

Appendix 9

Representation R1

Year 11 pupils (current Year 10) would remain on the Fernside Avenue site to finish their GCSE courses with their GCSE course staff wherever possible

What does "wherever possible" mean? If you have teachers left to teach that subject or a different supply teachers coming through out the year.

Or none of the above.

It's very clear I can't move my child (currently yr10) to other local schools as they are full and the one that isn't has a different curriculum!

We need clarification before July 4th this is total madness. Am shouting help. I have no idea what to do best for my kids education and their wellbeing which has been affected. Cabinet has messed them about twice now, best start in their life/education yer right. No questions are being answered again. Being open and providing guidance is what's needed to support the families and children.

What do we get as an answer... Nothing has been decided yet.

I have 3 at ACS currently yrs 5,8 and 10.

All I want is a yes it's closing (I'll crack on and find them new schools) or no it's not and pick up the pieces and get them back learning to the grades they were getting before this shambles.

You can not run schools like a business its young people and their future that your dealing with. Bums on seats =£

Messed about kids =messed up adults with mental health problems.

Representation R2

Need to keep the school open. I oppose to the changes you want to make. The children need to come first. It is their future that is important.

Representation R3

I object strongly to these proposals as the other secondary schools cannot cope with any increased numbers in their year groups.

Representation R4

We as parents strongly oppose the closure of secondary stage at A C S

Representation R5

My name is _____ and I would like to go on record to register my disappointment on the closure of Almondbury Community School (ACS). My connection to ACS is that my daughter is currently a year 10 pupil and my other children have all been educated at the former Almondbury High School.

The reason I am stating the 'closure' of ACS, is because throughout the alleged consultation, there has been nothing but negative information put before the public and it is clear that Kirklees council are desperate to close the school. I and others believe the decision has already been made, and

therefore the consultation is a sham. At no time has there been any feedback from the council to suggest any other options may be considered for the school.

I was embarrassed to witness the recent Kirklees Cabinet meeting which was streamed live locally to consider the school and the closure. The spokespeople for Kirklees were ill prepared and had clearly not done proper preparation for the meeting.

Due diligence, which should have considered the financial implications involved with the closure of ACS, had not been done, or if it had, it was not made available at the meeting. The only consideration raised repeatedly at the meeting, was how much it would cost to continue with the school. Clearly those people chairing the meeting had either not considered the substantial cost of closure, or those costs were known, but deliberately kept from the public. Either option smacks of sloppy preparation or a determination to present a biased point of view.

I cannot remember a single positive thing that was said about ACS by the council spokespeople, and I can't remember promises made by them to look at and consider any of the many alternatives put forward at the meeting by the people of Almondbury.

Shame on you Kirklees. The people of Almondbury deserve better.

Representation R6

Looking at the latest notice it sounds like you plan for all kids currently in the High School to get places at Newsome and that this covers the council's obligation to provide places. It also appears to be a plan to make Newsome more resilient, as that school has suffered falling numbers due to poor results and reputation causing parents to send their kids elsewhere (similar to ACS).

It sounds like King James are not working with you to create more places or even that the catchment area would be definitely changed to include Almondbury kids. Please can you confirm/clarify/explain?

Can you let me know how you would make this work please? Newsome school is over 2 miles away. Even further for those in the village. It is too far to walk to/from every day, not a very safe route, and there are no direct buses. While I drive (many don't), I also work full time. Newsome school is a 20 minute diversion from my commute and no-one to pick her up after school.

It also leaves the area short of 150 places as it relies on some parents sending their kids to schools outside the area. What if they didn't? While parents are favouring Honley and Shelley schools because of their better results, if KJS was again the best performing that parents want to get their kids to, and if Newsome stop the leak of kids from its own PAA, then there would not be enough school places. Is this right?

I am also very concerned at the damage these proposals are causing to the community and that little attention appears to be being paid to the psychological impact this is having on the kids and parents now.

I do understand that tough decisions need to be made but there must be a better way to provide good local high school provision.

Representation R7

I am a mum of two children currently at A.C.S , I have 1 ready to start junior, and 1 to start secondary in September. Since coming back to huddersfield 4 yrs ago, my children attended NLC school for 2 yrs and suffered non stop bullying day in day out , so we moved on to almondbury community school and straight away I saw a rapid change in both my children and also in myself as I

suffer from depression and separation anxiety. The 2 years of stress and unhappiness and got to us all.

They settled in their new classes from day 1 , went to school happy and came home telling happy stories, they wanted to go to school, looked forward to the next day. So I was happy I'd found a school that met all my children's need in every way , also I wasn't as anxious about my children been at school.

I am a single parent, with no family around me and no friends due to my anxiety/depression so if the secondary phase of the school is to shut i have no way of getting 2 children to 2 different schools in 2 different parts of huddersfield at the same time , i dont drive either so this would make things very difficult for our family, the fact that our schools cover all ages makes a massive difference to families with more than 1 child , as they can be collected and dropped off in the same place.

Also my daughter has started to worry about where she will end up, at such a crucial time in her education.

My only problem is that there is a few named schools around huddersfield in the same situation as A.C.S been given time and help to improve, but we haven't been supported at all, this decision was handled wrong from the first letter that was sent home with pupils, its rushed and no concrete evidence has been put to us as to why this is happening, so my only option IF the secondary school closes is to home school my children, together in a safe environment.

Thanks for reading this.

Representation R8

I am contacting you in respect to the proposed closure of Almondbury Community School.

I wish to OBJECT to this proposal in the strongest manner i can.

If the school closes it will have a massive negative effect on not just the children who go there but also the community as a whole.

You will be ripping the heart out of the village and the effects of this can only have catastrophic consequences for the poor children it effects and the wider community.

Representation R9

Dear Sirs,

I am writing to express my deepest concern at the propped plan to cut the secondary provision at Almondbury Community School. It is my view that the pupils currently attending the school simply cannot get the same quality of education and support that they receive in any other setting.

The school has a unique atmosphere and ethos, the like of which I have not seen anywhere else, despite teaching in, volunteering in and offering classes in other local schools. In fact the school motto "Together We Achieve" has never been more embedded in a school's ethos. The staff, pupils and parents pull together and the support for individuals - whether a pupil with additional needs or a member of staff having a bad day - is second to none.

I am appalled at the treatment of this school by the council. Not once, but twice in recent years have they disrupted the education of the Almondbury pupils to meet their own ends. The proposal to merge the junior and secondary provision met with fierce opposition from parents, who, despite a majority vote against the move, were ignored. It says a lot about the quality of staff and support at ACS therefore, that those same parents, are fighting against the new proposal to close the secondary

provision - they have witnessed the good that the school has done for their children who are all happy and settled until you ruin that again.

The council did not adequately support the Through School to succeed in the first place. The staffing structure cut any "unnecessary" roles and left the pastoral staff struggling to provide the level of support they aimed for. The high turnover of staff in that area should have indicated that support was needed. This support was requested and denied on numerous occasions. How ironic, that even more money is currently being paid out to agency behaviour workers in the wake of the media circus in November. This could have been avoided with a lower spend on permanent support staff.

Then, on the back of this incident which could quite easily have happened in any number of British schools, but which unfortunately went viral, Kirklees saw the opportunity to leap on their chance to close the school, as I suspect has been their intention for years now. It was a convenient excuse. The speed of the consultation process and run down towards closure has been shocking. The staff have been treated appallingly. They found out about the proposals by reading the letter addressed to parents from the council. Small wonder that several have seen jobs advertised at other schools and are now leaving.

This leaves the school in another difficult position, which plays straight into the council's hands - potentially not enough specialist staff to populate the timetable.

May I ask what the council propose to do about the fact that pupils learn Spanish from year 3 in a very popular and high attaining subject, yet those pupils are to be sent to Newsome High School where Spanish is not taught?

The moving of catchment areas could have addressed the issue of falling rolls at ACS, but Kirklees have only seen fit to alter boundaries to benefit other schools.

The situation saddens me deeply. I was very happy working for Kirklees at this school, and the plight of the children currently being shoved around upsets me. The council has not offered the support it should have to a school in difficulty - in fact it could be argued that the difficulties were caused by the actions of Kirklees. You have let them down badly. Staff and pupils may come and go, but there is nowhere in Huddersfield that has the family atmosphere of this school and by breaking this up, you are failing the children of Huddersfield.

I beg you to reconsider.

Sincerely,

Representation R10

My children go to Almondbury community school i have 1 in year 10 going into year 11, 1 in year 9 going into year 10 and 1 in year 3 going into year 4.

My girls love their school and the wonderful staff and i really object to it closing down 😞

Representation R11

I would like to register an objection to the proposal to change the age range for Almondbury Community School.

Jo-Anne Sanders once emailed me saying (about Almondbury Junior School) that the closing of that school was for the benefit of the children and would secure their education for the long term.

The policy for the Junior School was wrong as the same children are now facing another move.

Many parents felt lied to by Ms Sanders during the Junior School closure as her department would not admit that the proposals were about finance.

Jo-Anne and her team cannot be trusted to see very far ahead, as proved by the wrong policy over the Junior School.

It may well be that in only a few years, that the Almondbury High School (Community School) will be needed again.

Why should a large village like Almondbury face all these closures. Do the people proposing them not realise that they are destroying the heritage of the village: This is what has been closed or is under threat. Almondbury Junior School, Almondbury High (Community) School, 2 public houses, facilities at Southfield Road park - i.e. tennis courts and crazy golf. Almondbury Library has closed recently and the nearby Tolson Museum is under threat.

The government is saying that austerity is nearing an end, so stop these closures.

Representation R12

Please do not close this school. This is the biggest building in Almondbury. It can be made into a great school like it used to be when I first started working there. The teachers are fantastic and work towards the children's education and their exams. We have had the misfortune of the past events to put our school down. But other schools have had events happen in the past and survived with help. I believe our school can work its way back to the top again. Our children want to come and learn and thrive at this school. Please keep us open for our children and future children, for the parents and for the remarkable staff. They love and want our children to learn and it is their vocation. We all work together for our kids always.

Representation R13

Dear Sirs

I am the father of a pupil in the current year 7 of Almondbury community school, this email is to highlight my absolute disappointment in Kirklees education department.

As I am led to believe it seems to be a financial must in Kirklees eyes to close the secondary phase at ACS but the cost of the children's education and wellbeing doesn't seem to come into account.

On the first day the closure was suggested I had to console my daughter telling her all will be fine don't worry, then in a one to one consolation Kirklees representatives also told my daughter everything will be fine (again more lies) as now I have a child that is suffering from anxiety and has started to bite her nails when we discuss school. I am sure this isn't the intention of Kirklees but a 12 year old that loves the

school she is at and is now having her entire education ripped from under her feet with no support from Kirklees is now being told her second option of school is full (King James) with no plans to add school places and is now sat on a waiting list with 100s of other pupils in fact the only nearby (not even local) school that has space is a school that has exactly the same Ofsted rating as Almondbury community school (Newsome high school).

Question need to be answered for all eventualities if the school closes where are you going to put the pupils?

Are Kirklees going to give the pupils the support now not after the consultation periods?

Are you aware of the impact this is having on the local community?

Most importantly is my daughter going to get to go to a school of her choice and not be forced to go to wherever Kirklees can fit her as this whole scenario is Kirklees doing and the children are the ones that have to suffer.

If you would like to talk to me regarding any of the matters above or if you have any information so far please feel free to call me on the following number.

Representation R14

To whom it may concern
Re: Proposed Closure of ACS

I am writing to formally record my opposition to the proposed closure of the senior section of ACS. My reasons are listed below:

- 1) The current situation in the school is due to poor and ineffective leadership. Although Ofsted judged it to be inadequate, with good support and effective leadership this could be reversed. If we are to believe the article in the Examiner this is exactly what is happening in Newsome HS.
- 2) Currently numbers are low but again this could be remedied if the council focussed on the many positive aspects of the school; there are departments which are very good and have received national awards to mark their success. When Rawthorpe HS was in a similar position it restructured and became the Netherhall Learning Campus; again good leadership and management played a vital role in its improvement.
- 3) There is a massive building programme planned in the nearby areas and this will result in a great increase in demand for school places; where will these children go?
- 4) King James Academy is one of the schools which is expected to take in additional pupils; this school is woefully inadequate for the 21st century and is already housing pupils in portable classrooms. The campus is very poor compared with the excellent location of ACS. In the past Kirklees Council recognised this and proposed to close King James and amalgamate the two schools on the ACS site; hence the school seeking academy status so that it was taken out of local authority control and therefore protected from closure.
- 5) Almondbury is a village which needs a community school which serves as a hub for the whole community; closing it and sending pupils to schools outside will effectively fracture the already fragile community.
- 6) The increased focus on mental health, personal development and well-being is being ignored by Kirklees Councillors who do not appear to care at all about the young people involved. It seems they cannot see beyond the current difficulties and choose to take the easy way out as well as the cheapest and simply close it.
- 7) It is a relatively short time since considerable money was invested in reorganising the school and it has simply not been given the opportunity or time to grow and develop into a thriving successful establishment. There are excellent facilities at ACS and it is shameful that councillors can choose to ignore the many positives and focus only on the negatives.
- 8) Given time, good leadership and support, as in Newsome HS, this school could thrive again.

I am not a parent or member of staff but I am fiercely opposed to its closure and urge the councillors to reconsider before it's too late.

Representation R15

Hello,

I am writing to object to this proposal based on that no other options have been considered and that the only high school with capacity for places at this time is Newsome High School, which is also rated inadequate by Ofsted and that parents/children have been offered no other choice.

Kind regards,

Representation R16

To whom it may concern,

I would like to give my objections to the proposed changes to Almondbury Community School.

Whilst I can appreciate that pupil numbers across Kirklees have fallen and are predicted to continue to fall, this proposal is moving far too quickly for the existing pupils in the school.

With the current pace of decision making, there will be several year groups that are effectively left with no consistent teaching provision for key stages of their learning as there are no spaces in nearby schools.

I understand there is a great push for pupils to attend Newsome High School however it seems very strange to move pupils from one school in special measures to another school in special measures. As yet, simple questions have not been answered for example: school bus provision from Almondbury to Newsome so parents and pupils are not assured of either pupil safety or forward planning.

King James is not in any position to accept pupils for the foreseeable future and too much emphasis is being placed on their planning permission being granted and an additional 50 pupil places being created in accordance with new classrooms being built. As yet, this permission has not been granted and certainly questions the processes involved if it is known now by Kirklees that this application will be granted.

I'm also concerned about the changing of the priority admission area - again there are no clear assurances that King James school have been accepting of this change to assure Almondbury residents that their children will be able to attend school within their village as they can right now.

I have a child in Year 6 currently that I would like to see settled when she starts Year 7. I'm disappointed that I can't give her that assurance - even if I could consider Newsome High School, right now I just can't get her to the school in a morning or collect her when school finishes which rules this forced choice out for me!

I have serious concerns about the staff levels remaining at Almondbury Community School. I can understand teachers leaving the school at the moment, they have careers and require job stability however what teaching staff will be available in September 2019? How can high standards of teaching be assured to those pupils that are left in Almondbury Community School at this time?

The decisions so far have been so rushed through with no apparent thought for the near future of these students that I'm really concerned that the projected plans have really not been considered.

I also have a child in Year 4. Her class teacher has been absent for 3 weeks now. This week, they have a 3rd supply teacher. If this absence can't be covered consistently, it really does make me question how assurances can be given to parents and pupils within the high school that long term (contracted?) teaching staff will be supplied for the remaining time left at the school.

Whilst we are constantly told no decisions have yet been made, I'm afraid that the processes are being rushed through to the point that pupils are being moved as quickly as parents can manage to other schools to allow for them to settle and staff are already looking now to guarantee their own continued employment!

If this whole process had been slowed down, with better and more considerate communications, perhaps we wouldn't be in the position where many parents feel all they can say is No, because we simply do not have enough reassurances and future planning.

Kind Regards,

Representation R17

Dear Director of Children's Service

Re: Closure of Almondbury Community School.

I am writing to you to express my concern about the education of my son, who is currently in Year 10 at Almondbury Community School and is about to go in to Year 11.

My concern are regarding the level and standard of teaching that he will receive in the final year of his education at the school. Already he has been told that many of the teachers are leaving the school at the end of this academic year.

He is keen to do well at school and has high aspirations and cannot afford to get high grades if he is to fulfil his dream of going to one of the best universities.

My questions are:

Can you guarantee that the replacement teachers that will be appointed will be of a high calibre?

Will the local Further Education collage take into account the disruption of the year at ACS suffered by pupils in Year 10 and even more disruption next year in year 11?

Parent

Representation R18

We would like to know if any mental health professionals were consulted before the decision to close ACS was made?

I have printed a small part of the evidence based research what I found - anxiety, ptsd, stress

Also what support is being offered to the children of ACS for their mental well being

Are you aware that some of the children's mh is already deteriorating?+affecting sleep

: stress

: low mood

: anxiety

: change in behaviour

: my daughters friend has been sad since the proposals & last week she said she wanted to be with her dad & sister who passed away last year

She's started self harming now

The headteacher asked out loud if students had concerns last week Obviously children are too embarrassed to speak up in front of everyone so said nothing. They need to give each student an anonymous form to complete in private

Are you aware that KJS can not accommodate more pupils although they plan to build more classrooms?

I was given information on why KJS couldn't go one over pan last September, when my daughters appeal was rejected, due to health & safety reasons Including old small corridors, inadequate dining facilities & no social areas

I want to know if KJS are also planning on widening corridors & extending their dining facilities?

Kids take their siblings to school. This will impact parents jobs as they won't be able to do this anymore

If ACS was to shut who is going to be responsible for buying a whole new uniform & covering travel costs?

Representation R19

I like my school so much please don't shut it I love hanging with my friends and being taught by some of the best teachers ever i am a pupil of almondbury school I'm 13 and I am in year8

Representation R20

Hi I am a mum of 5 and 3 of my children go to acs my oldest daughter is 10 and is due to start high school in September 2020 she loves acs and doesn't not want to have to move schools all her friends

go to acs which is a very good school no matter what people say my children love the school it is put of our community closing the high school would be a great lose to our community there is new familys moving into Almondbury who have older children closing the high school is a bad idea instead you should be working with the school to make it better and use it as an overflow for other schools which are all full and can't take no more children please think about this carefully the school has helped loads of students who suffer with learning disabilities and anxiety closing the school would mean your putting extra pressure on our children and it is upsetting them your not thinking about them your thinking about yourselfs help our school don't close it

Representation R21

Hi I am 10 years old and I'm in year 5 at acs I love this school I really don't want it to close all the teachers are amazing and I love coming to school here I really don't want to have to move schools and be separated from my younger sister who is in year 3 all my friends come to acs I find it hard to make friends so moving schools and being separated from my friends is a scary thought I've have only been at acs for 3 years and in that time I have become less shy I'm a hard worker i would like the school to stay open so I can still be close to my younger sisters and my friends having to move schools would disrupt my education please think of us students at acs and what you are putting us through my little sister in year 3 has adhd and I look out for her and help her at play time and dinner time if you close the school and I have to move to a different school it will set her back as well as me please think about us and help our school we love it and really don't want it to close

Representation R22

To Whom it may Caoncern

I am the mother of a 16 year old pupil from ACS who has just finished her GCSEs. I have nothing but praise for the school which has given my daughter an excellent education and has made her into a well-rounded human being who I know. like many of the pupils from the school will be an asset to society. I was a Governor at ACS for four years and am well aware of the strengths and development needs of the school. Like all schools it will never be perfect and has its issues, one of which was the result of a high ratio of pupils expelled from other schools taking up places at the under-subscribed ACS, a state of affairs that was continually brought to the attention of the local authority by the head teacher and governing body of the school and which was never adequately addressed

Primarily, I am writing to you to protest the proposed closure of Almondbury Community School. My objections are as follows:

The area is well-populated and needs a school for local children to attend.

The proposed schools for resettlement of years 7-11 from ACS are unsuitable. King James' is already overcrowded and Newsome High is a considerable distance from Almondbury.

The proposed closure seems to have come at the end of a series of events which I feel have not been adequately addressed by the local authority, namely the decision to allow All Hallows to extend its provision to years 3-6 (a move which was bound to have a detrimental effect on pupil numbers at ACS); the bullying incident which went viral on Social Media last November and served to damage the reputation of the school; the subsequent, unannounced Ofsted inspection which took place the next working day after the the fallout from the viral video. This inspection was carried out on a school whose staff and students were already traumatised by the bizarre events following the video going viral and resulted in the regrading of ACS as 'inadequate', this then lead to the call for the school to close.

I would appreciate if you could answer my concerns.

Faithfully yours

Representation R23

With regards to your statutory notice.

Your department has precided over poor decision making and management decisions regarding changes to Almondbury Community school, occasionally with disregard to policy let alone parents. I am apalled at the the lack of RSC engagement, the poor timing of events (within weeks of admission announcements), and the lack of answers to questions posed by the poor consultation either in person or the document. You failed to meet a request for an open group consultation. Individual Subject Matter Experts at the 1-2-1 consultation were both poorly briefed and unable to answer questions. They were more interested at finding out alternative school choices.

With the proposal itself;

I still struggle to see the short term benefit against a back drop of housing expansion across Kirklees in line with recently announced LDF especially as you deem it appropriate for children to travel up to 3 miles and 2 buses to attend a secondary school.

With King James School seemingly constrained by size, location and access, and over subscribed (helped by your decision making and catchment areas) questions have been posed by several parties about engaging on this matter with King James to adopt a dual site/purpose academy solution. Not addressed.

You have said as part of the first stage consultation you have listened to views. There is little to no evidence of this in your updated report nor committee showing with no analysis or breakdown of consultation and responses documented other than a few bland statements. Not addressed.

I fear that the solution posed from the outset with out options fully explored or openly consulted, is merely pushing the current government funding constraints 'per head' around the system. Again a short term reactionary decision considering the fragile position of the current government.

From the outset you have stated this is about better educational outcomes. If this was so you would have recognised the passionate teaching, pastoral care (despite a high profile media incident (coincidence) which had been managed appropriately and not a reflection on the school we know. There appears to be no account for the fact that, through your (mis) management intervening decisions over the school through the years, the school has been a destination for struggling children with additional educational support needs. However, this has been a great advert and social education for my daughter preparing her for life in society. My daughter is happy and A1 attainment across grades with many friends in year 6.

Despite this I cannot allow for your damaging actions driving away families, children and teachers from this school, especially as she is about to enter year 7 with little hope of a stable educational environment. With this in mind, and our priviledged position, I have taken the likely decision to accept an offer for my child into Huddersfield Grammar school at great expense to ourselves. Yes, she passed her entry exams reflecting her educational attainment which is not a reflection that you and inspectors paint of the school.

Representation R24

Five years ago, ACS was created following a similar consultation process asking parents their thoughts on whether schools should be merged. Over 80% of respondents said "NO". KMC ignored that result and merged the schools anyway with great promise of how this was a flagship school and great things would happen.

We have now been consulted on the closure of the High School and the overwhelming majority of respondents say "NO".

I am a parent of a pupil in year 6 who was allowed to look around secondary schools in this area and make a choice with our child for their future. A week after secondary school places were confirmed to all pupils, KMC dropped the bombshell that the future of our chosen school was at risk. Parents were not told in a sensitive manner, instead we got an open letter sent home via our children, who were understandably bewildered and concerned. This has not changed as time has gone on, indeed, their concern has deepened and as parents, we haven't been able to help them as we have not been given answers either. That is a helpless situation for us.

I personally am angry that when we visited King James, the headmaster himself highlighted how overcrowded his school already was and he specifically said if we weren't in the catchment area, we should not bother to apply for this school as it was already oversubscribed.

No-one can tell us what the actual plan is. So the majority again, I understand, have said "NO". We don't know enough to be able to say anything other than NO.

This is not looking at the best interests of these students, this is looking at how best to walk away from a school that has suffered at the expense of an ill equipped council putting in place yet another project that has no foundation and no thought beyond the initial idea.

Representation R25

I write to ask for the council not to close provision for secondary pupils at Almondbury Community School.

1. The council will still be paying the contract on the school buildings for the next 15 years no matter what happens with this decision
2. The council has been unable to supply the statistics, to the people who have asked for them ,to prove their financial case.
3. It looks like that if 120 high school places are taken from this area of Kirklees there could be a shortage in the future
- 4, The authority is unable to prove it can provide enough places, on the information provided, unless the buildings in Almondbury are utilized.
5. The council has not shown how it can transport pupils to the other schools in the area if they can not attend ACS
6. The authority says there are spare places in the area the talks about building work necessary to accommodate pupils: surely a contradiction
7. The authority says it will be looking to use funds to help an academy(King James) to expand. Yet it looks as though it does not want to support ACS to become an all through academy, just a Primary Academy. That Primary Academy at the Greenside site will have to be expanded which will cost money
8. Given the time restrictions the council has been unable to provide the cost of building improvements to carry out the closure plan and demonstrate a cost/benefit analysis for the council

This has only been about money and the council have not been able to show how educational standards will be improved particularly as some of the pupils will be going from a school classed as Inadequate to another school classed as Inadequate.

I will get back in touch with further points to be considered

Kind Regards,Councillor

Representation R26

My name is _____ and I have two boys who attend Almondbury community school. I have 1 in year 9 who has a.d.h.d and dyspraxia. He has always struggled with school up till year 7 when he finally started to Seattle in and he's on track for good GCSE results at the moment as they choose their options early at ACS and I fear that if the school closes he won't get any GCSE's at all as he will find it really difficult because of his medical condition and anxiety. Now my other son is in year 6 starting year 7 at ACS in September he is a slow learner and needs help and as he is over weight and really tall for his age I fear the bullying will start up again if I have to move him now both my children love Almondbury community school and the staff are amazing and so helpful with everything. I also don't drive so I'd have no way to get my boys to school as I can't really trust them to get there on their own especially if King James is full and Newsome is too far away and also struggling. Almondbury community could be a great school if effort was put in look at Neather Hall that was exactly the same if not worse but they managed to turn it around so why not Almondbury community it's the heart of the community and no one wants it to shut.

Representation R27

I am writing to comment and object to the planned alteration to Almondbury Community School.

My son is currently in Year 9 and joined the school in February last year, following a decision by our family to move from Newsome High School. In the time that he has been with Almondbury he has matured and developed in both his confidence and learning levels due to the support that he has received from the teachers in the school.

Following the announcement of the proposed plans, my son began to suffer from anxiety due to the uncertainty and was worried that he would have to leave the school at a fundamental time in his education mid way through his GCSE's causing him a higher risk of failing his important exams.

Due to this with a heavy heart we made the decision to move back to Newsome High school and he went on a managed move to enable him to trial this. I can now tell you that this was unsuccessful and he is back settled in the nurturing environment of Almondbury community school. In the 8 days he attended Newsome High school, 6 of these resulted in him coming home unhappy. He was unable to attend all of the classes he has started for his GCSE's such as history and computing due to them either not having the room in terms of numbers in the class or because they were near completing the first year of a 2 year BTEC course and he wouldn't be able to join now or he could do the work at home during the summer holidays to maybe be able to catch up.

Safe to say that we have experienced the consequences that can arise from the proposed changes. Children will not easily be able to transition into a new school as the council seem to think, they may not be able to continue with their choice of GCSE's due to the availability in the other schools, they will more than likely receive lower grades due to the stress and anxieties caused and many other consequences that individually affect children at the most pivotal stage of their education.

Whilst I can agree that finances are a priority and are leading the way for the decision to close the school, for myself and all other parents our children's well-being, mental health, education and Future are the priority and the proposed plans are a threat to this.

I would also like to point out that the other schools proposed to take on the students from ACS are full in terms of capacity in space and numbers.

Kind regards

Representation R28

Hi,

I am writing regarding the proposal to close Almondbury community school to reduce the upper age range. My daughter started going to this school 3 months ago and the school has been excellent at accommodating her with her ADHD. Most schools avoid children with these sort of issues to look better on statistics so there are very few schools that can help give the help required to allow all children to learn. I really hope you change your mind in relation to the school range change as it will take away the safe and constructive environment she is happy in now. I believe schools should be there for all and not just the centre field students and I believe Kirklees will lose an important asset if this change happens.

Best Regards

Representation R29

I am writing in response to the closure of Almondbury Community School. I object to the closure I feel this has been a rushed decision and a knee jerk reaction to an incident that occurred at the School. This is a School at the heart of the Community. The children have always come first with staff and management and good relationships have been fostered with parents who now are being railroaded into sending their children to other Schools. Great expense has been spent on Executive heads who could work to improve the School but at the moment seem to just be working towards closure, no one feels safe. I feel undue pressure is being put on staff who no longer know if they are going to have a job and because of financial security are now having to seek employment elsewhere. I feel the whole way it has been handled has been unprofessional and many parents and staff have been misled.

Yours sincerely

Representation R30

Please can you reconsider closing Almondbury Community School?
All 3 of my kids go/have gone to this fantastic school and are thriving because of the quality teaching they have received here, I also live in Lepton and would be stuck in a horrible situation with siblings split over 2 schools which will make collecting them a nightmare.

Representation R31

To whom it may concern

As a parent of a child in year 8 due to start year 9 in September I strongly oppose the closure of the high school.

My child is smart and thriving within the school reaching targets and has amazing friendship circle! As a child of dual heritage she has never faced any form of racism or attacks!

She is doing well within the school and has been massively effected by the threat of closure and been moved and up routed to a school away from friends and prevented from choosing her school options because of all this situation. Non of this is been done in thoughts of the children currently in the school and how they are been made to feel/effects of the unsettled decisions!

Children within the school which parents have chosen to send there are threatened with sending there children to schools we wouldn't want them to attend! Which could go against there learning structure! Cause issues and effect there learning/grades.

I would like my daughter to finish her final years there and my son to attend there in the next 2 years when he is of high school age!

Chances are your children do not attend this school and you are not living or seeing the effect this is having on our children on a day to day basis! The unsettled behaviour within the school is horrible for both children and teachers and they are currently watching teachers they have bonded with and been supported by leaving as there jobs are at risk!

If this is truly what's best for the children then listen to the parents, teachers and the children who attend the school and support them in making there school better not closing it!

Thank you

Representation R32

Dear Sir/ Madam,

In respect of the proposed closure of Almondbury Community School I would like to advise you of my disagreement on this matter.

My son is currently attending this school in year 6, due to move up to the secondary phase year 7.

He is thoroughly enjoying his time at this school and is progressing extremely well academically.

Since the suggestion of closure he has become very stressed with the thought that he does not know what will happen and what school he would need to go to.

I find it very unreasonable to close the school as the staff there are amazing and without the school we would struggle to find one that is as local to us as ACS. As I understand King James is already nearly full to capacity.

I also think that the way the council has handled this proposal in respect of keeping parents updated and providing support has been unacceptable in that we are still really in the dark at this crucial time.

I can only hope for my son's sake and the other children that would like to attend the high school that the council see the error in all this and focus on improving the school instead.

Regards

Representation R33

I strongly oppose the proposals to close the secondary phase at Almondbury community school

1: My daughter is happy and settled and exceeding in her subjects moving her will have a negative impact on her mental wellbeing.

2: The staff at ACS are amazing they have a wonderful ability to bring the best out of the children

3: Most local schools are at capacity except newsome which to me is not an option as its 3.3 miles from our location. I would not want my daughter travelling this distance twice a day by herself.

4: I don't think you can guarantee that my daughter will be kept in the same friends group, the ones she's known since primary and this will mentally destroy her confidence in what is an important stage of her education. She is now in year 7 and this is the time where she needs stability and a strong direction so she can focus on her education and not worry about moving schools again. The whole proposal does not take into account any of the above issues and concerns.

Representation R34

I am one of the students that attends ACS, and I, for one, don't believe it should close. I have been there all my life and I have had no problems. I am in top sets for English and maths.

The teachers in ACS are always trying their hardest to help me and other children learn. They are always there to help and believe that every child will succeed.

If the school closes then I might be separated from my friends. There is no guarantee that I will get into the same school.

Now that the proposals have been made children in my school have been experiencing anxiety, afraid of leaving friends and teachers behind. Some of these children are only 12 years old, me included. We shouldn't have to feel this way, and moving schools will only increase our anxiety.

If children move it could affect their learning as they will have new teachers and will be surrounded by new people.

Improvement should be made to ACS, you can't just give up on a school that has the potential to be great.

Representation R35

We are strongly opposed to the closure of Almondbury Community School on the grounds of increased school related traffic in Sharp Lane (where we reside); more pupils at King James' will of course, mean more 'school run traffic' which is already a safety issue. It is only a matter of time before there is a serious road traffic collision.

As residents of Sharp Lane for over 25yrs we have seen a huge increase in school run traffic, especially from 08:15 to 08:45hrs (it would appear children no longer walk to school?!). There is a constant stream of cars passing our home, many travelling far faster than the (supposed) 30mph. Along with this, there are regular 'near misses' as vehicles attempt to exit the junction of Arkenley Lane to Sharp Lane which has very limited visibility for drivers; it is best described as a blind junction. The 'noise nuisance' aspect of this convoy of traffic is most unpleasant, and should not be ignored. We urge you to take the time to visit Sharp Lane at 'peak school run times' to experience this issue, and then appreciate why we are wholly opposed to the closure of Almondbury Community School.

Yours faithfully

Representation R36

Objection to change the upper age range of Almondbury Community School

I am the grandfather of 2 grand daughters who currently attend the school, 1 of whom will join yr 7 in September 2019 and 2 younger children whom would have joined yr 7 in 2 years from All Hallows.

The main reasons for my objection(s) are:

The proposals seem to be deficient on detail and leaves many questions to be answered which I have itemised in the second part of this objection.

Is the option to use King James's (KJ) dependable on the building of their extension

As part of the transition mentioned in the proposal are the council planning to allow teachers from Netherhall, Newsome and KJ to use ACS to teach pupils. If so will the funding for the pupils be paid to Netherhall, Newsome and KJ. This will result in a greater deficit.

On the question of finance the cabinet meeting 19th March (purpose of report: To seek approval to undertake a non-statutory consultation about future options for Almondbury Community School in the context of wider basic need for school places across Huddersfield South East and South West) considered the following agenda items which were signed by the Strategic Director, Service Director (Finance) and Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning.

Key Decision Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250 K or more or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards answer yes Have the council not a more exact figure or decide if it is +£250K or -£250K?

If the proposal to change the upper age range is passed are the council definitely going to stick to September 2020.

Part 2 of objection

The proposal shows that the senior schools are;

South and east and Kirkheaton: -Almondbury, King James(KJ) and Netherhall

South West: Newsome

Planned entry(s) for yr 7 2019/20 are

Almondbury	120
KJ	186
Netherhall	131
Newsome	183
Total	620

You have also stated that the plans include using KJ but quite rightly state that KJ is not subject to control of Local Authority.

If, as planned, the last intake of yr 7 to ACS will be 2019/2020 then the total available places will change. I have sent 2 different possibilities for the number of year 7 places available including the places at KJ and excluding the places at KJ.

In section 2 of your proposal you state:

This proposal is not dependent upon the creation of additional places at other schools either within or beyond the planning area. The local authority is of the view that if the proposal is implemented it will remain able to meet its duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places for secondary education in the area without the need to create extra places.

Next sentence states:

The Local Authority is working with local secondary schools to explore the opportunity for a small increase in places?

Is there a need for more places or not?

Breakdown of figures

Starting with 2020 there will be no places at Almondbury

By comparing the figures for pupils resident in planning areas (as shown on your proposal) we come to the totals in South east and Kirkheaton and South west for the years 2020 to 2026.

2020-613, 2021-666, 2022-628, 2023-650, 2024-621, 2025-558, 2026-621

Places available at schools including KJ

2020-2026 is 500

Places available excluding KJ

2020-2026 is 314

This shows a deficit of available places as;

Places available

	KJ incl	pupils	deficit	no KJ	deficit
2020	500	613	113	314	186
2021	500	666	166	314	352
2022	500	628	128	314	314
2023	500	650	150	314	336
2024	500	621	121	314	307
2025	500	558	58	314	244
2026	500	621	121	314	307

The figures are based on the statement that no extra places are needed.

With an average of 160 pupils accessing school places outside the area section 2 of the proposal this shows a deficit in 2021, see figures above assuming that KJ agree to become involved and that their plans for further capacity are agreed. If king James do not agree the deficit of places is between 352 and 244.

Unless there has been a change in the figures since 7th June or the proposal has other figures missing this seems an impossible situation.

The council leader stated at the meeting on 29th May that he was determined to fully involve the parents and to keep them informed.

When will the council officers and councillors meet this promise as getting information at the moment is lacking.

Representation R37

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Next sentence states:

The Local Authority is working with local secondary schools to explore the opportunity for a small increase in places?

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plans for further capacity are agreed. If king James do not agree the deficit of places is between 352 and 244.

Unless there has been a change in the figures since 7th June or the proposal has other figures missing this seems an impossible situation.

The council leader stated at the meeting on 29th May that he was determined to fully involve the parents and to keep them informed.

When will the council officers and councillors meet this promise as getting information at the moment is lacking.

Representation R38

I would like to make an objection to the proposal on the following grounds:

Department for education making significant changes(prescribed alterations)to maintained schools dated October 2018 states:

Annex A

Information to be included in a prescribed alteration statutory proposal sets out 7 sections which the department as a minimum would expect the proposal to include.

School and LA details Covered by LA

Description of alteration and evidence of demand LA sets out lots of reasons why they want to make changes but lots of meetings and Cabinet meetings with public attendance showed total evidence of no demand

Objectives (including how the proposal would increase educational standards and parental choice LA sets out their argument of educational standards except with their suggestion for using Newsome High school. This is classified by Ofsted as requires improvement. Parental choice is not covered as 2 of the 3 options would mean much longer walking distances

The effect on other other educational institutions in the area. LA have suggested 3 schools, 1 of the schools needs more classrooms and the planning permission not yet agreed. It is an academy and no agreement with LA yet.

Project costs and indication of how these will be met, including hoe long-term value for money will be achieved This is the section where the LA has FAILED to answer.

There is no explanation of how the costs will be met, what long-term value there is: Cabinet meeting dated 29th May agenda 9 stated that it was likely to result in spending or saving £250K or more but no mention on the current PFI for the school

The 2 other sections were covered by the LA proposal.

Nothing in the proposal covered the potential extra costs to be covered by parents in extra uniform costs, travel costs.

Section 5 also states that a proposal should not extend journey times, increase transport costs or result in too many children being prevented from travelling sustainably due to unsuitable walking or cycling routes. There is no comment from LA

Representation R39

Dear Ms Sanders

Please find below comments relating to the statutory consultation regarding future options for Almondbury Community School.

As a resident of St Helen's Gate we have grave concerns about student safety as well as impact at several levels on the community immediately surrounding school with the proposed increased student intake at King James School proposed under your options document.

We have also been subject to on going criminal damage and trespass to our property over the past 15 years by KJS students which looks to worsen with a further 150 students that will mainly come by foot past our property under your proposal.

There will also be impact to the local wildlife with increased littering on the road, in our garden as well as the footpath that runs up to Grasscroft that runs behind our property.

Measures must be put in place to address these concerns.

Other questions are:

1. What is the predicted cost of the school closure?

I understand that the council are paying about £650,000 a year to the management company and there is 15 or so years to run on the PPP contract.(£650k x 15 = £9.75million). How will you fill that gap?

2. However it also seems that according to information supplied at the time of the proposed extension to All Hallows that the cost would only be £3m to get out of the PFI contract. What is the actual cost?
3. Have Officers provided the report referred to on page 11 of the public papers issued for the cabinet meeting dated 29th May 2019, on the impact of changes upon the future use of the site and options for use of the site/ buildings.
4. If not when will this be?
5. Are there any restrictions of use of the school site?
6. Not all students are academic. Has the council looked at the options of re-positioning the high school part of the Community school as one that focuses on being a secondary modern (i.e. lower level qualification / practical skills attainment)?. By being niche this could lead to higher student numbers and lower cost curriculum provision. Or develop the high school as a specialist autism focused school that will attract PPP funding?
7. The report at the 29th May cabinet meeting recommends that all AHS students are re-allocated as of September 2020. This appears to contradict the statement that a phased increase of an

additional 30 places per year at KJS leading in time to an increase of 150 students on roll. KJS is an oversubscribed, cramped school with no physical room for more students currently. KJS already uses "outside" i.e. don't use a physical room as a classroom and are oversubscribed. If KJS does not get planning permission to extend what is your plan?

8. KJS is an academy and they can set their own PAN which requires consultation. How is the council going to ensure KJS increases its PAN to meet your recommendation in the timelines of Sept 2020?
9. Have the comments and objections lodged in relation to the proposed extension of KJS been reviewed and considered as part of the proposal recommendation to move to next stage?
10. What health & safety review and impact analysis has been done with regards to the infrastructure and community/ residents of St Helens Gate, St Helens Fold, Dark Lane, St James Court, Birks Lane, Arkenley Lane, Sharp Lane, Grasscroft and Fenay Lane (i.e. all roads that will be affected) if a further 150+ students from Almondbury are put on roll at KJS?
11. St Helens Gate is seriously overloaded at school times. Dark Lane does not have a footpath and the footpath to and from Grasscroft is crumbling and not maintained. What actions do the council propose to stop children being injured on their way to KJS?
12. What actions will the council and the police take about the dangerous parking at the top of St Helen's Gate to ensure safety of drivers and pedestrians as there will be increased 'traffic' as result of these proposals.
13. Due to the significant impact of the proposal with specific regard to transfer of students to King James School on the infrastructure and community/ residents around the school (St Helens Gate, St Helens Fold, Dark Lane, St James Court, Birks Lane, Arkenley Lane, Sharp Lane, Grasscroft and Fenay Lane (i.e. all roads that will be affected)) –

why have the residents of all properties around King James School NOT been formally consulted in writing (as they received no written communication in the recent consultation phase that has now closed), as 'any other interested organisation / person that the proposer thinks are appropriate'.

Please can you kindly confirm receipt of this email.

Regards

Representation 40

Good afternoon,

I would like to make the following comments in relation to the statutory proposals as follows:

I do not believe the proposals are satisfactory for all children living in the South East planning area as;

1.The PAN figure for ACS secondary provision is misleading and distorts the actual picture as they no longer admit the children who fed into the school from All Hallows in KS2 as they continue at All

Hallows until the age of 11 years so I believe the true figure that should be relied upon is 50 children less than the 120 quoted.

2. Looking at the table you have provided showing pupils resident in the South East planning area in Yrs 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11 in 2018, then comparing them with the current and predicted pupils resident in South East planning area, for yrs 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, all these years show an increase in pupils across this planning area and this only dips in 2025 to 436, then increases to 473 in 2026. I would like clarification as to whether these predicted figures include additional pupils from the houses in the Local Plan, which are:

Homes in Lepton/Fenay Bridge area 1050

Means an additional average 21 secondary pupils per year group attending King James School, plus 12 secondary pupils per year group from the developments in Kirkheaton. There will be 33 additional primary places required, from the homes in Lelton or year group and 18 primary places per year group for Kirkheaton, plus additional places for secondary pupils from the development off bank end Lane, Almondbury at both primary and secondary.

3. The tool used in the Local Plan to assess sufficient places at schools was based on distance to nearest school, taking the spare places at Newsome into account, this then defeats the assessment used in the Local Plan and makes a total nonsense of the Local Plan! Some children in the Almondbury area are no doubt unable to travel to Newsome school by car, it is too far to walk, they will therefore have to resort to catching two buses each way to school. This is unacceptable, it will lengthen their school days and be more tiring for them. Additionally some of them may be carers for someone at home and this situation would make things very difficult for them. It simply isn't right or fair. Additionally houses are now being planned to be built in Huddersfield town centre, which forms part of the Newsome Ward, so presumably any children living in these planned homes will be living in the catchment for Newsome Secondary, so I therefore question whether there will be sufficient places in the future as you are currently predicting!

4. While you state a quarter of Secondary pupils are attending schools outside their area, I have spoken with the following schools who have informed me of the following:

Shelley College 360 places. Full, oversubscribed, and already has housing being built within its catchment area through the Local Plan. Pupils applying outside the area come under criteria 5 in their admissions criteria and I was informed would be highly unlikely to be offered a place, but would have to join a waiting list, furthermore the college has been inundated with enquiries since ACS proposals were published.

Moorend: is full from its own catchment, oversubscribed with 60 children on the waiting list. Children applying from outside the catchment would be at Criteria level 5 so low down the list and therefore unlikely to be admitted. Moorend is an outstanding school, so I believe this would reduce a child's chance of being admitted even more where they live outside the area.

Honley High School, is currently oversubscribed, but doesn't fill from within its catchment. Distance to school is part of the criteria used in assessing whether a child meets their admissions criteria and again a child outside the area would be low down on meeting the criteria.

The assessment tool used in the Local plan to work out school places measured distance to nearest school, so travelling to other schools to have their needs met defeats the objectivity of that test used in the LP.

Netherhall Campus wasn't brought into this until issues around enough school places caused by the Local Plan were raised. Netherhall is full, so again there are no spare places, while this may be extended in the future, what will be the cost of that?

Royds Hall Community School – rated inadequate so parents will not bother sending their children there.

Newsome is rated inadequate and needs more pupils but is 2 bus journeys away for many pupils living in the Almondbury area. Now an Academy with plenty of places to fill. The explanation for giving this academy status and not ACS was ACS doesn't have the pupil numbers. But Newsome only had a hundred or so more on roll than ACS.

I therefore feel that while that may currently be the case, it will not continue due to lots of housebuilding taking place and children outside admission areas being rated at criteria level 5 or 6, with little chance of being accepted.

Thus, the statement " Given the size of schools in the surrounding areas, future child population cohorts and longstanding patterns of parental choice, this position is not expected to change significantly", I believe this statement to be false and misleading as the pattern emerging from the schools I have spoken with shows a very different picture! Additionally no mention is made of additional children from the houses in the Local Plan! I believe therefore that there will be insufficient places for pupils in Almondbury and that as Newsome is rated inadequate, it would simply not be fair or right to close secondary provision at ACS and expect children to travel to Newsome.

Finally, I do not believe it is fair or right to expand the upper limit of numbers per class to accommodate children being admitted to ACS secondary September 2019 which I understand may be the case. I would like to receive a note of the number of pupils being admitted to ACS September 2019 Yr 7 which may be above 30 for each class and flies in the face of current Government policy if the number is more.

Finally families in Lepton are now fearful for the education of their children at King James School and are looking for alternative schools, but they are all full. Additionally some pupils entering Yr 11 at ACS this September will not have access to their usual subject teachers as I understand that all the maths, science and IT teachers have left. This is an outrageous situation for those pupils at the school who are caught up in this mess and I sincerely hope they will be given the specialist support they need in this the most crucial of years.

Please note my comments and my continued opposition to these proposals.

Kind regards,

Representation R41

Decisions made in the past have contributed to the financial situation currently faced by ACS (extension of PAN for KJS in the past, extension to a KS2 provision at All Hallows) and the drop in local birthrate has not helped. It might have been possible to ride out this issue especially given the building works planned in the local area over the next few years which would have boosted local pupil numbers. However the OFSTED decision has forced everyone's hand. (I have my own views on the merits of this decision - there was no likelihood of a different decision being made after the incident hit the national press last year.) The fact remains that the financial situation of the school is unsustainable in the short term and no academy provider is likely to want to take the school as it stands. Therefore closure of KS3/4 provision is probably the only solution and one which is highly disruptive for those students who will be affected by it - current Y7 to Y9 and those currently in Y6 who will only have one year in the secondary phase before having to move on. I hope the council intend to offer good support to parents and children at this difficult time particularly those with SEND. ASC had a strong Nurture provision which is not something every secondary school has and which supported many of those young people.

I feel that the next year will be particularly hard with children remaining in school but knowing they will move on and probably moving on to other schools if the odd place becomes free during that year. All this will be disruptive for their classmates and also teachers. It will be hard to retain the staff for this next year - has any thought been given to what would be done if a key member of staff eg maths or MFL were to leave? It would be almost impossible to recruit anyone in this area of shortage with any quality for this short term period with a large risk to those sitting their GCSE in 2020. I note with approval some creative ideas here eg the suggestion that new jobs might be offered in other schools with staff remaining at ACS for the last year. Work does need to take place to reassure staff and redeploy where you can while trying to retain quality teaching for this last year. Despite the OFSTED comments there is a lot of good work going on in that school.

A PAN of 30 for the remaining KS1/2 school may not be a high enough figure. Numbers have not usually been as high as the current 60 PAN but are usually over 30. I would not like to think this lower figure would deprive a local family of a place. Current Almondbury provision is 30 at All Hallows and 60 at ACS and I think current numbers in the 2 schools are generally over 60 per year which would mean moving to a PAN of 30 wouldn't provide enough Almondbury places.

As a local resident I think it is important that Almondbury retains a KS3/4 provision for its children and young people. So if ACS has to close then the suggestion that King James is the school for most of this local area is welcomed. I would urge the council to encourage KJS to welcome the change to its PAA. In practice many local Almondbury children do attend KJS already. Children living within the proposed PAA will tend to walk to school - there isn't an environmental cost of them being driven to other schools further away or using buses.

What will happen to the school site is also of concern. The KS1/2 provision will continue on the Greenside site but that leaves a rather large building unoccupied in the village. It would be a waste of resources not to use it so what are the plans for it as well as for the assets within it eg the library books and other equipment? There is a sports centre on the site which was shared with the local community which would also be lost once the school closes. Additionally the swimming pool is used by other schools and providers for swimming lessons. If the school is closed who will open and close up this site securely for the swimming pool or will it too close? This would be a loss to the community. There is a risk of it just being opened for swimming that as no-one else is on site you will get vandals etc entering the site. I don't know whether the site on which Mulberry Bush sits is owned by them or yourselves but is there any risk that if the school closes that provision will also cease?

Representation R42

Good Morning

I totally object to the 'potential' closure of the High School element at Almondbury Community School. I gave my reasons in the consultation booklet.

Both my children have attended here - my daughter is currently in year 8 so this has a massive impact on all of us. They have both been happy here and the teachers they've both been taught by couldn't do enough for them!

My daughter has already gone through the merger with Juniors into the High School site and that was traumatic enough for her. We looked around King James School and Almondbury High School at the time of choosing which one to go to and chose Almondbury hands down. We thought the council would surely do everything in their powers to bring the school back to where it should be - they wouldn't let it fail after all the money that was spent on it and all the upset and upheaval for the children. How wrong we were, given the current situation and how foolish we feel when a lot of their friends jumped ship and moved from AJS to King James at that time. We put our trust in Kirklees! The community of Almondbury needed this to work. If we'd jumped ship with the rest and chosen King James our daughter would not be facing a very uncertain future in her education now, along with the affect this will have on her mentally too!!

Almondbury has so much to offer - it's a fantastic site, great playing fields, great gym and swimming facilities that other members of the community also enjoy the use of. The school is light and airy with a good feel about it. As mentioned, the teachers have always been very accommodating in our experiences. Plus it's the local school and our children get to walk there and interact with their friends- that's what it's all about- gaining that independence and confidence within the confines of what's local, safe and familiar. If I wanted my daughter to catch a bus to a school further away from our home, I would have applied to a different school in the first place!!

Almondbury Community School should not be allowed to close.

I suspect you will have a low number of responses by email but that doesn't mean people don't care what happens to the school and their children!! On the contrary, we've been burned before with the earlier merger and are sick to the stomach with the situation we are in now. Luckily we have a few good, determined parents prepared to fight for us. Hope it will make a difference.

Regards

Representation R43

My email is to object to the closure of this school. I have 3 children in acs from September 2019 the school is in walking distance from home I know my children will be safe getting to school and back if this school stays open. They have a wide range of friends here and are familiar with all the teachers I have never heard anything as daft as closing a school right in the middle of a housing estate it really isn't fair on the children and I hope it does not go ahead

Representation R44

I am writing this e-mail on protest against you closing Almondbury Community School. My daughter attends King James School which is fantastic I choose to send my daughter there as we had problems with bullies. Almondbury Community School did nothing about the situation so my daughter had her last 3 years of junior school ruined. Since you are closing Almondbury Community School down and intending to send them to King James School my daughter's anxiety has returned. I for 1 will be fighting all the way to keep Almondbury Community School open so that these bullies will not be making my daughter's life miserable again. And if you do close Almondbury Community School you will have made 2 child's mental health a hell of a lot worse than what it is.

Representation R45

Good Morning

I am emailing today to express my disappointment in Kirklees Council treatment of Almondbury children. They have been persistently let down by ineffective management. This whole fiasco started when Kirklees failed to notice that Almondbury Junior School was heading rapidly towards special measures. I noticed this when I visited the school for an open evening in October and sure enough the following April it was in special measures. If I was able to spot this in an hours visit how was this missed by school improvement?

The utter contempt that was then shown to parents when expressing concerns about the merger was disgusting. The meeting with councillors and those employed by Kirklees remains as the worst meeting I have ever attended because of the complete disregard for parental views.

Despite all that was promised for ACS to become a beacon school nothing was put in place, the same staff remained and no one was responsible for keeping a strong overview of what was happening.

Despite all this there has been no acknowledgement from Kirklees that mistakes have been made. Instead of trying to blame other schools and outside factors perhaps look inwards.

On a personal level the mismanagement and ineffective schooling has impacted on my children too many times already. One of my daughters had to have counselling after her time in ACS. They failed to deal with bullying and have such low expectations on all who attend there.

So I would urge Kirklees Council to accept that the children of Almondbury have already had to face too many poor educational outcomes compared to the rest of Kirklees. Each time Kirklees have failed to step up and provide what has been promised and left them floundering. When this has been accepted think about listening to parents and children and consider different options.

If the closure has to go ahead how will Kirklees properly and effectively support not only those who have to leave a school but also those who have chosen to move away from Almondbury because of the series of devastating experiences and now face further impact. Introducing 30 new students to settled year groups could bring negative repercussions for many. Transitions will need careful planning and a high level of support from experienced professionals such as psychologists.

Please do not further damage my children's education and mental health.

Yours sincerely

Representation R46

To Director for Children's Services, Kirklees Council

I would like to register my objections to the above proposal.

I have lived in Almondbury for most of my life and attended the infant School on Fernside Avenue, the Junior School on Southfield Road and then the High School which is now the Community School on Fernside Avenue. These were not the best schools but they were good schools and they served the local community well.

In recent years we lost the Junior school on Southfield Road with the creation of the Community school being given as the reason why. A huge investment to accommodate the Junior school on the same site as the High School seems to have been a success. My daughter had to make the switch and apart from the usual worries and reservations when changing schools she settled in well.

The latest proposal to remove the High school age range from the site seems outrageous. Not only does it undo all the hard work already carried out but it also makes a mockery of the previous investment such a short time ago. I fail to understand how anyone could agree to such a huge investment knowing full well that it would all change again a few years later. This is a waste of public funds at a time when councils are making more and more cuts to services.

By removing the High school age range, the buildings would only be housing the Junior school age range. These buildings would be too big for just the Junior school so how long before they are moved into smaller premises. This would then leave the buildings empty and the site unused....is this what Kirklees Council are really trying to achieve?

The proposal is to move the children to schools which are already full.....how can this work? More investment will be required to modify existing buildings. More investment will be required for new buildings, some of which would need to be built on green belt land which would be against planning regulations. How can any of this make sense? There are so many questions which need answering.

I strongly feel that this proposal should be scrapped and the council should put its efforts into fixing the problems with ACS rather than its eventual closure. It is perfectly located with plenty of room for future expansion should the need arise and has plenty of facilities - some of which are not available at other schools in the area. With the right investment and leadership, ACS has the potential to become a good school once again. Some might say that good is not good enough, but in my opinion not every school can be the best school but every school should be allowed to be the best it can be. This can only be achieved with the support of the council...something which Kirklees council doesn't seem willing to do.

Thank you for listening.

Parent of pupil at ACS

Representation R47

I'm 11 years old I am in year 6.

Please do not shut Almondbury secondary stage it is the only high school that is not too far away in my area. I love Almondbury community school it's amazing i'm moving into year 7 next year and I don't want to move to another school. I hope you find this letter and all the others like it as a reason not to shut almondbury high school.

Thank you,

Representation R48

Hello,

Further to my email last night, I have a further issue I wish to raise:

DFE guidance on closing schools:

While a Local Authority can propose the closure of a maintained school, alternatively a governing body of a school can also take this step if it gives two years notice of its intention to close the school. The Governing body were I understand advised by Council to stand down. It could be said that this was to prevent the existing governing body at the time from making this proposal, so that the closure could be hastened!

Reasons for closing a maintained school could be for wider school reorganisation, meaning the school is surplus to requirements, but in the light of the information I provided in my earlier email, I do not believe the Council has proved this is the case and I understand in any event that despite the departments best efforts, 72 children are being admitted to ACS September 2019. This is the current number of children unable to find school places elsewhere. In the future while a decline in pupil numbers is predicted as I have already mentioned in my earlier email there is only one year when the figure dips.

Additionally while Netherhall may have an opportunity to expand by building additional classrooms, there will be a significant cost and those classrooms will have to be built. The numbers of children in future years is only predicted and could change. I therefore require more evidence before I am satisfied.

On March 19th I asked a question relating to whether pupil numbers from the Local Plan had been incorporated into this plan as no mention was made of them in the report to Cabinet of the 19th March. I received a vague answer which has led me to believe that at that point pupil numbers from the Local Plan had not been factored into this Plan to close secondary provision, yet it is clearly stated in DFe guidance that any closure of a school should accommodate the long term, I don't believe this issue was considered.

Finally from that same DFe guidance it states "The decision maker – L/A must be satisfied that there are sufficient places elsewhere in the local area to accommodate displaced pupils and the likely supply and future demand for places in the medium and long term. The decision maker should take into account the overall quality of alternative places in the local area and the popularity of other local schools. I do not believe the Council has satisfied this test as stated in my last email and request that ACS secondary remain open and continues to accept pupils post 2020.

Kind regards

Representation R49

Dear Ms Sanders

I am writing to express my objections in respect of the statutory consultation on future options for Almondbury Community School.

My concerns include:

The main alternative school offered, King James is already crowded and fully subscribed. It will be difficult to absorb the additional proposed 150 students in a building where current student report overcrowded corridors and dining halls. This detrimental impact will affect current King James' students as well as transferring ACS students.

There are children at that school now, who would be required to move, that have settled and thrived at ACS when they did not do so at other schools. This is due to the support and skill at the school. By moving students to other schools, much of the great work that teachers at ACS have already achieved will be undone.

Students have firm, supportive friendship groups that will be broken up. This is particularly disruptive effect on these children both socially and in terms of their education.

The increase of danger to students around St Helens Gate. This is already a tight, congested area with little footpath space and no crossing points. During the time students are going to and returning from school, this area is already busy and congested and the majority of the proposed 150 additional students would use this route.

The increase in danger to student due to increased journey times. Many students will face lengthy journey times, on foot to alternative schools. Transport links to the alternatives offered are inadequate.

There will also be increased nuisance to residents around St Helens Gate and routes to the school caused by pedestrian students and increased school traffic, including littering, disturbance and increase in noise.

I do not think that options to utilise the site, possibly in conjunction with King James' have been fully explored. In particular, a split campus school, maybe with less academic / sports type subject taught at one site and more traditional subjects being taught at the other.

I do not think the full costs associated with this proposal have been fully made clear, especially in regard to the closure of the senior years, outstanding PFi payments and the additional cost to be incurred at the alternative schools. Questions have been asked at Council and Cabinet and not been fully answered.

Has consultation been carried out with the families at alternative schools regarding the impact on an influx of additional students? Has the impact on these schools been taken into account? I have not seen any evidence of this.

The notification of this proposal and consultation so far with students and families has been clumsy and badly handled. For example, I have heard of students having unsealed letters to take home announcing the consultation before teachers and staff at the school.

Staff, students and families have already endured enough stress and disruption regarding this matter. I strongly object to the proposal.

With Regards,

Representation R50

Sir/Madam

As a parent, I have concerns about the proposals for Almondbury Community School, and am also dissatisfied with the process so far.

I accept that the secondary phase in its current state is unsustainable, but the closure plans do not seem to take due consideration of the pupils who will be in key stages 3 and 4 next academic year (2019/20). Particular concern is the students entering year 10 who will have to move school half way through their GCSEs. This will likely have a significant detrimental impact on their achievement (as will the inevitable departure of permanent teaching staff during 2019/20-

I also have concerns about the proposed 3-11 school. It appears that the plan is to use the Greenside Centre in its current form. I do not believe that the building is currently adequate for the pupil numbers and year groups involved, and I have not seen any mention of capital expenditure to address this. I am not sure that there has been any consideration of the issues of accommodating the older learners in a building designed for only those up to key stage one.

Overall, it seems that the proposals are a knee jerk reaction. I do not know what other options have been explored, for example use of the school site/facilities by King James; I am not sure if any have.

Finally, as a parent, I must express deep dissatisfaction with the consultancy process thus far. I attended sessions on consecutive days at the Greenside and Fernside Centres respectively. At the Greenside Centre, we received little more than reassuring tones and encouragement to participate in the online consultation. Council representatives were unclear about basic facts, and no more knowledgeable on any aspect than we were as parents. At the Fernside Centre things were better in terms of the competency and knowledge of the representative, but the only significantly useful information that we gained was that we were still going to be largely in the dark, with an uncertain future for our children.

Yours faithfully

ACS parent

Representation R51

Short email

I want ACS to stay open and not close next year

I've worked here for almost 20years and my children came here

2 grandchildren came here

And foster children came here

DO NOT CLOSE IT!!!