

STATEMENT BY KAYTI RYAN, PARENT AT MAPLEWELL HALL SCHOOL

Good afternoon, I'm here on behalf of my autistic daughter and all students at Maplewell hall school to ask you to stop the proposed closure of the residential facility.

The residential facility at Maplewell is not 'respite' for parents to have a break. It is an essential educational resource for our children to learn to socialise and overcome the barriers their disabilities present every single day.

The children learn valuable skills including self-care, positive peer interaction, life skills, preparation for adulthood and independence. These skills can only be learnt at Maplewell as it offers a familiar and safe environment with familiar and trusted people it's an added bonus for the children they get to sleep over with their friends. These skills cannot be taught at home (independence especially) to any effective degree. You would not take away a maths department or sports hall, residential at Maplewell is no different it's a vital facility. Losing the residential would be just as devastating to our children.

The fact that residential is not stated on our children's EHCPs is because it has always been presented to us as a facility the school offers to all students, from a finance perspective I would urge you to consider the long term effects on LCC social care and transport budgets by withdrawing residence. Please do not take this outstanding facility away from our children, it is needed now and will be needed for future children studying at Maplewell. Rather than closing residential LCC should be showing Maplewell off as a flagship for what can be achieved for special needs children by such a facility and open more across the county. To close I would like to point out Maplewell Hall School consistently achieves excellent Ofsted reports and it's proven that children that use residential gain far more than the children that don't. I urge you to reconsider this proposal.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak today.

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