

**Fountains Earth, Lofthouse Primary School
Responses received to the consultation**

	Do you have any comments about the closure proposal?	Do you have any comments about catchment areas?	In what capacity are you responding to this consultation?
1.	The way the school have gone about the closure is shocking. They have bullied parents away. They failed with a safeguarding issue where they left a child to be with a member of the public alone in the changing area at the swimming pool while the staff sat and drank coffee. The incident was reported to the head after the teacher Mr # didn't report it and his answer to parents was he will deal with it next time at pool. Major Safeguarding concern that teachers don't follow protocol and the head wasn't made aware straight away. Was reported to Ofsted and local authorities.	I travel to burnt Yates, my child travels 30 minutes in the car each way. I travel 2 hours to complete school runs. We applied for the school at glasshouses and was turned away. My child has sen needs and they don't cater for sen children at all. Dacre Braithwaite is so full, we are having to travel long distance and it's not healthy for the child. It's restricted how many hours I can work due to how fare I have to travel. The road is so busy coming up and down from Lofthouse. Finical impact during to cost of fuel.	Ex parent
2.	Due to poor leadership of the executive head teacher and leadership team, pupil numbers and finances are an excuse.	Thriving area of outstanding natural beauty, very strong community which backs the school wholeheartedly. Lots of new families moving to the area, as now working from home is much more accessible.	Parent
3.	This is a the worse decision ever made by NYCC. This school was given to the village by people who wanted to ensure the future education of local children. The fact, as soon as it was passed over, its demise started. If there is any way to pass it back to the community, then this should be exercised.	The catchment area could be extended.	Community
4.	The school has been in decline with the number of pupils for a while now, and due to the lack of affordable housing options and the number of holiday lets, this stops families moving into the area. The remaining schools in the federation can take the future children from the area, and therefore maximise the available spend for the two other schools. The school will never reach a required amount of pupils, really needed to be around 30 in order to make it cost effective and also beneficial for the children with their social groups. Staffing will be near impossible as a FT teacher to reach across an 8 year age range, with differing needs, is extremely complex. The curriculum is challenging now, maybe that was different in the past		Community

	when other staff have been long standing and successful at that time, but the world has moved on.		
5.	<p>This school and the federation as a whole has failed many children in the dale including Lofthouse, st cutherberts, glasshouses . My daughter was in st cutherberts school as a year 2 student , she was failed by the school on multiple occasions . For example they would not provide her with a reading book for over 6 weeks and was told to simply read it again. For 6 week it's disgusting, I confronted the deputy head one morning in the school corridor I explained my concerns regarding progression of my child , making her read the same book for 6 week destroyed her willingness and eagerness to learn . Her development really suffered in the time she was at st cutherberts . I also explained that the fact that all the teachers were off with stress related issues were not making a settle environment for my child , they couldn't provide her class with a constant teacher everyday she would have a different teacher or just a cover TA this went of for around 6 months which my child suffered with . Whilst I was having the conversation with deputy head she agreed we with everything I said she stated it wasn't good enough and she said if I was you I would move your child out of the school as it was wasn't it a great state . The was not instilling me with any confidence that the school could look after my daughter education. I made the only decision possible to me which was to move her to Dacre braithwaite and all I can say is what a fantastic school she is now part of . Out of 12 children which started school with my daughter at st cuthberts there are now no children left . Can you tell me why ????? There has been no accountability or transparency into why so many children have left ! Now this has also been happening with Lofthouse children and glasshouses children ? Why have so many children left fedation within 2 years ? Many good teachers have been bullied and pushed out of these little schools which are the heart of our community . I have nothing but dissatisfaction towards the</p>	Why should children have to travel out of there area just to go to a school!	Parent
6.	It appears that this school has now run its course and is proving to be a burden on the wider federation.	The catchment area is well served by numerous other primary schools within reasonable travel distance.	Parent
7.	Village / rural schools are such important hubs for building a community, and provide a wonderfully safe environment for children to thrive. They should be kept open at all costs- it is out of the councils control to stop village shops / post offices / pubs closing but closing schools will accelerate community decline.	Why do you not enforce postcode catchment areas for undersubscribed schools as well as oversubscribed schools. Seems crazy that parents can choose to live in a village community, but then cherry pick their school at the detriment of that village. In the towns you strictly enforce postcodes driving pupil admissions,	A village resident who's school is also suffering from declining numbers.

		why not the same for villages to help build thriving communities??	
8.	So wrong to close these village schools .The dale has a strong farming community that need this school .These rural areas are slowly dying ,we have no shops ,no public transport ,and now our school is under threat .We need to encourage families to these areas .		Community
9.	While I appreciate the financial case for closure, and the fact that we are where we are with pupil numbers, I would like to put on record that the collapse in pupil numbers in the past three years is not a natural result of demographic changes. When my older daughter moved to secondary school in September 2021 we had to move my younger daughter to a school with wrap around care, as I couldn't physically transport one child to Harrogate and the other to Lofthouse when both schools started at the same time, or collectvfrom Harrogate and Lofthouse simultaneously either. Further, at the same time Lofthouse lost its second teacher and advised parents that teaching would be by teaching assistant and twinkl worksheets most of the time. The teacher was pushed into early retirement by the executive headteacher, so it was not a matter of retention. Her job was not advertised, so it simply wasn't a question of recruitment. Also, the remaining highly experienced teacher was then forced out and replaced by a relative of the executive headteacher, and recruitment was impossible after that because candidates feared the same would happen to them. I feel it is untrue to blame recruitment and retention issues for part if the problems here without acknowledging that these were exacerbated by the schools management. No effort has been made to engage the community or explore alternative models whereby the village might retain a school and parents didn't face up to a 26 mile round trip to the nearest primary school, further by the way than it is to the nearest secondary school. How can a parent put a 4 year old on a school bus to and from school to travel unaccompanied for half an hour with teenagers? Realistically, Lofthouse parents will have to drive and with no wrap around care to speak of in Pateley, that means parents can't work full time and women in particular will be further disadvantaged. Demographics in the longer term suggest that there is a need for a school in Lo	The proposed catchment area for Pateley Bridge is far too big for Primary School - it us unsafe to have KS1 students travelling by bus for such a distance with teenagers, unsupervised. Safeguarding. It also provides parents with no choice but to patronise the federation, which goes against the principle of school choice and marketisation and will only drive down standards and endure that management are unaccountable. Not least because the closure of glasshouses school for reasons of economic efficiency can't be far in the future.	Community
10.	This is a sensible decision as the school costs a lot of money per child to keep open, the children can't fully experience all of the subjects and lessons to their full potential when so little teachers	The children in upper nidderdale wouldn't have to travel too far to attend the larger primary school.	Community

	and TA staff cover all age ranges. The small amount of children which attend this school would be better suited and educated at the local primary school in pateley bridge where there are greater learning opportunities and peer interaction which will help the high school experience.		
11.	<p>I strongly object to the closure of this school. The reason there are no children on roll now is that parents have lost all faith in the leadership team for this federation and seeing no way forward have all opted to remove their children from this school and place them outside of the federation. This comes at a massive cost to parents, firstly financial, cost of time and fuel to take children outside of the federation is a huge burden to families. Hill farming communities and farm labourers are some of the poorest workforces in the country and this is an unfair burden. Secondly taking children away from their local community has a negative effect on friendship groups and bonds that children make with each other and members of their wider community affecting community cohesion and children's own idea of self and value within a rural community.</p> <p>Thirdly there is an environmental impact of commuting children over long distances and on minor roads that needs to be considered, spending at least one hour a day commuting to and from school is not advisable for primary aged children. Recruitment and retention of staff has not been a priority of this leadership team and indeed staff who have worked successfully at the school have been poached to other schools within the federation instead of making Lofthouse a priority. As a previous governor of this school and who's own children also attended the school although finances were always tight there was enough to invest in a two class structure and have it's own dedicated head teacher who was also the key stage 1 teacher. This was based on similar low numbers of approximately 15 as we're attending previously so why is this not now possible. Combining the accounts of all three federated schools masks what is really going on here and I would urge that the finances are separated out to review this more clearly. St Cuthbert's school is running at a far fewer number of learners to its potential than I believe Lofthouse was. Indeed the</p>	The catchment area option limits parents to the two other federated schools. As there is complete lack of trust in the leadership of this federation I would oppose this as provides no opportunity for parents to go outside this area and be supported in that choice	Community
12.	<p>Small village schools are an important part of our education system - they form part of the community and children belong to a family within the school. For some children large schools are overwhelming and children become anxious and unfocused. Having worked in a small primary school I know how well staff know</p>		Other

	<p>the children and the care which each child is given through that knowledge of the child and the family. This is a very important factor which cannot be lost. Children also benefit from a close relationship with older and younger peers which is nowhere near the same in large schools. Older children learn to care and appreciate the younger children. Children can also work with older and younger children to either develop their strengths or enhance their needs. Please do not close yet another village school. They are priceless</p>		
13.	<p>Fountains earth was once a fantastic school with fantastic staff and leadership team. Since the new head was appointed it has been clear that she wishes glasshouses to be the stand out school, fountains earth and our children have been in "in her way" of her agenda from the beginning. She has tried to alienate parents and the community from the school in order to make it easier for her to close the school. If parents even asked why something was happening we were banned from the yard/school premises. Hot meals ceased, parents viewing swimming lessons ceased as a child was left alone to attend the toilet and a member of the public had to help him use the toilet, when parents asked what happened we were told we could not go and watch swimming again. All the staff were bullied out and temporary staff took their place for a few months at a time, until the head teachers boyfriend took the teaching job, well until he then got a job at glasshouses. The school has been purposely run into the ground and we parents have been lied too time and time again by the head and the governors. The former head of governors even got caught out lying in the first public meeting which was a parish meeting in lofthouse village hall. She then admitted she "made it up" regarding pupil numbers. The head has let down this whole community and used our children to make her own agenda work for her. Fountains earth has always been a fantastic school until this Head was employed. The only reason that pupil numbers have fallen now is her! And fountains earth parents are not alone, parents from the other two schools in the federation have also started to remove their children from the federation schools. Regardless of the outcome of the closure, this Leadership needs carefully and thoroughly investigated.</p>	<p>Catchment areas can only be catchment for so many children for so many years, we need fountains earth to remain open under new leadership</p>	<p>Parent</p>
14.	<p>This school is the heart of our community and would be a great loss</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Community</p>
15.	<p>> I understand that this is a consultation process but I'm sure that others will agree that this seems to be a tick box exercise.</p>	<p>Upper Nidderdale shouldn't be in StCuthberts catchment area due to the above reasons, however</p>	<p>Parent</p>

	<p>However, as part of this consultation I would urge the council to look into the following questions; > > > - Recruitment of permanent staff and the difficulty of this has been listed as a one of the main reasons for closure, please tell us how many times have the federation attempted to recruit a full time permanent teacher to Fountains Earth in the last two years and where the permanent teachers job was advertised? > When asked if a permanent teacher would be recruited for Fountains Earth from Sept 2023 after the very sudden leaving of Mr #, the chair of governors told us that "I'm certain that's what's happening" however, this was later changed to a permanent teacher recruited for the federation and not Fountains Earth. > > - Can you tell us what 'support' (as referred to in the report) the leadership team and the governing board have provided to Fountains Earth in the last couple of years? > In my opinion there has been a total lack of communication and some deliberately deceptive behaviours, in fact the chair of governors said "we should have met with you (parents) sooner" when she eventually met with parents just a few weeks before the end of the summer term last year. > > - Why are there no children left at Fountains Earth? Why have none of the children gone into the other schools of the federation? > As families with primary school aged children we are now making 23 mile round trips twice a day. On Monday morning it was blizzarding going across the moor and this morning thick ice and we have months of this to come. > > The bottom line is that if you provide a good education with good leadership and engagement then people will come, just like they have at Dacre Braithwaite and Summerbridge. > I thoroughly believe that we have been forced from our school and we'd urge more understanding of the overall situation that I</p>	<p>the school run to Masham is the same times wise and more children are heading to Masham (3 more due to start there this coming September from Upper Nidderdale).</p>	
16.	<p>Three of my children attended Fountains Earth (FE) starting in 2014. Two were still attended up until July 2023. In June 2022 there was 12 pupils attending FE and due to proactive parents this number increased to 15 by Sept 2022. I doubt not many schools, that are threatened with closure actually increase during a time of uncertainty. But it did at FE and this showed that the parents within the community were still very much supportive and know the potential of the school if it was run by a supportive leadership team. So why by July 2023 did FE have ZERO pupils on role? In Sept 2023 a new permanent teacher was recruited to FE. Parents soon discovered that this teacher was in a personnel relationship with the Executive head of the federation. A back dated 'business of</p>	<p>The proposed catchment school of St Cuthbert's will not be supported by parents under the current leadership team and this was shown by a vote of hands at the public meeting</p>	Parent

	<p>interest' was posted on the schools website when the findings were questioned to the leadership team. Formal complaints were raised about the recruitment process especially given that the Executive head was on the interview panel. Parents did keep open-minded about the new teacher and remained optimistic. In June 2022 the school was given a 'good' Ofsted rating and in the report was praised for 'Federation Friday' which enabled the children from updale to join in team sports etc with larger groups. So why was Federation Friday reduced from once a week to once a term immediately after the inspection? Why was hot food removed? PE limited to either no PE lessons a week or only half an hour swimming lessons? Sandwiches were made at St Cuthbert's school and transported up to FE school on a Monday and the same 'stale' sandwiches fed to the children on the Friday. No school trips took place despite several offers from the PTA to fund one school trip per term. Why were children left for long periods on laptops while the teacher 'had to make phone calls'? Why were children left alone with admin staff? Why were children and parents left standing after 9am at the school gate next to a deceptively bu</p>		
17.	<p>As member of the top of the dale community and church warden at St Chads Middlesmoor I have very strong feeling about keeping our school open. We are very close up and our is very important to all. I have helped at the school in the past listening to the children read helping with different crafts always like a big family. The school is very much part of the community and has been for a lot of years. I was a pupil there many years ago same as a lot of people up here. The Bell Festival which is held in June each up at the church in Middlesmoor is for the children of Fountains Earth and all local children with a church service followed tea's competitions and sports it as been a big family day for over 150 plus years. To see the school close would be a very sad day.</p>	<p>To get our children to any of the schools in the catchment area is quite a long round trip in parents from up here in any direction, The price of fuel and weather conditions particularly in winter is far from ideal. To put a 4year old child on a bus to travel to the nearest school is not a good thing, this must be considered</p>	Community
18.	<p>This closure has been engineered by the trust to attempt to move the pupils to Pateley Bridge which itself is undersubscribed. The fact that Pateley Bridge is undersubscribed should prove to you that it is badly run and of a low educational standard, especially when alternative nearby schools are full I.e. Summerbridge, Dacre Braithwaite and Admiral Long at Burnt Yates</p>		Community
19.	<p>We support the closure of the school</p>	<p>New catchment area will need to be extended to include the upper dale</p>	Community
20.	<p>It will rip the heart out of this farming community if this school closes !</p>		Other

21.	<p>Leadership and management issues by current federation leadership have in my opinion lead to alienation of parents, staff, local community. It is wrong that this is being allowed to happen. This school could thrive again but not with current leadership. The two further schools in federation have far fewer pupils on role than before current leadership. Nearby schools outside the federation are full of these pupils as parents vote with their feet. Staff turnover has been similar. Is no-one asking why? I agree strongly with the request in current petition for an independent review of leadership of the federation. Past staff of all federation schools and parents, along with community should be given a safe avenue for expressing their experiences under current leadership. Something has gone drastically wrong and to allow the closure of Lofthouse school is not addressing the problem. The current leadership should be held to account for what has happened to all 3 previously thriving schools over recent years and actions taken to remove and replace. The Nidderdale community deserve this.</p>	<p>The proposed catchment area for St Cuthberts will drive families away from the upper Dale and weaken the community. A bigger issue is that families seeking a school outside the federation will have large distances to travel.</p>	Community
22.	<p>Under the statutory guidance for opening and closing maintained schools there is a presumption against closing rural schools, the guidance states" the case for closure should be strong and clearly in the best interests of educational provision in the area." There are currently 16 pupils in the catchment area of Fountains Earth School. Ten of these pupils have transferred from Fountains Earth School to other schools in this current year because of dissatisfaction with the leadership of the Upper Nidderdale Primary Federation, evident from comments made at the public meeting on 29.11.23. If the school was defederated and placed back under the control of the Local Authority, as I believe it was pre 2017, then parents would have confidence in returning their children to Fountains Earth Primary School. This was demonstrated at the public meeting on 29.11.23 where the community and current parents were all in support of maintaining the school. I would request that North Yorkshire Council explores the possibility of defederation as this would be in the best interests of preserving local education for the community of Upper Nidderdale. I understand that the local authority can request defederation of a school as detailed in DFE Guidance on Federation. I also believe there are suitably experience, committed and qualified people in the local vicinity to run the school effectively and form a new governing body with the aim of re-establishing a successful school.</p>		Community

23.	<p>I support the closure of Fountains Earth Lofthouse Primary School. Whilst this is extremely sad to close a small school and nobody wants to have to make that decision, the welfare (educational and social) and educational needs of the pupils and the sustainability of the school have to come first. A small class where there is a 4 year old, sat alongside a 10 year preparing for SATs and high school, must raise alarm bells. Neither child can have a normal or good emotional and social experience (they have no or limited peers of their age) and education is extremely challenging. Consequently the teacher has a huge workload. The Federation's resource (time, money, effort) used is disproportionately. 11 to 18 pupils are catered for at the expense of the other 100 pupils in the Federation. This is not fair to the rest of Nidderdale's children. The headteacher, deputy head and maths and English leads have all had to commit vast hours and effort to making Lofthouse work. This alone is unsustainable. Without the support of the community in sending many more children to the school it is no longer viable. Keeping a school open at any cost (financial, workload, mental health etc) is not acceptable. The community claim it is the heart of their community, but beyond the education of the pupils and the odd harvest festival and Christmas celebration, the community do not interact with the school. X explained to me that the community is most concerned that if the school closes the pubs will close and the house prices will fall.</p>	<p>If we choose to live in a rural area we accept that hospitals, schools, train stations etc will be some distance from us. The LA offers to support families with school transport from their home (not just from Lofthouse) which lessens the impact. Unfortunately a rural school does require reasonable pupil numbers (30 plus) to allow it to be viable and thrive. In recent years a former headteacher refused to take new reception pupils and parents had to send children elsewhere. This is where the decline in numbers started. Other parents choose to send their children to private schools. The community say that they do not want the school to close, yet they did not send their children this year. A lack of new affordable housing and a significant number of holiday homes and retired people in the local area has had a negative impact on the low pupil numbers. Parents have also opted at times to remove their children after year 5. The community have been concerned about the school's future for the last few (approximately years 4 plus) yet these wider factors have not changed and pupil numbers have dwindled as a result. Clearly a school with no pupils cannot stay open.</p>	Governor
24.	<p>I don't think this school should close because there are a lot of pre-school children living in the catchment area who would go to this school in the future if it were to stay open. Also, the school is an important part of the community.</p>	<p>As discussed at the recent consultation meeting, if this school were to close then parents would not be willing to send their children to the other 2 schools within the Federation due to them having no confidence in the Headteacher or leadership team. Therefore children would have to travel a considerable distance to the nearest primary school outside of the Federation.</p>	Parent
25.	<p>The likely closure of Fountains Earth School is a very sad event for the community in Upper Nidderdale. I understand that the absence of pupils in the school makes a decision to close the school very likely. However the circumstances whereby a school that was graded 'Good' by Ofsted in June 20022, but only a few months later has no pupils, does warrant examination. As I understand it, North Yorkshire Council has a duty to oversee governing bodies of maintained schools. As such I believe that the Council has a duty to examine how the Board of Governors handled matters at Fountains Earth School in the months following the Ofsted inspection in 2022.</p>		NYC Councillor Andrew Murday

	This is particularly relevant for the future management of the other two schools in the federation, St Cuthbert's, Pateley Bridge and Glasshouses Schools. These two are the remaining primary educational facilities for children in the upper part of the dale. The risk is that if the governing body was not acting appropriately during the last 18 months, the same thing may happen in these other two schools with the subsequent ramifications for the education of children in Nidderdale.		
26.	I believe that reopening with a designated SEN unit would increase pupil numbers as so any rural SEN students have to travel for miles for education.	With a targeted SEN provision, catchment area could increase to reach rural communities across the district.	Community
27.	I support the very sad need to close this school. The evidence is clear, and speaks for itself.	The future catchment areas seem realistic	Governor
28.	It's hard to imagine the community not having a school but clearly if there are no parents willing to commit to wanting their children to be at Lofthouse School then it should close. The issue that concerns me is why parents feel the school can not offer their children a good education	The catchment area is acceptable .	Previous student
29.	Fountains Earth is a unique school that has in the past served the local community well recognising the need for the children from the outlying farms and the rural workforce to have a nearby school that understands what the children require. All my 4 children attended Fountains Earth Lofthouse, I served on the board of governors and contributed to the decision on what was to go on the badge for the school for the school uniform (the white rose for yorkshire, sheep for the rural community, church for the Christian ethos and a book to represent learning) They all have different strengths and have grown up to be well rounded adults and work hard, 2 on the family farm, 1 working for the N H S in the community and 1 working in hospitality as a manager. All 4 went onto further education. The school is an integral part of the community it is a meeting point for local families whilst they drop off and pick up their children that help support people's mental health. However something has gone wrong and needs to be put right as I believe it stems from leadership that has failed to understand the sort of school that Fountains Earth Lofthouse is and the needs of the local families. Just because it is part of a federation does not mean that children from Fountains Earth Lofthouse should be made to go to St. Cuthberts and Glasshouses why not the other way? Children from down the dale could be transported up the dale to enjoy the experience of an amazing unique primary school!		Community

30.	<p>This consultation has come about due to 0 pupils bow being on roll at Fountains Earth Primary School. NYC have to investigate and appropriately respond to the community as to why there has been such a vast decrease to 0 in such a short period of time. If communication, concerns and complaints were dealt with appropriately, first by the current SLT, then governing board and also NYC who have not responded to concerns expressed by parents and the parish council, there would not be 0 pupils on roll. The data shared by NYC show that numbers of primary school age pupils continue to increase in the catchment area over the coming years, this is not a case of decreasing numbers in Rural areas. The consultation also states that they have been unable to employ a member of staff for the last 5 years - up until the autumn term of 2021, the school had 2 experienced and much-loved teachers. One left abruptly at the end of the summer term 2021 (the first term of the new SLT team) and the second went on an absence of leave during the autumn term of 2021 - has NYC explored the reasons as to why these experienced teachers left - and gathered information from all stakeholders (not just the current SLT)? Has North Yorkshire spoken to previous members of the governing board who have resigned from their posts in the past 2 years? Where has the job been advertised and for how long? Has NYC evidence of the statement that shares they are unable to employ staff? The unique rural school of Fountains Earth provides an opportunity for a personalised curriculum to meet the needs of the updale children - a rare and positive experience for any teacher. One such teacher volunteered their services at the public consultation. The reason for having no DfE funding is due to 0 pupils being on roll – this should not be part of any decision to close Fountains Earth Primary School as if the governing board and NYC had taken earlier concerns seriously, Fountains Earth would not have 0 pupils on roll and t</p>	<p>Shared at the public consultation, Families are not sending their children to the proposed catchment school due to feeling forced from their local, primary School - Fountains Earth. NYC will share that, if they decide to put St Cuthbert's as the catchment school, it will be 'parental preference' to send children elsewhere - how can NYC confidently say this is parental preference when all past parents feel they have been forced out of Fountains Earth Primary school? The 2014 National Travel Survey shared that the average distance to school for primary aged pupils was 1.9 miles; NYC would be asking families to travel 7+ miles (although realistically making families travel 10+ miles to a school outside of this current federation). Have the School Improvement Adviser also looked at declining numbers in the proposed catchment school, under the same leadership? Although pupil numbers vary and can change, having a 'good' school where the difference between number of children in catchment area and those actually attending is so vast, should surely be a red flag for NYC and the governing board and shows an unmatched, negative trend compared to other schools. Have leadership teams from other 'local' schools been approached for their experiences with the current SLT at this federation as many of these have received an influx of children in the past 2 years from this federation. Travel to school: Increase of vehicles on small rural roads as children are now attending Masham, Summerbridge, Dacre Braithwaite, Admiral Long schools, as will not attend within the federation due to the actions of the current SLT and governing board – increased pollution, more vehicles on smaller rural roads linked to increase risk of accidents. Putting parents and children at risk when travelling through rural community during inclement weather (snow and Ice).</p>	Community
31.	<p>The school has been run down by the federation, by getting rid of staff and parents, so there were no one wanting to stay under the current leadership. The headteacher has never met with any of the parents at the school and never came to the public meeting at lofthouse village hall. There werent any parent govenors aloud on</p>	<p>None wants St Cutberts to have the catchment as figures show that they dont even have half their own catchment in the school(bad leadership) shows that since the federation numbers have gone down.</p>	Parish Councillor

	<p>the board from lofthouse school and neither anyone from the parish council. The parish councillor has been on numerous governing board before around bradford school, so had lots of experience and he was discusted by the attitude of the federation. Numbers show that since the federation the numbers at the school have gone down so the federation hasnt benifited the school</p>		
32.	<p>The low pupil numbers simply are a mismanagement problem and deliberate exercise to drive good teaching staff and committed parents out. The school had no problems until becoming part of the Upper Nidderdale Federation. The timeline of events clearly shows staffing and pupil issues started after the new leadership took over, and especially immediately after the Ofsted inspection in June 2022 and employing the Executives Heads personal partner into the role in Sept 2022. There was no promotion of Fountains Earth, while promotional leaflets were printed pre June 2023 (governors minutes) this did not include Fountains Earth, while at the time was part of the federation. This is another piece of evidence that their agenda was to close Fountains Earth. The issues with recruitment and finances were not a problem pre UNF.</p>	<p>The catchment area must include schools out with this federation, especially if it remains under the same management team. There is no trust or confidence in the current leadership team and parents will not and are not supporting the other two schools in the federation.</p>	Parent
33.	<p>The federation hasnt benifited the school, the numbers show it all. The leadership hasnt had any contact with the parents and didn't even come to the public meeting, they have bullied all the parents and staff out of the school. School has never benifited the federation the numbers show that</p>	<p>St cuberts shouldnt have the catchment as numbers show they haven't even got half the pupils out of their catchment, bad leadership affecting this school.</p>	Community
34.	<p>I was a parent of a child at Lofthouse school. Under the right leadership this school could have thrived. It seems like the governors and leadership Upper Nidderdale Federation school ran Lofthouse school into the ground, intentionally. The local authority has not, so far, fulfilled its responsibilities in terms of holding the governing body to account. The numbers here would always be low, it is a very rural area, but this should not be a barrier to continuing to provide primary education. The distances people have to travel now each day are ridiculous, partly because there is no confidence in the rest of the federated schools (in Pateley and Glasshouses). Even though the round trip to the closest school in Pateley could be around 18miles for some families (twice each day). I received this response from the Department of Education after writing to them in August 2022 following the first request to consult on closure:</p>		Community

	<p>"I can assure you that the government is committed to supporting rural schools. We know that to preserve access for young children, local authorities may need to maintain more empty places in schools in rural areas than in urban areas, and small schools generally receive more funding per pupil than larger schools in recognition of the circumstances they face.</p> <p>The government recognises the importance of rural schools and the need to maintained access to good local schools in rural areas; rural schools are often at the heart of their communities and that is why there is a presumption against the closure of rural schools."</p> <p>Questions need to be asked and answered about what went wrong here and the priority of the council should be supporting sustainability both in terms of the environmental impact but also the economic, social and health impacts for the community over time.</p>		
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An additional three respondents did not leave any comments at all on their on-line form, and so their views are not known. Some of the respondents appear to have exceeded the maximum characters on the web form.