

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Lead Member for Children's Services
Date:	19 January 2024
Title:	The Future of Ampfield Church of England Primary School
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

Contact name Mark Saunders

Email: Mark.saunders@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to set out the feedback received and recommend a way forward, following a five-week period of pre-publication consultation, about the future of Ampfield Church of England Primary School.

Recommendation(s)

2. That approval is given to the publication of a Public Notice to close Ampfield Church of England 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. This report sets out the feedback from that consultation, analyses that feedback and recommends that, on balance, the best way forward in terms

of the education of children in this area, is to close Ampfield Church of England Primary School and to expand the catchment area of John Keble Church of England Primary School to accommodate the current Ampfield catchment area.

5. This report therefore seeks approval to publish a Public Notice to close Ampfield Church of England Primary School with effect from 31 August 2024.

Contextual information

6. Ampfield CE Primary School is an 84-place primary school for pupils aged 4-11 (12 children per year group). The school had 26 pupils on roll as of September 2023, two of whom live in the Ampfield catchment area. The school is currently operating a KS1 class of 7 pupils and a KS2 class of 19 pupils. 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.
7. 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.
8. 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).
9. 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 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

10. Of the primary age pupils currently living in Ampfield, only two children attend Ampfield Church of England Primary. 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.
11. 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 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.
12. 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

13. 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

14. The forecast assumes that the school will continue to run two classes each year.

15. 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

16. 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.

17. 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.

18. 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

19. 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.
20. 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.
21. 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.
22. 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

23. 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).
24. In total 41 responses 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.

25. The comments received during the consultation process are shared in full at Appendix B. Common themes are outlined below including commentary:

- ***Comment: There is a lack of school places within the local area***

Response: 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.

- ***Comment: Ampfield offers a specialist education due to the small class sizes and mixed cohorts.***

Response: several 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. Nor do the teachers have specialist SEND training, but it does have the teacher to student ratio that only comes with such a small school.

- ***Comment: Having to move schools will have a detrimental impact on vulnerable children***

Response: concern was expressed about the impact on the current children on roll at Ampfield CE Primary School, and particularly those who are vulnerable or have SEND. The impact on Ampfield pupils could be reduced through the option to transfer to John Keble CE Primary School which is within the same federation, with the same headteacher and governing body and the same Christian ethos. John Keble CE Primary School is a small one form entry school with 210 places. Children who choose to seek a place at a different school will be fully supported by Hampshire County Council's Admissions team and where required other specialist services.

- ***Comment: If Ampfield CE Primary School does close, a SEND provision should be considered in its place***

Response: several comments were received suggesting that if approval is granted to close the school, then the building should be used to create a new SEND provision due to its size and location. 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: A local school is important***

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.

- ***Comment: Money and fears of Ofsted should not drive the decision***

Response: several respondents questioned the justification for the consultation and suggested that additional funding and support be provided to Ampfield CE Primary School to enable it to continue. School revenue funding is determined by central government and the County Council is not, therefore, in a position to provide the school with long-term additional funding. The quality of education able to be offered is the concern. Yes, this is likely to cause concern in an Ofsted inspection too but this is not a driver for the proposal.

- ***Comment: How will the staff be supported?***

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

- ***Comment: One possibility would be for Ampfield to become a nursery***

Response: no potential use of the site, which is held by the Diocese, has been investigated while the consultation on potential closure is on-going.

- ***Comment: The consultation event was poorly presented, with insufficient time and inadequate statistics***

Response: every effort was made to provide the community with an opportunity to comment on the consultation. This is a pre-publication consultation prior to seeking authority to publish a statutory proposal. The information shared at the public meeting focused around current and recent numbers on roll and accurately reflected the position at Ampfield CE Primary School.

- ***Comment: The school has always struggled for numbers and the finances are not viable. Resources would be better spent elsewhere.***

Response: several respondents were in support of the proposed closure, commenting that the school does not appear financially viable. The consultation process outlined the financial pressure at Ampfield CE Primary School. Should the school close, the revenue funding would follow the pupils to their subsequent schools.

- ***Comment: Children are not getting the education and opportunities that they would in a bigger school and staff and resources are too thinly spread***

Response: a number of comments were received suggesting that the number on roll at Ampfield CE Primary School could not provide children with the educational experience that they deserve.

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. 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 in 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. 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 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.

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 village of Ampfield.

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 26 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.

29. 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 attend the school. This means that the other 24 children on roll attend from out of catchment and travel 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. Academy conversation 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 with 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.

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 26 children on roll 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 the local 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

30. Staffing implications will be considered subject to the outcome of the consultation/representation period. This will be done in accordance with the framework for school closures outlined in the School's Manual of Personnel Practice with a local procedure developed and consulted upon with both staff affected and trade union representatives. Staff affected by a closure will be provided with redeployment support, in anticipation of them securing alternative employment in another Hampshire maintained school or within the County Council.

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 can make amendments to any application up to 15 January 2024. Any applications received after 15 January 2024, will be considered late applications. All applications will be processed in line with published policies.
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 the consultation any transport issues arising will be managed in-line with the County Council's School Transport policy.

Conclusions

35. That the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services gives approval to proceed to the formal consultation stage with the publication of a Public Notice to close Ampfield Church of England 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

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. 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.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:



Hampshire
County Council

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
------------------	---------

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 eventually 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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Saunders', with a stylized, cursive script.

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%2FGDPRCSPN%2DSDCD%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 know. Sending local children across the county to 'specialist schools' would not be suitable. ie. 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.

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

After that:

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- 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?

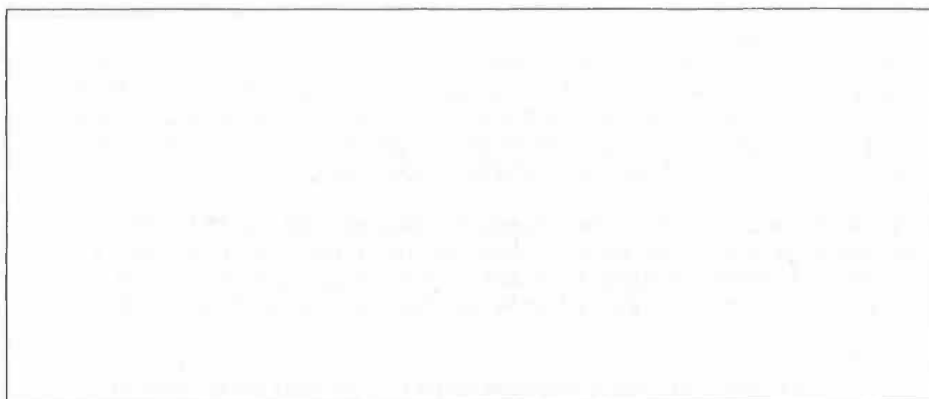
☒ Yes
☐ No

☐ Unsure

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

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

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 no 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 loves 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 if 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 2020. 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 in fact 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 Keble 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 strive'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	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.	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!!
19	Parent/ carer of a child at another school ;	No	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.	Please consider keeping the school open and making it as an SEN provision
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	Small schools are needed. We don't want to to a bigger school	

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 it 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> <p>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.</p> <p>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> <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, Hiltingbury & John Keble</p>	