

**From the staff and governors of Arncliffe/Kettlewell, Grassington and  
Threshfield Primary Schools.**

c/o

Mr Richard Humpidge (Chair of Governors - Kettlewell Primary School)  
& Lesley Taylor (Headteacher – Arncliffe & Kettlewell Primary Schools)  
Kettlewell Primary School  
Kettlewell  
Skipton  
North Yorkshire  
BD23 5HX

21<sup>st</sup> October 2010

**Review of Provision for Children aged 0-11 in Upper Wharfedale**

FAO:

**Cynthia Welbourne**, MA, FRSA, Corporate Director – Children and Young People's Service.

**Carolyn Bird**, Assistant Director of Strategic Services Group.

**Julia Evans**, Principal adviser, 0-11 learners

We are writing to you to voice our concerns over recent developments relating to this review and the proposals published on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> October, 2010.

Following a meeting of staff and governors from Arncliffe/Kettlewell, Grassington and Threshfield on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> October we have been asked to highlight some concerns shared by all of these schools. The meeting was unanimous in expressing concern in the following areas:

1. At the meeting on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> September at Grassington Children's Centre we all understood that the only options to be removed from the document dated 8<sup>th</sup> October 2010 entitled Upper Wharfedale Primary Review, would be Option 1: Retain the current pattern of provision.  
It was with some considerable shock and disappointment to all of us when we realised that only two options were put forward to the Executive Members of the Council and neither of these included a future for either Arncliffe or Kettlewell.  
Why was this decision taken subsequent to the meeting?  
In your document of 18<sup>th</sup> October, shared with parents, you state that, "We would welcome your views on whether the retention of educational provision in Kettlewell is desirable and how this could be achieved." Despite this, neither Option 1 nor Option 2 indicates any future for Kettlewell Primary School. These options seem too tightly defined and prevent the community and stakeholders from being given the opportunity to propose their own plans for the future of any education at Kettlewell.
2. Following meetings with parents and the wider community we strongly believe that the Local Authority have underestimated the strength of public opinion in the dale. We do not feel that the timescales allow sufficient scope for appropriate discussion to take place between all interested parties. This has given the impression to everybody in the community that decisions have already been made and this consultation is therefore raising concerns that the Local Authority are just, "going through the motions." Can you explain why these timescales are so short?
3. The consensus of the meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> October was that the education of the children in the dale is at the forefront of all of our minds and is and remains paramount to any future decisions. We want and need to work with the community and all stakeholders to develop strong educational provision in the dale, but strongly feel that the Authority is not giving us sufficient time to achieve this.

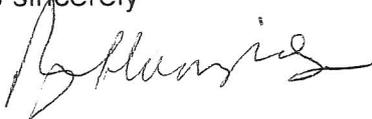
The projected figure of pupils on roll at Kettlewell is not due to fall below the figure quoted in, "Small Schools in North Yorkshire – A Policy Statement, January 2005" before September 2012. Given this information, the members of the meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> October were shocked and confused as to why Kettlewell, in particular, needs to close as soon as September 2011.

We want the parents to share their proposals on how we can develop an understanding of the advantages and the drawbacks to operating a school with small numbers and share with us their own thoughts on how we can best provide this in Upper Wharfedale for the future. Given these figures why has the Local Authority determined that Kettlewell School will close in September 2011?

We would strongly request that the Local Authority give urgent consideration to extending the period of public consultation, currently due to end on 3<sup>rd</sup> December. We also ask that you give thought to postponing the first of the three public consultation meetings scheduled for Monday 1<sup>st</sup> November at Kettlewell Village Hall.

We ask that you address our concerns as soon as possible given the tight timescales set by the Authority.

Yours sincerely



Richard Humpidge – Chair of Governors Kettlewell Primary School



Lesley Taylor – Headteacher of Arncliffe and Kettlewell Primary Schools



Rev Peter Yorkstone – Vice-Chair of Arncliffe Primary School



Rita Bennett – Chair of Governors Grassington Primary School



Libby Wheildon – Acting Headteacher of Grassington Primary School

Peter Huff - Chair of Governors of Threshfield Primary School



cc. Councillor Shelagh Marshall, Councillor John Roberts, Chris Beazley (Chair of Kettlewell with Starbotton Parish Council), Garry Schofield (Chair of Buckden Parish Council) and all parents, staff and governors of above schools.