

**Full representations to the statutory notice to close Culham Parochial Primary School (as of 4 May; representation period closes 5 May)**

<p>Parent/carer of a child at Culham Parochial CE Primary School</p>	<p>My son attends Culham Parochial school &amp; is testament to the fantastic learning environment that this wonderful village school offers. He has thrived both educationally &amp; emotionally. The atmosphere is one of a caring, fun &amp; stimulating school where all the pupils are extremely happy &amp; eager to learn. The standard of education is excellent &amp; the close links with the village church means this is a true Church of England primary school, which as parents we chose for our children based on location, size &amp; standard of education amongst other personal reasons. The school is now the hub of the village since the shop &amp; pub have closed. Many of the village residents were educated at the school &amp; have generations through their families who have been, or who they wish to have the opportunity to be in the future. To close this wonderful school would be disastrous to the children who attend, their families &amp; to the village community. With the plans for many more houses to be built in the area &amp; the shortage of good schools available it seems absolute madness that we find ourselves in this predicament of having to fight to keep Culham school open. We are convinced there is a suitable headteacher out there &amp; as this is the final hurdle we would hope that all avenues would be explored &amp; help would be forthcoming from OCC in helping to secure a suitable candidate into post. We cannot give up the fight to keep the school open, we owe it to the present pupils &amp; the children who in the future will benefit from having the opportunity to attend &amp; thrive.</p>
<p>Parent/carer of a child at Culham Parochial CE Primary School</p>	<p>Considering the very recent news where by Oxfordshire (as well as nationally) primary schools face even more pressure on places than previously feared, after population experts forecast the birth rate would continue to rise, shows that it is vitally important that this school remains open. Culham school is a very well maintained school, has excellent teaching, happy children, dedicated parents and a committed and pro-active group of governors. With there being no shop, village hall or pub, this just leaves the church with the school being a highly important focal point of the village. Events held at school are very well attended by the local community and I and many others strongly object to the proposed closure.</p>
<p>Staff/governor at Culham Parochial CE Primary School</p>	<p>I have written at an earlier stage of the consultation and wish to register that I continue to believe that closure would be the unfair destruction of a good school, which has been through troubled times, but is now in an excellent position to recover. We have a new Head teacher and a rejuvenated Governing body, with strong local support.</p>
<p>Staff/governor at Culham Parochial CE Primary School</p>	<p>I strongly object to the closure of this school, there are very limited places available to the children in other schools (only it seems those with poor Ofsted ratings and many pupils on register with behavior problems). I do not understand with this distinct lack of places in the area why a school as good as this one should be closing. As for appointing a Head Teacher - i feel that having 2 LA people on the interview panel who will have the VITO on whether a candidate is suitable or not is absolutely appalling, especially when the same body of people have sent out tenders to taxi companies for quotes to transport 14 children from Culham to Sutton Courtenay from September - rather makes one think that the decision is already made. On this note i also find it rather disturbing that Sutton Courtney school has published their newsletter stating that from September they will be appointing a new teacher and creating a new classroom for the rise in pupil numbers. I assume they are talking about pupils from Culham, as it is common knowledge that parents do not normally drive any distance to take their child to this school, in fact the opposite is true, many parents living in Sutton Courtenay drive their children to other areas. So why are the children of Culham school being left with this as their only option??? A lot of questions I realise, but i think they should be investigated and answered. I thank you for your consideration of this matter.</p>
<p>CE Diocese</p>	<p>Much has happened since the proposal to close Culham School became public. Despite the pressure of a falling roll caused by the consultation uncertainty, the Governing Body has been reinvigorated and probably would not be in its current position, had they been in office a year earlier. The school now has the widespread support of the village and they are fully committed to supporting the school. We would clearly like to see this school to remain open. The continuation of village schools is vital to their communities and the Diocese wishes to support all of its schools. The school remains the key public building for the village of Culham. Since the proposal was published we have seen the collapse of the proposed Academy at the European School, which has removed the possibility of alternative provision</p>

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	<p>for the village and this is significant. The school has found itself in its current predicament through a series of unfortunate circumstances and not any strategic need to close the school. Understandably, a set of criteria was set by the Council to enable the school to continue, including the appointment of a Headteacher, secure pupil numbers and a balanced budget. The school has made significant progress in all of these areas and we feel it has now earned the chance to re-establish itself as a thriving institution. Therefore, we would strongly urge the Council not to approve the closure notice.</p>
<p>Parent/carer of a child at another school</p>	<p>Although the distance to the next nearest primary school in Sutton Courtney is 2 miles away it is a busy route with only a narrow footpath across the bridge which would not be easy if you were walking with a pram and an older sibling. Once the school is gone it will not be replaced and what would happen if more children moved into the village in the future?</p>
<p>Parent/carer of a child at Culham Parochial CE Primary School and another school</p>	<p>I strongly object to the closure of Culham School, my son attends the school and my daughter went to the school and has now moved to Didcot Girls. I have objected in writing before, I've attended protest meetings outside County Hall, supported fundraising and many other things in order to get the message across about the brilliant Culham School. The school is a focal point of the community well supported by the vicar and Culham Church. The teaching staff are excellent and standards are high. Ofsted reports are good. The children care about other children, are willing to learn in a lovely environment. Former pupils return to the school year after year and express a real belief that they have received a good learning experience at the school. Government stats state that by 2018 over 500,000 more children will require primary school education at the very school that the Oxford City Council plan to close. This is short term thinking by people that have no understanding of this school and how it sits in the community. Last Friday the school was packed in the evening for a quiz night. Why? because this useless Oxford City Council will now stop the funding for the children to attend swimming classes in Berinsfield every Tuesday. The evening raised nearly £500 with food and refreshments provided. This will now ensure that swimming continues. Oxford City Council and the LEA has failed this school and has now galvanised the village into action. I am truly disgusted with OCC and the LEA. I quote Roy Leach from the LEA who said at the meeting last year when he announced the closure of the school and I quote "I have failed to secure the future of this school". He said that twice. I'm delighted to know I'm paying for his failure. I've gone past the point of writing polite letters to Keith Mitchell and his sidekicks, I'm actually quite angry that so many parents have had to work so hard on 'save culham school' websites, meetings, fundraising, protest meetings etc because of the incompetence of the forementioned. (here I am again giving up my time during business hours - I run my own business - to write another letter). Under no circumstances should this 160 year old school close. There has been an investment in computers, new play equipment and fencing and has been recently decorated. I simply cannot believe that the OCC is considering closing this school. I'd like to think that you will listen to my comments and all the other positive replies you will receive but I'm quite sure you won't; OCC knows the price of everything and the value of nothing. I and all parents will fight on to Save Culham School, see our website: <a href="http://www.saveculhamschool.co.uk/">www.saveculhamschool.co.uk/</a></p>
<p>Staff/governor at another school and parent/carer of a child at another school</p>	<p>There is no need to close this school. There needs to be small schools in villages because: 1) they make for a decent and vibrant place to live for families and to stop villages becoming dormitory; 2) to give a suitably good education to children (small schools are much better for young children - there is no doubt about this, there is a huge amount of evidence to support this); 3) to give an education to the children of the village that is in and for their village 4) to deliver the statutory requirements of a LEA without forcing families to go outside their village. This is a good still a good school, despite all its issues with the headteacher and a temporary head who alienated a large number of parents. Think carefully about the legacy you will be leaving by closing this school. This is a good school, and the LEA needs to be lobbying to change the requirements for heads that make it more difficult to recruit heads to smaller schools, not lying down and accepting this and closing small schools with the phrase 'we can't find a headteacher'. To close this school would be a massive failure on the part of the County Council in its statutory and moral duty to the children and families of this village and to future generations. It is a lazy, short sighted, ignorant and unimaginative decision. Look around at the world, and see how valuable small schools are; then see what can be done to solve the short term problems of the school - yes, this will be more challenging than closing the school - but rise to the challenge and show yourselves worthy of the responsibility invested in you!</p>

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Staff/governor at another school	I am reluctant to agree with the closure as I am a firm supporter of village schools, but this one does seem to have become untenable despite many and various efforts to find a solution. That there is another village school so close makes a big difference to my response, however this school, Sutton Courtney, should receive extra input and advice to help it to cope with the new arrivals and to raise standards to those that many of them were experiencing before.
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### Summary of responses

9 responses, 8 of which objected to the proposal.

Category of respondent	Number of responses
Parent of child at Culham Parochial Primary School	2
Parent of child at another school	2
Parent of child at Culham Parochial Primary School and another school	1
Parent of child not yet at primary school	0
Staff/governor at Culham Parochial Primary School	1
Staff/governor at another schools	1
Staff/governor at another school and parent/carer of a child at another school	1
CE Diocese	1

<b>Community value of the school</b>	
The school is vital to its local community	5
Young families will leave/not move to the village	1
Value of local schools in general	1
<b>Educational value of the school</b>	
Culham provides a high quality of education	5
Culham meets demand for a small school – value of small schools	1
Shortage of good schools / alternative schools are not as good	2
Collapse of academy proposal removes alternative option	1
<b>Traffic and travel</b>	
Difficult for parents to transport children to other schools	1
<b>Need for school places</b>	
Population rising locally and beyond	2
Housing development in the area *	1
<b>Alternative solutions</b>	
More effort needed to secure a headteacher	3
Current problems can be overcome by new governing body	2
Sufficient progress has been made against council's criteria	1

\*There are three current planning applications in the area, all pending decision:

- a) Outline application for 140 dwellings on the Amey's site, Appleford Road(10/01907/OUT - re-submission of withdrawn application SUT/19470/8-X)
- b) 15 dwellings on the adjacent Amey's site (10/02032/FUL).

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- c) 15 dwellings in Hobby Horse Lane (Christ Church site). Application to extend planning permission already granted for 15 dwellings on appeal. (11/00086/RENEWAL and 10/02230/FUL).

All of these lie south of the river and are therefore within the current catchment area for Sutton Courtenay Primary School, although (a) & (b) are nearer to the Culham School site (approximately 0.6 miles compared to 1.6 miles).