future of Ampfield Church of England Primary School was discussed with stakeholders who were given the opportunity to comment and feedback on the proposal. The detailed outcome of that consultation can be found in the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services (ELMCS) report that this EIA is attached to. The non-statutory consultation concluded on 3 November 2023 and a report is being taken to the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services on 19 January 2024.

In the report it is recommended that a public notice be published for a minimum period of 4 weeks between 26 January and 29 February 2024. After the public notice period and if, at this stage, a decision to proceed with the closure is made, a report would be taken to the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services for final approval.

Equalities considerations - Impact Assessment

Age

Impact on public	Negative - Low
Impact on staff	Negative - Low
Rationale	As a primary school attended by children aged 4-11 the impact on this protected characteristic has been assessed as negative low. If the school were to close, the primary aged children would be required to attend an alternative provision.
Mitigation	<p>Currently there are 26 children attending the school across the 7 year groups who would be required to submit an application to another primary school. There are a number of schools in the local area that are rated as "good" by Ofsted so parents will have the opportunity to apply for a place at any of those schools. Applications will be processed in accordance with the school's published admissions policy.</p> <p>Moving to an alternative school will increase the opportunities for pupils to learn and play with children their own age.</p> <p>Parents and children may have to travel further to receive their education, though some will be eligible for Home to School Transport. All children's eligibility for Home to School</p>

Transport will be assessed in line with the Home to School Transport Policy and all eligible children will be provided with to Home to School Transport assistance. Further information on assistance with Home to School Transport can be found here:
<https://documents.hants.gov.uk/transport-home-to-school/HTST-Policy-2021.docx>

The Hampshire County Council Human Resources department will work with and support all members of staff in line with all appropriate policies, regardless of their age, to assist with finding alternative employment elsewhere.

Disability

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>Number of children with EHCP's - 8% (summer term 2023)</p> <p>The proposed change is expected to have a neutral impact on people who share disability as a protected characteristic. Alternative schools will have a policy which protects this characteristic which will be adhered to if required.</p>
Mitigation	

Gender Reassignment

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>The proposed change is expected to have a neutral impact on people who share gender reassignment as a protected characteristic. Alternative schools will have a policy in relation to this protected characteristic which will be adhered to if required.</p>

	The Hampshire County Council Human Resources department will support and work with all members of staff in line with all appropriate policies, regardless of gender reassignment, to assist with finding alternative employment elsewhere.
Mitigation	

Pregnancy and Maternity

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>The proposed change is expected to have a neutral impact on people who share pregnancy and maternity as a protected characteristic. Alternative schools will have a policy in relation to this protected characteristic which will be adhered to if required.</p> <p>The Hampshire County Council Human Resources department will support and work with all members of staff in line with all appropriate policies, including those on maternity or paternity leave, to assist with finding alternative employment elsewhere.</p>
Mitigation	

Race

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>The proposed change is expected to have a neutral impact on people who share race as a protected characteristic. Alternative schools will have a policy which protects this characteristic which will be adhered to if required.</p>

	The Hampshire County Council Human Resources department will support and work with all members of staff in line with all appropriate policies, regardless of their race, to assist with finding alternative employment elsewhere.
Mitigation	

Religion or Belief

Impact on public	Negative - Low
Impact on staff	Negative - Low
Rationale	Ampfield School is a Church of England primary school with a religious characteristic. Some parents select this school as a preference due to this and others select it as it is their local school.
Mitigation	<p>The LA and Diocese value the provision of Church Schools for children of all faiths and none, but appreciate some parents particularly want their children to attend a school with a distinctively Christian ethos. Parents wishing to apply for places in such schools are assured that the School Admissions Team will support them in identifying those schools, and will be able to confirm at the time if those schools have places. Alternatively, parents can contact those schools direct. The LA and Diocese are reassured that there are at least two such schools reasonably local to Ampfield, although these would need to be applied for in line with published arrangements and places cannot be guaranteed.</p> <p>It is recognised that staff employed in Ampfield Church of England Primary School may have chosen employment due to religion or belief and therefore the impact has been assessed as low negative for staff. The Hampshire County Council Human Resources department will work and support all members of staff in line with all appropriate policies, regardless of their religion or belief, to assist with finding alternative employment elsewhere.</p>

Sex

Impact on public	Neutral
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Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>The proposed change is expected to have a neutral impact on people who share sex as a protected characteristic. Alternative schools will have a policy which protects this characteristic which will be adhered to if required.</p> <p>The Hampshire County Council Human Resources department will support and work with all members of staff in line with all appropriate policies, regardless of their sex, to assist with finding alternative employment elsewhere.</p>
Mitigation	

Sexual Orientation

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>The proposed change is expected to have a neutral impact on people who share sexual orientation as a protected characteristic. Schools will have a policy which protects this characteristic which will be adhered to if required.</p> <p>The Hampshire County Council Human Resources department will support and work with all members of staff in line with all appropriate policies, regardless of their sexual orientation, to assist with finding alternative employment elsewhere.</p>
Mitigation	

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral

Rationale	<p>The proposed change is expected to have a neutral impact on people who share marriage and civil partnership as a protected characteristic. Schools will have a policy which protects this characteristic which will be adhered to if required.</p> <p>The Hampshire County Council Human Resources department will work with all members of staff in line with all appropriate policies, regardless of their marital status, to assist with finding alternative employment elsewhere.</p>
Mitigation	

Poverty

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Negative - Low
Rationale	<p>Number of children registered for free school meals - 47% (summer term 2023) . Note: every child in YR, 1 & 2 is entitled to free school meals.</p> <p>Number of children who are eligible for pupil premium - 35% (summer term 2023)</p>
Mitigation	<p>The closure of Ampfield CE Primary School and the subsequent relocation of pupils to John Keble CE Primary School will not necessarily increase the overall use of the motor vehicle for the school run, and therefore cost of travel, as a majority of children are already travelling to school from outside of the catchment area. All children's eligibility for Home to School Transport will be assessed in line with the Home to School Transport Policy and all eligible children will be provided with to Home to School Transport assistance.</p> <p>The Hampshire County Council Human Resources department will support and work with all members of staff in line with all appropriate policies, regardless of their salary or grade, to assist with finding alternative employment elsewhere.</p>

Rurality

Impact on public	Negative - Low
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>It is proposed that the John Keble Church of England Primary School catchment area will be extended to incorporate the existing Ampfield Church of England Primary School catchment area, subject to approvals.</p> <p>The Hampshire County Council school transport policy provides local authority funded transport to the nearest school with a space when the home to school journey is more than the statutory distance or if the journey is less than the statutory distance but the route is unsafe. The statutory distance is 2 miles for a child who is 7 years or under and rises to 3 miles for children aged 8 or over. 3 For each child, who is a resident in the Hampshire County Council Local Authority administrative area, who moves school following a school closure an individual transport assessment would be required based on their home address and the journey to their new school.</p>
Mitigation	<p>The closure of Ampfield CE Primary School can be mitigated by the proposed relocation of pupils to John Keble Church of England Primary School if parents wish to have their children educated at the school. Home to school transport will be available for those children who are eligible for assistance. Each child's transport eligibility will be assessed, in line with the Home to School Transport policy, based on their home address and the school they attend.</p> <p>Further information in relation to Home to School Transport eligibility can be found here: https://documents.hants.gov.uk/transport-home-to-school/HTST-Policy-2021.docx</p> <p>It is recognised that alternative employment may require staff to travel further or less than they travel currently and therefore the impact on staff for rurality has been considered neutral. The Hampshire County Council Human Resources department will support and work with all members of staff in line with all appropriate policies, regardless of the home location, to assist with finding alternative employment elsewhere.</p>

Geographical Impact: Test Valley, Winchester

Equality Statement

Additional information:

The consultation documents were available online and could also be requested in paper form. Responses were collated via survey, email, post and in person at the consultation drop ins held at both Ampfield Church of England Primary School and John Keble Church of England Primary School. Every effort has been made to ensure that key stakeholders are able to access and comment on the public notice.

Overview Statement:

A summary assessment to show that due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty has been paid, which is undertaken when a full EIA is not needed:

EIA reference number: 00489

Date of production of EIA for publication: 30/11/2023

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Hampshire County Council utilises two decision-making tools to assess the carbon emissions and resilience impacts of its projects and decisions. These tools provide a clear, robust, and transparent way of assessing how projects, policies and initiatives contribute towards the County Council's climate change targets of being carbon neutral and resilient to the impacts of a 2°C temperature rise by 2050. This process ensures that climate change considerations are built into everything the Authority does.

Carbon Mitigation

Due to the relocation of pupils, there may be an increase in carbon dioxide emissions as some pupils may need to travel by motor vehicle due to an increased distance and inaccessibility of the proposed new catchment school, John Keble CE Primary School. However, the relocation of pupils may mean that some are able to travel to school by active travel (walking, cycling, etc.) as they now live closer. This would therefore help to offset the additional carbon emissions produced from other pupils now having to use motor vehicles to travel.

There may be carbon emissions that need to be mitigated but it is dependent on where current students on roll live in relation to Ampfield, and which school they subsequently choose to relocate to, should a decision be taken to close Ampfield CE Primary School.

Should approval be granted to close the school, the decision would support the strategic priority of ensuring people in Hampshire live safe, healthy, and independent lives is met.

Appendix A



*Children's Services Department
Elizabeth II Court North,
Winchester
Hampshire SO23 8UG*

Telephone 0300 555 1384
Fax 01962 842355
Textphone 0845 603 5625

Enquiries to **Mark Saunders**

My reference

Direct Line

Your reference

Date **29 September 2023**

E-mail strategicplanningunit@hants.gov.uk

Dear Consultee

The Future of Ampfield Church of England Primary School, Knapp Lane, Ampfield

Hampshire County Council is consulting on the future of Ampfield Church of England Primary School.

The full governing body of the Ampfield CE Primary School and John Keble CE Primary School Federation, the Local Authority and the Diocese of Winchester met to discuss the education outcomes for children and the future financial viability of Ampfield CE Primary School. As a result of this meeting the Governing Body wrote to the Local Authority seeking their support for a consultation to be held with the local community on the potential closure of Ampfield CE Primary School.

Reason for proposal

The Director of Children's Services, in discussion with the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services, has approved a period of public consultation on the proposed closure of Ampfield CE Primary School from 31 August 2024. Where a Local Authority proposes to make significant changes to a school, including closure, it must follow relevant guidelines as set out by the Department for Education. This information and some Frequently Asked Questions are available on the following website:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/aboutthecouncil/haveyoursay/consultations/>

Director of Children's Services
Stuart Ashley



Providing an outstanding service to children and families

Contextual Information

Ampfield CE Primary School is an 84-place primary school for pupils aged 4-11 (12 children per year group). It is federated with John Keble CE Primary School located in the village of Hursley approximately two miles away. The school had 26 pupils on roll in September 2023, 2 of whom live in the Ampfield catchment area. Ofsted judged the school to be Good following a visit in June 2018 and it is anticipated that the school will be inspected again before July 2024.

The new National Curriculum is a knowledge based curriculum in which children are taught sequences of knowledge, which can present some challenges. There is concern from governors that the school will be unable to sustain the quality of this delivery to groups of children across a considerable age range, resulting in an unsatisfactory Ofsted judgement. This view is shared by the Local Authority and the Diocese. All parties are committed to ensuring that children in Hampshire receive the very best education and teachers at the school will continue to work hard to provide this. While teaching the national curriculum in mixed age classes is not unusual, teaching across more than one key stage, or across 3 or 4 year groups is complex and challenging. This is made more difficult in that each teacher "stands alone" as they have no year group or even key stage partner with whom to work.

John Keble CE Primary School is rated as Good by Ofsted following a short inspection in October 2017. This reinforced the previous Ofsted judgement of Good in June 2013. John Keble CE Primary School is currently supported by the Local Authority and are expected to achieve a good judgement when next inspected by Ofsted.

A reduction in the birth rate nationally over recent years together with the slowing down of house building in some areas has led to falling school rolls. Ampfield CE Primary School has one of the lowest numbers on roll in the county and has had a consistently low intake in recent years. As school revenue budgets are directly aligned with numbers on roll, that puts significant pressure on the school's finances. A school with such significant surplus places is not sustainable financially and cannot continue to provide the breadth of curriculum required by pupils.

The table below shows how the numbers in the school have changed over the past three years, with the total number on roll reducing as the larger cohorts leave the school.

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	September 2023
YR	7	2	2	3
Y1	1	12	2	3
Y2	5	2	8	1
Y3	4	5	2	6
Y4	6	8	5	2
Y5	4	6	11	2
Y6	10	5	7	9
Total	37	40	37	26

The pupil forecast for Ampfield shows a continued fall in pupil numbers based on the historic trend of recruitment for reception year pupils. The forecast suggests that there are a maximum of six pupils living in the catchment of the school over the next 5 years and not all parents living in catchment are choosing to send their child to the school.

The Consultation

The purpose of this consultation is to seek the view of all stakeholders on the proposed closure of Ampfield CE Primary School from August 31 2024. The decision-making process is outlined below:

- This initial consultation will run from Friday 29 September 2023 until Friday 3 November 2023, including two public meetings, detailed below.
- A report setting-out the consultation responses received will be taken to the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services in January 2024 to decide if the proposal should continue to the formal statutory consultation stage.
- If approved, a statutory Public Notice would be published for a period of four weeks during which representations can be made to the Local Authority.
- If, at this stage, a decision is taken to proceed with the closure, a report would be taken to the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services for final approval.

How to take part in the consultation

A public meeting has been arranged and will provide an opportunity for parents/carers/stakeholders to raise their views directly with council officers.

The meetings are to be held:

- 09 October between 7-8.30pm at Ampfield Church of England Primary School
- 10 October between 7-8.30pm at John Keble Church of England Primary School

A website has also been set up with the details of the consultation which includes a link to the survey (<https://forms.office.com/e/jxysTPv3KG>) and also some 'Frequently Asked Questions' that may address any queries you have. To access this website please follow the link below:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/aboutthecouncil/haveyoursay/consultations/>

If you would like to speak to an Officer, please make that request by email to strategicplanningunit@hants.gov.uk briefly outlining your query so we can arrange a mutually convenient time for you to speak to an appropriate officer either via conference call or telephone.

If you are unable to email or visit the above website and wish to make a comment, please write to Mark Saunders, Senior Strategic Development Officer, Children's

Services Department, EII Court North, Winchester, Hampshire SO23 8UG by Friday 3 November 2023.

Thank you for taking the time to give us your comments. Your response will be carefully considered as part of the consultation.

Yours sincerely



Mark Saunders
Senior Strategic Development Officer
Children's Services Department

The data you provide as part of your consultation response will be treated in accordance with UK Data Protection Legislation, and may be used as part of aggregated information published in a decision report. Any personal data provided will be removed before any publication. Your data will be retained in line with the County Council's retention strategy. The legal basis for our use of this information is the compliance with our 'public task' duty. You have some legal rights in respect of the personal information we collect from you. Please see the supporting details for further information: <https://hants.sharepoint.com/sites/Chil8684/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2FChil8684%2FShared%20Documents%2FGDPR%20CSPN%20DSDCD%2DSchool%20Closure%20Consultations%20Privacy%20Notice%2Epdf&parent=%2Fsites%2FChil8684%2FShared%20Documents&p=true&ga=1>. You can contact the County Council's Data Protection Officer at data.protection@hants.gov.uk, if you have a concern about the way we are collecting or using your personal data. You should raise your concern with us in the first instance or directly to the Information Commissioner's Office at <https://ico.org.uk/concerns/>

Appendix B

1

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 29 September 2023 09:26
To: Strategic Planning Unit
Subject: Ampfield closing

Categories: Consultation

Caution: This is an external email and could contain malicious content. Do not open any links or attachments if you were not expecting them. If the e-mail looks suspicious, please report via the 'Report Phishing' Button found on your toolbar.

Hi,

First of all I'm disgusted that in an area where there are no spaces available you're thinking of closing the only school with spaces. Are you insane?

Please can someone contact me to discuss what happens to us when there are no spaces available at all? Not to mention the impact on my child with special needs?

[REDACTED]

2

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 05 October 2023 08:34
To: Strategic Planning Unit
Cc: [Redacted]
Subject: Ampfield School Site

Categories: Consultation

Caution: This is an external email and could contain malicious content. Do not open any links or attachments if you were not expecting them. If the e-mail looks suspicious, please report via the 'Report Phishing' Button found on your toolbar.

Hello

I own and manage [Redacted] and have heard about the potential closure of Ampfield School. If the school were to close, I would be very interested in knowing more about the site, as we are currently over subscribed and actively looking for additional premises in the local area.
As and when you have any further details, please can you let me know?

Kind regards

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Ampfield Church of England Primary School - Consultation 2023

Hampshire County Council is consulting on the future of Ampfield Church of England Primary School. The Director of Children's Services, in discussion with the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services, has approved a period of public consultation on the proposed closure of Ampfield CE Primary School from 31 August 2024. Where a Local Authority proposes to make significant changes to a school, including closure, it must follow relevant guidelines as set out by the Department for Education.

This initial consultation will run from **Friday 29 September 2023 until Friday 3 November 2023**, including two public meetings. The meetings are to be held on:
09 October between 7-8.30pm at Ampfield Church of England Primary School
10 October between 7-8.30pm at John Keble Church of England Primary School

After that:

- A report setting-out the consultation responses received will be taken to the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services in January 2024 to decide if the proposal should continue to the formal statutory consultation stage.
- If approved, a statutory Public Notice would be published for a period of four weeks during which representations can be made to the Local Authority.
- If, at this stage, a decision is taken to proceed with the closure, a report would be taken to the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services for final approval.

1. Please indicate if you are a:

- Parent/ carer of a child at Ampfield Church of England Primary School
- Member of staff at Ampfield Church of England Primary School
- Pupil at Ampfield Church of England Primary School
- Governor at Ampfield Church of England Primary School
- Parent/ carer of a child at another school
- Ampfield resident
- Other

2. Do you support the proposal to close Ampfield Church of England Primary School?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

3. Please provide a reason for your answer to question 2

Ampfield should be converted into specialist infant provision to help other families like ours that have needed a place for a child that would not cope with a more conventional school setting.

4. Additional comments:

Ampfield's teachers have let two of our children thrive. Sending local children across the county to 'specialist schools' would not be suitable. i.e. children that have SEN on long commutes is not going to help them.

Thank you for your comments.

Your response will be considered as part of the consultation on the future of Ampfield Church of England Primary School. Responses will be used as part of a report that will be taken to a future decision day.

Ampfield Church of England Primary School - Consultation 2023

Hampshire County Council is consulting on the future of Ampfield Church of England Primary School. The Director of Children's Services, in discussion with the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services, has approved a period of public consultation on the proposed closure of Ampfield CE Primary School from 31 August 2024. Where a Local Authority proposes to make significant changes to a school, including closure, it must follow relevant guidelines as set out by the Department for Education.

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- If, at this stage, a decision is taken to proceed with the closure, a report would be taken to the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services for final approval.

1. Please indicate if you are a:

- Parent/ carer of a child at Ampfield Church of England Primary School
- Member of staff at Ampfield Church of England Primary School
- Pupil at Ampfield Church of England Primary School
- Governor at Ampfield Church of England Primary School
- Parent/ carer of a child at another school
- Ampfield resident
- Other

2. Do you support the proposal to close Ampfield Church of England Primary School?

Yes
 No

Unsure

3. Please provide a reason for your answer to question 2

But, it is a shame it can't be funded as
specialist provision

4. Additional comments:



Thank you for your comments.

Your response will be considered as part of the consultation on the future of Ampfield Church of England Primary School. Responses will be used as part of a report that will be taken to a future decision day.

5

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 October 2023 17:11
To: Strategic Planning Unit
Subject: Support please re Ampfield Primary School

Categories: Consultation

Caution: This is an external email and could contain malicious content. Do not open any links or attachments if you were not expecting them. If the e-mail looks suspicious, please report via the 'Report Phishing' Button found on your toolbar.

Good afternoon
I am the [REDACTED] at this school, so I am going to be out of a job when this takes place and I am of the view that the school will close regardless of any opinions.
Nobody has been in touch with me at all to support me or discuss my options which I am not at all happy with.
Please can somebody from HR contact me as a matter of urgency. Presumably you have a duty of care towards your employees although when I asked this at the public meeting my question was brushed aside and nothing has happened.
My phone number is [REDACTED].
Yours sincerely
[REDACTED]
Sent from [Outlook for iOS](#)

6

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 25 October 2023 10:34
To: Strategic Planning Unit; [Redacted]
Subject: Ampfield Primary School

Categories: Consultation

Caution: This is an external email and could contain malicious content. Do not open any links or attachments if you were not expecting them. If the e-mail looks suspicious, please report via the 'Report Phishing' Button found on your toolbar.

Good morning,

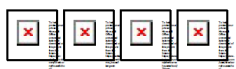
We have been very sorry to hear of the potential closure of Ampfield Primary School. I am writing to you from Sherborne House School, a local independent school in Chandler's Ford. We currently have spaces so we would like to offer support by way of helping parents to choose their next school. We would very much welcome the opportunity to come and speak with parents about what Sherborne House has to offer or, indeed, provide guidance for other local primary schools so that they can find the best setting for their child.

We hope to hear from you soon and hope that this could be made possible.

Best wishes and kind regards,

--
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

Sherborne House
Lakewood Road | Chandler's Ford
Hampshire | SO53 1EU
T: 023 80 252440
W: sherbornehouse.co.uk



7

From: [REDACTED] >
Sent: Friday, October 27, 2023 12:10 pm
To: Heron, Cllr E <edward.heron@hants.gov.uk>
Subject: Proposed Ampfield School Closure

[REDACTED]

Caution: This is an external email and could contain malicious content. Do not open any links or attachments if you were not expecting them. If the e-mail looks suspicious, please report via the 'Report Phishing' Button found on your toolbar.

Dear Councillor Heron.

I understand that you are the councillor who will review the evidence about the proposed closure of Ampfield C of E Primary School and who will make the final decision.

I would like to meet with you, please, to discuss this matter.

My interest is as a previous Head of Governors, an Ampfield parishioner and as a parent whose children attended the school.

Yours

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Appendix C

ID	Please indicate if you are a :	Do you support the proposal to close Ampfield Church of England Primary School?	Please provide a reason for your answer to question 2.	Additional comments:
1	Parent/ carer of a child at Ampfield Church of England Primary School ;	No	This is a wonderful school, the children have an excellent relationship with their teachers and learning. They are all known personally when they arrive even just into the playground by all staff. They have a wonderful relationship on learning and include a forest school for the younger children one half day a week. I feel this would be an absolute shame for my child who's only just joined this September to have to move schools. We were torn between 3 really lovely schools and to us the small 1:1 relationship the children get here swung it for us	I don't feel the school should be closed and I feel the added pressure onto already full schools locally would really impact the children's learning and enjoyment in a settled school.
2	Parent/ carer of a child at Ampfield Church of England Primary School ;	No	Ampfield provides a safe space and wonderful education which is unmet by other local schools. We have no catchment spaces in our area (chandlers ford) and we're given ampfield. To start I was dubious but they have been amazing. My child with adhd struggled at his previous school but at Ampfield has thrived. I genuinely fear for his health if it closes. Not to mention there aren't spaces here anyway, so where are my children to go? You're closing down the only school that was available to me. The local authority has a duty to provide an education for my children and by closing would be breaching that. Funding should not be based on pupil numbers but need of the area. Maybe get some of those tax dodging politicians to pay their taxes and we'd not have this issue. I'm now in a panic over my child's wellbeing which is not what I need as a disabled parent.	Having been told Ampfield was the only school available, what are you going to do if you do close it? Just sack us off and abandon our children?
3	Parent/ carer of a child at another school ;	Yes	The small numbers do not justify the need for the school particularly where classes have such a broad range of ages.	<p>As a John Keble parent of a mixed Y1/Y2 class I believe this could and should be seen as an opportunity to improve John Keble school, a beautiful place to learn under the excellent leadership of Mrs Vidler.</p> <p>With it being a short distance away it makes sense to combine (NOT REMOVE) the funding and sale of the building/assets to improve facilities in JK, Hursley which at current needs more space and classrooms</p> <p>Extending the school to incorporate the "temporary" Y6 building/class and creating separate Y1 and Y2 classrooms would support the anticipated growth in children - perhaps with the purchase of the temporary IBM car park next to it. This move by Hampshire CC would show real intent for the future of children growing up in the area with increasing numbers at Hursley Nursery school.</p> <p>Those children attending Ampfield often join because of learning and social interaction difficulties, these must be taken into consideration with provision, facilities and support given to the school they move to.</p>

4	Governor at Ampfield Church of England Primary School ;	Unsure	It has the potential to be changed into a school which specialises in semh needs as it is a small setting of a lovely building	
5	Member of staff at Ampfield Church of England Primary School ;	No	These schools are needed to cater for children who cannot cope with larger primary schools, Ampfield caters for these children	Dedicated staff who look after children with educational needs and learning difficulties, sometimes these are not catered for in a larger school
6	Live close by ;	Yes	Clearly it's unsustainable.	
7	Ampfield resident ;Parent/ carer of a child at another school ;	Yes	Numbers are falling, Budget provision is worryingly short of what is needed. Teaching must be very difficult given the mixed classes. There appears to be no prospect of future growth of pupil population	
8	Former parent and staff member at John Keble;	Yes	Always struggled with numbers. Children would, on the whole, benefit from a larger school, with more opportunities for extra curricular activities, more opportunities to socialise with other children. A bigger school would also prepare children better for their transition to secondary school.	
9	Parent/ carer of a child at Ampfield Church of England Primary School ;	No	This school is very good for my child,he love to be there.	
10	Parent/ carer of a child at Ampfield Church of England Primary School ;	Unsure	My child is a year 6 at Ampfield so not too affected but concerned about the children possibly needing to change schools is Ampfield closed due to the severe lack of spaces in schools locally.	Having been through the process of having to find space for my children to start in September 2023. It was really quite stressful due to lack of spaces at the time in any school close to me which is why we were offered Ampfield or John Keble. If these 2 schools are infact a federation surely finding space or actually making space for these students should be a priority for John Keble school. The understanding is that current year 6's are the largest year group at Ampfield. Surely this means that there would be a maximum of 4 students per year group to find space at John Keble. This would mean a much smoother process for all involved. Speaking as a parent who has been through the extremely stressful process of 'in year' application, with the school closing, if there are not any schools close by it should not be acceptable to just provide a taxi for children to travel to their primary school with space. John Keble should be at least offering a space for pupils as a first instance. Ampfield has felt neglected as it is and not felt part of a federation, the newsletters for the past year will show that. As a federation, John Keble making it a priority to find a space for these pupils and families should be the least they can do.
11	Parent/ carer of a child at Ampfield Church of England Primary School ;	No	We do NOT support the proposal to close Ampfield school. Ampfield is a great school and my child loves attending, he is very upset with the proposal of its closure.	It will be such a shame to close a great school and a waste to the lovely school grounds to potentially turn into houses or flats.
12	Parent/ carer of a child at another school ;	Yes	I support the proposal to allow the resources to be consolidated for better effect of all the children at John Keeble school.	

13	Ampfield resident ;	No	I believe that a local school is important for those living locally. The closure would result in a long distance having to be travelled to the next local school and this puts a strain on families time and finances in order to have to take them to school. This school is lovely and the children are happy who attend here as they have a small classroom and more one on one tuition than they would receive elsewhere. I am planning a family and would be heartbroken to not be able to go to a local school.	
14	Member of staff at Ampfield Church of England Primary School ;	No	The children are well provided for, safe and happy. They thrive in a small school environment and their parents have chosen this. It is disgusting and abhorrent to me that money and fears of Ofsted are taking priority over their wellbeing. Staff are being expected to do way more than the typical teacher job and this is done through good will. This proposal completely disregards and insults the work that the current staff do.	Extra funding should be made available to support continuation of the school and investment should be made into the building and staff. Small schools are needed. Not everything is about money.
15	Parent/ carer of a child at another school ;	Yes	The intake and classes are too small to be viable at Ampfield. Pupils, teachers and other resources should be redirected into John Keble which at last interim Ofsted inspection had issues itself - which I am led to believe would reduce John Keble's rating down from 'good'. The boost in more students, funding etc. would help both schools.	<p>Ampfield and John Keble are geographically very close so it would make sense to move students across. Ampfield and John Keble are in a federation so share resources etc. If Ampfield is closed, John Keble should not be detrimentally impacted in terms of budget, resources etc. - that would feel like making a bad situation worse.</p> <p>The new head teacher is effecting change at John Keble under difficult circumstances - her motivation and morale, and that of the rest of the teams at both schools should be closely monitored and supported.</p>
16	Ex pupil parent ;	No	The school is unique and very accepting nurturing and caring of every child's needs . The school strife's to meet every individual child's needs.	My [REDACTED] moved to Ampfield school from a well known large three intake primary school in Romsey . My daughter thrived at Ampfield, socially , emotionally and academically with smaller classes and the teaching style at Ampfield school

17	Ampfield resident ;	Yes	<p>The issue here is how best to provide high quality learning to the children at Ampfield PS, especially those who's learning was retarded by the lockdown.</p> <p>In a school with a roll of only 26 children, spread over all six year groups, and teaching resources severely limited by lack of funds, it is not possible for a teacher to give any child the teaching time it needs, provide adequate supervision, or to attend to safeguarding and PTSD, especially if any of the children have special needs. High quality outcomes are simply not possible in the situation Ampfield PS finds itself in. The data provided by the Education Authority is compelling, and cannot be</p> <p>As a former governor at a single form entry Primary School in Romsey, I know how the schools funding system works, and how difficult it is for a Head Teacher with a roll of around 200 to allocate adequate teaching resources to meet the needs of the children's education, let alone deal with all the safeguarding and special needs that schools are obliged to deal with. At Ampfield it would be impossible.</p> <p>If Ampfield were to close, there are several very good Primary schools in the area that would provide the children with a better quality of learning, with a lower risk of failure, such as John Keble, Halterworth, Cupernham, and Romsey Primary.</p> <p>No doubt there will be some people who will argue for a fresh start for Ampfield PS, but we have tried that before, and it failed. It will be sad to see this historic school close, but the facts are incontrovertible. Closure would be the rational decision in the best interests of the children's education.</p>	
18	Parent/ carer of a child at another school ;Needing a smaller setting for my son ;	No	<p>No I do not support this. My [REDACTED] local school cannot meet his needs so he hasn't been able to attend school for 4 weeks!! This is due to him not having a diagnosis but yet needing extra support either from a smaller setting or sen school- in which there are not enough to support them all. After weeks and weeks of searching for a school I found Ampfield only to find they will close, which limits mine and other parents options.</p>	<p>There are not enough support schools local that can help a child who has learning difficulties but aren't classed as severe. Turning the school into a SEN school is a great idea and I'm sure funding would be available for such a good use!!</p>
19	Parent/ carer of a child at another school ;	No	<p>There is so many children struggling already, I think it should be considered to become an SEN school, due to the outcry from special needs school and the lack of schools available.</p>	<p>Please consider keeping the school open and making it as an SEN provision</p>
20	Parent/ carer of a child at another school ;	Yes	<p>The school only provides education for 2 children within Ampfield. It is simply not viable. At this time of funding cuts and a struggle to find provision in nearby areas, the resources would be better used elsewhere.</p> <p>Both schools in the federation are under subscribed so there is no justification for it.</p>	<p>Staff turnover has been high at this school.</p> <p>Surely providing transport support for the two children in Ampfield and any others who express it as their 1st choice catchment school in the next round of admissions would be a better use of finding?</p> <p>It should also be noted that at teaching and management staff have changed several times since the most recent OFSTED inspection.</p>
21	Pupil at Ampfield Church of England Primary School ;	No	<p>Small schools are needed. We don't want to to a bigger school</p>	

22	Ampfield resident ;Pupil at Ampfield Church of England Primary School ;Parent/ carer of a child at Ampfield Church of England Primary School ;	No	WE DO NOT SUPPORT THIS CLOSURE. IF ANYTHING WE NEED MORE SCHOOLS AFTER ALL THESR HOUSES BEING BUILT TO HELP PROVIDE THESE EXTRA CHILDREN WITH EDUCATION . I ALSO FULLY SUPPORT THE SCHOOL BEING CONVERTED INTO A SEN SCHOOL AS MY NEPHEW HAS TO TRAVEL 24MILES TO HIS SEN SCHOOL	
23	Ampfield resident ;	Unsure	My own children do not attend the school as having moved here when they already attended a different school I did not wish to move them. The school with its very small size is not the right education setting for my children, however I firmly believe it is better than most schools for some children. I also feel it is important for local children to be able to attend a school within walking distance.	The smaller class groupings seem to work for some and a local educational facility is important for some families in the village.
24	A parent wanting to send their child to this school;	No	Would love for my child to go to CofE school that I smaller than most schools	
25	Regular member of Ampfield church;	Yes	I understand the concerns about being able to implement the new curriculum and the falling birth rate, so from a strategic point of view, it does make sense. However, both my [REDACTED] attended the school, in the nineties, and the eldest one particularly, needed a small school for his primary education and I am very grateful, they were able to attend this lovely school. Therefore, my heart wants it to stay open, but acknowledge that emotions are not helpful in this scenario.	I have a life long relationship with Ampfield church, which I have attended since birth, even though since marriage I have lived in Romsey, and strongly feel that the school is an integral part of the village. If the school closes, I feel very strongly that this beautiful building continues to be used as a community resource.
26	Ampfield Parish Council;	Yes	Whilst sad to see the closure of the school, with reference to the briefing paper we understand that for it to remain open is not financially justifiable.	We note that the land for the school was conveyed according to the School Sites Act 1841 and the School Sites Act 1844 and if the school is closed the site will return to the beneficiaries of Mr [REDACTED] who died on [REDACTED], with probate granted on [REDACTED]. If his beneficiaries cannot be found (unlikely), then the site will be owned by HM Treasury as bona vacantia land. The original conveyance states this and it was confirmed by [REDACTED] solicitors of [REDACTED] on [REDACTED] who wrote to [REDACTED] of [REDACTED].
27	Member of staff at Ampfield Church of England Primary School ;	No	The school provides a valuable resource for children who thrive in this small environment.	How will you support the staff? Nobody has contacted us at all.
28	Member of staff at Ampfield Church of England Primary School ;	No	The children at Ampfield are vulnerable for a number of reasons including SEND. Moving schools, potentially into much larger classes, will be detrimental to their education and well being.	
29	Hampshire resident;	Yes	Whilst it may be technically possible to construct a curriculum which enables coverage of the National Curriculum for all YR-6 children, it is difficult to see how the children can enjoy a range of social and sporting opportunities with so few pupils in a year group.	

30	Resident North Baddesley & former teacher in The Federation;	No	<p>I attended the poorly advertised Consultation Meeting held at Ampfield Primary, and raised some questions with the panel during the meeting.</p> <p>Ampfield Primary School is a unique school with a big heart for inclusion. It has a very caring Christian ethos providing the very best it can for every individual pupil beginning from where the children are personally, socially, emotionally and academically when they arrive in the school. Ampfield Primary has small classes which is where some children thrive. Busier, bigger environments do not suit every learner. Ampfield Primary has a very special purpose for every learner who goes there, many of whom have individual needs that require a bespoke individualised curriculum to enable them to be successful. Ampfield Primary can integrate these children and does very successfully because its classes are small. In recent years staff have been very experienced and thus able to differentiate effectively to meet the needs of all the learners in their class.</p> <p>I recognise that experienced staff are more expensive, but the LEA benefits from these people too. Professionals value the learning opportunities Ampfield Primary provides them with, and within the last five years 3 senior staff have become Headteachers in other local Primary Schools. The Management opportunities these people have had within The Federation of Ampfield and John Keble Schools are unique and challenging, yet incredibly rewarding when they see the differences they are making to the lives of the children. What they learnt here is no doubt proving very valuable to them as they now lead their own schools.</p> <p>I strongly believe that the school should be protected by the LEA who should recognise its unique strengths, sustain them and develop them, most importantly for the children the school serves. Ampfield champions providing the very best for all of its learners, many of whom are in some way vulnerable.</p>	<p>Interestingly since the meeting I have seen this article in the National Press. Look what a small caring environment did for this pupil. https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-cambridgeshire-67124263</p>
30 (cntd.)			<p>I understand what is being said about the budget yet recognise this is part of a national difficulty currently within the education system. This is not a reason to close a small school. Maybe with the full commitment of the LEA, The Federation of Ampfield and John Keble CofE Primary Schools should be looking for a new way forward. Ampfield School could become a specialised unit within The Federation that is designed to meet the needs of the children who naturally gravitate here. This would take 100% commitment from the LEA, but I believe more provision for these children is required within the area, as the education of every child in the wider locality than Ampfield's catchment area is important.</p> <p>Another possibility is for Ampfield Primary to become a Nursery with The Federation. Again this would take commitment from the LEA, but as one who now works in this sector, it pains me to see how far some 2/3/4 year olds travel to Nursery, especially when they have already identified individual needs. Ampfield Primary is perfectly located on the main road from Romsey to Winchester with many parents with young children in their cars already driving past it twice a day. I sincerely hope that the outcome of this consultation will be to find a way forward so that children can still be educated at Ampfield Primary School. With the LEA, the Federation of Ampfield and John Keble schools and the local community all being proud of the very valuable contribution this little school with a very big Christian heart makes for all its pupils.</p>	

31 Member of the public;	No	Closing the school with have a detrimental impact on the pupils attending the school.	
32 Ampfield resident ;Governor at Ampfield Church of England Primary School ;Former Chairman of Governors, Ampfield;	No	LEA - incompetent statistics; badly publicised meeting, little public consultation time, no marketing help given to keep school open, LEA will decide behind closed doors.	<p>On October 9th Hampshire Local Education Authority visited Ampfield School and delivered an ill prepared presentation about the process they were going to follow to close down Ampfield C of E Primary School.</p> <p>This team had given minimal notice, so the audience was small, the statistics they presented were derisory and would not have met the standards laid down by any self respecting statistician or the Market Research Society's exacting requirements. They failed to show that they had examined alternatives and every optimistic, constructive suggestion from the audience was dismissed with body language and answers that indicated they had come with a pre-ordained brief to close the school.</p> <p>They explained the very short process for consultation and said that the matter would be decided by one individual in the LEA and that that individual would not be available for face to face questioning by parents, staff, governors or other interested parties.</p> <p>Parents and staff explained the unique offers that this small school gives to children from as far away as Millbrook and the value of small classes, yet the LEA hit team were only interested in the catchment area of a few square miles between Hursley, Braishfield and Ampfield.</p> <p>In today's world the smaller classes offered by private schools is valued yet this team want to force the sensitive pupils of Ampfield with special needs into unsuitable, larger classes.</p> <p>The team said that one of the problems in schools was the lack of teachers. In their team there were two former teachers. Rather than trying to shut down Hampshire's 'uneconomic' schools they should be seconded to Ampfield for twelve months and help turn it around.</p>
32 (cntd.)			<p>In a lifetime of business, this was one of the most egregious, incompetent presentations that I have attended; it was an exercise in steamrolling.</p> <p>The LEA in their arrogance is judge, jury and executioner. Their attitude was disgraceful and disrespectful to all who work so hard at Ampfield School.</p>
33 Member of staff at Ampfield Church of England Primary School ;	Yes	Children are not getting the best education they deserve, staff are thinly spread and need is not being met.	
34 Local resident;	Yes	Whilst ot would be great to keep a school like Ampfield open, the reality is that with the number of pupils, it just is not feasible. They are not getting the education that they deserve and would get in a bigger school. We should consider the needs of the children as our utmost priority.	I can understand the sentiment in keeping the school open, but as above it just is not feasible, or fair to the children

Appendix D – Comments received after the consultation ended

ID	Please indicate if you are Do you support	Please provide a reason for your answer to question 2.	Additional comments:
35	Parent/ carer of a child at Ampfield Church of England Primary School ; No	<p>As a parent to a child in Ampfield, this is such a fantastic and special school run by incredibly talented and dedicated staff.</p> <p>An environment that's really helped the development of our children. Two of our sons with complex development delays have been supported through this school, with one currently in Ampfield infants.</p> <p>It provides an unique part of Hampshire's provision because it caters for children that wouldn't fit in to the larger class sizes, and helping those that that really benefit from the multi-age group classes. The incredible teachers are able to meet each child's needs where they are at in their development.</p> <p>It is a particularly important resource for children with special educational needs,</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ampfield's multi-age classes are able to meet the needs of these pupils prior to getting an EHCP. It seems to takes years to get an EHCP, and there can also be a long delay working out why a child is not coping in a more normal class. Ampfield provide that space to work out what the need is before the EHCP. 2. It is ideal for children that would otherwise need to be in specialist provision. It provides a place where their needs can be met, through the multi-year classes. <p>By meeting the needs in this caring and small environment, they can access the work, develop at the pace they are capable of and be happy. The alternative of a child unable to cope in a more conventional setting would result in negative behaviours.</p>	Specialist schools are provided with extra support and funding. Ampfield (in particular infants) should be recognised as the specialist provision that it is, and given the support needed to thrive in that role. So that it can continue to support other local families that are on a similar journey to ours.
35 (cntd.)		<p>The alternative to Ampfield in our case would likely be specialist provision. However, we are being told there is no availability. It is difficult to see that special provision schools can be provided at remote locations, naturally these need to be local, to avoid sending SEN children that struggle (for example with toileting) long commuting distances.</p> <p>Our son in infants has received such fantastic teaching from an incredible teacher and assistant, that have really helped him to thrive there.</p>	
36	Ampfield resident ; Yes	<p>This is a very very small school and for my child who is due to start school is September this is not an appropriate school for her development and learning in primary education. This is our only school within catchment area and is not a fair school for learning and teaching on all levels based on the levels of schools that art near by, Cupernham, Hilingbury & John Keble</p>	

Appendix E – Public Notice



AMPFIELD CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL, AMPFIELD – DISCONTINUANCE

1. Notice is hereby given, in accordance with Section 15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013 that Hampshire County Council, Elizabeth II Court, Winchester, Hampshire, SO23 8UG intends to discontinue AMPFIELD CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL, Knapp Lane, Ampfield, Romsey, SO51 9BT (category of school – Voluntary Controlled Church of England) with effect from 31 August 2024.
2. Ampfield Church of England Primary School is a small Church of England school located in Romsey, Test Valley. It is an 84-place primary school for pupils aged 4-11 (12 children per year group). The proposal is to close Ampfield Church of England Primary School with effect from 31 August 2024.
3. Ampfield CE Primary School had 20 pupils on roll as of January 2024, two of whom live in the Ampfield catchment area. A reduction in the birth rate nationally over recent years together with a lack of housing developments within the Ampfield catchment area has led to falling school rolls. The school is currently operating 1 class at KS1 and 1 class at KS2. Whilst teaching the national curriculum in mixed age classes is not unusual, teaching across more than one key stage, or across 3 or 4 year groups is both complex and challenging. The closure of Ampfield Church of England Primary School is therefore being proposed due to continuing challenges the school are facing. Places will be available for all pupils affected by the closure of Ampfield Church of England Primary School (including those with special educational needs) at John Keble Church of England Primary School, Hursley. The two schools are currently federated.
4. Transport will be provided for any pupils who qualify under the authority's published policy: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/schooltransport>
5. This Notice is an extract from the complete proposal. Copies of the complete proposal may be obtained from Mark Saunders, Senior Strategic Development Officer, Children's Services Department, EII Court North, Winchester, Hampshire SO23 8UG; e-mail: strategicplanningunit@hants.gov.uk
6. Within five weeks from the date of publication of these proposals, any person may object or make comments on the proposal by sending them to Mark Saunders, Senior Strategic Development Officer, Children's Services Department, EII Court North, Winchester, Hampshire SO23 8UG; e-mail: strategicplanningunit@hants.gov.uk

Dated January 2024

Carolyn Williamson
Chief Executive

Appendix F – Comments submitted during the public notice period 1.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2024 14:22
To: Strategic Planning Unit
Subject: Ampfield School Consultation

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

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Dear Mr Saunders

Further to the recent communications I write with a couple of points I would like to raise regarding the proposed closure of Ampfield School.

I am surprised and concerned to hear that a school is due to close in an area that is not only one of the most affluent but capable areas of the United Kingdom.

Having been a resident of the local area since birth and seeing the area develop, I am surprised to find a decision to close a school is difficult to understand or indeed understand the true nature of the reason to close the school.

I would say as a resident and a parent of two children who have attended and are currently attending Ampfield School that since the departure of Mr Marcus Roe the school has been in decline for some time with little or no effort to rectify this.

Mr Marcus Roe no doubt made excellent efforts to maintain the school and its status that was never in question as an individual is a truly unique person in today's day and age a professional individual, we should all aspire.

Currently like most parents at Ampfield School I am now faced with the unnecessary upheaval of relocating my child to another school at this stage is troubling as children require stability and continuity in their lives. I know the argument is countered by other reasons that may transpire to move my child, but I feel this is a forced issue and shows no signs of thought or concern for the Ampfield School community.

The ironic side to this is that Ampfield school is a far easier school to get to than other schools with less traffic disruption than say there is at John Kable which causes the residents of Hursley more issues than the residents at Ampfield.

When I first applied for my eldest child to attend primary school the closest was Ampfield which is some distance from my home and passes several other schools on the way. If this were to happen today, I assume the travel to school would be a greater distance (subject to placement at other local schools) which raises a concern about the need for schools in this area.

Ampfield School is no doubt unique which is at present a gift and a curse, having seen the school and what it can achieve and what it has already achieved I would like to know why the closure is taking place.

I think as a parent and part of the community this is not a good sign or an act that demonstrates logical thinking. It appears very poorly handled, as a professional, it is something I would not want to be associated with as this is poorly thought out and the execution is just as poor.

Kind Regards
[REDACTED]

2.

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 26 January 2024 16:48
To: Strategic Planning Unit
Subject: Ampfield School - potential closure

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

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I am interested to understand any implications for John Keble School which is the other school in the Federation? Would it mean that the Ampfield children are automatically transferred to John Keble which will have implications for the class sizes at John Keble?

If this is the case, I would like to understand how many children in each year group will be transferring across and whether all staff will also be moving over?

Many thanks
[Redacted]

3.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 29 January 2024 09:16
To: Strategic Planning Unit
Subject: Ampfield Closure

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

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Dear Sirs,

I am writing with regards to the potential closure of Ampfield Primary School.

I currently have 2 children attending, [REDACTED]
My youngest [REDACTED] has special needs, he struggles with ADHD and autism. When we were initially allocated Ampfield (as there are no local places to us) I was unsure how it would go but I can not speak highly enough of them.

[REDACTED] at Romsey Abbey before (an excellent school) but despite this he struggled. He was around 9 months behind academically and struggled. Ampfield have helped me support him, and have done so much with him that now 18 months on he is almost where he should be. In some areas he is ahead. They have introduced a range of measures to help him learn to manage his neurodivergence. He is happy and thriving in ways I never believed he could have done in mainstream school. It has impacted every aspect of his life, he is now enrolled in a theatre club, will be performing (with support) at the point, and our home life is vastly improved.

I have checked and there are still no other places locally to me. Closing Ampfield will directly impact [REDACTED] children like him. Whilst Ampfield is a small school, many parents choose it because of its size and difference. Talking to the education authority it appears that the birth rate reduces as we hit the current key stage 1 but current key stage 2 children will all struggle to find places local to them. All our local schools are full. I would suggest an alternative would be to wait until at least children will be able to find places locally, or we all end in the same position again.

I would plea for [REDACTED] wellbeing but I suspect that you won't care about just one child. Instead let me talk about other children, the child we saw yesterday who was bullied so badly because of autism in previous schools but is now thriving at Ampfield. The child who struggled [REDACTED] now plays online with his friends from Ampfield [REDACTED]. The child with severe anxiety previously struggling, but thanks to Ampfield now due to excel in SATs next year.

Please don't damage their education, their happiness, their health, all to save a little money.

In earnest hope of your understanding,

[REDACTED]

4.

From: NOKES, Caroline <caroline.nokes.mp@parliament.uk>
Sent: 30 January 2024 08:10
To: Strategic Planning Unit
Subject: Ampfield Primary School

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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Dear Mr Saunders

Further to the announcement of the consultation period regarding Ampfield Primary School I wanted to make the following comments:

- There has been a school on this site for a very long time in a building gifted to the community for that purpose. It would be regrettable if that building were now to be lost forever, losing part of the village's history
- Has the County Council considered (given the demand for SEN provision in Hampshire) repurposing Ampfield School to be a dedicated special school?
- What discussions has the County Council had with the local planning authority (TVBC) regarding the future of the site?
- What discussions has HCC had regarding ownership of the site and whether it intends to return it to the estate of the original donors?
- This is a very prominent site in the village of Ampfield and the County Council cannot wash their hands of responsibility for it. It is imperative this site is not permitted to deteriorate and decay alongside the main A3090.

Yours sincerely

Caroline Nokes

Rt Hon Caroline Nokes MP
Member of Parliament for Romsey and Southampton North
Chair of the Women and Equalities Select Committee

13 Market Place
Romsey
SO51 8NA
Tel: 01794 521155

www.carolinenokes.com

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5.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 30 January 2024 12:40
To: Strategic Planning Unit
Subject: Ampfield ~School

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

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Dear Mark,

I am writing to record my full support for the proposal to close Ampfield School.

As a former [REDACTED] at another primary School in the Romsey area, I fully understand that the existing funding model for Primary schools would not provide sufficient funds to staff a very small school like this one to a level where the children are getting the best teaching and non curricular activities, and that for the teachers, it is difficult to teach children across four year groups, as would be the case in KS2.

What matters is that all children get the best possible education, and that the best outcomes are achieved for them. There are several very good Primary schools in the Romsey area that can provide better learning opportunities for these children.

This is a sensible step that probably should have been taken sooner, sad though it is to see a historic little school finally close its doors.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

6.

[REDACTED]

Subject: FW: [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, February 2, 2024 1:32 PM
To: Strategic Planning Unit <strategicplanningunit@hants.gov.uk>
Subject: [REDACTED]

Caution: This is an external email and could contain malicious content. Do not open any links or attachments if you were not expecting them. If the e-mail looks suspicious, please report via the 'Report Phishing' Button found on your toolbar.

To whom it may concern

I am emailing to enquire about speaking with a member of your team regarding the Ampfield Primary School consultation and potential closure. I would like to put forward a proposal that would allow the school to continue as a school and serve the community and surrounding areas, specifically SEND pupils.

I can be contacted on the following number during the day [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] throughout the day and evening.

Thank you in advance for your time.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

7.



From: [Redacted]
Sent: 20 February 2024 12:50
To: Strategic Planning Unit
Subject: Ampfield C of E Primary
Categories: [Redacted] Consultation

Caution: This is an external email and could contain malicious content. Do not open any links or attachments if you were not expecting them. If the e-mail looks suspicious, please report via the 'Report Phishing' Button found on your toolbar.

Dear Mr Saunders.

I propose that you delay the closure of Ampfield Primary School for 18 months so that it can be promoted by a group of local activists to be known as Friends of Ampfield Primary School.

I have assembled an experienced group of people who are ready to help. I have written to the Headmistress, Amber Vidler, and await her reply.

The school has not been actively promoted for years and there are many potential pupils in the newly built estates between Ampfield and Romsey which you research and statistics did not take into account .

The school is over 124 years old and deserves this chance. On your own admission, no money will be saved by closing it.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted signature]

8.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 20 February 2024 14:43
To: Admin Office (Ampfield) <adminoffice@ampfield.hants.sch.uk>
Subject: Attention Ms Amber Vidler. Closure of School

Dear Ms Vidler.

Please forgive my presumption in not having spoken to you about what I have written below but the people trying to close down Ampfield School are not listening to the arguments put forward. Time is now very short; hence my lack of communication with you.

The man with the ultimate responsibility for the school's closure is Councillor Edward Heron and he has not only refused to meet me but he has failed to reply to three e-mails.

In desperation, I have written the letter below to the Hampshire Chronicle and the Romsey Advertiser.

When I was [REDACTED] at Ampfield Primary [REDACTED] years ago and we had our [REDACTED] children there, it was actively promoted and the pupil numbers were high. I appreciate that this is not an easy task for the small number of staff

I could easily raise a committee of Friends of Ampfield School (I already have offers of help to do this) and with your approval we should ask for a reprieve of 18 months to get pupil numbers back. We would do the work and it would not require much staff input.

Please do let me know your thoughts.

All kind wishes.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

TO THE HAMPSHIRE CHRONICLE AND THE ROMSEY ADVERTISER

Dear Sir.

Ampfield C of E Primary School is about to be closed down after 124 years of continuous education. But it can be saved; readers can help.

The overwhelming reason is that pupil numbers are low so teachers are removed and those left have to teach classes of more than one age group. New OFSTED guidelines penalise this and the school will be failed.

Please write to Mark Saunders before March and tell him that you are willing to join Friends of Ampfield School who will mount a promotional campaign to increase pupil numbers. Tell him that we need a delay of 18 months to achieve this and save the school.

The school has not been promoted for many years and Hampshire Education Committee is remiss in not helping. Furthermore they have admitted in Freedom of Information request that no money will be saved by closing the school. The whole matter is disgraceful.

Please write or e-mail immediately:

strategicplanningunit@hants.gov.uk

or

Mark Saunders, Senior Strategic Planning Officer, Children's Services, Ell Court North, Winchester, SO23 8UG.

Do please contact me should you want to become a Friend of Ampfield School.

Yours

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

9.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 February 2024 18:18
To: Strategic Planning Unit
Subject: Ampfield C of E School

Categories: [REDACTED] Consultation

Caution: This is an external email and could contain malicious content. Do not open any links or attachments if you were not expecting them. If the e-mail looks suspicious, please report via the 'Report Phishing' Button found on your toolbar.

Dear Mr Saunders.

Ampfield C of E Primary School

I have just sent this letter to the Hampshire Chronicle and Romsey Advertiser. I am asking you to give Ampfield C of E Primary School one more chance - an 18 month reprieve during which I and some influential and business minded locals can promote it and improve pupil numbers. The school has been in continuous existence for 124 years.

I strongly feel that no one has helped Ampfield Primary School to promote what it has to offer since I was Chairman of Governors there some years ago. The school needs skilful marketing help and our Friends of Ampfield School can offer this with our experience in business.

The school is situated on the Winchester-Romsey road with some 10,000 vehicles passing every day - a prime site for advertising the school. Any company would pay many thousands of pounds for such a position.

We can help to produce leaflets for distribution in the Ampfield Village hall, the local golf club, the Potters Heron, the shops on the new estate at Ganger Farm and Abbotswood, in Romsey and hold open days and so on. There is so much we can do.

Please be good enough to look at this link of a similar group in Gloucestershire that managed to turn round a failing school

Friends of Hillesley School
hillesleyprimary.com



Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

No Need to Close Ampfield School

Dear Sir.

Ampfield C of E Primary School is about to be closed down after 124 years of continuous education. But it can be saved; readers can help.

The overwhelming reason is that pupil numbers are low so teachers are removed and those left have to teach classes of more than one age group. New OFSTED guidelines penalise this and the school will be failed.

Please write to Mark Saunders asap and tell him that you are willing to join Friends of Ampfield School who will mount a promotional campaign to increase pupil numbers. Tell him that we need a delay of 18 months to achieve this and save the school.

The school has not been promoted for many years and Hampshire Education Committee is remiss in not helping. Furthermore they have admitted in Freedom of Information request that no money will be saved by closing the school.

Please write or e-mail immediately:

strategicplanningunit@hants.gov.uk

or

Mark Saunders, Senior Strategic Planning Officer, Children's Services, Ell Court North, Winchester, SO23 8UG.

Do please contact me should you want to become a Friend of Ampfield School.

Yours

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

10.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 23 February 2024 18:01
To: Strategic Planning Unit; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Ampfield School closure consultation - parental response
Categories: [REDACTED] Consultation

Caution: This is an external email and could contain malicious content. Do not open any links or attachments if you were not expecting them. If the e-mail looks suspicious, please report via the 'Report Phishing' Button found on your toolbar.

Please consider the following in the consultation on the closure of Ampfield school. This is also CC'd to Caroline Nokes.

I am a parent of a child [REDACTED] at Ampfield school. [REDACTED] loves Ampfield school, [REDACTED] is settled, learning and progressing there. [REDACTED] is in an environment that is meeting [REDACTED] needs, and so has excellent behaviour and positive attitude to learning. [REDACTED] is benefiting from learning in a small-school multi-age group setting. We have been waiting on a special education provision place [REDACTED], but have been now notified that there is no space, and there will be no space in September. We are therefore expecting that the closure of Ampfield school will result in no suitable education setting [REDACTED]

Where Ampfield sits in the Hampshire education provision is an unofficial special education setting - provided within the mainstream system. It is particularly suited to supporting pupils with SEN due to the multi age-group classes. There is a huge need for this within the (multi-year) period of time whilst waiting for an EHCP to be put in place and then the wait for suitable provision. Our family has found this a very pressing need, and Ampfield has fulfilled that and made a huge positive impact to our family. Having a school place that meets the needs of the child (where they are in their development) - means that they can thrive, and they can avoid the trauma and resultant behavioural issues of a school that is not meeting their needs. Ampfield has provided that special space in Hampshire for many families before ours, and continues to provide it.

Our [REDACTED] has received such fantastic teaching from an incredible teacher and assistant, that's really helped him to thrive there. Although we have particularly felt the issues with long-term staff absence through sickness.

Specialist schools are provided with extra support and funding. Ampfield should be recognised as the specialist provision that it is, and given the support needed to thrive in that role. So that it can continue to support other local families that are on a similar journey to ours.

Considering the unavailability of specialist SEN school places, and that there will not be a suitable provision when Ampfield closes, we are very concerned about the situation in which this will leave our family.

We understand the financial issues being faced by AJK Federation, exacerbated by the changes in population demographics. One solution that I would see, would be for John Keble school to provide a separate SEN cohort within the Federation. This could be physically located within the spare space at John Keble School. That would reduce the costs to the Federation (in not supporting the building). For this to succeed, this would need to be provided the financial support, and critically the acknowledgement that we are losing a special provision in Ampfield, a place that fulfils a critical need to families in Hampshire.

We implore you to consider both the unique needs that Ampfield meets for families like ours. And also we would also request that you consider the specific case [REDACTED] with needs acknowledged by EHCP, where [REDACTED] will be without a suitable place if Ampfield is closed.

Yours faithfully

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

11.

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 26 February 2024 07:55
To: Strategic Planning Unit
Subject: Re: Ampfield closing
Categories: Consultation, [Redacted]

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Hi there,

I thought I'd let you know that I have done an in-year application [Redacted] to start at John Keble (although technically [Redacted] won't start until September as I put the start date at the end of August).

Please can you let me know the best way to proceed regarding accessing transport? Should I do an application and if so would you be able to provide support or do I talk to you directly?

Many thanks

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

12.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 29 February 2024 14:42
To: Strategic Planning Unit
Subject: Closure of Ampfield Church of England primary school, Ampfield
Categories: Consultation

Caution: This is an external email and could contain malicious content. Do not open any links or attachments if you were not expecting them. If the e-mail looks suspicious, please report via the 'Report Phishing' Button found on your toolbar.

To whom it may concern,

I have been saddened to read about the proposed closure of the school. This school is in a good location and has historically offered a high level of education.

I would be concerned were it to close due to the number of proposed and ongoing housing developments in Romsey and also the areas surrounding the village.

Romsey certainly does not have enough school places to cater for these developments and therefore in the future we may find ourselves in a situation where Ampfield school would have been able to take some pupils to help support these extra residents.

As a mother with a child at primary school, I would be feeling very anxious and concerned about my child being moved to a school which I did not apply for. I would like to hope that the thoughts and feelings of the families and children involved are being thought of too, rather than it just being about budgets and finances.

A good start to life and education creates more opportunities in the future for children, who are our future. Therefore investment in ensuring stable education is so important.

I would hope you would consider the views of those affected above all else and make the correct decision.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]
Sent from my iPhone

13.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 01 March 2024 06:57
To: Strategic Planning Unit
Subject: Ampfield CE Primary School
Categories: Consultation

Caution: This is an external email and could contain malicious content. Do not open any links or attachments if you were not expecting them. If the e-mail looks suspicious, please report via the 'Report Phishing' Button found on your toolbar.

Dear Mark Saunders

I am willing to join the Friends of Ampfield School who will mount a promotional campaign to increase pupil numbers. Ampfield school is a brilliant school. I am a primary school teacher who has met the staff and been shown around the school in the past. They have been instrumental in developing and promoting their children's wellbeing and academic success. We need more schools like Ampfield in the area. Also with plans to expand housing in Romsey and some schools becoming oversubscribed it's important to keep schools like Ampfield going.

Thank you for your consideration.

All the best,

[REDACTED]

14.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 01 March 2024 12:13
To: Strategic Planning Unit
Subject: Fwd: Amp field primary school
Categories: Consultation

Caution: This is an external email and could contain malicious content. Do not open any links or attachments if you were not expecting them. If the e-mail looks suspicious, please report via the 'Report Phishing' Button found on your toolbar.

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: [REDACTED]
Date: 29 February 2024 at 19:01:05 GMT
To: look I
Subject: Fwd: Amp field primary school

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: [REDACTED]
Date: 29 February 2024 at 17:40:02 GMT
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Amp field primary school

Dear [REDACTED]

Thanks so much for taking the trouble to write to Mark Saunders and to me.

Here, copied and pasted from his e-mails, is his address.

strategicplanningunit@hants.gov.uk

Please do try to re-send your e-mail to him.

I will certainly contact you should we win a reprieve and can form friends of Ampfield School

All kind wishes

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

On 29 Feb 2024, at 15:57, [REDACTED]
wrote:

To Mark Saunders or who it may concern.

[REDACTED] I tried to send this to the strategic planning unit as you suggested in your letter to the Hampshire CHronicle, but it got sent back. I don't know why. I will be happy to be a FRIend.

I understand that Ampfield primary school is to be closed because falling numbers mean that children have to be taught in mixed age classes. My son, now in his fifties, went to Western Primary school where the infants were taught in mixed age classes. It was brilliant. The little ones learnt from the big ones and helped smaller ones in their turn. It created a lively atmosphere of interdependence, cooperation and kindness which has stayed with those children throughout their lives. It saved them needing expensive counselling for their mental health problems. They did not need it Because they learnt to be part of their community. Save Ampfield School.

[REDACTED]

I

from my iPad

Sent from my iPad