

FEEDBACK COLLECTED BY PITLOCHRY PARENT COUNCIL AT PUBLIC MEETING

This feedback was provided to the Council by Pitlochry High School Parent Council (1 December 2018). They are comments from a public meeting held by the Parent Council. For the purposes of anonymity personal details have been redacted.

1) What are your ideas for improving the school for the children?

Comments

1. Wrap around childcare and holiday club. Lack of infrastructure is impacting school role.
2. Could the theatre be a possible drama department in some way? It has no drama department currently.
3. Costume design? Via theatre link.
4. Distance learning and video conferencing facilities for all to expand subjects and include S5 and S6.
5. S5 and S6 in Pitlochry to reduce transport time for children especially those in outlying areas.
6. Provide please storage cycles.
7. 4G pitch.
8. Better link up with other schools throughout primary and secondary so that content covered is similar at transition points and so kids have more and better relationships with pupils at different schools.
9. Financing school through local businesses.
10. Have a 5th and 6th year.
11. Campus with school, library, leisure centre all in one.
12. The children of Pitlochry should have access to the same sorts of facilities that are available at Breadalbane campus.
13. Community campus would be able to increase availability of out of school activities that the kids would be able to enjoy.
14. Have S5 and S6 at Pitlochry high school. Community campus would be great with virtual classrooms so kids could do wider range of subjects.
15. S5 and S6 to be provided by community campus at Pitlochry.
16. Link leisure centre, library, adult education, etc. work together.
17. Teaching 5th and 6th year at the school.
18. 5th and 6th year. Less risk of getting lost in transition over to another school to complete education.
19. Make it a 6 year school.
20. Pitlochry high school obviously provides an excellent opportunity to provide ACFL. Perhaps making it into a 6 year school would help improve more.
21. School is so important to the community. We need affordable housing for the continuation of the school going forward.
22. We should have a 5th and 6th year so continuing the fantastic education at Pitlochry.
23. Access to S5 S6. Access to UHI/Perth college comes virtually.
24. Facilities like Breadalbane - proper music department - dance studio - campus - different facilities altogether like including library - inclusion 5th and 6th year.
25. Opportunity to revamp the school with investment in the school buildings and improving the safety and infrastructure for pupils.
26. A Pitlochry campus for the children, staff and community.
27. Extend age ranges for the school cover 5th and 6th year. At the age of 16 to transfers to a new school is potentially difficult situation.

28. Improve facilities would lift kids mental health by removing long commute times.
 29. Before and after childcare.
 30. Teacher and pupil open 'learning conversations' more regularly to discuss strengths and next steps within each subject.
 31. At present, how many schools are there? Can they be identified on the map?
 32. Do you what is the estimated number of children requiring schooling.
 33. Campus.
 34. Lack of investment in school hall, sports improvements, out of hours child care, holiday options.
 35. If not all the classes for 5th and 6th year are possible then maybe arrangements should be made with other senior schools to bus kids to other schools and have other schools do the same.
 36. New building campus facility. Extend to full school programme.
 37. What is the current cost of transporting children to Aberfeldy and Pitlochry schools?
 38. I would be very grateful if you can tell me why Aberfeldy has the senior secondary?? I have never had an answer.
 39. Can you provide an OS map of the catchment area?
 40. 5th and 6th year campus swimming pool.
 41. Reduce time being transported on buses i.e. no closure and S5-6 at Pitlochry. Use modern VC facilities to extend curriculum. Pay attention to policies for addressing mental health issues by minimising time on buses.
-

2) What are your ideas for improving the school for the community?

Comments

1. Community campus would benefit whole community.
2. Pitlochry is well overdue a campus and a 5th and 6th year. It's needed to keep families in the area.
3. Improve the school for pupils/staff and community. Campus for further education/training. Part of university of Highlands & Islands
4. Build a nice new school like was previously promised. Why's Aberfeldy better? And why has Pitlochry been ignored #patched.
5. Adult education could thrive to. Pitlochry AEA. Give us a space for free - benefits all on so many levels, e.g. wellbeing.
6. Campus so all community can use it.
7. Campus available to all.
8. Community campus - sports centre - library - police station.
9. Community groups/children's activities run through school building. Easier to use as a community space.
10. Continuity of high learning = need for years 5 and 6.
11. Community hub with swimming pool! Place for meeting up and having adult classes etc.
12. Could registration area be changed to let people from Kirkmichael go to PHS?
13. Include the public library within the school. Increasing access for all. Adding an IT site for public use.
14. A campus like Breadalbane so whole community can benefit.
15. Adding a campus like Breadalbane will help make the school have better sports facilities and also help the community so everyone can benefit.
16. Cubs/scouts/ guides/ rainbows/ playgroups/OAPs could all make use of a community campus like 'feldy.
17. Community campus would increase the town appeal to those looking to move into the area.
18. Open in the evenings, wrap around childcare.

19. Community campus for benefit of whole community.
 20. Why can the profits from the 'Enchanted forest' not be used to fund school £3m?
 21. Build a community campus for all ages to benefit from.
 22. Community campus facility to include other council run local services - could sell off other council structures to fund, e.g. town hall.
 23. A campus for all - pupils, residents, clubs, visitors. We have a large population boosted by visitors.
 24. Community buy-out - empower the people to run the school, for the community circular!
 25. A campus like Breadalbane with sport facilities, etc.
 26. Combine sport and other things - like what was done at Breadalbane.
 27. UHI/Perth college hub based at the school as local buses/trains not accessible for LLL.
-

3) What impact would the closure of the school have on the children?

Comments

1. Very hard for kids travelling for 2 hours a day from age 12 if they have to go to Breadalbane. My XXXXX has heart condition and couldn't manage it.
2. Children will be unable to involve themselves in any aspect of out of school activities due to distant and lack of transport.
3. If the school closes, the bus journey for secondary pupils from outlying areas to Breadalbane (rather than Pitlochry) will take over an hour each way. This will impact on their ability to study in the evening - tiredness - less time available.
4. Environmental impact of busing more children more miles.
5. Proven that connection to local community and sense of place has educational and wellbeing benefits. To remove this connection for children will negatively impact development.
6. A lot of travel time for kids. Would mean less time for kids to have fun after school. Days are too long!
7. Long journey kids already familiar with their surroundings.
8. Winter months could be prone to disruption in education because of snow road closures.
9. Long bus journeys are detrimental to mental and physical health of pupils.
10. Tired children, some travelling approx. 10 hours a day.
11. Would they be shipped over to Breadalbane? Too far to travel from locations even further than Pitlochry, waste of time commuting, tiring for them, this is already felt for kids travelling to Breadalbane, my child would not be able to participate in all the extracurricular activities she currently does as would get home too late and too tired.
12. Closure of school and community diminishes the community - requires children to travel too far - catchment area wide - puts pressure on Breadalbane
13. They will lose 2 hours of their day to travel and not have time for extracurricular.
14. What would possible 4 hour commute have on 11 year olds mental health? Education?
15. What are the implications for areas north of town i.e. pupils from Blair Atholl and Calvine primaries?
16. A massive loss for the community!
17. Detrimental impact on the primary schools that feed into the high school, given the wide catchment area.
18. No 12 year old needs to be travelling 2 hours per day. Spend those 2 hours in school.
19. Having had 4 children gone through Pitlochry I would want my 5th child to have the same opportunity. Do not want him to go to Aberfeldy.
20. Kids will face pressure of moving to new school, stress, fighting for positions in new place that will have impact on their educational and self-confidence.
21. Having an S5/S6 at Pitlochry would stop the competition between the 2 schools and they could work together better.

22. Kids won't have enough time and energy to take part in after school clubs (ballet, swimming lessons, etc.) if they will have to travel to other schools.
 23. Friends would live miles away. Visiting = more pollution. No friends = sad kids.
 24. Our children would need to spend 2 hours on a bus to go to high school.
 25. Breadalbane focuses on exam results and not realising kids potential. Pitlochry is a nurturing school.
 26. If children have to travel to Aberfeldy, long days, travel sickness, need to pay for buses for any after school activities/many families cannot afford this.
 27. Without the school, children would have no education of the rural world. The school have many opportunities such as Junior Rangers, Imbewu and Duke of Edinburgh.
 28. I don't want my children to have to travel an hour each way to Breadalbane, as I believe the bus currently takes. Breadalbane is a great facility, but what benefits do Pitlochry children get if they have to get on a bus as soon as lessons finishes.
 29. Children with special need are very well cared for in Pitlochry. They are experts in getting the best out of all children and supporting their needs and developing their future life skills. A move to a large, further away school would absolutely have a negative impact on those children with additional support needs.
 30. Safety concerns for children that may have to go to Breadalbane or move away from A9 corridor to B class roads.
 31. Where will our children go and how long will they have to travel to get an education?
 32. Closure will drive families away from Pitlochry. Town will become a town for the retired and holiday homes.
 33. Diversity is healthy. Keep options open. Pitlochry growing all the time. Don't stop it.
 34. Children would need to be shipped by road. Traffic increases. Greater risk to health & safety of children.
 35. Long bus journeys and a long school day. No local network of friends.
 36. Moving to another school would mean re-adjusting to somewhere else, new friends, new teachers. All complications that are not convenient at such an important time.
 37. Class sizes over 30 at other schools. Longer school day with added travel. Local buses extracurricular activities.
 38. Increasing the catchment area may result in smaller primary schools in the area being close and therefore younger children would have to be bused and transported further= more kids on the roads and more pollution.
 39. No social life after school.
 40. Prospect of having to travel to another school would ...cost of fuel.
 41. Travel, not all children are good at travelling.
-

4) What impact would the closure of the school have on the community?

Comments

1. Pitlochry becomes less attractive as a place to live leading to more people commuting long distances.
2. Take the children away from learning in the local community.
3. Long distance travel on minor roads for kids to get to school.
4. May as well close Pitlochry - already too many 2nd homes.
5. We wouldn't have a community - massive effect on the whole area.
6. Close of local business our vital infrastructure.
7. Local businesses will be unable to share expertise. School children will be out of touch with the community they live in and vice versa.
8. People won't be interested to live (move) to town where there is no school. IT will affect businesses and quality of workers. Best workers are parents.
9. Disaster! Every town needs to flourish and contribute within the town.

10. Lose the fluency that the children have at the moment when going to nursery, primary and secondary.
11. People wouldn't want to live in Pitlochry, hence difficult for people to fill jobs. General loss of community centre.
12. How many hours will be spent kids waiting for the bus, on the bus and for the parents waiting for a bus, returning their kids and possibly delayed.
13. Closure would result in a dying community. No young people coming in and supporting growth and development. A retirement community that would eventually die away.
14. Loss of jobs, teachers, cleaners, catering staff.
15. There is a huge business legacy with the hydro tunnel tigers and SSE have established their company archive at the dam. Losing the educational links to this heritage would be a huge loss and missed opportunity to maintain historic links.
16. The only place for children in Pitlochry is the school - keep it at all costs.
17. Pollution from extra buses, long journey for kids.
18. Catastrophic families will leave.
19. Shops at lunch will lose trade.
20. No families would move here, losing the school would mean loss of employment
21. Consider the mental health and wellbeing of pupils if they have extensive journeys to school.
22. Pitlochry high is required in the future plans of the community.
23. We will have an aged community without our very excellent school. That will impact us all in the town.
24. Sports day - parents would need to travel. Christmas concerts. Travel if children ill - what if parents have a car
25. Decay, discourage people to come and work in the area. Hindrance for the progress of the community.
26. New families will not move to the area. House prices will drop as a result.
27. Local services would deteriorate, e.g. Balhousie care home, if there are no school placements for children.
28. Young families will stop moving to Pitlochry. Children's clubs (e.g. Scouts) and activities will be forced to shut and there will be nothing for young people to stay for.
29. Not a desirable place for families to live.
30. Get the school more involved in the community, provide houses for teachers
31. Would stop young families moving into area.
32. A9 dualling will make living here more possible for commuters it's the future. We need Pitlochry, it will lose out if no school.
33. The impact of closure of the school on community devastating - Pitlochry would become even more of an 'old peoples home' what a dismal thought.
34. Lots of people work in hospitality in Pitlochry who have young families - surely closure will lead to them finding an alternative town to live therefore reducing the workforce - will Pitlochry become a ghost town.
35. If school is closed people will stop moving to this town.
36. Community needs a school at its heart - opportunity for intergeneration involvement which is good for both.
37. Disaster!! Every town needs the young to flourish and contribute within the town.
38. Closure will result in the inability for any community members to have involvement or inclusion in school life - school plays, community café, fundraising events, e.g. sausage sizzle.
39. I moved to Pitlochry a year ago - I would not have done so if I had known that the school might close. Others will feel the same.
40. Newcomers to area will be put off from moving here and the whole town will close.
41. Closure would be a disaster.
42. Younger children benefit from a well-run smaller situation to learn in. Not from long bus journeys to a bigger school by bus.

43. I move to Pitlochry XXXXX years ago and I am a partner in a business that employs XXXXX people in the town. Put simply, if Pitlochry didn't have a school and I am sure my position is not unique. If you close the school, young families will stop coming to the area and the town will die.
 44. Families would move away from the area.
 45. Impact of closure, children would need to travel, a vast mileage along a difficult road.
 46. Would not be attractive to families as a place to live.
 47. My 83 year old mother went to Pitlochry high school. So did I, and now my XXXXX children go there. It provided my mother and I with a good education and is now doing the same for my children. It has always been at the heart of the community and for the sake of the community it needs to stay open.
 48. No new families would move to Pitlochry. House prices fall, town would become a ghost town.
 49. Parents will move away - what will be left of the town? Lose the young, lose our future.
 50. People like to live in catchment areas. This is something that is looked at when relocating. I would not want to live in Pitlochry and bring up kids in this area without a school.
 51. Pitlochry is the heart of the community.
 52. Bring back 5th and 6th years, invest in the buildings, invest in the teachers.
-

5) What impact would the closure of the school have on the community?

Comments

1. Adding more traffic to an already busy road. Dangers weather wise. Staff will lose jobs! People won't come to live here if school is located so far away.
2. If our funding for primary improvements are already gone, how are we expected to keep the children who are here already and improve our school.
3. Please could Perth & Kinross supply the funding for the early years as promised.
4. If we fight closure realistically has much in development of possibility, budget from where?
5. Lack of investment to date has impacted on numbers.
6. Can we make the capacity versus the range of subjects more balanced.
7. Costing exercise to find out cost of additional travel would be over 10-20 years expense versus cost of improving school.
8. Children suffer travel sickness when travelling by bus. Tiredness of children 1.5 hours per day = 7.5 hours per week, which is equivalent to an extra day at school.
9. Pitlochry is an important school to feed into local businesses.
10. Rethinking moving back to our home town due to the possible closure of the school.
11. Children are provided with a school pass but this does not allow the children to use at certain times, so if they need to attend doctor or dental appointments, parents have to pick up the costs.
12. Pitlochry is a growing community which could be further enhanced with upgrade to the A9. The school could and should be an integral part of that developing community.
13. Pitlochry will become an aged population and a part-time population of tourists.
14. If kids were to go to Aberfeldy it becomes a very long week for them - the travel over is not great in the winter months.
15. Pitlochry high school could become a community campus.
16. What is the alternative school if closed?
17. Opening Bertha Park will mean Aberfeldy will lose pupils. Is this the plan to send Pitlochry kids as a replacement?
18. Where will the kids go? Buses/cars equals more pollution and more vehicles on the road

19. Betha Park will open up places for Dunkeld, etc. meaning that places will be free in Breadalbane for Pitlochry kids. Shutting Pitlochry because it is empty.
 20. We should have a choice where our children are sent and not just forced into a school that is not suitable for our children.
 21. Can any of us be expected to let our children spend 10 hours plus 200 miles every week on a bus in order to get an education?!
 22. Moving secondary to Aberfeldy will push families to like there. This will reduce the already tight staffing pool within Pitlochry.
 23. Will what we suggest actually make a difference to what they decide - or have PKC already made their decision?
 24. Centralisation of schools? Didn't work for NHS or Police Scotland.
 25. Travel will increase our CO2 imprint.
 26. Pitlochry High school could offer post 16 support for youngsters with varying support needs (good practice at Caberfeidgh Horizons at Kinguissie).
 27. Long bus journey, no out of school activities possible.
 28. Pitlochry high appears to have been last on the list for investment.
 29. Continuity from S4 to 6 should be done in Pitlochry.
 30. Lose the school, lose the community.
 31. Staff will lose jobs.
 32. In order to employ new doctors locally we require extra nursery pre-school placements.
 33. Out of school activities/clubs/plays/parents night etc. would be unsuitable for many.
 34. Negative impact on outlying schools, e.g. Dunkeld catchment will change.
 35. Blair Atholl impacted as kids would have to travel even further to Breadalbane.
 36. Where would alternative school be?
 37. If all elected officials are against closure take Pitlochry high school out of phase 2 now.
 38. If children from Pitlochry access after school activities in Aberfeldy parents have to pay for bus transport home or collect children.
 39. Pitlochry high school could offer S5 and S6 places for a full range of academic courses.
 40. Where will the centralisation stop? How long before all out kids are in a MEGA school in Perth?
 41. Assuming worst case scenario - how soon will the school close?
-