Argyll and Bute Council

Education

PROPOSAL DOCUMENT: August 2023

Review of Education Provision
Achaleven Primary School

Proposal for the closure of Achaleven Primary School

SUMMARY PROPOSAL

It is proposed that education provision at Achaleven Primary School be discontinued with effect from 31st May 2024.

The catchment area of Lochnell Primary School shall be extended to include the current catchment area of Achaleven Primary School.

Reasons for this proposal

This is the best option to address the reasons for the proposals which are;

- Achaleven Primary School has been mothballed for two years. The school roll is currently zero, and is not predicted to rise significantly in the near future.
- Along with several other rural councils, Argyll and Bute is facing increasing challenges in recruiting staff. At the time of writing there are 16.29 teacher and head teacher vacancies in Argyll and Bute.
- Whilst the school is mothballed, the building is deteriorating with limited budget for maintenance. The annual cost of the mothballing of the school building is currently around £15,866.

This document has been issued by Argyll and Bute Council in regard to a proposal under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, as amended. This document has been prepared by the Council's Education Service with input from other Council Services.

DISTRIBUTION

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https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/school-consultations-and-proposals

A summary of this document will be provided to:

- The Parent Councils of the affected schools
- The parents of the pupils at the affected schools
- Parents of children expected to attend an affected school within 2 years of the date of publication of this Proposal Document
- The pupils, deemed to be of suitable age and maturity to be able to communicate a view on the proposal, at the affected schools
- The teaching and ancillary staff at the affected schools
- The trade unions representatives of the above staff
- Argyll and Bute Councillors – Ward 5: Oban North and Lorn
- Connel Community Council
- Ardchattan Community Council
- Dunbeg Community Council

- Community Planning Partnership
- Relevant users of the affected schools
- The Constituency MSP
- List MSPs for the area
- The Constituency MP
- Chief Superintendent, Police Scotland
- Chief Executive, NHS Highland
- Chief Executive Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT)
- Area Commander, Fire Scotland
- Education Scotland

A copy of this document is also available from:

- Council Headquarters, Kilmory, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8RT
- Education Offices, Argyll House, Dunoon, Argyll, PA23 8AJ
- Lochnell Primary School, Benderloch, Oban, Argyll, PA37 1QS
- Dunbeg Primary School, Dunbeg, Argyll, PA37 1QF
- Connel Village Hall, Lora Rd, Connel, Argyll PA37 1PA
- Oban Library, 77 Albany Street, Oban PA34 5AL

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यह दस्तावेज़ यदि आपको किसी अन्य भाषा या अन्य रूप में चाहिये, या आपको आनुवाद-सेवाओं की आवश्यक्ता हो तो हमसे संपर्क करें

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یہ دستاویز اگر آپ کو کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہو، یا اگر آپ کو ترجمان کی خدمات چاہئیں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے رابطہ کیجئے۔

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 On 10th June 2021 Argyll and Bute Council approved the mothballing of Achaleven Primary School. The Council agreed that in the event there are no registered pupils by the commencement of session 2022/23 the school be considered for formal closure through the statutory process.

https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=548&MId=14218&Ver=4

1.2 On 25th August 2022, the Community Services Committee agreed that the Education Service would undertake the required preliminary consultation and an Options Appraisal for Achaleven Primary School.

https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=548&MId=14784&Ver=4

1.3 The Community Services Committee received a report on 9th March 2023 providing details of the Options Appraisal for Achaleven Primary School; carried out in accordance with the preliminary requirements set out in Section 12A of the Schools (Consultation)(Scotland) Act 2010, as amended. The Committee agreed to note the outcome of this consideration of the preliminary requirements and requested that officers formulate a draft proposal for consideration at the meeting of the Community Services Committee on 24th August 2023 which, if approved, would subsequently trigger the formal consultation process under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=548&MId=15032&Ver=4

1.4 The statutory process for the closure of a rural school is laid out in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended by the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. The Act, as amended, introduced a presumption against closure of a rural school and details specific requirements which the education authority is required to follow if they are formulating a proposal to close a rural school. This includes the introduction of certain preliminary requirements which must be satisfied prior to the formulation of a proposal.

1.5 In addition, the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 sets out a new right for community organisations to request the transfer of local assets into local community ownership/management. This may be something that the Community wish to consider as part of or as a consequence of this process. Public bodies including Councils must

consider such requests and make a decision within six months of receiving a valid request.

1.6 Achaleven Primary School has had zero pupils enrolled since August 2021.

1.7 There is a requirement to have special regard to the rural schools factors prior to formulating a proposal to close a rural school. In particular it is necessary to consider any reasonable alternatives before considering closure. It is also necessary to consider the impact on the wider community of a potential closure and the impact of any different travel arrangements. These factors have been considered in the preliminary requirements which were undertaken prior to this proposal being written. A full assessment of the preliminary requirements is set out in the Options Appraisal, which is attached as **Appendix 5**

1.8 A new Corporate Plan (2023-2027) was agreed by the Council 29th June 2023. The Plan contains a new set of Council Priorities. The Argyll and Bute Corporate Plan 2023-2027 states its vision of a successful and vibrant Argyll and Bute with a growing population and thriving economy. The area has a rich mix of remote, rural and island communities. The Council will use its strong track record in partnership working, at all levels, to secure the best possible outcomes.

In the Corporate Plan for 2023-2027 through the agreed priorities, the will ensure:

- Children and young people will attain and achieve at all stages. We will improve outcomes for our children and young people.
- Our schools are effective, sustainable learning environments.
- Continued support for all of our children and young people with additional support needs across Argyll and Bute, within our schools and other service areas.
- We will support connections to, from and within Argyll and Bute.
- Recognition of the importance of marine connections to and from our island and mainland communities and our role in maintaining these links.
- We will reduce our carbon emissions.
- We seek to increase availability of all types of housing, including affordable homes.
- We build up and strengthen our communities as attractive, vibrant places to live, work and do business.
- We make assets work now while we plan for and invest in the future.
- We commit to working in partnership wherever we need to as well as calling on others, with responsibility, to take action that is required to safeguard Argyll and Bute's success.

1.9 The Council, as an Education Authority, has a statutory duty in terms of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 to make adequate and efficient provision of school education across their entire area for the current school population and future pattern of demand. This is reflected in "Our Children, Their Future" which is the Education Vision and Strategy for Argyll and Bute Council.

2 PROPOSAL

2.1 It is proposed that education provision at Achaleven Primary School be permanently discontinued with effect from 31st May 2024. The catchment area of Lochnell Primary School shall be extended to include the current catchment area of Achaleven Primary School.

Reasons for this proposal

2.2 This is considered to be the best option to address the reasons for the proposal, which are:

- Achaleven Primary School has been mothballed for 2 years. The school roll is currently zero, and is not predicted to rise significantly in the near future.
- Along with several other rural councils, Argyll and Bute is facing increasing challenges in recruiting staff. At the time of writing there are 16.29 fte teacher and head teacher vacancies in Argyll and Bute.
- Whilst the school is mothballed, the building is deteriorating with limited budget for maintenance. The annual cost of the mothballing of the building is currently £15,866.

Additional Considerations

- The Council needs to allocate its resources in a way that ensures the quality of all of its services;

- This proposal will bring educational benefits and assist in ensuring that the Education budget is more sustainable into the future. This proposal document contains an Educational Benefits Statement;

- The costs per pupil in under-occupied schools are excessively high;

- Schools in the Council area are expensive to maintain and operate. Retaining unnecessary accomodation is a serious drain on the resources of the Council and diverts spending from areas that directly affect the educational attainment of pupils; and

- There is no realistic possibility at present of the Council being able to bring its whole school estate up to a satisfactory condition. The present condition is unsustainable and can only be improved by reducing the extent of the estate.

3 PRELIMINARY REQUIREMENTS

3.1 The Council is required to consider the future of Achaleven Primary School, as it has been mothballed for 2 years. The Council have considered the reasons for making this proposal, and have also considered other viable alternatives, the likely effects on the community and the likely effects of different travelling arrangements as a consequence of this proposal. Financial implications were also considered. Some of these figures have been recalculated since the Options Appraisal was produced.

3.2 The Council considered how the implementation of this proposal would impact on the education of the children affected. The Council also considered the impact on the children who currently live in the catchment area but attend other schools, as well as children who may potentially live in the catchment area in the future.

3.3 The place of the school in the community was also considered, in terms of the impact this proposal would have on the sustainability of the community itself. Since its mothballing, the school premises has not been used for any meetings or events, as these tend to be held in Connel Village Hall, a short distance (approximately 300 yards) from the school.

3.4 Impact on the environment was taken into account during the initial pre-consultation process. This included a consideration of the transport implications if this proposal was to be implemented.

3.5 Four options were presented to the local community by the Council for consideration during the pre-consultation phase, as required by section 12A of the 2010 Act.

3.6 Of the four options which were considered by the community and the Council; (d) is the option favoured by the Council, as it was considered it most adequately addressed the reasons for the proposal.

a) Re-open Achaleven Primary School,
b) Continued Mothballing of Achaleven Primary with pupils zoned to either Lochnell or Dunbeg Primary School,
c) Close Achaleven Primary School and realign its catchment area to Dunbeg Primary School.
d) Close Achaleven Primary School and realign its catchment area to Lochnell Primary School (The Proposal).

When considering the above options; the positive educational benefits of Lochnell Primary School alongside the factors of projected low pupil numbers, the challenges in recruiting teaching staff and the considerable expenditure needed to bring the building up to standard at Achaleven Primary School; in addition the lack of local support for reopening

Achaleven Primary School; option (d) was considered the most appropriate response to the underlying reasons behind consideration of this proposal.

3.7 Following from an initial Options Appraisal which was presented to the Council's Community Services Committee on 9th March 2023, it was agreed that the preliminary requirements were satisfied enabling the draft proposal to be formulated, with the option to close Achaleven Primary School and realign its catchment area to Lochnell Primary School being identified as the most adequate means of addressing the reasons for the possible proposal.

3.8 During the preliminary consultation regarding the future options for Achaleven Primary School, there were a range of viewpoints gathered from parents, young people and members of the community.

3.9 The majority of the community were in agreement that the low numbers of children did not make the re-opening of the school realistic. There was a small percentage of people in support of continued mothballing in order to retain the building in case of future need. The majority of the community felt that it would be disappointing if the building lay empty and became derelict and were keen to explore other options for the building should the school close permanently. Parents of very young children expressed concern that the school may be closed, but agreed this may be the best option when projected numbers were clarified.

3.10 Closing the school would have no impact on staff or pupil travel from the current arrangement. There would be no alteration to the current travelling arrangements or environmental impact.

Alternatives to the Proposal

3.11 The community engagement process prior to the drafting of this proposal considered the views of members of the community and also considered any other alternatives to the closure of Achaleven Primary School. Full details from the community engagement and the findings from the preliminary requirements, to include the alternative proposals are attached as **Appendix 5.**

3.12 In conclusion, after the pre-consultation with the community, the Council feels that the proposal to close Achaleven Primary School and realign its catchment area to Lochnell Primary School is the most reasonable means to address the underlying reasons for considering the future of Achaleven Primary School. Further detail is provided in relation to educational benefits, travel, environmental impact, community impact and financial impact below.

4 ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSAL

4.1 It is proposed that education provision at Achaleven Primary School be discontinued with effect from 31st May 2024. The catchment area of Lochnell Primary School shall be extended to include the current catchment area of Achaleven Primary School. (See **Appendix 3**.)

4.2 Achaleven Primary School has been mothballed for two years. The school condition will deteriorate with limited budgets for maintenance. The school roll is currently zero and is not predicted to rise significantly in the near future. The annual cost of the mothballing of the building has increased to £15,866 since the Options Appraisal was produced.

4.3 Along with several other rural Councils, Argyll and Bute is facing increasing challenges in recruiting staff. At the time of writing there are 16.29 fte teacher and head teacher vacancies in Argyll and Bute.

4.4 The Council needs to allocate its resources in a way that ensures the quality of all of its services.

4.5 This proposal will bring educational benefits and assist in ensuring that the Education budget is more sustainable into the future.

4.6 The costs per pupil in under-occupied schools are excessively high.

4.7 Schools in the Council area are expensive to maintain and operate. Retaining unnecessary accomodation is a serious drain on the resources of the Council and diverts spending from areas that directly affect the educational attainment of pupils.

4.8 There is no realistic possibility at present of the Council being able to bring its whole school estate up to a satisfactory condition. The present condition is unsustainable and can only be improved by reducing the extent of the estate.

4.9 As part of the preliminary requirements in the drafting of this proposal, the Council considered four options. The option favoured by the Council is (d), as it was considered it most adequately addressed the reasons for the proposal.

a) Re-open Achaleven Primary School,
b) Continued Mothballing of Achaleven Primary with pupils zoned to either Lochnell or Dunbeg Primary School,
c) Close Achaleven Primary School and realign its catchment area to Dunbeg Primary School.
d) Close Achaleven Primary School and realign its catchment area to Lochnell Primary School (The Proposal).

4.10 Having considered these alternatives the Council has made an initial assessment that these are not viable alternatives to the proposal, and will proceed to consult on the proposal to close Achaleven Primary School and extend the catchment area of Lochnell Primary School.

4.11 The Council has undertaken an appraisal on impact if this proposal was to be implemented. This includes an assessment of:

- The school roll and predicted school roll;
- Teacher numbers; and
- The condition of the building.

4.12 The Council has carefully considered and reviewed the steps it has taken to address the underlying reasons for the proposal (as outlined at Section 2.2, above), prior to formulating this Proposal Paper.

4.12.1 In relation to the decline in the school roll, and no material increase being predicted in the forthcoming years, the School was mothballed two years ago as a result of a change to the School's circumstances – i.e. the school roll falling to zero as of August 2021. The Education Authority therefore decided to mothball the school as a temporary measure – in order to monitor the situation and assess whether there was any likelihood of the school roll increasing to the extent that the School became viable again in the near future. The mothballing was subject to review at least annually and the Education Service undertook to review the position should any further school age pupils move into the catchment area and/or if they demonstrated a sufficient level of demand for the School to justify its re-opening. As mentioned above, the School has been mothballed for two years, and its roll is not predicted to rise in the forthcoming years to a level which would make the School suitable for re-opening. As there has been no material change in circumstance evidenced, and having kept the position under review via mothballing for two years, the Education Service are of the view that matters should now move forward in the form of a statutory closure consultation in order to determine the future of Achaleven Primary School. This approach aligns with that suggested by the Statutory Guidance for the 2010 Act, and Paragraphs 63-65 in particular. Further details in relation to the School roll are set out at Section 5 of this Proposal Paper.

4.12.2 In relation to the underlying reason for this proposal in regards to recruitment of teachers, the issues that have been faced by the Education Service regarding the recruitment of teachers to Achaleven Primary School are detailed at Section 6 of this Proposal Paper. Since the School's mothballing, in order to address this particular issue, and prior to formulating this proposal, the Education Service have offered a number of posts across the Authority area on a permanent basis to a locality, rather than to a temporary school, as an attempt to increase the likelihood of attracting a permanent post. The Council has also entered into a strategic housing agreement with social housing partners to support staff with sourcing accommodation (which is a particular pressure in remote areas of Argyll and Bute), as well

as offering relocation packages. Furthermore, the Education Service continues to work with UHI Argyll to recruit more local candidates for teacher training. Notwithstanding these efforts, the recruitment of teaching staff within Argyll and Bute remains a considerable challenge, hence why it is still a main underlying reason for this closure proposal.

4.12.3 In relation to the underlying reason for this proposal concerning the condition of the school premises, the school property will continue to deteriorate whilst it remains mothballed. As mentioned at Paragraph 4.12.1, above, there is currently no evidence to suggest that the School will become viable for re-opening in the near future. Whilst the School remains mothballed, it costs the Council £15,866 annually. Accordingly, the Education Service are now seeking approval to proceed with a statutory closure consultation which, if subsequently implemented, will allow the Education Service to use any savings generated to the benefit of the other occupied schools and pupils within the Education Authority's area. It may also allow for any plans for other uses of the School property to be progressed, as it will need to be permanently discontinued as an educational establishment in the first instance. Further information about the condition of the School building and premises can be found at Section 7 of this Proposal Paper

4.13 The council has also undertaken an assessment of likely educational benefits or effects which this proposal may have if implemented on:

- The pupils of any affected school;
- Any other users of the school's facilities;
- Any children who would (in the future but for implementation) be likely to become pupils of the school; and
- The pupils of any other schools in the Council area.

4.14 In addition, the Council has also considered how to minimise or avoid any adverse educational effects that may arise from the implementation of this proposal.

4.15 The Council has also had special regard to the following factors if this proposal was to be implemented, as Achaleven Primary School is classified as a remote rural school.

- Likely effect on the local community to be assessed by reference to:
    - The sustainability of the community; and
    - Availability of the school's premises and other facilities for use by the school community.

- Likely effect caused by different travelling arrangements by reference to the effect caused by such arrangements on:

    - Environmental impact; and
    - The schools pupils and staff and other users of the schools facilities.

4.16 Finally, the Council has also considered the financial implications of implementation of the proposal and information on this is set out later in this document.

5 SCHOOL ROLL

5.1 The information in relation to the school roll as shown below is drawn from the yearly pupil census, which takes place in September each year. School rolls by their very nature may fluctuate slightly on an ongoing basis due to changes in pupil numbers as a result of pupils moving to and from the catchment area.

The school roll of Achaleven Primary School has seen a steady decline since 2008:

Table 2:	**Achaleven**	**Dunbeg**	**Lochnell**
Capacity	41	174	147
	Roll	Roll	Roll
2008-2009	39	80	92
2009-2010	27	81	87
2010-2011	8	79	92
2011-2012	0	76	96
2012-2013	4	73	101
2013-2014	5	76	112
2014-2015	9	81	109
2015-2016	10	82	114
2016-2017	12	78	124
2017-2018	9	99	130
2018-2019	13	88	124
2019-2020	9	98	114
2020-2021	7	90	112
2021-22	0	88	119
2022-23	0	89	118

Predicted Roll

Table 3:	Achaleven	Dunbeg	Lochnell
Capacity	41	174	147
	Roll	Roll	Roll
2023 -2024	0	125	116
2024 -2025	4	128	114
2025-2026	4	130	122

* A prediction based on information available June 2023.

5.2 In 2022 - 2023 there are 52 school aged children who live in the Achaleven Primary School catchment area and who attend other schools. This includes children within a cross boundary area with Achaleven Primary School and those children who attend the denominational primary school (St Columba's Primary School) in Oban.

5.3 There are currently 16 school aged pupils who live in the Achaleven catchment area who attend Lochnell Primary School and 13 who attend Dunbeg Primary School.

5.4 Whilst there is a slight rise in the predicted school roll for the forthcoming years, the historical trend has been for parents to make placing requests to neighbouring schools. Those in the cross boundary area of Achaleven and Lochnell Primary tend to send their children to Lochnell. This coming school year there are 7 children (as at July 2023) from Achaleven catchment due to start school in August 23. However, all of those families in the cross boundary area have chosen Lochnell, and the remaining children will attend other local schools by virtue of placing requests.

5.5 The school roll is not predicted to rise significantly in the future. The area around Achaleven is a small settlement and is not identified for growth in the Local Development Plan: https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/ldp

5.6 There is currently only one residential development within the Achaleven catchment area.

6 TEACHER NUMBERS

6.1 Teacher numbers are improving nationally, with a 6.3% increase in the number of teachers nationally from 2016 - 2022. In Argyll and Bute there has been a 3.1% reduction in the fte number of teachers from 2016- 2022

6.2 As the school has been mothballed for two years, the issue of recruitment of staff has not improved. At the time of writing there are 16.29 fte teacher and head teacher vacancies in Argyll and Bute. Despite a sustained effort to secure permanent staff, there is no reason to think

that staffing would not continue to be a considerable challenge for Achaleven Primary School.

6.3 At the current time, if the proposal was to be implemented, there would be no impact on staffing levels at Lochnell Primary School.

7 CONDITION OF THE BUILDING

7.1 Argyll and Bute Council's School Estate Management Planning process identified in 2022 that the condition of Achaleven Primary School was satisfactory and graded a B.

7.2 The original costs for re-opening the building remain the same as the Option Appraisal (See **Appendix 5**), the running costs of continuing to retain the building whilst mothballed have considerably increased (See **Appendix 4**).

7.2 As part of the consultation process the Council would be open to discussion with the community in regard to the future of the building. This might involve the transfer of the property to a recognised community group through the provisions of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 or some other agreed mechanism. This may provide the community with an opportunity to utilise the building as a driver for community benefit and potential regeneration that could also enhance the sustainability of the community.

EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS STATEMENT

8 Assessment of likely educational benefits on pupils

8.1 If this proposal is implemented, the Council believes that there will be considerable educational benefits arising from this. These centre around;

- Learning and teaching;
- Meeting learners needs;
- Broadening the range of opportunities; and
- The environment for learning.

8.2 This statement focusses on Lochnell Primary School, which is the school the majority of pupils from the Achaleven Primary School catchment area currently attend.

8.3 The principles of Curriculum for Excellence recognise the professionalism of teachers and the importance of this in exercising the freedom and responsibility associated with broader guidance. This means that schools are able to design their curriculum to meet the specific needs of their children and community. There are no specific

educational benefits from reopening Achaleven Primary School as all schools implement Curriculum for Excellence ensuring effective learning and teaching which is matched to the needs of children. Continued attendance of pupils at other schools allows children to experience a curriculum which is matched to their needs.

8.4 Achaleven and Lochnell Primary Schools are remote rural schools. Each school is set within a remote rural area (Scottish Government classification). Although there are 52 school aged children in the Achaleven Primary School catchment area, children from the Achaleven Primary School catchment area who attend Lochnell Primary School continue to benefit from education in a locality familiar to them, and still relatively close to home.

8.5 The co-location of the Early Learning Centre (ELC) and the primary classes at Lochnell Primary School enables a strong transition process between the ELC and school and includes joint early level learning every week.

9 Learning and Teaching

9.1 The curriculum includes a broad range of experiences which are planned for children and young people through their education, to help every child and young person to develop knowledge, skills and attributes for success in learning, life and work. In Lochnell Primary School, children are encouraged to be eager and active participants who are engaged, resilient and highly motivated during their learning. Children know that their views are sought, valued and acted upon.

9.2 The learning environment encourages high level of achievement, providing a wide range of opportunities for children to achieve their full potential within the four contexts of learning. In Lochnell Primary School children may be taught in classes composed of children from more than one year group. Children benefit from being part of a social context in which they can build relationships with different groups and individuals, develop social skills, meet challenges and exercise responsibilities as members of a social group. They are able to interact and socialise with groups of children, take part in team activities and move with their peers to secondary school.

9.3 There is a continual challenge for all schools to deliver a school improvement agenda and deliver effectively the principles and outcomes of curriculum for excellence. The National Improvement Framework priorities include raising attainment for all, and closing the gap between the most and least disadvantaged children.

9.4 The principles of Curriculum for Excellence recognise the professionalism of teachers and the importance of this in exercising the freedom and responsibility associated with broader guidance. This

means that schools are able to design their curriculum to meet the specific needs of their children and community.

9.5 At Lochnell Primary School, staff are challenged and supported through a range of continuous professional development and review opportunities gained by working and learning with a range of colleagues. Lochnell Primary School is part of the Oban, Lorne and the Isles Cluster, which means that staff can be supported together, moderation and tracking of pupil progress is enabled and staff work across stage appropriate groups. Colleagues within Lochnell Primary School are able to support and challenge each other on a daily basis. The whole staff are able to bring a range of talents and skills to benefit outcomes for learners.

9.6 Lochnell Primary School encourages nurturing and positivity. One aspect of this work is a successful Buddy System. Children from different stages work and learn together. This vertical support is particularly evident through events such as sports day and during breaks and lunch when groups of children are together in a social context. This system develops and benefits both the 'buddy' and the 'buddied'. This system works well and benefits the wide range of children in the school.

10 Meeting learners' needs

10.1 Through the Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC), practice model, meeting the needs of every child continues to be a priority and teachers carefully plan and assess to ensure each child has the opportunity to reach their potential. Careful tracking and monitoring procedures are in place to evidence pupil progress. This includes professional dialogue with teachers, learning discussions with children, classroom observations, assessment and looking at pupil work.

10.2 The school also has planned meetings and discussions with parents. These discussions between home and school improve parental engagement whilst focussing on next steps for learning. Where appropriate, intervention is put in place, while working effectively with other agencies and parents to ensure the needs of each child are met. In the primary classes, standards of attainment have been maintained over the last three years. Majority of children are achieving national expectations in reading, writing, listening, talking and numeracy. Health and Wellbeing continues to develop within the Emotion Works programme which supports positive behaviours and relationship within the school.

10.3 The staff, parent body and partner groups also bring opportunities for increased collaborative working. This applies both in terms of the wider curriculum and within aspects of the curriculum that may be enhanced by staff individual expertise e.g. PE, language, STEM, expressive arts teaching.

10.4 A ‘Respect Me’ policy is built into class lessons and permeates the whole school ethos through assemblies and class work on rights and responsibilities. The school has achieved its Bronze Nurture Award and is working towards the Silver Award, it is also working towards Rights Respecting School accreditation

11 Broadening the Range of Opportunities

11.1 Children are offered a range of active, planned experiences which help them develop the knowledge and understanding, skills, capabilities and attributes which they need for their mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing both now and in the future.

11.2 There is also a strong transition planning process between Lochnell Primary School and Oban High School, which involves increased opportunities for children to participate and to make new connections.

11.3 Children are provided with a variety of experiences to develop their sense of responsibility, independence, confidence and enterprising attitude. The school has an active Pupil Council and ECO Group.

11.4 Across the school children are engaged with learning and contribute well in lessons. Staff promote positive relationships at all levels and also through the Young Sports Leaders programme, the impact of this being that children enjoy good relationships with their peers, young leaders feel confident and entrusted to take these developments forward.

12 Environment for Learning

12.1 Lochnell Primary School is a suitably-equipped and well supported school, situated in Lochnell. The entire building is well maintained and along with the surrounding scenery provides attractive accommodation for the Lochnell Primary School. The school has an all-weather pitch adjacent to the school, which is well utilised. The building has facilities for pupils and visitors with special access needs.

12.2 Any mitigating effects around the adverse weather and transport issues are outweighed by the benefits of this proposal.

12.3 In summary, there are a range of educational benefits for pupils if this proposal was to be implemented, as summarised in the paragraphs above. There are benefits for the development of social and emotional skills, as well as the educational benefits resultant from access to a more diverse curriculum. The learning environment in Lochnell Primary School also offers children the opportunity to participate in a wider range of active learning strategies.

13 Assessment of likely educational benefits on other users of the school's facilities

Implications for staff

13.1 If this proposal is implemented, there will be no new implications for teaching and ancillary staff in Lochnell Primary School.

13.2 If this proposal is implemented, the Council does not envisage any adverse effects from the proposal in respect of staffing. Should issues arise however, these will be mitigated through the Council Educational Management Team support structure.

Early Learning Centre Users – Pre Five Children

13.3 The co-location for the Early Learning Centre (ELC) and the primary classes at Lochnell Primary School enables a strong transition process between the ELC and the school and includes joint early level learning every week.

14 Assessment of likely educational benefits on any children who would (in the future but for implementation) be likely to become pupils of the school.

Existing and future pupils

14.1 Children who may live in this catchment area in the future will benefit from the broad range of educational opportunities which are presented through this proposal, as detailed above.

14.2 There would be positive educational benefits associated with this proposal. The management arrangements of the school would be strengthened and there would be opportunities for increasing the range of the curriculum and increasing the use of active pedagogies.

14.3 The proposal could increase the roll of Lochnell Primary School and would thus extend the peer group for all pupils, present and future. The larger school should be able to support a wider range of social and extra-curricular activities.

14.4 Pupils who would otherwise have attended Achaleven Primary School, would benefit from daily interaction in a larger peer group and from improved educational arrangements as described above. Pupils in the combined school will have more shared experiences and opportunity for friendships. This will enhance their confidence and make the transition to secondary easier. Larger year groups make the provision of specialist services more viable and provide enhanced opportunities for school trips. Lochnell Primary School meets all the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

15 Assessment of likely educational benefits on the pupils of any other schools in the Council area

15.1 The current mothballing of the school has had an indirect effect on other pupils in Argyll and Bute. The reduction in the running costs for the school means that this is a saving to the Council, which is not taken from elsewhere. If Achaleven Primary School was to close, the current mothballing costs being incurred would be re-directed and therefore indirectly benefit other school pupils in Argyll and Bute.

15.2 There are no other significant impacts from this proposal on other pupils in the authority or who attend other schools, in either a positive or a negative way.

Placing requests

15.3 This proposal will not affect the right of parents to request that their child attend a school of their choice rather than the designated school in whose catchment area the family lives as provided by the Education (Scotland) Act 1980.

16 Consideration of how to minimise or avoid any adverse effects that may arise from the implementation of this proposal

16.1 The main adverse effect from this proposal would be the length of the journey to school for children who live in the Achaleven Primary School catchment area. However, children who live in this catchment area and attend Lochnell Primary School make this journey, and families in the area engaged with thus far do not feel this is a major consideration. Funded school transport would also continue to be provided for pupils should this proposal be implemented.

17 Summary of educational benefits statement

17.1 Educational benefits of this proposal, such as the ability for children to participate in a broad range of experiences, the development of the strategic leadership of the head teacher in taking forward improvements in learning and teaching, and the ability to meet the educational, social and emotional needs of the children are significant benefits to this proposal. During the pre-consultation phase, these benefits were explored in detail and details from the community engagement and the findings from the preliminary requirements, to include the alternative proposals and the authority's assessment of other likely effects of the

proposal and the reasons for that assessment are attached as **Appendix 5** Options Appraisal.

17.2 Whilst the positive educational benefits are numerous, there is one negative aspect identified which arises from the children attending Lochnell Primary School. This negative aspect is principally around the fact that children have to travel by either bus or car to school. However it is considered that the positive aspects of this proposal outweigh the negative aspect of some travelling for children.

18 FACTORS FOR RURAL SCHOOL CLOSURES

18.1 The Council has had special regard to the following factors in relation to this proposal, as Achaleven Primary School is classified as a remote rural school:

The likely effect on the local community if this proposal is implemented

18.2 The Council has made an assessment on the sustainability of the community should this proposal be implemented and considers that this may have a positive impact.

18.3 The Scottish Government focuses on four key areas of importance to rural communities;

- a strong and diverse rural economy, harnessing traditional strengths and with an appetite for change,
- thriving rural communities where everyone can enjoy a decent quality of life, where the young are not forced to leave their communities to get on and where the vulnerable are no longer excluded,
- strong, community focused public services that are accessible, of the highest possible quality and with the greatest possible choice,
- a rural Scotland whose natural and cultural heritage flourishes in all its diversity

18.4 In rural communities, the challenges and opportunities are largely defined by the local area and can often best be met by a bottom-up, community-led response. Strong community leadership is vital to articulating local priorities and driving forward change and growth.

18.5 There is the potential if this proposal is implemented to capitalise on the existing will and drive in this community, with opportunities for local leaders to enable them to organise, motivate and inspire their neighbours. The opportunity for the local community to acquire this building would have a positive impact on the sustainability for the village.

18.6 Research[1] has shown that when communities feel empowered, there is:

- greater participation in local democracy;
- increased confidence and skills among local people;
- more people volunteering in their communities; and
- greater satisfaction with quality of life in the neighbourhood.

18.7 The majority of people who attended the preliminary engagement event stated that they would be in favour of preliminary work to investigate whether the school building could be retained for community use and not allowed to fall into further disrepair, as that would adversely impact on the visual impact of the village.

18.8 It is considered that formal closure of this school could have a positive impact on the wider community, and might have potential to lead to an increase in other users of the facility, which may lead to an improvement in economic growth.

18.9 Indeed, the school closure may help to empower the local community should the community wish to undertake an asset transfer process for the building. This could have a positive impact on community sustainability. Formal closure would mean that these plans could potentially be progressed by the community, some of whom are already contemplating ideas for future uses for the building. This may enhance community life by giving a community enterprise focus.

On the availability of the school's premises and its other facilities for use by the community

18.10 During the pre-consultation phase, almost all members of the community supported closure of the school with the suggestion that the building and adjoining grounds could potentially be retained for community use. As previously stated, Connel Village Hall is situated approximately 300 yards from Achaleven Primary School and is used for village events. All people who attended the pre-consultation meeting felt that the school building should be retained for community use and not allowed to fall in to further disrepair, as that would adversely impact on the aesthetic of the community.

18.11 It is accepted that a school closure may have an adverse effect on a community, but a community hub could be an asset to the community. If any of the local community's plans for the building were to progress, this could have a positive impact on the sustainability of the community and in particular the availability of the school's premises and other facilities for use by the community. Formal closure of the school would mean that these plans could potentially be progressed by the community.

[1] https://www.gov.scot/policies/community-empowerment/

The likely effect caused by any different travelling arrangements

18.12 The travel distance from Achaleven Primary to Lochnell Primary is 3.6 miles via the A85 and the A828. Travel time is approximately 8 minutes. Travel arrangements have been in place for 2 years since the school was mothballed. Travel is an accepted aspect of living in the Achaleven community.

18.13 Implementation of the proposal would have no effect on the current travel arrangements of staff and pupils. The closure of Achaleven Primary School, in terms of current travel arrangements would have a neutral effect. There is no current annual transport cost for pupils to travel to Lochnell Primary School as it is part of an existing West Coast Motors service bus route, and therefore would not incur additional costs in the immediate future.

18.14 It is anticipated that the effect on the travel arrangements of staff and other users of the facility would not differ materially from that of the pupils.

Environmental impact

18.15 Currently pupils travel to Lochnell Primary School from the Achaleven Primary School catchment area, and there is a pre-existing West Coast Motors service bus. Therefore, implementation of the proposal would have a neutral environmental impact on the current position, and would have no environmental impact on the current travel arrangements for staff.

18.6 If this proposal was to be implemented there would be little or no further impact on the natural environment.

19 FINANCIAL IMPACT

19.1 The full breakdown of the financial analysis is detailed in **Appendix 4.** This information gives details on the estimated cost if Achaleven Primary School was still to be an occupied and operational establishment. However, as Achaleven Primary School is currently mothballed, the cost for the mothballing is now estimated to be £15,866 per year. Should the school be reopened, occupied and operational, the running costs per year are estimated at £165,867 with the cost to bring the property to an acceptable standard to re-open the school is £25,465. These latter two costs have not changed significantly since the Options Appraisal (**Appendix** 5) was produced.

19.2 Column 2 of Table 1 at **Appendix 4** shows the projected annual running costs of Achaleven whilst Column 3 shows the additional impact on Lochnell Primary as the receiving school. The annual recurring savings (or costs) are shown in Column 4.

19.3 The main elements included within a school budget are teacher employment costs (i.e. basic salary costs plus related employer's National Insurance and Superannuation contributions plus any relevant individual allowances); Local Government employee costs and an allocation for discretionary expenditure incurred by the school (i.e. educational equipment, materials, staff travel, etc.). Teacher staffing budgets are calculated on an annual basis and within the primary sector are determined, taking cognisance of the SNCT class size maxima, by the number of classes required to provide for the specific number and age of the pupils in each school. When a school ceases to be operational the teacher staffing budget is adjusted (at the appropriate time), per entitlement information from Education HR, with the staffing budget resulting in a nil value.

19.4 In line with the national priority of maintaining teacher numbers, the Education Service operates on the basis that supernumerary teachers are redeployed and therefore their salary costs still exist with an increase to the receiving school's budget. Some of the costs noted in column 3 of Table 1 will not directly impact on Lochnell Primary School but they will be a cost to the Authority as a whole, for example the costs of maintaining the teachers employed in Achaleven Primary School.

19.5 There are currently no annual transport costs for pupils to attend Lochnell Primary School.

19.6 Table 2 contains the notional 30 year lifecycle costs that would arise based on the GIA of the various schools irrespective of the number of pupils accommodated. Lifecycle costs are representative of the cost needed to keep the building in a good state of repair. The cost over the next thirty years therefore to maintain Achaleven Primary School is £327,885 and for Lochnell Primary School this is £1,060,969.

19.7 Table 3 contains the annual running costs during mothballing of Achaleven Primary School. This estimate has increased to £15,866 per year. This includes non-domestic rates, utility costs, insurances, etc. If the school was to be formally closed, this would allow the Council to take steps towards selling the school to a third party or local community.

19.8 The transfer of pupils from Achaleven to Lochnell Primary School would impact on the council's Grant Aided Expenditure (GAE) allocation for Achaleven Primary School Teaching Staff as there would be a reduction in the Percentage of Primary Pupils in Small Schools. This reduction is estimated at £15,798. However Argyll and Bute Council is supported through the floor mechanism so would not see a reduction in their overall funding.

20 EQUALITY AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT

20.1 The Council as a public authority has a duty under the Equality Act 2010, the Public Sector Equality Duty 2011, the Fairer Scotland Duty (Part one of the Equality Act) and the Islands (Scotland) Act (2018) to have due regard to their provisions when making strategic financial decisions. This is done through assessing the potential impact of the decision on equality through Equality and Socio-Economic Impact Assessments (EQSEIAs).

20.2 The Council will undertake the process of assessment during the consultation process in respect of this proposal to ensure that due regard is given to such matters in the decision making process.

21 CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS

21.1 Prior to formulating a rural school closure proposal under the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act* 2010 (the 2010 Act), as amended, the Education Authority must satisfy the preliminary requirements set out in Section 12A of the 2010 Act. The Authority has previously identified its reasons for formulating a possible proposal, considered whether there were any reasonable alternatives to the possible proposal as a response to those reasons, and assessed each of the options in accordance with Section 12A(2)(c) of the 2010 Act. After considering a paper addressing these preliminary requirements, the Education Authority decided on 9th March 2023 that, having specific regard to the reasons for formulating a prospective closure proposal, the option to close Achaleven Primary School and redraw its catchment area to Lochnell Primary School is the most appropriate response to the specific reasons for the potential proposal.

21.2 This document was considered by the Council as Education Authority on 24th August 2023 when it was agreed that it should be adopted as a relevant proposal and issued as a basis for consultation. No decision will be taken by the Council on the proposal contained in this paper until after the end of the consultation period. The Council will then receive a report on the consultation and will reach a view on the proposal.

21.3 A summary of this document will be issued free of charge to all of the consultees listed on page 2 of this document and it will also be published on the Council's website:

https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/school-consultations-and-proposals

21.4 As part of a consultation process, the Education Authority must publish the proposal paper, advertise it and notify Education Scotland and all of the relevant consultees as prescribed by Schedule 2 of the 2010 Act, inviting them to make representations on the proposal. The consultation

period will be from 31st August 2023 until the close of business on 27th October 2023 which lasts for a minimum of 6 weeks and includes at least 30 school days.

21.5 A public meeting will be held at Achaleven Primary School on Wednesday 4th October 2023 at 6.00pm. Anyone wishing to attend the meeting and participate is welcome to do so. The meeting will be convened by the Education Authority and the Education Authority will present reasons for bringing forward the proposal. There will be an opportunity for questions to be asked and comments to be made. A note will be taken so that comments can later be summarised and considered. However, the Education Authority will also consider written responses which should be sent to Education Services, School Consultations, Argyll & Bute Council, Argyll House, Dunoon, Argyll, PA23 8AJ and should be received no later than 5.00pm on 27th October 2023.

21.6 Written representations may be made on the proposal and the alternatives to the proposal. Written representations may also suggest other alternatives to the proposal.

21.7 Following the close of the consultation, the Education Authority will provide Education Scotland with copies of the written representations submitted, a summary of the oral representations made at the public meeting and any other relevant documentation. This will allow Education Scotland to prepare a report on the proposal within a period of 3 weeks.

21.8 After receiving Education Scotland's report, the Education Authority will then prepare and publish a Consultation Report in accordance with Sections 9, 10 and 13 of the 2010 Act. The Education Authority will thereafter make its final decision on whether to implement the proposal. The decision will be made a minimum of 3 weeks after publication of the Consultation Report. If the Education Authority makes a closure decision, it shall notify the Scottish Ministers within 6 working days of that decision and publish the fact that the Scottish Ministers have been notified, and that representations can be made to them. The Education Authority would also be required to publish a notice on its website of the decision to implement the proposal and why it has been satisfied that closure is the most appropriate response to the reasons for formulating the proposal.

21.9 The Scottish Ministers will have a maximum of 8 weeks to call in any closure decision made by the Education Authority in certain circumstances. This 8 week timeframe would consist of an initial 3 weeks from the date of decision, during which representations can be made to the ministers, and a further 5 weeks for the Scottish Ministers to decide whether to issue a call in notice. During this period the Education Authority will not proceed to implement any closure decision.

21.10 If the Scottish Ministers call in a closure proposal, it is referred to the Convener of the School Closure Review Panels. The Convener must

constitute a School Closure Review Panel within 7 days for determination. The Education Authority may not implement a closure decision in whole or in part until the Panel has made its determination. It will usually issue a decision within 8 weeks of the Panel being constituted.

21.11 If the School Closure Review Panel refuses to consent to the closure decision, or following publication of the Consultation Report the Education Authority decides not to implement the closure proposal, the Education Authority cannot publish a further closure proposal in relation to the school for 5 years, unless there is a significant change in the school's circumstances.

22 CONCLUSION

22.1 It is proposed that education provision at Achaleven Primary School be discontinued with effect from 31st May 2024. The catchment area of Lochnell Primary School shall be extended to include the current catchment area of Achaleven Primary School.

22.2 It has been assessed that the proposal is the most appropriate means of addressing the underlying reasons for formulating it, which are:

- Achaleven Primary School has been mothballed for two years. The school roll is currently zero, and is not predicted to rise significantly in the near future.

- Along with several other rural Councils, Argyll and Bute is facing increasing challenges in recruiting staff. At the time of writing there are 16.29 fte teacher and head teacher vacancies in Argyll and Bute.

- Whilst the school is mothballed, the building is deteriorating with limited budgets for maintenance. The annual cost of the mothballing of the building is currently £15,866.

Other Considerations

- The Council needs to allocate its resources in a way that ensures the quality of all of its services.

- This proposal will bring educational benefits to all present and future users of the affected schools and assist in ensuring that the Education budget is more sustainable into the future;

- The costs per pupil in under-occupied schools are excessively high;

- Schools in the Council area are expensive to maintain and operate;

- Retaining unessecary accomodation is a serious drain on the resources of the Council and diverts spending from areas that directly affect the educational attainment of pupils;

- There is no realistic possibility at present of the Council being able to bring its whole school estate up to a satisfactory condition. The present condition is unsistainable and can only be improved by reducing the extent of the estate.

DOUGLAS HENDRY
Executive Director with responsibility for Education

Councillor Yvonne McNeilly
Policy Lead for Education

For further information, contact:

Wendy Brownlie
Head of Education: Performance and Improvement
Wendy.Brownlie@argyll-bute.gov.uk

Rachel Binnie
Education Manager (Acting)
Rachel.Binnie@argyll-bute.gov.uk

9th August 2023

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Consultation Letter
Appendix 2 - Response form
Appendix 3 - Maps
Appendix 4 - Financial template
Appendix 5 - Options Appraisal

APPENDIX 1

Argyll and Bute Council
Comhairle Earra Ghàidheal agus Bhòid

Executive Director: Douglas Hendry

Kilmory, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA318RT
Telephone: 01631 700045 Fax:
Our Ref: Ref:
e-mail: Rachel.Binnie@argyll-bute.gov.uk
Council Website: www.argyll-bute.gov.uk

Achaleven Primary School

Dear Consultee,

Review of Education Provision
Notice and Summary of Proposal for closing Achaleven Primary School
Schools Consultation (Scotland) Act 2010

Background

Argyll and Bute Council, through its Education Service, aims to realise ambition, excellence and equity for all.

The Council is consulting on a proposal to close Achaleven Primary School. This notice provides a summary of a proposal that you may have an interest in or are required to be notified of, giving you key information about the proposal.

The Council is conducting a public consultation process. This will commence on 31st August 2023 and will conclude on 27th October 2023. This is the period within which you will be able to make written representations to the Council in respect of the proposal. If you wish your view to be taken account of in the consultation exercise you must submit your written representation within this period. This notice and summary provides further information on where a full copy of the proposal may be obtained or referenced and also advises on how you can make written representations to the Council.

The Council will hold a meeting where officers will be able to provide information on the proposal. The details of the public meeting are contained in this notice and summary.

It is important that everyone we are consulting tells us what they think of the proposal. Please read this notice and summary and then consider the contents of the proposal document. You can then tell us what you think of the proposal by making written representation and/or by attending the public meeting. This notice and summary tell you how to do that.

The Proposal

It is proposed that education provision at Achaleven Primary School be discontinued with effect from 31st May 2024. The catchment area of Lochnell Primary School shall be extended to include the current catchment area of Achaleven Primary School.

Reasons for this proposal

This is considered to be the best option to address the reasons for the proposals which are;

- Achaleven Primary School has been mothballed for two years. The school roll is currently zero, and is not predicted to rise significantly in the near future.

- Along with several other rural Councils, Argyll and Bute is facing increasing challenges in recruiting staff. At the time of writing there are 16.29 fte teacher and head teacher vacancies in Argyll and Bute.

- Whilst the school is mothballed, the building is deteriorating with limited budgets for maintenance.

The Council's education strategy - Our Children Their Future

Together we will realise ambition, excellence and equality for all.

- Raise educational attainment and achievement for all,
- Use performance information to secure improvement for children and young people,
- Ensure children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed,
- Equip young people to secure and sustain positive destinations and achieve success in life,
- Ensure high quality partnership working and community engagement,
- Strengthen leadership at all levels.

Alternatives to the Proposal

The following alternatives to the proposal were considered at the preliminary pre-consultation stage of this process;

a) Re-open Achaleven Primary School,
b) Continued Mothballing of Achaleven Primary with the pupils zoned to either Lochnell or Dunbeg Primary Schools,
c) Close Achaleven Primary School and realign its catchment area to Dunbeg Primary School,
d) Close Achaleven Primary School and realign its catchment area to Lochnell Primary School, (the Proposal).

Written representations may be made on those alternatives as well as on the proposal.

Written representations on the proposal may suggest other alternatives to the proposal.

What will we do?

We will consult with people by:

- Providing a notice of the consultation and a summary of the proposal to the relevant consultees **this is that notice and summary**
- Placing an advert in the local press
- Putting information on our website https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/school-consultations-and-proposals
- Holding a public meeting to explain the proposal
- Ask parents, carers, children, young people, teachers, support staff and others to tell us what they think of the proposals.

What to do now?

- Please read the full proposal document
- Please attend the Public Meeting which will be held on Wednesday 4th October 2023 at 6.00pm in Achaleven Primary School.
- Let us know what you think by:

Letter to: Education Services
School Consultations
Argyll & Bute Council
Argyll House
Alexandra Parade
Dunoon
PA23 8AJ

Returning the attached response sheet by post or by;

Email to: argyllhousereception@argyll-bute.gov.uk

What next?

Whilst the Council is engaging in a consultation process in relation to this proposal that does not mean that the proposal will go ahead. It does mean that the Council is engaging in a consultation process to seek your views on the proposal.

All the points raised during the consultation will be carefully considered and Elected Members will then decide if the plan should go ahead.

If the suggestion goes ahead, any children from Achaleven Primary School catchment area would be educated at Lochnell Primary School. Children

already attending Dunbeg Primary School would be able to continue at this school.

Please note that this summary document is for convenience only. Full details of the consultation can be obtained from:

- Council Headquarters, Kilmory, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8RT
- Education Offices, Argyll House, Dunoon, Argyll, PA23 8AJ
- Lochnell Primary School, Benderloch, Oban, Argyll, PA37 1QS
- Dunbeg Primary School, Dunbeg, Argyll, PA37 1QF
- Connel Village Hall, Lora Rd, Connel, Argyll PA37 1PA
- Oban Library, 77 Albany Street, Oban PA34 5AL

It is also available electronically via our website:

- https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/school-consultations-and-proposals

Yours faithfully,

Douglas Hendry
Executive Director with responsibility for Education

APPENDIX 2

Argyll and Bute Council
Education

RESPONSE FORM

I wish my response to be considered as confidential with access restricted to Elected Members and Council Officers of Argyll and Bute Council ☐

Proposal	
It is proposed that: Education provision at Achaleven Primary School be discontinued with effect from 31st May 2024. The catchment area of Lochnell Primary School shall be extended to include the current catchment area of Achaleven Primary School.	
This part of the form must be completed for a valid response:	
Name: (please print)	Address: Post Code:
I agree/do not agree (delete which does not apply) that my response can be made publicly available	
Signature:	Date:

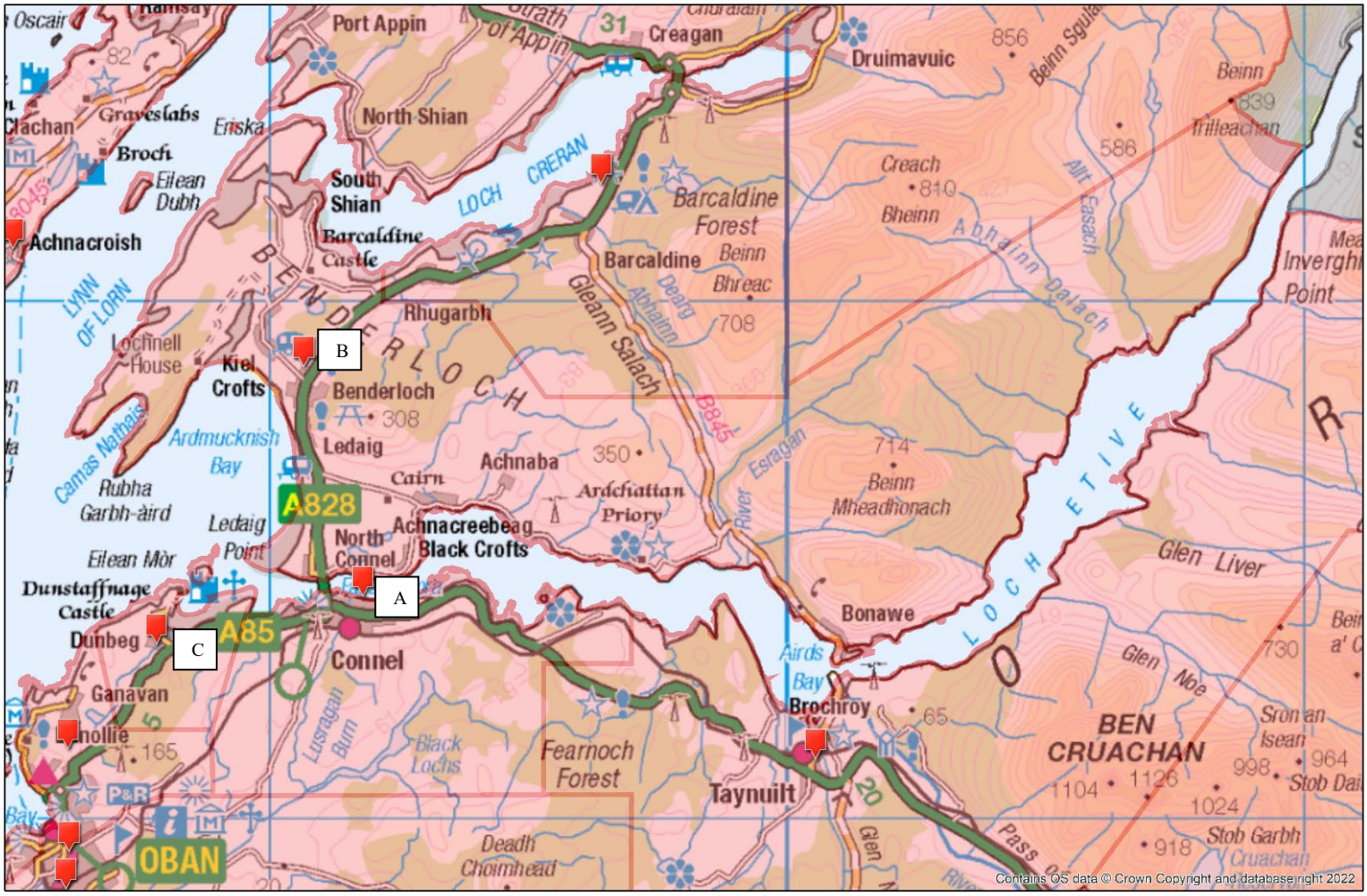
YOUR INTEREST: (please tick)

Parent ☐	Child / Young Person ☐	Staff ☐	Other * ☐
Elected Member / MSP / MP ☐		Member of Community Council ☐	
*Other: (please specify)			
Please state your views on the proposal (continue overleaf if necessary)			

APPENDIX 3 - MAPS

MAP OF CURRENT PRIMARY SCHOOL CATCHMENT AREA

The Map below shows the adjoining catchment areas of Achaleven and Lochnell and Dunbeg Primary Schools:



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0 1 2 4 Miles

N

A – Achalaven Primary School
B- Lochnell Primary School
C – Dunbeg Primary School

APPENDIX 4 – FINANCIAL TEMPLATE

Table 1[2]

Name of School Achaleven Primary	**Projected annual costs for full financial year 2023/24**	**Additional financial impact on receiving school** Lochnell Primary School	**Annual recurring savings** (column 2 minus column 3)
School costs			
Employee costs -			
teaching staff	106,927		106,927
support staff	23,355		23,355
teaching staff training (CPD etc.)			0
support staff training			0
Supply costs	3,030		3,030
Building costs:			
property insurance	1,948		1,948
non domestic rates	605		605
water & sewerage charges	142		142
energy costs	13,478		13,478
cleaning (contract or in-house)	549		549
building repair & maintenance	2,650		2,650
grounds maintenance	211		211
facilities management costs	0		0
revenue costs arising from capital			0
other - refuse collection; telephones	1,480		1,480
School operational costs:			
learning materials	2,911	44	2,867
catering (contract or in-house)	9.055	361	8,694
SQA costs			0
other school operational costs (e.g. licences)	544		544
Transport costs:			
home to school			0
other pupil transport costs	0	0	0
staff travel			0
SCHOOL COSTS SUB-TOTAL	166,884	405	166,479

[2] These figures have been calculated based on Achaleven Primary school roll the last full year prior to mothballing.

Income:			
Sale of meals	-1,017	-291	-726
Lets			0
External care provider			0
Other			0
SCHOOL INCOME SUB-TOTAL	-1,017	-291	-726
TOTAL COSTS MINUS INCOME FOR SCHOOL	165,868	114	165,754
UNIT COST PER PUPIL PER YEAR	23,695	14	20,719

Table 2

Capital costs	**School proposed for closure** Achaleven Primary	**Receiving school** Lochnell Primary
Capital Life Cycle cost	352,885	1,060,969
Third party contributions to capital costs		

Table 3

Annual Property costs incurred (moth-balling) until disposal	**Cost**
property insurance	1,948
non domestic rates	605
water & sewerage charges	142
energy costs	7,412
cleaning (contract or in-house)	0
security costs	0
building repair & maintenance	1,950
grounds maintenance	211
facilities management costs	3,422
other	177
TOTAL ANNUAL COST UNTIL DISPOSAL	15,866

Table 4

Non-recurring revenue costs	
	£3,800
TOTAL NON-RECURRING REVENUE COSTS	

Table 5

Impact on GAE - note 5	
The Primary Indicator determining the GAE allocation for Primary School Teaching Staff is based on the number of primary school pupils with the Secondary Indicator being the percentage of pupils in small schools (roll < 70 pupils averaged over 2 years). The additional pupils from Achaleven will maintain the rolls of both Dunbeg and Lochnell above the small school threshold. There will be a loss of small school GAE for those pupils attending Achaleven equating to approximately £16k. **Argyll and Bute Council, however, is supported by the floor mechanism therefore any calculated reduction in GAE would not have an actual impact on the overall GAE allocation.**	15,798
GAE IMPACT	**15,798**