



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

26th October 2017

Dear Mr Sinnott,

Re: Maplewell Hall School Residential Facilities: Consultation Response

We write as the Members of Parliament for Charnwood and for Loughborough to respond to the consultation launched by Leicestershire County Council, regarding the proposed closure of residential facilities at Maplewell Hall School.

We both have constituents who use these facilities, and have been contacted by a number of local residents who have voiced their concerns about the proposed closure of them. You will be aware of a petition on this issue which now has almost 10,000 signatures, and also of representations made by local Councillors including Deborah Taylor, County Councillor for Bradgate Division.

Of course, we are both acutely aware of the challenging financial situation faced by Leicestershire County Council and, as you will know, have worked with LCC to campaign for a fairer deal for the county. However, LCC do have a choice about exactly how and where important savings are made, and so we feel the Council should be looking again at this proposal and instead finding a solution to keep the residential facility at Maplewell Hall up and running.

Knowing the fantastic work Maplewell does, we have very real concerns about the impact this decision would have.

Our concerns centre on the following issues:

Educational Outcomes

The most recent Ofsted Inspection Report for Maplewell Hall School's residential facilities rates the residential provision 'Outstanding'. The report states that '*young people make exceptional progress academically, socially and emotionally because of the residential experience.*' It is notable that 51% of students who attend the residential provision are responsible for 89.7% of the rewards for academic achievement, positive attitude, development of social skills and behaviour.

Clearly, the residential facilities enhance not only the students' overall experience at the school, but

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Mr John Sinnott,
Chief Executive
Leicestershire County Council
County Hall
Glenfield
Leicestershire LE3 8RA

Telephone: 020 7219 8140
Email: edward.argar.mp@parliament.uk



also their academic achievement. The Ofsted Report is absolutely clear that academic progress is enhanced by the residential facility and its staff, detailing how regular reports on progress identify where residential staff can offer additional support or opportunities to help young people achieve, and the provision of a set time for homework club in the residential setting means that staff can consolidate the learning from the school day.

Social Development

Not only does the school enhance academic achievements, but the impact it has on a young person's social development cannot be understated. Many families have stated how the residential facility benefits their children, who already struggle with learning difficulties, to develop their social skills away from home and take part in activities that promote independence and increase self-confidence.

Maplewell Hall benefits from a dedicated Care and Intervention Staff team, whose major input is arguably during the evenings, at night and in the mornings. Further, the Ofsted Report of September 2016 states that *'the development of social skills is a real strength of the provision. The transference of these skills across varied settings including school, residential provision, home and community supports young people to develop.'*

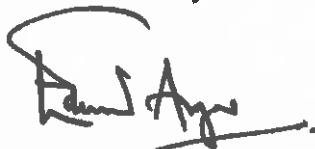
Mention has been made of the pupils ECHPs not covering residential provision. Has the Council done an analysis of how many of the pupil's ECHPs were produced when they were at primary school, where no such residential provision is offered, and have the plans been re-visited for their secondary education?

Transportation and other costs to affected families

As outlined in the paper that went to Cabinet on 15th September 2017, there will inevitably be 'further revenue costs' arising to provide individual support to families/ pupils as a consequence of the removal of these facilities. There appears to be no detailed assessment of what these might amount to, and the impact this would have on the projected savings. We would urge the County Council to fully investigate the impact of such costs, and take in to account how this may impact on the cost saving from closure of the residential facility.

Finally, as we understand it, there remain outstanding queries specifically regarding usage of the residential facility, with such information not yet clarified we would urge Cabinet to wait until they have all necessary information before taking a decision.

Leicestershire County Council have a strong record making important savings while continuing to deliver vital public services, and I would urge the Council to work with Maplewell Hall School, parents and the wider community to find a way to keep the residential facility open, and to reject proposals to close this important and much-valued provision.

James Argar


Edward Argar MP

Nicky Morgan


Rt Hon Nicky Morgan MP