

## School Org: Consultation Results: Skilts School Stat-Con summary

### Summary Table

Total number of responses:	20
Number in favour or against the proposal:	
In favour	1
Against	19
Don't know	0
Not indicated	0
Method of response:	
BeHeard (website)	16
Email	4
Letter	0
Respondent by type:	
Pupil	5
Parent	5
School Governor	0
School Staff Member	7*
Local Resident	0
Local Councillor	1
Member of Parliament	1
Other, please specify	1
Comment themes: (counted per mention of total responses*);	Result
Respite benefits pupils and families	18/20
Concerns regarding removal of an important respite service (without replacement)	7/20
Much confidence in staff	7/20
Dispute that condition of buildings is a reason for closure (*a)	6/20
Highlight that OFSTED rating of Inadequate is for school. Boarding provision received an OFSTED rating of requires improvement in separate inspection. (*b)	6/20
Staff dispute that there are no boarding pupils and maintain that pupils receiving respite <u>are</u> boarding pupils.(*c)	5/20
Concerns regarding staff consultations and future roles	4/20
Concerns about consultation document and process	4/20
Concerns that closure is due to lack of funding	3/20
Claims that financial deficit is due to other factors	3/20
Makes sense to remove the boarding provision if there are no boarding pupils	1/20
Alternative respite provision required	1/20

## **School Org: Consultation Results: Skilts School Stat-Con summary**

### **\*Analyst Notes:**

Of the 7 staff member responses, one was a type of petition signed by 33 members of staff.

Comment themes method - example: Of a total of 10 responses, if 3 responses mention traffic concerns the result is: 3/10. If the same 3 people mention parking and 3 others mentions parking the result is: 6/10.

(\*a): A recent condition survey of Skilts School has identified major structural concerns with the residential buildings which will require considerable investment to rectify.

(\*b): Skilts School received an OFSTED judgement of “inadequate” following an inspection on 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> December 2017. The school has had two monitoring inspections since this inspection. Ofsted also inspected the school’s boarding provision on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2017; this social care inspection was carried out under the Children’s Act 1989 amended by the Care standards Act 2000. The boarding provision was judged as requiring “improvement” and a further inspection of the boarding provision was carried out on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2018 and the judgement remained as “requiring improvement”. The overall judgement of the school remains “inadequate”.

(\*c): A large number of the responses to this consultation refer to pupils being residential pupils. There are currently no pupils with a statement of need or an Education and Health Care Plan that states they require a residential or boarding place. The pupils at the Skilts School who have been staying in the residential unit have been receiving respite care. Three pupils will still be on roll at the school should the proposal to discontinue the boarding provision be approved. The school has made Children’s Advice & Support Service (CASS) referrals for two of the families who have agreed to a full assessment. The remaining family declined the support and the offer to engage with CASS.

## Response ID ANON-1CUJ-8S7A-P

Submitted to **School Organisation Skilts School**

Submitted on **2019-03-18 14:10:29**

### Introduction

#### 1 What is your name?

Name:

[REDACTED]

#### 2 What is your e mail address?

e mail:

[REDACTED]

#### 3 What is your interest in the proposal?

Member of Parliament

other, please specify:

#### 4 Are you in favour of the proposal?

Yes

**Please give details:**

Given the lack of full time residential students, it makes sense to remove boarding provision at Skilts School. However, it is essential that all families who use this facility for respite have secured alternative provision and are happy that their respite needs can be adequately met, prior to the residential facilities being closed.

## Response ID ANON-1CUJ-8S7E-T

Submitted to **School Organisation Skilts School**  
Submitted on **2019-03-26 10:43:45**

### Introduction

#### 1 What is your name?

Name:

[REDACTED]

#### 2 What is your e mail address?

e mail:

[REDACTED]

#### 3 What is your interest in the proposal?

Parent

other, please specify:

#### 4 Are you in favour of the proposal?

No

**Please give details:**

My son benefited Tremendously from being in residential if I did not have this I do not know how I wouldâ[REDACTED] coped because my son lacked any social skills he was on able to make or keep friends and from the moment he started doing residential this improved drastically even the way he behaved at home improved. If you got rid of this facility I believe you would be taking something away from the kids that are currently attending and future attendeesThis might seem as if itâ[REDACTED]s a small part of the school but it plays a massive part in helping our children to be able to navigate life on the outside my son now attends secondary school and I do believe that the residential facility at Skilts helped him to be able to cope with secondary school

## Response ID ANON-1CUJ-8S7H-W

Submitted to **School Organisation Skilts School**

Submitted on **2019-03-13 18:40:40**

### Introduction

#### 1 What is your name?

Name:

██████████

#### 2 What is your e mail address?

e mail:

████████████████████

#### 3 What is your interest in the proposal?

Parent

other, please specify:

#### 4 Are you in favour of the proposal?

No

**Please give details:**

I think that the closer of the residential is not needed, as when it has gone it will be a great loss for our students and staff!

I for one have seen how much improvement it has made for my son ██████████ it gives him a place to play out side safely and a place to build his social and communication needs.

The residential has been of great need for not only my family, but several other families. To know that this is going to be withdrawn and taken away from skilts is very sad but also concerning.

It is very much needed, this a perfect opportunity for the parents to access residential or respite care, it's on school grounds which's means that the staff on both sides of the boys daily school life can work closely together to ensure the boys meet targets and reach goals.

What concerns me most is that the lack of money, the reasoning for closure is not because it's inadequate or there is a major issue with staffing, but the lack of funds. The residential section of Skilts is something needed for the students and their families! I think the lack of understanding about this is very sad.

I have tried to access many services in regards to ██████████ diagnoses of ADHD, only to be told their isn't anything really out there. I was also recently told that ADHD isn't classed as a disability which means ██████████ is not entitled to access certain services. So once ██████████ was able to go to the residential, something he does enjoy and something which has made a positive impact on our family you want to take it away for lack of funding?

My son is one of many who has found themselves in this situation, services and support is being stripped down and taken away with nothing adequate put back in its place. I really do urge you to reconsider this decision, because I know funding is not a valid reason when cutting a service - They may look like numbers and statistics to you on a piece of paper, the staff salaries maybe just the percentages in the red but they are our guardian angels! It may sound ridiculous but you need to realise that the residential is something our boys need!

## Response ID ANON-1CUJ-8S7K-Z

Submitted to **School Organisation Skilts School**  
Submitted on **2019-03-26 08:54:56**

### Introduction

#### 1 What is your name?

Name:

██████████

#### 2 What is your e mail address?

e mail:

████████████████████

#### 3 What is your interest in the proposal?

Pupil

other, please specify:

#### 4 Are you in favour of the proposal?

No

#### Please give details:

I don't want the residence to close. It is a great way to friends and play with your friends after school. It's really fun to sleepover-it feels like a sleepover. The activities are fun and also the VIP trips. I would never have known that 'Rock Up' was so cool if residence didn't take me. The staff are kind as well. I like them. The staff are great at helping with difficulties and when I'm sad and feel down. The food is really nice. ██████████ is a great cook.

# Response ID ANON-1CUJ-8S7P-5

Submitted to **School Organisation Skills School**

Submitted on **2019-03-21 12:46:59**

## Introduction

### 1 What is your name?

Name:

[REDACTED]

### 2 What is your e mail address?

e mail:

[REDACTED]

### 3 What is your interest in the proposal?

Staff Member

other, please specify:

### 4 Are you in favour of the proposal?

No

Please give details:

Response to the proposal to remove the boarding provision at Skilts School

21st March 2019.

1. Provision used for short breaks/respice, evening intervention.

The residential provision has never provided evening intervention as stated in the proposal document, and the term short breaks and respice is bending the truth to suit. All pupils in residence reside two nights per weeks plus, we have not taken on new pupils due to being prevented by the school leader on request [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. This has been in place since June 2018.

At present time we have six residential pupils. Last year we had 17 residential pupils and provided a high level of support to both the children and their families. Some of this support was sought from children's services and has supported to keep children in the family home by offering extensive support to parents/carers, and to grandparents. No other support was being given to these families so how can anyone say this is not a needed provision, services are being cut everywhere and the decision to close the boarding provision is very much a financial one to support cutbacks in education and local authority. This makes the proposal very unfair to the staff working in this provision, the proposal insinuates we have been providing inadequate care in a building not fit for purpose.

To indicate the long term nature of placement, I have included a representation of current pupils, but this is unrealistically low due to the enforced hold on taking in new pupils.

Y.P. 1. Resides 3 nights per week. He has been a residential pupil [REDACTED] [REDACTED].

Y.P. 2. Resides 2 nights per week. He has been a residential pupil [REDACTED] [REDACTED].

Y.P. 3. Resides 2 nights per week. He has been a residential pupil [REDACTED] [REDACTED].

Y.P. 4. Resides 2 nights per week. He has been a residential pupil [REDACTED] [REDACTED].

Y.P. 5. Resides 2 nights per week. He has been a residential pupil [REDACTED] [REDACTED].

Y.P. 6. Resides 2 nights per week. He has been a residential pupil [REDACTED] [REDACTED].

2. Residential provision financially unviable.

The Deficit in School is due to poor leadership within the school and has nothing to do with the residential provision. The Budget set aside for residence has continually been dipped into for resources in school, including paying for the role of parental school advisor (P.S.A.) this role replaced an R.S.C.W. this was a leading factor in the choice to start cutting the provision. Up until June 2018, staffs hours were hijacked to use in school due to the untimely absence from our headmaster. Approximately 45% of residential hours were used in school day to provide pastoral support due to safeguarding issues within the school. This has been mentioned in last two of our ofsted reports.

3. The buildings being beyond economical repair no longer fit for purpose.

The whole school has had a recent survey to assess the structural state of the buildings, and although their where concerns over the school building the residential building passed with flying colours and we were informed the building was structurally sound. The internal décor is regularly updated by the staff despite this not being part of their job descriptions and all the rooms are of a high standard. This is mentioned in many of the residential ofsted inspections, parents often ask staff during a look round if they can come and stay as they cannot believe the quality of pupil's bedrooms. I have spoken to our headmaster about the inaccuracies in this statement, his response was the school is not in a good state of repair, the proposal is about the boarding provision not the school so this statement is bending the truth and very misleading, I was then informed the school and boarding provision are one, this makes no sense, My suggestion is you are trying to justify your position as you are not allowed to close a provision on financial grounds only so it's easier to bend the truth and sell such provision as inadequate. The authority has put lots of details in the letter about this provision, I don't remember in 16 years anyone from said authority visiting the provision in question. You can't adequately judge something you've never seen.

4. Ofsted rating of inadequate.

The factual inaccuracy in the proposal document about the Ofsted rating from the inspection of 5 th December 2017.

The proposal is about consulting on the removal of the boarding provision and yet the document only quotes the Ofsted outcome for the main school which was 'Inadequate'. This is a misleading statement which could be seen to suggest to the uninformed reader that the boarding provision was also judged inadequate at the same December 2017 inspection. This is however not the case, the boarding provision was separately inspected by Ofsted at the same time as the school in December 2017. The outcome for the boarding provision was 'Requires improvement' not 'Inadequate'. The proposal document does not make any mention of the outcome for the boarding provision, at the very least I would have thought that for correctness both inspection outcomes (for the school and for the boarding provision) should have been quoted given that the consultation is very specifically about the removal of boarding.

How will this effect pupils in school.

Staff were assured all pupils remaining in residence would be assessed to ensure alternative provision to meet individual need by the implemented date of closure 31/07.2019. At the time of writing my response no assessments via health and social care for the children that currently access residence have been undertaken.

How will this effect staff.

Proposal stated staff will be offered alternative roles wherever possible. I would like to state clearly that as early as September 2018, the residential team were informed [REDACTED] that there would be no re-deployment and redundancy would be the only option for all residential staff.

The overall way this consultation has been managed is disgraceful, the leaders and authority have shown very little thought or care to long serving staff with extemporary records, vulnerable pupils and families in crisis. The staff and families were informed in June 2018 the provision would be closed by Christmas 2018. The leaders in no way followed the legal process of consultation. [REDACTED] told staff the provision was closing before any consultation took place. 9 months of uncertainty coupled with high levels of misinformation for a group of long serving, loyal employees is terrible and shows a lack of regard and respect.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]



## Response ID ANON-1CUJ-8S7R-7

Submitted to **School Organisation Skilts School**

Submitted on **2019-03-24 11:50:17**

### Introduction

#### 1 What is your name?

Name:

[REDACTED]

#### 2 What is your e mail address?

e mail:

[REDACTED]

#### 3 What is your interest in the proposal?

Pupil

other, please specify:

#### 4 Are you in favour of the proposal?

No

#### Please give details:

I don't want the residence to close at my school because I love to play pool with the staff and I like to spend some time away from my sisters cause they annoy me and it makes me make bad choices and then I'm naughty.

I like to play with my friends in residence and go on the vip trips that we have to earn.

I like it when the staff help to make me calm when I'm having some problems and I get really angry.

I like my own bedroom in residence cause it is my own space and it is my safe area we're I can be on my own.

Residence is the best part of my week.

If residence got taken away from me I would be very sad and I would miss all my friends I spend time with there I would miss all the fun things we do and I would miss the lovely food and I would really miss my staff.

I would like residence to stay cause I like it very very much.

## Response ID ANON-1CUJ-8S7U-A

Submitted to **School Organisation Skilts School**

Submitted on **2019-03-26 15:42:52**

### Introduction

#### 1 What is your name?

Name:

██████████

#### 2 What is your e mail address?

e mail:

#### 3 What is your interest in the proposal?

Pupil

other, please specify:

#### 4 Are you in favour of the proposal?

No

**Please give details:**

It is fun, I get to play with my friends and ████████ happy face.

## Response ID ANON-1CUJ-8S7V-B

Submitted to **School Organisation Skilts School**

Submitted on **2019-03-26 09:32:03**

### Introduction

#### 1 What is your name?

Name:

██████████

#### 2 What is your e mail address?

e mail:

████████████████████

#### 3 What is your interest in the proposal?

Parent

other, please specify:

#### 4 Are you in favour of the proposal?

No

**Please give details:**

I am saying NO to removal of the boarding provision NOT to the increase of the number of day places which is needed.

My son ██████ has made use of the residential provision at Skilts since ██████. He had a difficult early life experience which has impacted on his life. He has needed to talk about these experiences but has been on the Forward Thinking Birmingham waiting list since 2014. A lot of this waiting has been due to the reduction of funding and resources for children's mental health services. However, since accessing the residential provision at Skilts, we, his parents, have noticed that his social skills have improved and he has been able to open up and speak with trusted adults. ██████ says he has enjoyed having the extra time at school and making friends. This has been nothing short of a miracle because this has been a challenge for him.

This provision has made such a difference to ██████ (psychological) life and we have seen and experienced this ourselves. Having those two nights has been valuable for ██████. Even though our son is leaving Skilts in the summer, we are deeply concerned that in future other boys who may benefit from this service will lose out, especially as Skilts looks forward to welcoming more pupils (and their problems.) Being able to offer 1 or 2 nights to pupils so that these dedicated and skilled staff can work with some challenging children to enhance their life in school and beyond is too valuable to lose. Also offering 1 or 2 nights means staff can work with a reasonable number and breadth of children too both in terms of boarding as well as in the context of the school. I would really commend you and the other stakeholders to reconsider this decision. This provision changes lives. Do not take away the possibility of such change for other pupils in the future.

## Response ID ANON-1CUJ-8S7W-C

Submitted to **School Organisation Skilts School**  
Submitted on **2019-03-09 15:24:22**

### Introduction

#### 1 What is your name?

Name:

[REDACTED]

#### 2 What is your e mail address?

e mail:

[REDACTED]

#### 3 What is your interest in the proposal?

Local Councillor

other, please specify:

#### 4 Are you in favour of the proposal?

No

#### Please give details:

Believe the decision to remove the residential element is purely on finance and not in best interests of the children of families. Understand many families are worried and against the proposals and hope council will genuinely listen and consider their thoughts. the service provided is essential for many families and high-dependent children. And the institution may struggle to meet the needs of a significant number of children once residency has been removed.

## Response ID ANON-1CUJ-8S7X-D

Submitted to **School Organisation Skilts School**  
Submitted on **2019-03-11 13:56:39**

### Introduction

#### 1 What is your name?

Name:

[REDACTED]

#### 2 What is your e mail address?

e mail:

[REDACTED]

#### 3 What is your interest in the proposal?

Parent

**other, please specify:**

I am a parent & my sons welfare is my interest in this proposal and the negatives that removing this is going to bring him.

#### 4 Are you in favour of the proposal?

No

**Please give details:**

I don't agree with set backs and delays this is going to cause my son both academically and mentally and physically.

# Response ID ANON-1CUJ-8S7Z-F

Submitted to **School Organisation Skills School**

Submitted on **2019-03-24 18:51:53**

## Introduction

### 1 What is your name?

Name:

[REDACTED]

### 2 What is your e mail address?

e mail:

[REDACTED]

### 3 What is your interest in the proposal?

Staff Member

other, please specify:

### 4 Are you in favour of the proposal?

No

Please give details:

I have worked as part of the Skilts residential team for more than 17 years and have supported many children and families during this period.

I am fully aware of the importance of offering the children residential provision and the positive impact this also has on the family dynamic. I am positive that without this provision, some families would have failed to remain together due to disruptive nature of the children involved and the environment they live in at home. The residential facility has offered stability to children and their families; the residential setting offers them a safe area to develop their life skills whilst working on their social and emotional development to help them with their mental wellbeing. Without the specialist setting offering the children consistent routines and positive interactions within a family-style environment, some of these children would fail to coexist with their family and their wider community. I am therefore very concerned that, by the withdrawal of the residential provision, many of our most vulnerable children will struggle being at home full time and may end up being taken into care.

After studying the Final Proposal Document I would like to report some inaccuracies contained within it:

i). Under 'School Information' - The Ofsted rating (5/12/17) was deemed 'Inadequate/Special Measures'. This was the school's judgement, not the residential judgement. There were 2 different inspections, the residential judgment was 'requires improvement'. As the document is giving details relating only to the removal of boarding provision, surely the school's judgement shouldn't be the one that's highlighted? How can anyone compiling a report get a fact like this so wrong?

ii). Under ' Why do we want to do this?' - It is the main school building which is beyond economical repair and deemed no longer fit for purpose NOT the residential facility. I think this is rather an important fact to get wrong - residency has continued since the report so I'm sure the building is safe to be in, otherwise we wouldn't be allowed to use the facility. Historically, the residency side of Skilts has more than paid for itself, in fact the money generated has also benefitted the wider school community. Not only will the children and their families suffer because of the withdrawal of residency, the school will suffer too.

iii). Under ' Why do we want to do this?' - The school has not admitted more children to use the residential facility for at least 3 years. This is wrong, more/different children have used the boarding facility every year since I started working at Skilts. It's only since September 2018 that this has changed due to the school's proposed association with a FET. A stop has been put on offering residential places to those who would hugely benefit from it. Residency has not only been offered to children who have it specified on their EHCP/statement (in fact this provision has not been specified as a specific requirement for a number of years). Therefore, I wonder why it is now deemed unnecessary when all evidence points towards the additional provision being so successful for those who have access to it? The vast majority of children and parents, past and present, would strongly disagree with the implication that residency isn't of crucial importance to the holistic wellbeing of the children and their family unit.

I am very disappointed that this final proposal was published in the Birmingham Post and copies sent to all stakeholders prior to anyone at Skilts reading the draft version and amending the factual inaccuracies. I understand that this was due to the fact that the Headteacher failed to notice the communication in his emails. Clearly this is a completely unsatisfactory situation and yet another demonstration of where the real inadequacies lie. As I am one of the people who is directly affected by this proposal, I am very annoyed that such inaccuracies have already been circulated and will have been read by many people, I feel insulted and humiliated that my own personal practice has been reported upon unfairly. I am worried that if the inaccuracies are not corrected, retracted and republished, this may become an obstacle for any future employment.

The residential team at Skilts were informed of the proposed closure of the boarding facility back in June 2018. We have all continued to operate as model professionals from that point to the present time and we will continue to do so until the day our employment ceases. I ask that we are all treated with the same professionalism until that time, this includes ensuring that all paperwork and reports are accurate - such fundamental mistakes are inexcusable. I'd also like to point out that all findings from our Ofsted report have been acted upon and subsequent monitoring visits have acknowledged this, indeed reports now paint a very different picture of residency at Skilts.

## Response ID ANON-1CUJ-8S72-7

Submitted to **School Organisation Skilts School**

Submitted on **2019-03-26 15:05:31**

### Introduction

#### 1 What is your name?

Name:

[REDACTED]

#### 2 What is your e mail address?

e mail:

#### 3 What is your interest in the proposal?

Staff Member

other, please specify:

#### 4 Are you in favour of the proposal?

No

Please give details:

Response to moving the Boarding Provision from Skilts School

21-03-2019

I am one of the stakeholders who has worked in the Boarding provision at Skilts School.

I feel I need to highlight areas to which removing the Boarding Provision is going to impact on the Children who attend Skilts School and the impact to which Boarding has had on children who have left Skilts School.

Now and over the years the Boarding Provision has had a very important part in the children's lives in areas of education, development, Social and safeguarding.

A large percentage of our pupils have been born into poverty, they often live in cramped overcrowded property often in disrepair, or they live in high rise flat accommodation without any outdoor space.

The children find mixing in their communities difficult, and parents don't feel safe to allow their children out to play. Drug and knife crimes are increasing at a high rate, child slavery in on the increase with dealers using children as county line runners. Due to cut back of funding and lack of community resources for children have declined in the past few years.

The Boarding out Provision at Skilts gave our children a way of escaping what they were experiencing or hearing about in their home lives.

I can give several examples of how Children greatly benefitted from being able to access the Boarding out Provision.

One such child who struggled during class time to complete school work and the Boarding Provision was able to support the youngsters to complete and achieve school work. He had a lot of difficulties, who believed he didn't need to learn to read, because all his thought he needed to get on in life was to be able to fight.

The Boarding Provision changed this believe with him. Using our skills, knowledge and understanding of children with SEN and associated conditions this child learnt to read, this opened up a wonderful world to him, he would read books, text his friends, use social media, he would take an interest in the country of his parents look at maps etc. As years went on he would actively promote reading to younger children. Socially this child had no social skills, he was disliked by his peers, he wouldn't follow any rules. Again using the skills which the Boarding team has, we were able to work with this child and develop his social skills, to a point where he developed into quite an athlete and was admired by his peers. The Boarding Provision enabled him to attend the Birmingham Athletics club at weekends.

Another couple of pupils who accessed the Boarding provision at different times lived high rise flats without gardens, these boys learnt a love of playing football, whilst in the Boarding Provision. One of the youngsters with our support went for trials at all the midland clubs, they all wanted to sign him, and he chose the Villa. He was a part of their academy, and he had gone on to make a career out of Footbal. Without the Boarding Provision, this would never had happened. The other youngster continued his football passion and went on to be signed up by a football club.

Over the past few years we have had youngsters in residency who were in danger of being groomed into county lines activity. Parents of these children had little control at keeping there children safe in the home, the Boarding Provision gave these youngsters a safe environment to live and play in. Some of the youngsters after leaving us had gone into the care system, because they were not able to access Boarding Provision at there senior schools.

Some youngsters who have been in the Boarding Provision have felt safe enough to be able to disclose abuse in their homes. They have built up close trusting relationships where by they could disclose. These children are now thriving in good foster homes.

We currently have children Boarding with us who live close to Birmingham city centre whose parents say their children are scared to leave their homes due to the knife crimes and violence they not only see on the news but actually witness from their homes.

This is only a tiny amount of accounts where we have made a difference to out children who have been able to access the Boarding Provision. Unfortunately this Provision is likely not to continue.

The children at our School are all Birmingham SEN, and I feel as you are their Local Authority you have a duty and responsibility to support and keep our Children

safe from harm and danger. The School has 73% of the children on Free meals, 100% of these children are in residence at the present time. This means the families are all in low paid or no employment and all living in poverty. The Boarding out Provision has given the children a different insight to what life is like. The children do and have gained aspirations and go on to make good choices, they have lasting positive memories, which stay with them for ever. I do make a plea to Birmingham Local Authority not to close this Provision, and want the Local Authority to increase places and funding so we can give the children aspirations and positivities to make a change so they can have bright futures.

Due to big financial funding to the school a few years back, school had to make redundancy. The impact of these redundancy put a great deal of stress on the children and staff. Behaviour increased and Staff morale dropped, staff sickness increased. All these factors plus other put the school into failings when they were OFSTED in 2018. Due to this the failings the School is now going to become an academy who don't want to take on the Boarding facilities. I personally feel the DfE and Local Authority should be made more accountable to ensure the SEN children of Birmingham, should be given the best opportunity to thrive, succeed and achieve. The DfE and Local authority have a duty of care to our Children, and this can partly be met by the Boarding Provision being kept.

██████████



## Response ID ANON-1CUJ-8S73-8

Submitted to **School Organisation Skilts School**

Submitted on **2019-03-27 15:03:07**

### Introduction

#### 1 What is your name?

Name:

[REDACTED]

#### 2 What is your e mail address?

e mail:

[REDACTED]

#### 3 What is your interest in the proposal?

Staff Member

other, please specify:

#### 4 Are you in favour of the proposal?

No

#### Please give details:

Firstly I would like to say that I disagree with the wording on the proposal document as the information is misleading and unfair. We as staff members deserved for the information to be accurate and correct before it being made public. I have worked at Skilts for 13 years as both a teaching assistant and a RSCW. Since working during the residential evenings I have worked with many different children. Most wanted to become residents and some would have rather have been at home but because of certain circumstances had to stay. You will find it very difficult to find a parent, carer, relative or child that would have anything other than positives to say about the residential provision. This is because they get so much out of being a resident and each one of them got something different. For some it was as simple as making friends that they couldn't make before and others it was about helping them be more independent with their routines so they could take it home with them. There were some children who needed help expressing their emotional needs in better ways than aggression and for others it was helping relationships that had broken down at home due to patterns of behaviour which parents or carers had struggled to change due to a number of different reasons. I have worked with some of these most difficult and challenging children that Birmingham has to offer which has been tough at times but during this time I have also seen these children show levels of kindness and compassion that many people that had worked with them before would probably have deemed impossible. I have had the privilege to work with all the children that walked through the doors at Skilts and the boys that have been residents have changed me for the better. So with all that being said all I ask is that the money saved from the removal of the residential provision at Skilts is used to ensure that children from all over Birmingham get the support/services that they require and need as if support is not offered then I worry about the future of some of these children from Birmingham.

## Response ID ANON-1CUJ-8S74-9

Submitted to **School Organisation Skills School**

Submitted on **2019-03-21 13:33:18**

### Introduction

#### 1 What is your name?

Name:

[REDACTED]

#### 2 What is your e mail address?

e mail:

[REDACTED]

#### 3 What is your interest in the proposal?

Staff Member

other, please specify:

#### 4 Are you in favour of the proposal?

No

Please give details:

21st March 2019

Response to the proposal to remove the boarding provision at Skilts School

I would like to present my views with regard to the proposed removal of the boarding provision at Skilts School. I am not in favour of the proposal. I am very concerned about this proposal being put forward and also about the practical management of this issue to date on a number of levels, the most significant of my concerns being as described below:

- Primarily, I am concerned that this proposal. If successful, is intending to remove a boarding provision that has delivered a previously unquestioned, valuable service to the people of Birmingham for many years, without, I believe, any true or in-depth consideration of the positive impact that the service has had previously on vulnerable children's lives and would continue to have into the future, should it be allowed to continue.

I believe that the boarding provision has been providing a positive and worthwhile service to some of the most disaffected and challenging primary age pupils in Birmingham. I believe that the vast majority of the previous and current boarding pupils of Skilts School and their parents/carers would hold the boarding element of the school in high regard, seeing it as a valued and supportive service. The decision being proposed is I feel clearly a financial decision, and possibly one of convenience given that the school is due to join an Academy in the very near future. The format and presentation of the proposal in no way recognises that the boarding provision has been highly successful over the years and that previous boarding pupils and their parents/carers, right up to the present day, have benefitted from it being available to them. This service has likely ensured that many families have been able to not only stay together but also to see improvement in their circumstances and allow their children to access formal education due to the supportive offer of residential places to children with significant social, emotional, behavioural and mental health difficulties. I believe that in the proposal, the boarding provision is being unfairly represented. Over the current academic year, the boarding provision has been formally prevented from replacing pupils who left during the previous academic year due to the proposal to close being on the table, despite the fact that it is only now, some months on that a consultation is even in place. Although admittedly not resident full time, as near ago as June 2018 there were actually 17 boarding pupils (almost a fifth of the school) accessing overnight stays at school as opposed to the artificially created number of six who are currently accessing boarding at the school due to the hold on new admissions. I would suggest from my experience that in addition to current service users, a high number of the parents of those pupils who were accessing the service during the summer term 2018 and before, would have a very positive view of the provision and the service it provided to their children and families, those being high needs Birmingham families. In addition, I would question what work has seriously been undertaken to assess the worth of the current provision or to understand the impending impact of closure for future children and families at a time when support services in Birmingham even for those with the greatest difficulties and the highest level of needs are being cut back drastically. I would suggest that the proposal being made is financially driven, but feel that once a service has been removed it will be considerably more expensive to reinstate or replace and therefore would urge that all aspects must be considered very carefully and wisely, taking a holistic view before taking action.

- My second major point of concern is the inertia at the point of writing, on the part of the LA and other proposers to have arranged and delivered an effective fair assessment for the current pupils who, despite the misleading suggestion of the proposal document, WILL be affected by the ending of the provision despite the need for an assessment being outlined previously as an intention and also being contained within the final proposal document.

As a staff group, our main concern since the start of this exceptionally long and drawn out journey has been to support the pupils and families who will be affected most by the proposal to close the boarding provision, that is those who are currently using it and will still be pupils of the school after July 2019. As a staff group we sought and received guarantees from leaders that alternative support would be sought for current pupils and we were assured that it would be. At the time of writing, it is my understanding that despite the relevant parents being asked for their formal consent and this consent being given some time ago, and despite written requests for assessment by Children's Services having been completed by the Head Teacher of the school, there has yet to be a response to the Head Teachers written requests or any approach made to any affected family by Childrens Services with regard to carrying out a needs assessment or offering alternative support. I was previously informed in September 2018, by the Local Authority that the initial attempt at carrying out a consultation/representation period

(during Autumn term 2018), was to be delayed in order that such arrangements could be put in place. As I previously stated, this has still not happened at the time of me writing. In my view, this leaves children and parents who are vulnerable to the outcome of this proposal, being asked to provide their views with regard to the closure of the boarding provision without them having any indication of whether or not they will be given any alternative support. This is I feel an unacceptable situation that appears to treat those children and parents affected with little respect or understanding about the very real needs they have.

- Another key area of concern for me is the misleading semantic approach used in the proposal document to outline the current service provision in order, I believe, to play down its significance and importance to the lives of the children who have accessed the provision over recent years.

As an example of this, I am very concerned that the proposal document states that

'The School has not admitted any boarding pupils for at least 3 years; the provision has recently been used for evening intervention/short break/respite only;'

It is my understanding that the definition of boarding according to the Oxford dictionary is 'the arrangement according to which pupils live in school during term time'. Our boarding pupils may only stay a few days per week in school and agreed it is not their home, but they do live there during a percentage of term time, they do have their own bedrooms and allocated spaces and they are certainly staying by organised arrangement with parents and carers to provide support for pupils and their families. Therefore I would conclude that the boarding provision has admitted a significant number of pupils over the past three years, and have only not done so this year because specific leaders have prevented boarding places being offered or allocated during the academic year 2018/19 to current pupils of the school beyond those that were already in boarding in September 2018, at the commencement of the Autumn term.

I accept that it could be argued that the provision has provided respite care as the proposal states, in that it is not permanent or necessarily for the duration of a child's time in school, but the placements are certainly not short in duration and they are well planned and regular, extending over a significant period of time in our pupils school lives as the current Placement and Care Planning documentation would show. The placements used are clearly not as suggested by the proposal, 'short breaks' as the arrangements can extend over months and even years while the support needs remain for the individual child. Finally we have never provided 'evening only interventions' as the proposal suggests, all of our arrangements involve staying in school overnight and sometimes for a number of days in a row during each week, during term time. This is contrary to what the proposal seems to suggest. I feel that our pupils do evidently board at the school, even if this arrangement does not quite fit into the Local Authorities acute definition of boarding. Therefore as new pupils have been admitted within the last three years, I would suggest that we actually have admitted boarders to the provision in this time period.

In the proposal document, both 'boarding' and 'residential pupil' are used as descriptions. I also realise that in the proposal, the local authority has outlined the term residential pupil as referring to a child who has a statement of need or an EHCP specifying that they require a residential place. However in terms of custom and practice, I have been employed at Skilts by the Local Authority for 16 years, and in that time the LA has never placed a single pupil with a Statement or EHCP requiring residence at the school. In fact I firmly believe that despite operating a number of their own school based provisions, there has always been a reluctance on the part of the Local Authority to state residence is required for pupils. The LA has however during all of this time, over many years, continued to provide and fund a residential resource at the school with the full knowledge of how it was being used to benefit the current pupils of the school. I would ask why this is now an issue, if not a financial consideration, and is this logic to be applied to all the maintained residential schools in Birmingham that are in the same position as Skilts, given that the same historical principle has been applied to a number of other schools within the authority. I would question, If the authority was previously happy with the way significant amounts of public money have been spent on providing a residential resource, over a large number of years, with the school and it's Governors being able to identify how best to apply the resource, what has changed now? Again this points to a largely financial decision being made.

- The clear factual inaccuracy or potential duplicity with which the proposal has been presented to stakeholders and the Birmingham population is yet another point of concern I would like to address.

With regard to this aspect of my response, I am gravely concerned that a highly inaccurate and misleading, possibly dishonest proposal has been published to Stakeholders and Birmingham residents in general through a variety of media including the local press. Given that I believe that some of the statements made are simply false, I would like clearly recognised, my opposition to the following statements that are contained within the proposal.

1. The suggestion that no boarding pupils have been admitted to the school in 3 years, this statement is at best misleading as previously described. Clearly pupils who have boarded, have been admitted to the boarding provision. I feel that the descriptions used are intended to imply that the provision is wasteful and a financial drain on the school budget. As I have previously stated, the Authority has been funding places and the school has until this year been identifying pupils to access the provision successfully. This year has seen a conscious decision by leaders to not allow any new places to be offered to pupils of the school due to this proposal being put forward.
2. The provision is currently operating with a large number of unfilled spaces as leaders involved in decision making around the proposal placed a formal block on identifying new pupils from the school cohort who could benefit from a boarding intervention during this current academic year. This situation has existed since September 2018 and followed a number of pupils in year six leaving the provision in July 2018.
3. The misleading insinuation that continuance of the boarding provision could risk the schools financial viability. I believe that the current significant financial deficit that the school finds itself in, is not a result of reduced places in the boarding provision, it is caused by other factors not aligned to the boarding provision. The viability of the boarding provision should surely be based on how effective and valuable it is in itself, not on how financially short of funds the wider school service is.
4. I, along with other staff members, am deeply upset that the proposal states openly that the buildings are beyond economical repair and are no longer fit for their original purpose. This fallacious and very misleading statement is an extremely unfair observation to make when consulting on the future of the boarding provision of the school. This statement may well be true of some of the main school buildings but it is definitely not true of the residential/boarding premises. The boarding house is NOT in a poor state of repair and is NOT by any stretch of the imagination beyond economical repair. The buildings comprising the boarding provision were purpose built as residential units and they were a later addition to the main school building which is of a much earlier construction than the boarding house buildings. The boarding house is a sound and delightfully presented building which is well within the bounds of being safe and fully fit for its intended purpose. I would challenge anyone to visit and state otherwise. Current health and safety regulations are met in the boarding house and it is in a good general state of repair. In fact compared to other residential boarding premises that the Local Authority maintains, I would suggest that it is of an equal or higher standard. Successive annual Ofsted inspections have not been critical of the boarding premises and have in fact often praised the quality and presentation of the provision. I believe the statement in the proposal in regard to the quality of the boarding premises to be at best wholly inaccurate and at worst a public insult to the staff group who work in the boarding unit. It is tantamount to suggesting that we have been potentially placing pupils at risk by using inadequate premises to operate a boarding provision from. This could not be further from the truth and the premises are of a good standard.

5. My final point relating to factual inaccuracy in the proposal document is with regard to the statement about the Ofsted rating from the inspection of 5th December 2017. The proposal is about consulting on the removal of the boarding provision and yet the document only quotes the Ofsted outcome for the main school which was 'Inadequate'. This is a misleading statement which could be seen to suggest to the uninformed reader that the boarding provision was also judged inadequate at the same December 2017 inspection. This is however not the case, the boarding provision was separately inspected by Ofsted at the same time as the school in December 2017. The outcome for the boarding provision was 'Requires improvement' not 'Inadequate'. The proposal document does not make any mention of the outcome for the boarding provision, at the very least I would have thought that for correctness both inspection outcomes (for the school and for the boarding provision) should have been quoted given that the consultation is very specifically about the removal of boarding.

- Finally I would like to comment on the overall management of this proposal to date which has led to pointedly raising undue concern and worry for parents, pupils and also for the team of loyal, substantial time served Birmingham employees, who work in the residential setting, all of whom have substantial, exemplary employment history's with Birmingham Local Authority and I believe have been treated poorly within this process. Parents, pupils and staff have all been subjected to a lengthy, seemingly poorly planned and executed awareness/informal consultation/formal representation period, coupled with both a lack of information and at times information that has been misleading. A truly unfair process for those concerned.

In further support of my comments, pupils, parents and staff were first made aware of this proposal in June 2018, with staff literally being given only a few minutes of notice of the proposal before it was made fully public. This is a huge and potentially emotionally damaging length of time for people to endure high levels of uncertainty about their futures. Especially as only now is a formal representation period open for comment. The proposal talks about staff being offered alternative roles wherever possible. I would like to state clearly that as early as September 2018, the residential team were informed that there would be no opportunities of re-deployment and it was made fairly clear at meetings that the boarding provision ending was already at that time pretty much a foregone conclusion. Hence my concern that this final proposal document six months later is still in conflict with what staff have previously been told sometime ago. I am also aware that in terms of misinformation, parents and staff have been given severely contradictory advice and information by the LA officers about what is happening at various stages leaving a fundamental level of suspicion and a lack of trust in the fairness of this consultation/representation. I am concerned that some parents and pupils during this process have had different levels of knowledge and information depending on who they are or when they asked for information from the authority. I myself asked the LA about the consultation period starting point back in September 2018 and was given information by the LA that differed from the information a parent was given at the same time. Other parents received no information at all. To give an example of how this issue impacted on people, this resulted in one pupil thinking that boarding would be in place until summer 2019 while another thought it was ending at Christmas 2018. Staff were unable to advise pupils as they had not been informed themselves. A very unfair, upsetting and confusing scenario for all.

Since June 2018, the residential staff team at Skilts School have known of the proposed closure of boarding. I am sure that you would agree that an imposed 9 months of uncertainty coupled with high levels of misinformation for a group of long serving, loyal employees is a disgrace. However in conclusion, I would like to point out that during this time that same group of residential staff have made significant changes and improvements to the provision despite the uncertainty and have continued to offer a high standard of support to pupils and parents. It is a shame in my view that the same consideration has not been afforded to the pupils, parents/carers and the residential staff team by the LA and other leaders.

## Response ID ANON-1CUJ-8S75-A

Submitted to **School Organisation Skilts School**  
Submitted on **2019-03-19 16:01:33**

### Introduction

#### 1 What is your name?

Name:

██████

#### 2 What is your e mail address?

e mail:

#### 3 What is your interest in the proposal?

Pupil

other, please specify:

#### 4 Are you in favour of the proposal?

No

#### Please give details:

I love coming to residency as i get to see my friends. We get to do amazing things and we also learn new and exciting things. The staff are lovely, they really look after us and make us feel loved and safe. I leave Skilts in July to go to a High School and i'm really going to miss residency. My confidence has grown over my time here and i'm really sad that other children will not get the same opportunity as i have done.

## Response ID ANON-1CUJ-8S77-C

Submitted to **School Organisation Skilts School**

Submitted on **2019-03-27 13:54:46**

### Introduction

#### 1 What is your name?

Name:

██████

#### 2 What is your e mail address?

e mail:

#### 3 What is your interest in the proposal?

Pupil

other, please specify:

#### 4 Are you in favour of the proposal?

No

**Please give details:**

I think residence shud stay opun bcuse it's fun to do so  
and . I think it's fun so then so other pepule  
will enjoy it to.

## David Board

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 11 March 2019 13:53  
**To:** Edsi Enquiries Parent; against  
**Subject:** Skilts  
**Categories:** Forwarded

Good afternoon

I am a parent of a child attending skilts school and who also has placement at Skilts residential.  
I am reading through the proposal of the closure that he was sent home with on Friday.  
It states on the letter that we can voice any opinions, objections etc and it's taken me to this email address.

From my experience of seeing how residence has helped my adhd/asd/anxiety/sleep disorder son, I personally think that the discussion of the closure is not going to benefit any of the boys that stay within residence.

The children's mental welfare and needs are not being considered at all.

Since my son has found out what's possibly going to happen with his residence he's been retaliating alot and his behaviour has become very much more challenging as he does not deal with change well at all.

He's very settled at the residence in which with his anxiety and separation disorder was a major thing for him, he's got an amazing bond and relationship with each staff member and they all know how to manage [REDACTED] when things are getting a little tough for him or if he's having an emotional meltdown.

[REDACTED] having his residence means he can have that freedom of being a normal child with other children playing outside in a safe environment which he cannot have at his home environment as is not safe to let [REDACTED] outside as he runs away and gets into lots of trouble from being mislead by some of the other children that also play out freely.

[REDACTED] struggles to maintain relationships with other children and this is one thing residence is working on him building up and if this residence gets closed all of [REDACTED] efforts in trying so hard & all of the staff that have helped and pushed so hard with him is all going to be for nothink as I know personally my son will just go right back to square one.

He will currently be going into year [REDACTED] in September so the change of not only having a new class teacher and new children and a new classroom he will also have to learn to deal with the fact that his residence is also being taken away from him and he won't have this safe place he enjoys so much to look forward.

Before [REDACTED] has residence offered to him he refused to maintain good hygiene, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
personal information redacted  
[REDACTED]

My other [REDACTED] children [REDACTED] benefit also from him having residence as they get that one to one time with me that they need when [REDACTED] isn't home, which is mandatory as my [REDACTED] will be sitting [REDACTED] exams in a few weeks and revision without interruptions is vital for her.

With [REDACTED] having residence I have managed to bring myself off anti-depressants, my moods can be lifted as I can recharge my batteries when he's not here, I'm not constantly tired or run down, I'm happier as I'm not 100% stressed all the time and my children can all be happier then when I'm happier.

I really am stressing so much that this decision is re-looked at as it's going to cause alot of upset and distress to all of the boys that stay there cause it's there safe zone with people who love them and take time out to work with them and play with them just as much as we do as parents.

I just want what's best for my son and my sons future and I feel taking this provision away from him is going to set him backwards and really delay all of the hard work he's tried since starting residence.

Thank you for taking time to read this [REDACTED]

Education and Infrastructure  
PO Box 15843  
Birmingham B2 2RT

Or by emailing: [eds.enquiries@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:eds.enquiries@birmingham.gov.uk) Please include **Skilts** in the email subject

A consultation response form can be found at the end of this document and can be used if anyone would like to send their comments in writing or by email.

### What happens next?

The dates set out below meet the government requirements for us to consult fully with the people affected by the proposal.

#### Key dates

Action	Date
Statutory notice to be published	28th February 2019
Beginning of 4 week consultation period	28 <sup>th</sup> February 2019
End of 4 week consultation period	27th March 2019
Final decision to be made no later than	27th <sup>h</sup> May 2019
Changes implemented	31st July 2019

### Skilts School:

#### Proposal to Remove the Boarding provision

Thank you for taking the time to send us your thoughts on these proposals.

### Consultation Response Form

Please help us to analyse your response by completing the following:

Your name (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Your contact details (optional, if you would like a reply)

enquiry@Skilts.bham.sch.uk

Your interest in the proposal (please indicate one of the below):



Pupil	
Parent	
School Governor	
School Staff	✓ 33 signatories from staff
Local Resident	
Local Councillor	
Member of Parliament	
Other (please specify)	

Against the proposal

Please provide your comments to the proposal.

We are school staff who have worked at Skilts for many years, we are deeply upset to witness what is happening to our residential staff.

Firstly, we would like to point out that the school received an 'inadequate' Ofsted inspection and the residential team received 'requires improvement' – the report has recorded this incorrectly.

Secondly, the report stated that the residential buildings are no longer fit for purpose – this statement is another falsification; the most recent surveys inspection stated they were fit for purpose.

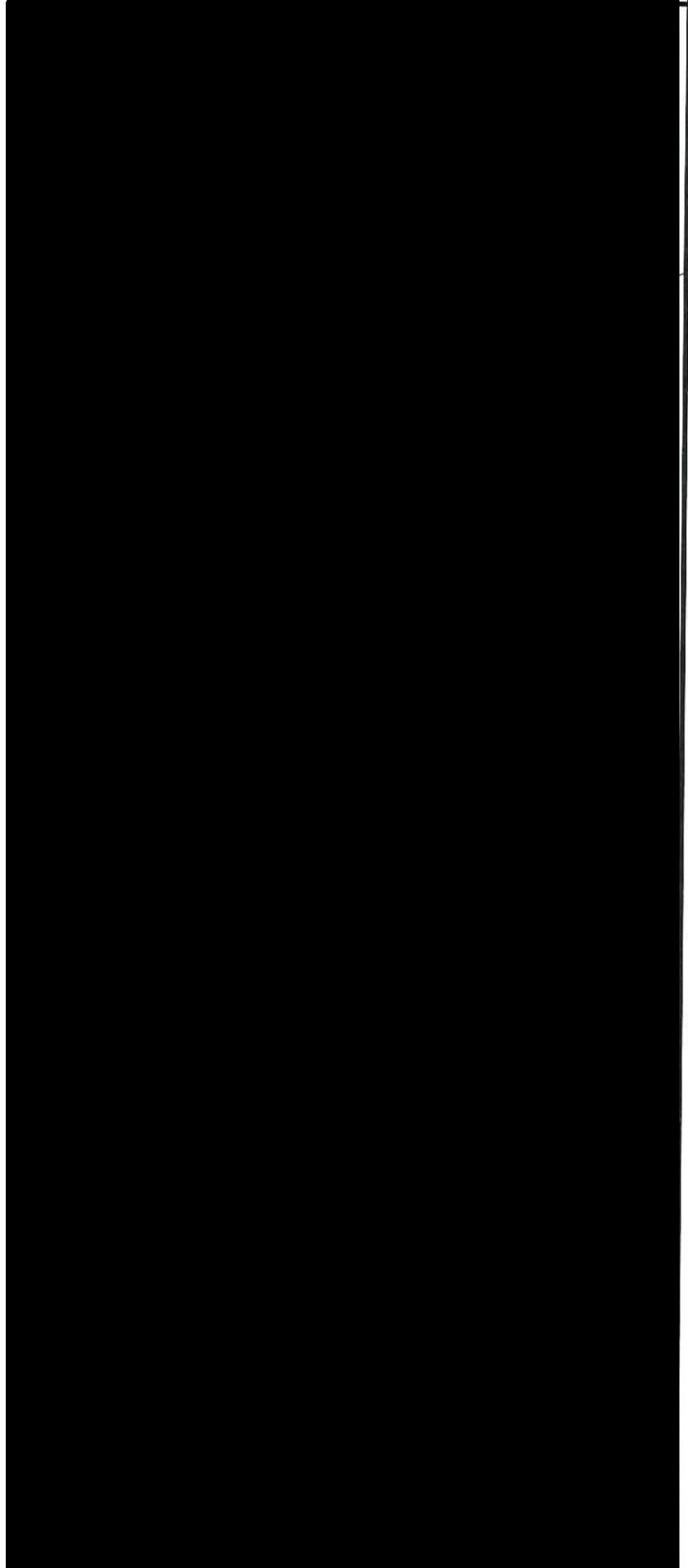
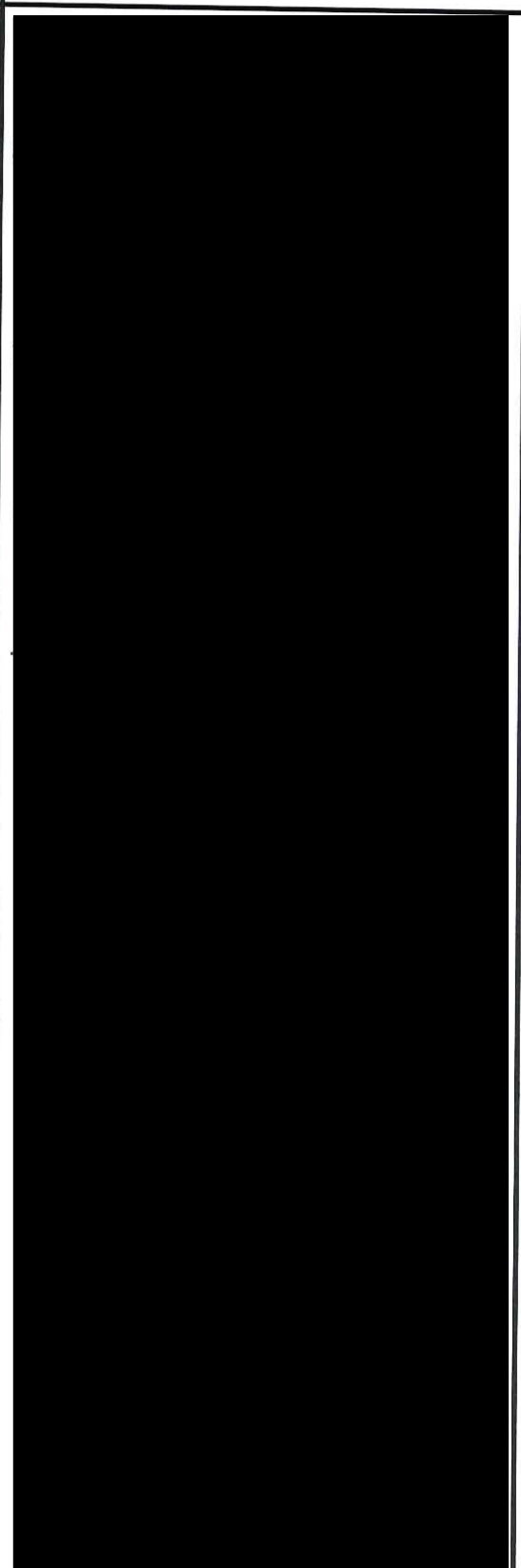
We have had the privilege and pleasure of working with this wonderful team for many years – their support has been invaluable in school. They have & continue to offer support with some of the most challenging pupils who attend Skilts, boosted staff morale and they have also given a lot of time on a voluntary basis.

The boys who access residency flourish not only through learning & developing life skills but also on developing coping strategies around the behavioural challenges they have – this in turn will allow them as adults of lead rich and fulfilled lives.

It is heart breaking to see what is happening to our colleagues and friends who have ALWAYS given above and beyond to improve, sometimes heart breaking lives of of our vulnerable boys.

Signature of school staff at Skilts School

Name of staff member

Signature of school staff at Skilts School	Name of staff member
	

## David Board

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 26 March 2019 10:43  
**To:** Edsi Enquiries  
**Subject:** Skills school residential provision consultation

Interest: Other.  
Against the proposal

**Categories:** Forwarded

My heart sank as I was reading this a lot of children benefit from respite as they have another adult explaining right from wrong why things should not be done why things are on appropriate the staff at respite go above and beyond for these lads and they also support the family it would be devastating to a lot of families that rely on this support from skilts school the staff teachers reception kitchen respite staff support staff all give 100% to support these children they have skills that you do not learn with coping and dealing with the children please think carefully before you close down this service my grandson no longer attends skilts school but I know without the support they gave us through respite we are still together as a family in a family unit it breaks my heart to think children and parents could be separated because skilts have not got the funding for respite

The staff that provide respite work very hard and very close with the boys they teach them how to share how to get along with others it's a skill that you cannot learn

for them to be able to get through to these lads having autism is hard enough for the child to live with but if we can keep the staff that know how to cope and to provide support for not only the child but also the families

it would be a deep sorrow for others to not experience and have the help expert help at hand

I am extremely grateful for the support given to me and my family from the staff at skilts and I hope in the future this support network will not be taken away from other families that need help keeping their family together

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 27 March 2019 22:13  
**To:** Edsi Enquiries  
**Subject:** Skilts - 10131

Staff member;  
against proposal.

**Categories:** Forwarded

To whom it may concern,

I am writing with regard to the proposed removal of the boarding provision at Skilts School. I would like to comment on the points raised in the proposal:

1. The school has not admitted any boarding pupils for at least 3 year; the provision has recently been used for evening intervention/short break/respice only..

This is simply not the truth - the residential provision has never been used for evening intervention as mentioned. As for the statement respice/short breaks, this once again is not true - the school has always stated they do not offer respice when been approached by outside agencies including health and social care looking to place children who could not return home due to safeguarding issues.

Any children that have accessed residency have been considered for this provision via a criteria that was set by the Head of Care and Headteacher to ensure their request was to benefit the child and offer access to a 24 hour curriculum including development of their social skills which were limited prior to accessing residence at Skilts. In turn this development would be seen within the family home and help build more positive relationships at home between child and parent.

All children are either offered 2 night per week, term time and previously some have been offered 3 nights per week at the request of Social Workers due to the family being on Child Protections plans to help support the family and keep the children within the family home.

Children have been admitted to residency in the last three years - what is stated is a lie. No new pupils have accessed residence this academic year 2018/2019 as CEO of Forward Education Trust has instructed the senior leaders at Skilts not to take any new children in. Currently 6 children access residence at Skilts - for some families this is a life saver as their son/grandson could very easily have ended up in care.

At present 3 of the families are due to have assessments carried out by Health and Social Care to assess their sons and families' needs - the assessments should have started now but to date none of the families have been contacted. [REDACTED] I offer support to all families whose children attend Skilts [REDACTED] for respice for these families and I know better than anyone that services are being cut left, right and centre so know these families will be left with nothing once Skilts closes its residential provision. I reiterate that this, in my professional opinion, may have disastrous implications for the families concerned.

Due to the above, the impact will be that Health & Social Care will receive referrals from these families when they hit crisis point - in turn this will cost the council more money as I can say without doubt some children will end up in care - how much more costly will this be, but it's ok because it won't be from the education budget it will a Health and Social Care problem which is already struggling with the demands being made on it...

2. For schools with residential units operating with a large number of unfilled residential places there can be a risk that they become financially unviable.

From what I can see and from what I have witnessed the current deficit is due to mismanagement of schools funds over the past 2 years - we had a headteacher absent from post for 2 years - initially the deputy was made to Acting Head but as he left an Interim was appointed via an agency. The cost of paying an agency Interim Head and an absent Head will have been a factor in the deficit.

Residential staff offered support within the school when it initially went into special measures due to safeguarding issues - they continued to do so until July 2018.

Skilts currently pays a number of agency staff - 1 of whom is a senior leader, this undoubtedly is affecting the school budget and blame should not be laid at the door of the residential provision as this is not a fair reflection.

3. The building is beyond economical repair no longer fit for purpose.

A recent survey has been carried out on the school site including the residential house Phoenix - it was passed as being structurally sound.

The school building was the issue not the residential block.

The decision to close the residential provision is purely a financial one and by using the comments it will achieve moving the school within the Birmingham boundaries as quoted by the CEO of Forward Education Trust on numerous occasions. It has also been announced to staff this week that the school is relocating.

4. The school received an Ofsted rating of 'inadequate' when they were inspected on 5th December 2017.

The school received 'inadequate' NOT the residential provision- this was 'requires improvement'.

Prior to the school being without a headteacher, the school was a 'good' school with an 'outstanding' rating for residential provision for a number of Ofsted inspections. As a consequence of the support that the residential staff had to give school because of safeguarding concerns, this cost them dearly with their inspection on 5th December 2017 - which was not a true reflection on what the children and families accessed. This fact was included in the Ofsted report and was one of the factors listed.

I have had the pleasure of working at Skilts for [REDACTED] years so have seen changes over this time and understand 100% why things have to change in order to meet the needs of the children who attend Skilts and whose needs have changed significantly over time.

One of the biggest challenges our pupils and families face at present is their difficulties and needs around mental health - this is well published day in, day out at present - if the right level of support isn't given by a variety of agencies including schools, the outcome can be catastrophic for those involved. What cost is put on a child/adults life due to not getting the level of support they need and deserve.

I stand in front of parents and carers at the end of each academic year in July during a leavers assembly, who openly state whilst fighting back tears that "this school and residence has saved my family, if he hadn't come here I don't know where my family would be - well I do my grandson would have been in care". These sentiments are clear for all to witness, such a shame that no one from your organisation takes the time to come and listen with your own ears regarding the impact this very special provision has on children and families.

At this time Birmingham Local Authority feels that closing a much needed provision which brings so much support to children (and families) who have identified additional special educational needs is the right thing to do - the closure is for money saving purposes and to appease a Trust who do not want to take on a school with a residential provision to ensure their profits are as great as they can be; you should be ashamed of yourselves as this is not in the best interest of children and families of Birmingham who access this provision.

Please could you ensure I receive an email to say my views have been received.

[REDACTED]