

Appendix 3 – Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)

Key service delivery objectives and outcomes *

Describe the objectives the service is working towards and the current outcomes being achieved, to give context to your proposal. If this is a new service and these needs/objectives have never been met before, please state this instead of describing the current outcomes.

The Council, as the local Children's Services Authority, has a statutory duty to provide a school place for every child living in its area of responsibility who is of school age and whose parents want their child educated in the state funded sector. To achieve this, the Council keeps the number of school places under review and to take appropriate steps to manage the position where necessary. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 also requires local authorities to adopt a strategic role, with a duty to promote choice, diversity, and fair access to school provision.

In 2022/23 the Council detailed how it would bridge a projected £22.2m gap in budget with efficiencies, savings and the one-year government finance settlement – as well as working to bridge a projected gap of more than £80m over the next five years. Since then, inflationary pressures have further compounded financial challenges which the Council must work to mitigate. Equally schools are facing additional financial pressures, the like of which have not been seen in recent years.

The Council's statutory duty to provide school places in a way which promotes choice, diversity and fair access must be balanced against financial pressures to ensure a viable and sustainable future for our schools.

What is the proposal *

Describe what is changing and why

The Council has concerns on several fronts, as to the future viability of Great Gidding (Church of England) Voluntary Controlled Primary. These include, but are not limited to, demographic and in particular, financial issues.

To assess the school's overall viability a position statement was compiled which included details of the current and forecast financial position, staffing leadership and governance, actual and forecast pupil numbers, pupil outcomes and building condition. The conclusion of this position statement is that, given the weight of evidence, the Council should move towards closure of the school, effective from 31 August 2022 on the grounds that it is no longer considered to be viable.

A subsequent paper was provided to the Cambridgeshire Children and Young People's Committee, on 17 January 2023, at which the committee voted in favour of commencing a public consultation regarding the future viability of the school.

Following the public consultation, a further paper was provided to the Cambridgeshire Children and Young People's committee on 8 March 2023. The committee voted in favour of publication of a statutory proposal to close the school.

It is noted that there are 203 primary, infant, and junior schools across Cambridgeshire and that this is the first time since 1992 that the Council has proposed closure of one of the county's schools.

What information did you use to assess who would be affected by this proposal? *

e.g. statistics, consultation documents, studies, research, customer feedback, briefings, comparative policies etc

- Actual data regarding the children on roll at the school and their year group (2018 - 2023).
- Actual data regarding the home catchment location of pupils on roll in the current academic year.
- Actual data regarding children on roll at neighbouring schools to determine capacity (2022)
- Demographic data (2022) including:
 - The number of children of primary school age forecast to be resident in the Great Gidding catchment area.
 - Child Health Information Service data regarding reducing birth rates which are resulting in falling school rolls
 - Planned housing developments in the area
 - Census data regarding the gender and ethnicity of children on roll
- 2022 data regarding children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) including
 - The number of children on roll with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
 - The number of children on roll in receipt of SEND Support
- Financial information (2022/23 and forecast up to 2025/26)
 - The current and 3-year budget forecast for the school.
 - The cost of redundancies, should they be required
 - The cost of decommissioning buildings
 - The cost of transport to provide access to alternative schools for displaced children
- Performance data (2021/22)
 - SATs pupil outcomes at the school for reading, writing and maths
 - Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) outcomes
 - Year 1 Phonics outcomes
- Exploration of the potential impact of running a 2-class structure on the education offer and pupil outcomes.
- Leadership and governance information including
 - The outcome of a Strategic Leadership and Governance Review undertaken in October 2019
 - Vacancies and interim positions
- Information related to nearby schools including distance from Great Gidding and appropriateness for relocating Great Gidding pupils
- Demographic data regarding small settlements in Cambridgeshire.
- Responses to the consultation on the future viability of the school received via multiple means:
 - Smart Survey

- Consultations email inbox
- In writing
- During parent one to one meetings (where specified that it can be used for this purpose)
- During 5 consultation events – for parents, staff, public, parish council and local Headteachers
- Community Impact Assessment
- Input from church representatives

Which particular employee groups/service user groups will be affected by this proposal? *

e.g. all staff in 'X' team, all staff in 'y' location, all customers receiving 'x' service, all customers in 'y' area

Of the 44 children on roll at Great Gidding Primary School in January 2023 10 will transition to secondary school in September 2023. Of the remaining 34 children, only 10 reside in the Great Gidding catchment area.

Forecast birth rates in the catchment are very low, with only 1 child predicted to be reaching school age each year.

Great Gidding has a small population with 322 residents recorded in 2020.

Those affected include:

- Children on roll
- Children on roll subject to Special Educational Needs (SEN) support.
- Children on roll eligible for free school meals
- Children in Gt Gidding catchment
- Children in other catchments
- Families living in the catchment area
- Staff working at the school
- The local community
- Local business owners

N.B. There are currently no children with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) attending the school, though this may change between now and the potential closure of the school.

What is the significance of the impact on affected persons? *

The aim here is to focus your mind on the lived experiences of the people impacted by our decisions, understanding they are part of these people's wider lives. Think about how serious the impact of this change will be, not by itself but as part of wider cumulative impact. For example, disabled people's lives cost more, and disabled people are often poorer, than non-disabled people.

So, a cut to a service that disabled people use is likely to be part of a cumulative experience of financial difficulties and challenges to living as full a life as possible

Age

Children on roll at the school who reside in the Great Gidding catchment area and those who have recently been/will be born in the catchment will no longer have access to a school in their local community. It is of benefit to children to be able to walk to school and to attend school with peers who live locally to facilitate social development with peers outside school.

The main changes for pupils currently on roll, in Reception to Year 5 would be:

- A new school
- A new routine
- A new route to school
- A new uniform
- New teachers and support staff
- A new learning environment
- Changed friendship groups

Children in other catchments but on roll at Great Gidding are, in some cases, attending the school due to parental preference. The consultation feedback indicates that this preference is often related to it being a small school or to it being a church school. Parental preference will again be a primary consideration in applications for alternative schools and will be met where possible, in accordance with the school admissions code. Parents will be able to express a preference for another small/church school. It is possible that not all preferences will be met and some children will be offered places in their catchment or nearest school. Whilst it is possible that there will be detrimental impact of relocating such children to their local catchment school, it is also possible that they will benefit from attending school in their local community.

School communities, especially in small schools, develop close knit bonds. All children at the school will be impacted socially and emotionally by the closure of their school and by the breaking up of peer and friendship groups during the relocation of children to alternative schools. This is strongly reflected in the consultation feedback. They will also be impacted by the loss of the trusted adult relationships they have developed with staff at the school. Childhood is a period of fast paced social and emotional development and it is likely that there will be impact. Support will be needed to minimise detriment to wellbeing and to ensure positive transition to alternative schools.

Great Gidding has an aging population. Small villages often form close communities which are dependent on each other for quality of life. It is possible that the relocation of school children will have an emotional impact on elderly residents.

Disability:

Children with SEND have the right to access education provision which meets their educational, health and care needs, and which promotes the best life outcomes.

As part of the duty under the Children & Families Act 2014, the Council has a legal duty to identify and assess the special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) of children and young people for whom they are responsible. The Council becomes responsible for securing appropriate educational provision for a child/young person in its area when it becomes aware that the child/young person has or may have SEND. The Council must then ensure that those children and young people receive a level of support which will help them “achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes.”

There are currently no children on roll at Great Gidding Primary School who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). There are children on roll accessing SEN Support.

Whilst the needs of children accessing SEN Support are met through ordinarily available provision within mainstream schools, it is possible that the issues highlighted as affecting all children on roll will disproportionately impact children with SEND. Children with SEND can be more reliant on trusted adult relationships and more susceptible to trauma resulting from upheaval.

Additional support for the transition of children with SEN to new schools will be required and particular attention paid to engagement with their parents/carers.

Families with children

Whilst families may indicate a preference for relocation to a particular school, they may not be offered their first preference and/or they may not wish for their child to attend the nearest available school. It is possible that this will pose challenges in terms of travel to and from the relocation school as transport may only be provided where parents express an interest for and take up the place offered at the catchment school or nearest school with places available.

Parents and carers of children at the school are likely to have developed supportive relationships with each other. These relationships may cease and there may be a resulting social and emotional impact.

There are/have been events both inside and outside of school hours organised by the school. If the school closes, these events will cease. Events include but are not limited to:

- Summer and Christmas Fayres (though the last of these was in 2019)
- Harvest Festival during which the whole school go to church and family members are invited to attend
- Book week events during which parents are invited to an assembly
- Christingle church service followed by a Christmas Mingle
- Discos and quizzes have been held in the past but are not regular events

A dance club and a PE club are offered after school one day per week for approximately 1 hour. Previously, 2 PE related clubs and an art club were offered.

Pregnancy and maternity

There is a small possibility that those with young children, current pregnancy or who plan to have children will choose to move away from the village or will not opt to move to the village at all.

Religion or belief

Gt Gidding CE Primary is a denominational school (Church of England). The school has strong links with the church, into the grounds of which it has direct access from the school site.

Currently there are 19 church of England primary schools providing a total of 3747 denominational places in Huntingdonshire. Should Gt Gidding close the number of denominational primary schools would reduce to 18 and the total number of places to 3649. Whilst there are other denominational schools in the area surrounding Gt Gidding, places being available at those schools cannot be guaranteed and transport may not be provided for parental choice placements, in accordance with CCCs transport policy. Some pupils currently in Reception to Year 5 at Gt Gidding might be offered places at non-denominational schools.

The church community may suffer detriment from the loss of the primary school children within their church community.

The children may suffer detriment through reduced access to the place of worship.

Parents may have selected the school as their preference due to it being a Church of England school with an Anglican Christian character and be unhappy that this option will now be closed to them locally. Whilst some schools that children may be relocated to are also Church of England schools, some are not. Should parents express a preference for a school which is not their catchment/closest school on the basis of the school's designated religious character, they may be responsible for transporting their children to and from that school. This is due to the Councils policy that transport is only provided where a child attends their catchment school or the closest school with places available.

Great Gidding Church of St Michael is led by a visible, popular and active lay and ordained church team. As a typical and important rural church, it has 2 'minister led' services a month on Sundays, and one early morning midweek communion. In addition, individuals regularly use the church as a spiritual haven at any part of the day. The closure of the school will naturally likely impact on participation in such activities, particularly in relation to those individuals and families whose presence in the community is a consequence of being at, or having children in, the school. In short, the school closure will reduce the wider impact of the church's Ministry, and the reciprocal resourcing of it.

For Christmas, Harvest, Remembrance Day and for choral evensongs (2 or 3 a year, with visiting choir), the congregation increases considerably as a consequence of school participation. The school come into church every month for a service and are a welcome and important part of the congregation. Due to their regular attendance, the staff and pupils have made a 'qualifying connection' to be married in the church, should they wish. The school has 3 services in the year when parents also come.

Without the school, participation could be significantly impacted, not least in terms of children, young people and families. The community will need to further support the excellent Parochial Church Council in continuing to make the church available to the community, whether that be for festival times, regular worship for those who seek it, a spiritual safe-space, or general use for social benefit purposes.

The Grade 1 listed building is increasingly in need of support, and funding. The closure of the school then, like any major village service, will thus further put pressure on the long term sustainability of such essential spiritual provision, for those of faith and for anyone seeking pastoral care and support.

Rural isolation

Residents of rural communities are often socially connected with children and school activities being a central aspect of social activities. The number of children living in the area is already low and there may be an impact in terms of fewer children attending local village events and further declining numbers of children residing in the village.

During consultation, concern was expressed that local amenities may be affected by closure of the school. Specifically, concerns were expressed about the impact on the village shop, the village pub and the village hall in respect of lost trade and lost bookings for events such as children's parties and the potential impact on the local Church and Church community due to the loss of services attended by school.

Whilst it is possible that there will be an impact in terms of declining demand for housing in the village and associated impact on house prices, data provided by the Business Intelligence team indicates that villages with similar demographics and no local school have stable populations.

Poverty and socio-economic status

The number of children on roll at Great Gidding (Church of England) Voluntary Controlled Primary School who were eligible for Free School Meals in October 2022 was 22.7%. Whilst this is in line with the national average of 22.5% it is higher than the local average for Huntingdonshire which is 18.1%. This is an indicator that the school has higher than the local average of families on low incomes.

Families on low incomes may be less likely to have the resources available, for example transport options and IT solutions, to mitigate the dispersal of social networks caused by the school closure. They may also be disproportionately impacted by the need to purchase required items such as school uniform.

Such families are less likely to be able to apply preference to the school their child attends following the closure of Great Gidding (Church of England) Voluntary Controlled Primary School due to being reliant on Local Authority provided transport options. As a result, children from disadvantaged families may have fewer options to their counterparts who have financial opportunity.

Gender reassignment

The proposed closure of Great Gidding Primary School will not have a foreseeable negative impact on this group.

Marriage and civil partnership

The proposed closure of Great Gidding Primary School will not have a foreseeable negative impact on this group.

Sexual orientation

The proposed closure of Great Gidding Primary School will not have a foreseeable negative impact on this group.

Sex

As at the January 2022 Pupil Led Annual Census (PLASC), there were 20 female, and 24 male children on roll at the school. Whilst this is slightly more male than female, the number is not significant.

Therefore, the proposed closure of Great Gidding Primary School will not have a foreseeable negative impact on those of a particular sex.

Race

The rate of children on roll at Gt Gidding who belong to an ethnic minority is low.

At the January 2023 Pupil Led Annual Census, 39 of the 44 children on roll reported being white British. Of the remaining 5 children on roll, 3 reported an ethnicity other than White British, 1 refused to provide the information, and for 1 child the information had not yet been obtained.

Great Gidding CofE Primary School	44
Any Other Asian Background	1
Any Other Mixed Background	1
Information Not Yet Obtained	1
Refused	1
White - British	39
White and Asian	1
Grand Total	44

Therefore, the proposed closure of Great Gidding Primary School will not have a foreseeable negative impact on ethnic minorities.

N.B. Staff

Should closure be considered, staff redundancies will also be considered. This is likely to be undertaken via a separate EqIA completed specifically for the staff redundancy process.

Research, data and /or statistical evidence *

List evidence sources, research, statistics etc used. State when this was gathered/dates from. State which potentially affected groups were considered. Append data, evidence or equivalent

- Actual data regarding the children on roll at the school (2022). This includes:
 - Numbers on roll and year group
 - Home catchment location of pupils
 - Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) data
- Actual data regarding children on roll at neighbouring schools to determine capacity (2022)
- Demographic data (2022) including:
 - The number of children of primary school age forecast to be resident in the Great Gidding catchment area over the coming years.
 - Child Health Information Service data regarding reducing birth rates which are resulting in falling school rolls
 - Planned housing developments in the area
 - Great Gidding population data
 - Census data regarding the gender and ethnicity of children on roll
- Data regarding children with SEND (2022) including
 - The number of children on roll with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
 - The number of children on roll in receipt of SEND Support
- Financial information (2022/23 and forecast up to 2025/26)
 - The current and 3-year budget forecast for the school.
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 - SATs pupil outcomes at the school for reading, writing and maths
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- Exploration of the potential impact of running a 2-class structure on the education offer and pupil outcomes.
- Leadership and governance information including
 - The outcome of a Strategic Leadership and Governance Review undertaken in October 2019
 - Vacancies and interim positions
- Information related to nearby schools including distance from Great Gidding and appropriateness for relocating Great Gidding pupils
- Demographic data regarding small settlements in Cambridgeshire.
- Responses to the consultation on the future viability of the school received via multiple means:
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- During 5 consultation events – for parents, staff, public, parish council and local Headteachers
- Community Impact Assessment
- Input from church representatives

Consultation evidence *

State who was consulted and when (e.g. internal/external people and whether they included members of the affected groups). State which potentially affected groups were considered. Append consultation questions and responses or equivalent

The DfE guidance document '[Opening and Closing Maintained Schools](#)' guides this process, including through provision of a list of consultees.

A period of consultation was agreed by the Children and Young People Committee on 17 January 2023. The consultation period commenced on 23 January 2023 and ran until 21 February 2023.

There were many ways in which responses to the consultation were gathered:

- An online smart survey (open 23 January 2023 – 21 February 2023)
- Provision of a box at the school where paper responses can be posted and forwarded (available 23 January 2023 – 21 February 2023)
- Provision of a consultations email inbox
- One to one meetings offered to parents/carers (6 February and 9 February 2023)
- Three consultation events at Gt Gidding CE Primary school; one for parents, one for staff and one for the public (held 31 January 2023)
- A consultation event for Headteachers of other primary schools in the area (held at Folksworth Village Hall on 6 February 2023)
- A consultation event with the Parish Council (held 9 February 2023)
- A pupil voice forum attended by all pupils at the school on 5 February 2023.

All responses were collated and provided in full to Children and Young People Committee on 8 March 2023. Committee also received an overview of the consultation responses including:

- themes arising
- how many responses were received and through which mechanism
- who has responded (parents of current and previous pupils, staff, governors, Gt Gidding residents, other)
- views on closure of the school (strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, strongly disagree)

Themes and points arising from consultation are considered within this assessment and in the community impact assessment, which appended the 8 March committee paper.

Consultation questions and responses were appended to the 8 March 2023 Children and Young People Committee report.

Based on all the evidence you have reviewed/gathered, what positive impacts are anticipated from this proposal? *

This includes impacts retained from any previous arrangements as well as new benefits including improvements in line with our duties as a Public Sector organisation under the Equality Act. Use the evidence you described above to support your answer

Should the school remain open it will be subject to a financial deficit position which will make the running of it unviable. Timely closure avoids a budget deficit which would otherwise have to be managed.

Continued falling rolls and increasing costs will either result in this school having a budget deficit very soon or in the education offer being significantly impacted by the measures taken to remain within budget. Closure of the school, and relocation of the pupils on roll elsewhere, will ensure that pupils are not in a school which is unable to provide a broad and rich curriculum due to financial constraints and the need to reduce to a 2-class structure.

Children attending Great Gidding Primary School from out of catchment have the potential to benefit from being relocated to a school in their local community.

Based on consultation evidence or similar, what negative impacts are anticipated from this proposal? *

This includes impacts retained from any previous arrangements. Use the evidence you described above to support your answer

Children on roll - Reception to Year 5:

- Being unable to access an alternative school place in the local area
- Impact on emotional wellbeing of their school closing and moving to a new, larger school
- Potential loss of established peer relationships and the resulting impact on social development
- Potential impact on educational attainment as a result of being in a larger school, being affected emotionally and managing the loss of old social connections and needing to form new social connections.
- Possible loss of access to a church school
- Increased journey times for some pupils.
- Possible loss of access to a small school with mixed year groups.

Children on roll - Year 6:

- Classmates and peers moving schools prior to the end of the academic year and the resulting experience of seeing their school community dwindle.
- Emotional impact of their school closing

- Potential negative result on SATs performance due to the emotional and social impact of what is happening.

Children with SEND

- Possible negative impact of attending a larger school for some children with SEND

Parents/carers

- Potential of not being able to relocate their child(ren) to another small school/church school.
- Potential of having to transport their child(ren) to school in order to access an alternative school which meets their preference.

Gt Gidding Community

- Potential loss of trade at local businesses, namely the pub, shop and village hall
- The possible reduction in the church community and the resulting impact on the local church
- Possible reduced attraction of living in Gt Gidding and a resulting impact on the stability of the community and the housing market.

How will the process of change be managed? *

Poorly managed change processes can cause stress/distress, even when the outcome is expected to be an improvement. How will you involve people with protected characteristics/experiencing socio-economic inequalities in the change process to ensure distress/stress is kept to a minimum? This is particularly important where they may need different or extra support, accessible information etc

The change process will follow that laid out in the DfE '[Opening and Closing Maintained Schools](#)' guidance document. Information regarding the proposal and consultation is being shared widely and is accessible online. There is a consultations email inbox which is monitored daily to enable the request of information in an alternative format should it be required.

HR services are involved throughout to advise and support staff working in the school. The impact on staff will be identified and mitigated as far as reasonably practicable, for example through support to identify future recruitment opportunities in the local area.

Local Authority support will be made available to all children at the school through the Strategic SEND Support Team who will provide support for pupils using a pastoral emotional health and wellbeing approach. The package of support made available will be bespoke to the needs of pupils at Gt Gidding and delivered by a Strategic SEND Support Specialist Teacher. The support is scheduled to commence in May.

Should we become aware of a significant population of people who may need information in a different format, we will be proactive in providing that. Otherwise, information will be made available in different formats, as far as is reasonably practicable, upon request.

How will the impacts during the change process be monitored and improvements made (where required)? *

How will you confirm the process of change is not leading to excessive stress/distress to people with protected characteristics/experiencing socio-economic inequalities, compared to other people impacted by the change? What will you do if it is discovered such groups are being less well supported than others?

There was a consultations email inbox, an online survey and a place to receive paper responses to ensure that impacted people could ask questions about the process and provide responses. In addition, there were multiple consultation meetings. One to one meetings were offered to parents of the school and contact with admissions officers will be made available should a decision to close be made. There has also been a pupil voice group forum facilitated by staff with appropriate skill in working with children. This included all pupils at the school on the day.

The process is being closely monitored by Education Place Planning Officers in relation to consultation responses and by HR staff in relation to staff relocation and redundancy (though this will be covered in more detail in the staff specific EqIA).

An FAQ document is available. This was updated in response to consultation responses received. Questions and comments arising during the consultation were published. Though these were redacted prior to publication (to protect personal data and ensure privacy), Committee members received them in full. Council responses to questions and comments aimed to provide an understanding of why decisions have been made, whilst also ensuring that consultees feel heard and assured of a fair and transparent process.

Responses were monitored and analysed. Should any group have been disproportionately represented in responses, the Council would have sought to establish why. Learning will be applied to future consultation activity.

If responses had indicated an impact on a particular group not already identified, it would have been taken into consideration with regards to how any negative consequences can be mitigated.

This is the first time since the 1992 that the Council has had to propose a school closure. Staff will ensure any learning throughout the process is used to inform change.

Action to mitigate impact with reasons/evidence to support this or justification for retaining negative impact

Throughout the process so far, the ability of people to engage and comment has been maximised through use of mixed media and other support. I.e. a webpage where information can be found including consultation documents and FAQs; regular update letters and communications to parents and staff; face to face group meetings for staff, parents and members of the public; an email inbox where comments can be received; an online form where comments

can be received; a box at the school where paper responses can be received; a pupil voice face to face forum; one to one meetings offered to parents; HR meetings for staff; admissions meetings for parents should a decision to close be made.

Age

The objective outcome of maintaining educational standards and ensuring good educational provision for all children is key. The benefit of attending a school where a broad and varied curriculum is offered is likely to outweigh negative consequences of closure for the majority of children in the long term. Alternatives to closure are being considered and if an option is found that meets the educational aim without closure, it will be presented to CYP committee.

It is proposed that a change to the catchment area, from the 2023/24 academic year, be made to incorporate the Gt Gidding catchment area into the Sawtry catchment area. This would ensure that should Gt Gidding close, children living in the school's catchment area would have access to other local schools. An application for a variation in admission arrangements under paragraph 3.6 of the School Admissions Code 2021 could be made due to a significant change in circumstances (which would be the closure of Gt Gidding) and this would assist in making the changes sooner than under the Code using the normal procedures of consultation, which would not be implemented until the admissions round for September 2025. Under the normal procedures, consultation would occur during the Autumn Term; determination would be made by 28 February post consultation; and implementation would occur in the year after determination.

Every pupil would be guaranteed the offer of a place at an alternative primary school in their local area. Which school is offered will depend on parental preference and the home catchment location of each child. It is noted that 3 children live outside of Cambridgeshire (2 in Peterborough and 1 in Northamptonshire). Liaison with the local admissions authority regarding these children is taking place. Schools likely to receive displaced children include:

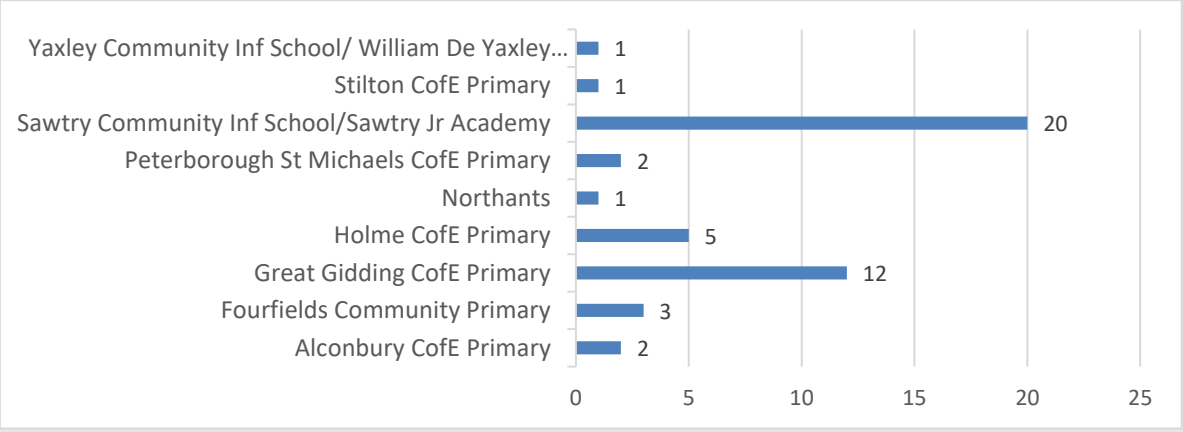
- Sawtry Community Infant School
- Sawtry Junior Academy
- Holme Church of England Primary School
- Fourfields Community Primary School
- Stilton Church of England Primary School
- Yaxley Community Infant School
- William de Yaxley Church of England Junior School
- Alconbury Church of England Primary School

These schools will in many cases be closer to home than Great Gidding. Where the schools are further away (and it is the catchment or closest school with available places), transport to and from school will be provided. It is anticipated that places will be made available and offered in catchment schools which, offers are accepted by families, is likely to result in more children being able to walk to school, or in reduced journey times. This is currently subject to negotiations with schools regarding increase of PAN.

The majority of pupils attending Gt Gidding are from outside its catchment area. As at the October 2022 annual pupil census, there were 47 pupils on roll at Gt Gidding. Only 12 (25.5%) of those pupils lived in the Gt Gidding catchment. The remaining 35 pupils (74.5%) travelled to Gt

Gidding from other catchments. The largest proportion of pupils attended from the Sawtry catchment. This is illustrated in the chart below.

Distribution of pupils attending Gt Gidding CofE VC Primary School



Source: Pupil led annual school census (PLASC) October 2022

From this information it is evident that the majority of pupils attending Gt Gidding already faced journeys to and from school each day. A number of in-year applications to move to alternative schools have been received and some children have left Gt Gidding for other schools. The impact on traffic congestion and the environment had the potential to be reduced in the event that Gt Gidding were to close, as the majority of displaced pupils have the opportunity to attend schools nearer to their home address. However, parental preference is clear with many families opting against their local/closest school when making an in-year application to move to an alternative school.

Of the 12 children on roll in October 2022 who reside in Gt Gidding’s catchment 2 are in Yr 6 and will transfer to secondary phase in Sept 2023. For the remaining 10 children, if Gt Gidding were to close, alternative schools are not far from the village and would be in travelling distance for community activities - between 3.1 and 7.3 miles away from Gt Gidding as shown in the table below. For the majority of pupils and families these schools could be nearer to their home address.

Distance from Gt Gidding CofE VC Primary School to alternative schools in the local area

School	Distances in miles (as the crow flies)
Sawtry Infants School	3.1
Sawtry Junior Academy	3.1
Folksworth CofE VC Primary School	4.5
Stilton CofE Primary Academy	4.7
Brington CofE Primary School	5.1
Holme CofE Primary School	5.5
Yaxley Community Infant School	7.1
William de Yaxley CofE Junior Academy	7.2
Fourfields Primary School	7.3

Analysis of those on roll at the time of the October 2022 census shows that of the 37 Reception to Year 5 pupils who may be affected by the proposal, approximately 73% live nearer, or the same distance, to an alternative school, with approximately 27% living further away. Free home to school transport would be provided for eligible pupils who meet the criteria set out in the link below.

[Pre-16 transport \(mainstream\) - Cambridgeshire County Council](#)

As at January 2023, the local authority anticipated that 10 pupils would be eligible for free home to school transport to their nearest alternative school if applying the transport policy. This was offset by 8 children who currently receive free transport to Gt Gidding, and who may no longer be eligible. Hence, the additional cost to the local authority had the potential to be small. However, due to the exceptional circumstances, the Children and Young People's committee may choose to support families with transport costs over and above what the policy states.

The local authority acknowledges that pupils living in the Gt Gidding catchment and attending the school will face longer journeys to and from an alternative school each day though, for the majority, their nearest alternative school is within statutory walking distance.

It is envisaged that many displaced pupils will continue to be transported to and from school under arrangements made by their parents and carers, though some may receive LA provided transport. Given that the majority of pupils are able to attend a school nearer to their home address, it initially appeared unlikely that there would be an increase in car usage. To the contrary, it was hoped that car usage would reduce, thereby having a positive impact on the environment. The reality, based upon in-year applications received, is that many families have opted against their local school, as they previously did in their preference for Gt Gidding. As a result, car usage is likely to remain at a similar level whether Gt Gidding closes or remains open.

The local authority must continue to discharge its statutory duty in terms of ensuring there are sufficient school places to meet demand and that all schools are well placed to deliver high quality education that meets the needs of their local community and makes best use of public funding.

It is not the school's or the local authority's role to seek to encourage families with young children to move to the village. The LA is not allowed to promote any school and indeed the resources required to attempt to do so would be prohibitive and likely to be of little effect.

Schools in the local area have a greater offer for wraparound care and events than is currently available at Gt Gidding. They provide events and clubs, but many also provide wrap around care for pupils. The offer available is summarised below and further detail can be found by contacting schools directly.

☐ Sawtry Community Infant school

Sawtry Community Infant School runs a number of lunch time and after school clubs for pupils including music, gymnastics, computing, multi-sports, dance, choir and dodgeball.

The Friends of Sawtry Infant School Association runs fundraising events including a Christmas shopping event, discos, mini competitions, and a summer fayre.

There is a preschool, Buttons and Bows, running from the school site.

Wrap around care is provided on site, by Kidzone, to both Sawtry Infants School and Sawtry Junior School pupils.

□ Sawtry Junior Academy

Sawtry Junior Academy offers a wide range of after school enrichment activities, including a wide range of clubs, a lunch time homework club, and music lessons for piano, recorder, violin, drums and guitar.

The Sawtry Junior Parents Association runs fundraising events for the school, including discos, film nights, Christmas and Summer Fayres.

Wrap around care is available at the nearby Sawtry Infants School site.

□ Fourfields Community Primary School

Fourfields Primary School offers a wide range of after school enrichment activities. There are after school clubs run by school staff offering choir, cooking, football, cross country, reading, Korean, history, forest fun. There is a lunch time pokemon card swapping club. There are also after school clubs run by external providers on school site including Taekwondo, drama, boxercise and football.

The school runs events for parents, including parent coffee afternoons and a support group for parents of children with special educational needs (SEN).

Yaxley Out of School Club offers wrap around care for the children at the school.

□ Alconbury CofE Primary School

Alconbury's local vicar leads Collective Worship weekly. Other clergy from the local Baptist and Methodist churches who are friends of the school lead worship each half term.

The school runs a range of clubs, further details of which can be obtained from the school office.

Alconberries Before and After School Club offers wrap around care.

□ Holme CofE Primary School

Holme CofE Primary School offers wrap around care via an After School Club.

The school runs clubs offering football for girls run by Peterborough United Football Club, Lego, Zumba, singing, netball and futsal.

Friends of Holme School facilitate the sale of pre-loved school uniform and Christmas jumpers and run the 100 club, a lottery which involves parents and other relatives being able to buy a number for a monthly draw.

□ Yaxley Community Infant School

Wrap around care is provided for Yaxley Infants, by Energy Kidz, at William de Yaxley Junior School.

The school can provide information on clubs and events if requested.

□ William de Yaxley CofE Junior School

Wrap around care is provided on site at William de Yaxley Junior School by Energy Kidz. Easter holiday club provision is also available on site.

Pupils take part in collective worship and there is a worship council, voted for by peers.

The school has a lunch time Eco Club and offers in school music lessons, delivered by JMP Music, for the following: Piano/keyboard, guitar, ukulele, drums, singing, violin, recorder and trumpet. Lessons for clarinet, saxophone and flute are also available online.

□ Stilton CofE Primary School

Collective worship at Stilton CofE Primary School takes place daily and there is a termly schedule of times when parents/carers can attend the school to join collective worship.

Various extracurricular activities are available for children at the school including choir, gardening club, French, music, Lego club, DT, street dance, and music lessons in singing, keyboard, drums, guitar and ukulele.

The Haven Out of School Club runs wrap around care from the site.

□ Folksworth CofE Primary School

Folksworth CofE Primary School holds collective worship. The school has links with its local churches in the surrounding catchment villages of Folksworth, Stilton, Elton, Haddon, Morborne. These villages and churches fall within the Diocese of Ely. The Vicar-in-charge of The Stilton Group of Parishes, Richard Gibbs, is the local Vicar and visits the school regularly.

After school clubs are available at the school. They are run by Youth Dream and the current offer includes multi sports, handball/dodgeball, yoga, netball, Minecraft, SATs booster, and bible story Lego.

Friends of Stilton School meet regularly to organise events and initiatives that support fundraising for the school.

□ Brington CofE Primary School

St Leonard's Pre-school is located next door to Brington CofE Primary School. As well as offering Early Years provision the site hosts the out of school club which, although a separate entity, is run by the same charitable trust. Wrap around care is available 7:30 – 18:00, 50 weeks of the year.

Collective worship is a feature of the school and a pupil worship committee meets at least once every half term.

The school can provide information on clubs and events if requested.

It is recommended that, in addition to the mitigations outlined above, the receiving schools would be asked to identify buddies for the incoming pupils to help further ease transition by ensuring there is a familiar face and an introduction to new friendship groups.

The local authority would be responsible for overseeing the process of closing the school and would work closely with the school to implement closure, including supporting pupils during their final months at Gt Gidding and in their transition to a new school. Many parents/carers have already made in-year application to move their child(ren) to an alternative school and in most cases, the first preference has been met. Parents and carers of children remaining at the school would be able to express a preference for a place at an alternative school, should the decision be made to close. Parents/carers would be asked to complete an admissions application form and to name up to three schools they would prefer their child(ren) to attend. Parents/carers would be offered a school place either at one of their preferred schools named on the application form or, if this is not possible, at the nearest school to the child's home where a place is available. The local authority would try to meet parents and carers preferences wherever possible but cannot guarantee to do so. The allocation of places would

be made in line with the School Admissions Code and the admissions policies for the schools involved. Further information is available on the Cambridgeshire County Council website at:

[Apply for a school place - Cambridgeshire County Council](#)

The local authority would take all practicable steps to ease the transition for all pupils, including vulnerable groups. It would work with the receiving schools to arrange transition days for pupils to meet their new teachers and to familiarise themselves with their new environments.

Local Authority support will be made available through the Strategic SEND Support Team who will provide support for pupils using a pastoral emotional health and wellbeing approach. The package of support made available will be bespoke to the needs of pupils at Gt Gidding and delivered by a Strategic SEND Support Specialist Teacher.

Whilst there may be an emotional impact on adults within Great Gidding due to the loss of the school, evidence from Business Intelligence data suggests that small settlements remain stable even without a school.

Disability

The objective outcome of maintaining educational standards and ensuring good educational provision for all children applies equally to children with SEND as to others. The benefit of attending a school where a broad and varied curriculum is offered is likely to outweigh negative consequences of closure for the majority of children in the long term. Alternatives to closure are being considered and if an option is found that meets the educational aim without closure, it will be presented to CYP committee.

The council is aware that children with SEND may be disproportionately affected by the potential closure of Great Gidding Primary School.

To mitigate impact as far as reasonably possible, there are several steps that will be taken, should the closure go ahead.

In January 2023 there were 9 children on roll at Great Gidding Primary who were accessing SEN support. There were, and still are, no children who have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

The SEND District Team is working to identify the provision required to meet the needs of children receiving SEN support. They provide the receiving school with advice regarding implementation of the required support within their existing resources.

The SEND District Team is ensuring that link SEND practitioners are identified within the receiving schools and that information is appropriately shared regarding the children they will receive.

Support will be available to Special Education Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) at receiving schools to incorporate the provision required as part of the school's graduated response.

Prior to closure, the SEND District Team is working with staff at Great Gidding Primary School to carry out child centred planning for the small number of children with more complex needs. This will ensure that pupil and parent/carers voices are heard and used to build a robust and successful transition plan.

For the small number of children requiring more specialist transition support, the SEND District Team will work collaboratively with receiving schools and parents/carers to identify how SEND District schools hours can be used for the individual case work required.

Should any children receive an EHCP prior to closure, they will be supported to identify and transition to a school through the well-established EHCP processes.

Pregnancy and maternity

Data provided by the business intelligence team estimates that there have been a very small number of births in the Great Gidding catchment in recent years (on average, less than 2 per year over the past decade), and that this trend of low births in the village is expected to continue, and if anything reduce even further.

Religion or belief

All non-denominational state funded schools in England have to provide collective worship of a '*broadly Christian character*'. Equally, denominational schools are not exclusive to worshipping families.

Aside from Gt Gidding, there are five denominational schools within 6 miles of Gt Gidding (as the crow flies). These are listed alongside their distance from Gt Gidding, their published admission number (PAN) and the number of classes they currently operate.

- Gt Gidding CofE Primary School (0m; PAN 14; 3 classes)
- Folksworth CofE Primary School (4.5m; PAN 15; 4 classes)
- Stilton CofE Primary Academy (4.7m; PAN 30; 6 classes)
- Brington CofE Primary School (5.1m; PAN 17; 4 classes)
- Holme CofE Primary Academy (5.5m; PAN 17; 5 classes)

Though it cannot guarantee to do so, the LA will endeavour to meet parental preferences for alternative school places and it is forecast that there will be surplus places in all of the above schools in September 2023 with the exception of Brington CE Primary School. There is the possibility of Brington reorganising classes to create capacity in surplus physical space. Further detail of places can be found in the Community Impact Assessment section entitled 'Impact on Neighbouring Schools'.

CCC Officers offered to meet with parents one to one. With parents that took up this offer, we discussed likely preferences for alternative school placement should Gt Gidding close. Based upon this information, officers are exploring options with implicated schools which would allow for as many preferences to be met as possible.

Should a decision be made to close the school, a discrete admissions round will be opened for parents of children in Reception to Year 5 at Gt Gidding CofE Primary School. Parents

will be able to express three preferences for alternative schools, and effort will be made to accommodate children in denominational schools should they so wish.

The consultation process has already raised a number of concerns from parents whose children would be displaced to other schools in the event of Gt Gidding CE VC Primary School closing. These include the cost of transport to their child's new school if their choice of school does not entitle them to transport assistance under the Council's transport policy. This could apply to families whose preference is for an alternative Church of England school. If Committee were to decide to move to Stage 4 of the statutory process and close the school, officers would propose that the Committee considers an exceptional case for the parents/carers of pupils who were on roll at the school on 17 January 2023 and subsequently displaced to other schools, to receive support with transport to the school nearest to their home address or the nearest Church of England school with an Anglican Christian character to their home address. Officers would present more information in support of this if the Committee were to meet in April.

Children resident in the Great Gidding catchment, and those further afield, will still have access to the local church, even should they no longer attend as part of their school day.

Families and children of faiths other than Church of England, and of no faith also attend Great Gidding Primary School. It may be that some would prefer a school without a designated religious character, or have no preference.

Rural isolation

Whilst it is possible that there will be an impact in terms of declining demand for housing in the village and associated impact on house prices, data provided by the Business Intelligence team indicates that villages with similar demographics and no local school have stable populations.

The Giddings Parish Council provide information on its website about a range of groups and events in the wider parish area that could be accessed by the local community. Events have included:

- The Great Gidding Wassail held in Jubilee Wood
- Festive wine tasting
- Luddington Open Studios, where Luddington in Brook ladies were serving homemade cakes and teas
- Hamerton Village Harvest Supper
- Harvest Festival and Service of Prayer and Reflection remembering Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II at St Michael's Church.
- Winwick Fete
- Summer wine tasting
- Coffee mornings at the village hall.

The economic benefits that a school brings to a community must be considered beneficial side effects to the main duty of a school which is to provide a quality education to its pupils. Numbers on roll, budget deficits and academic standards must be the major considerations in any decision on the future of a school and, while a community may be impacted by a decision to close a school; this cannot be an overriding factor. If the school closed, the local shop and pub would be unable to rely on passing trade from the school community and their families.

This is already the case for 13 weeks of the year during school holidays. It would be for the local community to consider how to support local retail facilities.

Concern was raised during the consultation that there is potential for reduced bookings at the village hall for events such as children's parties. Most of the children on roll at Gt Gidding do not live in the catchment. It is likely that events for these children have been held in venues local to their home rather than to their school. The families of children on roll who do reside in Gt Gidding are likely to continue to use the village hall as previously. Research conducted by the Parish Council Clerk shows that there have been only 2 children's parties at the village hall since the end of COVID-19 lockdowns in March 2021. Both bookings were for village residents. There was an children's party enquiry from a resident outside of Gt Gidding but the booking could not be facilitated due to it coinciding with another booked event. The school directly made use of the village hall over a 2 day period in July 2022 for end of term event rehearsals. The hall was made available for use of the school with no charge.

Gt Gidding and Abbots Ripton are the smallest settlements in Cambridgeshire with a primary school. The Abbots Ripton school catchment has a different demographic to Gt Gidding with over 44 age 4-11 children living in catchment, compared to only 19 in the Gt Gidding catchment. A demographic comparison of Gt Gidding and similar Cambridgeshire villages without schools or where schools previously closed indicates that populations remain stable.

Poverty and socio-economic status

If Committee were to decide to move to Stage 4 of the statutory process and close the school, officers would propose that the Committee considers an exceptional case for the parents/carers of pupils who were on roll at the school on 17 January 2023 and subsequently displaced to other schools, to receive support with transport to alternative schools even if they are not the school nearest to their home address or the nearest Church of England school with an Anglican Christian character to their home address, and with uniform costs. Officers would present more information in support of this if the Committee were to meet in April.

It is possible that many children will relocate to schools with peers from Great Gidding.

Transition arrangements will be made to ensure opportunities to form new social groups are maximised, for example through visits prior to transition and through the identification of 'buddies' at the receiving schools who will socially support their new peers.

It is possible that some children will attend school closer to home if relocated, which is likely to have a positive impact on access to community and peer group activities.

Many alternative schools have help available to parents through the provision of low cost second hand uniform.

All schools are legally obliged to provide additional support to children and families from disadvantaged backgrounds and as such, the support received through free school meals and pupil premium will continue for all eligible children.

Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan:

Details of negative impact (e.g. worse treatment/outcomes)	Groups affected	Action to mitigate impact with reasons/evidence to support this or justification for retaining negative impact	Who by	When
Some people may find it more difficult to access consultation and or events and this inequality could affect their ability to contribute and be heard.	All	During the process so far, the ability of people to engage and comment was maximised through use of mixed media and other support. I.e. a webpage where information can be found including consultation documents and FAQs; regular update letters and communications to parents and staff; face to face group meetings for staff, parents and members of the public; an email inbox where comments can be received; an online form where comments can be received; a box at the school where paper responses can be received; a pupil voice face to face forum; one to one meetings offered to parents; HR meetings for staff; admissions meetings for parents should a decision to close be made.	Education Place Planning Team	During the consultation period
Children on roll at the school who reside in the Great Gidding catchment area and those who have recently been/will be born in the catchment will no longer have access to a school in their local community. It is of benefit to children to be able to walk to school and to attend school with peers who live locally to facilitate social development with peers outside school.	Age	Children will be offered places at alternative schools following a discreet admissions round solely for families of pupils at Gt Gidding. These schools will in many cases be closer to home than Great Gidding. Where the schools are further away (and it is the catchment or closest school with available places), transport to and from school will be provided. It is anticipated that places will be made available and offered in catchment schools which, offers are accepted by families, is likely to result in more children being	Admissions team	May 2023

<p>Children in other catchments but on roll at Great Gidding are, in some cases, attending the school due to parental preference. The consultation feedback indicates that this preference is often related to it being a small school or to it being a church school. Parental preference will again be a primary consideration in applications for alternative schools and will be met where possible, in accordance with the school admissions code. Parents will be able to express a preference for another small/church school. It is possible that not all preferences will be met and some children will be offered places in their catchment or nearest school. Whilst it is possible that there will be detrimental impact of relocating such children to their local catchment school, it is also possible that they will benefit from attending school in their local community.</p> <p>School communities, especially in small schools, develop close knit bonds. All children at the school will be impacted socially and emotionally by the closure of their school and by the breaking up of peer and friendship groups during the relocation of children to alternative schools. They will also be impacted by the loss of the trusted adult relationships they have developed with staff at the school. Childhood is a period of</p>		<p>able to walk to school, or in reduced journey times. This is currently subject to negotiations with schools regarding increase of PAN.</p> <p>If Committee were to decide to move to Stage 4 of the statutory process and close the school, officers would propose that the Committee considers an exceptional case for the parents/carers of pupils who were on roll at the school on 17 January 2023 and subsequently displaced to other schools, to receive support with transport to the school nearest to their home address or the nearest Church of England school with an Anglican Christian character to their home address, and with uniform costs. Officers would present more information in support of this if the Committee were to meet in April.</p>	<p>Place Planning Team</p>	<p>April 2023</p>
		<p>Local Authority support will be made available through the Strategic SEND Support Team who will provide support for pupils using a pastoral emotional health and wellbeing approach. The package of support made available will be bespoke to the needs of pupils at Gt Gidding and delivered by a Strategic SEND Support Specialist Teacher.</p>	<p>Strategic SEND Support Team</p>	<p>Until the end of the academic year.</p>

<p>fast paced social and emotional development and it is likely that there will be impact. Support will be needed to minimise detriment to wellbeing and to ensure positive transition to alternative schools.</p> <p>Great Gidding has an aging population. Small villages often form close communities which are dependent on each other for quality of life. It is possible that the relocation of school children will have an emotional impact on elderly residents.</p>		<p>Whilst there may be an emotional impact on adults within Great Gidding due to the loss of the school, evidence from Business Intelligence data suggests that small settlements remain stable even without a school. This information is available in the community impact assessment.</p>	<p>Business Intelligence Team</p>	<p>Complete</p>
<p>Children with SEND have the right to access education provision which meets their educational, health and care needs, and which promotes the best life outcomes.</p> <p>As part of the duty under the Children & Families Act 2014, the Council has a legal duty to identify and assess the special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) of children and young people for whom they are responsible. The Council becomes responsible for securing appropriate educational provision for a child/young person in its area when it becomes aware that the child/young person has or may have SEND. The Council must then ensure that those children and young people receive a</p>	<p>Disability</p>	<p>The council is aware that children with SEND may be disproportionately affected by the potential closure of Great Gidding Primary School. To mitigate impact as far as reasonably possible, there are several steps that will be taken, should the closure go ahead.</p> <p>There are currently 9 children on roll at Great Gidding Primary who are registered as requiring SEN support. There are no children who have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP).</p> <p>The SEND District Team will work to identify the provision required to meet the needs of children receiving SEN support. They will then provide the receiving school with advice regarding</p>	<p>LA SEND Services</p>	<p>Throughout the remainder of this academic year and into the next academic year if required.</p>

<p>level of support which will help them “achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes.”</p> <p>There are currently no children on roll at Great Gidding Primary School who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). There are children on roll who accessing SEN Support.</p> <p>Whilst the needs of children accessing SEN Support are met through ordinarily available provision within mainstream schools, it is possible that the issues highlighted as affecting all children on roll will disproportionately impact children with SEND. Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities can be more reliant on trusted adult relationships and more susceptible to trauma resulting from upheaval.</p> <p>Additional support for the transition of children with SEN to new schools will be required and particular attention paid to engagement with their parents/carers. This will be provided by CCC SEND services in conjunction with Great Gidding and the receiving school’s staff.</p>		<p>implementation of the required support within their existing resources.</p> <p>The SEND District Team will ensure that link SEND practitioners are identified within the receiving schools and that information is appropriately shared regarding the children they will receive.</p> <p>Support will be available to Special Education Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) at receiving schools to incorporate the provision required as part of the school’s graduated response.</p> <p>Prior to closure, the SEND District Team will work with staff at Great Gidding Primary School to carry out child centred planning for the small number of children with more complex needs. This will ensure that pupil and parent/carer voices are heard and used to build a robust and successful transition plan.</p> <p>For the small number of children requiring more specialist transition support, the SEND District Team will work collaboratively with receiving schools and parents/carers to identify how SEND District schools hours can be used for the individual case work required.</p> <p>Should any children receive an EHCP prior to closure, they will be supported to identify and</p>		
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		transition to a school through the well-established EHCP processes.		
It is possible that those with young children, current pregnancy or who plan to have children will choose to move away from the village or will not opt to move to the village at all.	Pregnancy and maternity	Data provided by the business intelligence team estimates that there are a very small number of children the Great Gidding catchment in recent years, and that this trend is expected to continue, and if anything reduce even further, regardless of there being a school . This information is available in the community impact assessment.	Business Intelligence Team	Complete
<p>Gt Gidding CE Primary is a denominational school (Church of England). The school has strong links with the church, into the grounds of which it has direct access from the school site.</p> <p>Currently there are 19 church of England primary schools providing a total of 3747 denominational places in Huntingdonshire. Should Gt Gidding close the number of denominational primary schools would reduce to 18 and the total number of places to 3649. Whilst there are other denominational schools in the area surrounding Gt Gidding, places being available at those schools cannot be guaranteed and transport may not be provided for parental choice placements, in accordance with CCCs transport policy. Some pupils currently in Reception to</p>	Religion or belief	<p>Parents can express preference for alternative schools with a designated religious character, though it is acknowledged that transport may only be provided where this is their catchment/closest school with available places.</p> <p>Children resident in the Great Gidding catchment, and those further afield, will still have access to the local church, even should they no longer attend as part of their school day.</p> <p>Families and children of faiths other than Church of England, and of no faith also attend Great Gidding Primary School. It may be that some would prefer a school without a designated religious character, or have no preference.</p> <p>If Committee were to decide to move to Stage 4 of the statutory process and close</p>	Admissions team	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>April 2023</p>

<p>Year 5 at Gt Gidding might be offered places at non-denominational schools.</p> <p>The church community may suffer detriment from the loss of the primary school children within their church community.</p> <p>The children may suffer detriment through reduced access to the place of worship.</p> <p>Parents may have selected the school as their preference due to it being a Church of England school with an Anglican Christian character and be unhappy that this option will now be closed to them locally. Whilst some schools that children may be relocated to are also Church of England schools, some are not. Should parents express a preference for a school which is not their catchment/closest school on the basis of the school's designated religious character, they may be responsible for transporting their children to and from that school. This is due to the Councils policy that transport is only provided where a child attends their catchment school or the closest school with places available.</p> <p>Great Gidding Church of St Michael is led by a visible, popular and active lay and ordained church team. As a typical and important rural church, it has 2 'minister led' services a month on Sundays, and one early morning midweek communion. In addition, individuals regularly use the church as a spiritual haven at any part of the day. The closure of the</p>		<p>the school, officers would propose that the Committee considers an exceptional case for the parents/carers of pupils who were on roll at the school on 17 January 2023 and subsequently displaced to other schools, to receive support with transport to the school nearest to their home address or the nearest Church of England school with an Anglican Christian character to their home address, and with uniform costs. Officers would present more information in support of this if the Committee were to meet in April.</p>	<p>Place Planning Team</p>	
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<p>school will naturally likely impact on participation in such activities, particularly in relation to those individuals and families whose presence in the community is a consequence of being at, or having children in, the school. In short, the school closure will reduce the wider impact of the church's Ministry, and the reciprocal resourcing of it. For Christmas, Harvest, Remembrance Day and for choral evensongs (2 or 3 a year, with visiting choir), the congregation increases considerably as a consequence of school participation. The school come into church every month for a service and are a welcome and important part of the congregation. Due to their regular attendance, the staff and pupils have made a 'qualifying connection' to be married in the church, should they wish. The school has 3 services in the year when parents also come.</p> <p>Without the school, participation could be significantly impacted, not least in terms of children, young people and families. The community will need to further support the excellent Parochial Church Council in continuing to make the church available to the community, whether that be for festival times, regular worship for those who seek it, a spiritual safe-space, or general use for social benefit purposes.</p> <p>The Grade 1 listed building is increasingly in need of support, and funding. The closure of the school then, like any major village service, will thus further put pressure on the long term sustainability of such essential</p>				
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spiritual provision, for those of faith and for anyone seeking pastoral care and support.				
<p>Residents of rural communities are often socially connected with children and school activities often being a central aspect of social activities. The number of children living in the area is already low and there may be an impact in terms of fewer children attending local village events and further declining numbers of children residing in the village.</p> <p>Whilst it is possible that there will be an impact in terms of declining demand for housing in the village and associated impact on house prices, data provided by the Business Intelligence team indicates that villages with similar demographics and no local school have stable populations.</p>	Rural isolation	<p>Whilst it is possible that there will be an impact in terms of declining demand for housing in the village and associated impact on house prices, data provided by the Business Intelligence team indicates that villages with similar demographics and no local school have stable populations.</p>	Business Intelligence Team	Complete
<p>The number of children on roll at Great Gidding (Church of England) Voluntary Controlled Primary School who are eligible for Free School Meals is 22.7%. Whilst this is in line with the national average of 22.5% it is higher than the local average for Huntingdonshire which is 18.1%. This is an indicator that the school has higher than the local average of families on low incomes.</p>	Poverty and socio-economic status	<p>Transport will be provided to alternative schools at no cost to parents, should they accept offers for their catchment/closest school with places.</p> <p>It is possible that many children will relocate to schools with peers from Great Gidding.</p> <p>Transition arrangements will be made to ensure opportunities to form new social groups are maximised, for example through visits prior to transition and through the identification of</p>	<p>Education transport team</p> <p>Receiving schools</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Upon admittance of children previously</p>

<p>Families on low incomes may be less likely to have the resources available, for example transport options and IT solutions, to mitigate the dispersal of social networks caused by the school closure. They may be also be disproportionally impacted by the need to purchase required items such as school uniform.</p> <p>Such families are less likely to be able to apply preference to the school their child attends following the closure of Great Gidding (Church of England) Voluntary Controlled Primary School due to being reliant on Local Authority provided transport options. As a result, children from disadvantaged families may have fewer options to their counterparts who have financial opportunity.</p>		<p>‘buddies’ at the receiving schools who will socially support their new peers.</p> <p>It is possible that some children will attend school closer to home if relocated, which is likely to have a positive impact on access to community and peer group activities.</p> <p>If Committee were to decide to move to Stage 4 of the statutory process and close the school, officers would propose that the Committee considers an exceptional case for the parents/carers of pupils who were on roll at the school on 17 January 2023 and subsequently displaced to other schools, to receive support with transport to other schools, possibly even those that are not the school nearest to their home address or the nearest Church of England school with an Anglican Christian character to their home address, and with uniform costs. Officers would present more information in support of this if the Committee were to meet in April.</p>	<p>Place Planning Team</p>	<p>attending Gt Gidding</p> <p>April 2023</p>
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