

St Gregory's Catholic Primary School Statutory Representation Feedback

Overview

In accordance with the guidance from Department for Education, the statutory public notice regarding the proposed closure of St Gregory's Catholic Primary School was published in Macclesfield Express on 25 October 2023.

The 4-week representation period ran from **25 October till 26 November 2023**.

Information was made available on the Cheshire East Council website and the representation period was notified to key stakeholders including Ward Members, MP, Diocese, neighbouring parish and town councils and neighbouring local authorities. Information was emailed to all local schools and schools were issued with letters for distribution to their staff, governors and parents.

Responses

During the representation period there were **767** responses received.

Some of the key issues raised are summarised below: -

Q1 Do you agree with St Gregory's Catholic Primary School closing?	Responses			Total
	Yes	No	No View	
	322	305	140	767

Summary of key issues raised from Q1 are detailed below: -

- Increased housing in the Bollington area, there will be a growing demand for places going forward.
- Diversity of choice needs to be maintained. Catholic schools are vitally important in the community.
- Not enough capacity in the other Bollington schools need the places at St Gregory's
- St Gregory's is a big part of Bollington history, the right amount of funding and people could change the fate of the school.
- More should have been done to support the school.
- With so few children the school it is no longer viable.
- People have lost faith in the school thus a change is needed.

Although the majority of respondents said a clear yes or no, the overwhelming responses from comments received against question 1 and question 2 was that the school should remain as a school setting.

Q2 Do you agree that the site should remain as a School?	Responses			
	Yes	No	No View	Total
	739	12	16	767

Summary of key issues raised from Q2 are detailed below: -

- The 100 places lost need to be added to other mainstream schools across Macclesfield.
- School should remain a school even if not associated with the Diocese.
- No school should close.
- Shortage of school places across Bollington but school needs a new start.
- The worry is the site would be sold for housing.
- School has been let down by the authority and the Diocese, not enough support given.
- There are memorial sites on this site for past pupils they should remain there.
- Closing the school would result in even more children travelling out of Bollington for mainstream schooling.
- It should remain as a school.
- Buildings already have the infrastructure for a school and great playing field.
- The site would be best used as a specialist school.
- The school is a perfect site for building on to establish an SEN school.
- Another mainstream school not necessary, with 3 other schools in Bollington the need is met.

Q3 Do you agree to the change of use from a mainstream primary into a Special Education Needs primary school to meet the education needs of Cheshire East children?	Responses			
	Yes	No	No View	Total
	740	17	10	767

Summary of key issues raised from Q3 are detailed below: -

- Peak school times there is already traffic chaos. Assume majority of SEN pupils would be from outside of Bollington and would need cars or taxi's adding to the traffic congestion.
- Should be a primary school as it always has been.
- Needs to be compromise to cater for local children and SEN.
- Clarity of SEN provision needed and careful consideration applied.
- Where possible SEN pupils should be in a mainstream school with their peers, not secluded in a specialist school.
- Need more SEN places, too many children have to travel out of Cheshire East to get a specialist place.
- Does seem a rising demand for SEN provision.
- Good use of existing educational buildings
- Bollington and surrounding area in desperate need of more SEN provision

Q4 Do you have any further comments that you would like captured in this consultation.	Responses	
	168 comments received	

Summary of key issues raised from Q4 are detailed below: -

- Already enough traffic chaos, children travelling from all over Cheshire would add to the parking and congestion problems.
- If it becomes an SEN school need enough parking for the additional cars and taxi's
- Need to maintain a Catholic school. Bollington children should be able to access a local catholic school and not have to travel.
- More publicity and student participation to allow further 6 months to review progress.
- Government and local funding is inadequate. School has been there a long time and needs to stay open.
- Don't close the school without increasing places at the other Bollington schools.
- Expanding village with more housing, need to maintain the primary school places.
- Poor management and lack of support over the years have led to the school's demise.
- Do not allow the land to be sold for housing.