

## Save Our School Online Petition – Scremerston First School

Change.org

As at 01/03/23 has 837 online signatures.

<https://www.change.org/p/save-our-school-f0ebeca0-8097-4f74-b529-c8e0a5f3eb17/c>

### Reasons for signing

See why other supporters are signing, why this petition is important to them, and share your reason for signing (this will mean a lot to the starter of the petition).

[REDACTED]  
11 Oct 2022

I worked as a peripatetic SEN teacher for twenty eight years and saw the distress and disruption caused by the closure of village schools caused by the number crunchers in county hall.

[REDACTED]  
9 Oct 2022

I went to this school 2 of my children went to this school. It is necessary for the village and surrounding areas.. This school has been part of a 2 tier system in the past before 1976..

[REDACTED]  
8 Oct 2022

I am a former Head Teacher of Tweedmouth Middle School. As such I still take an interest in Berwick schooling. I am appalled that they can possibly consider closing the Middle schools and adding two year groups to a seriously under-performing High school. On top of that, closing Scremerston is shocking, unnecessary treatment of a vibrant community and its successful school.

[REDACTED]  
7 Oct 2022  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
6 Oct 2022

When I was young, I was forced to move to strange school after mine was closed. Totally disrupted my early years education, and caused a lot of stress missing friends who were moved elsewhere. Local schools give kids a great sense of belonging.

[REDACTED]  
6 Oct 2022

My daughter's went to this school. My granddaughter's are currently at this fantastic school. My husband was a governor at the school. I used to be a dinner lady we have had loads to do with the school. Will support all the way!

[REDACTED]  
5 Oct 2022

When you lose a facility like this it has far-reaching effect on the local community

[REDACTED]  
5 Oct 2022

My girls currently go to this school and they love it. I was taught here too! Staff are amazing, supportive and so friendly! Great school!

[REDACTED]  
5 Oct 2022  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
5 Oct 2022

NCC should not be closing rural schools. Once a rural school is closed, the whole community suffers. In times of increased energy prices surely children travelling out of their area is not sustainable?

[REDACTED]  
4 Oct 2022

The value of rural schools is well established both for the children who are educated there and for the communities in which they sit. This was recognised in the Section 65 presumption against closure of rural schools.

[REDACTED]  
4 Oct 2022

All 3 of our boys attended the school. The school had a massive catchment area compared to some and the staff were fantastic in giving our sons a good start to their education journey. It would be a travesty if they shut the school.

[REDACTED]  
4 Oct 2022

My grandchildren attend this school and are so very happy

[REDACTED]  
4 Oct 2022

In a world where we are encouraging more people to go to school on foot or bicycle and avoid using the car, it seems wrong to be closing a valuable local resource,

[REDACTED]  
4 Oct 2022

My grandson is a future pupil at Scremerston school and I feel it is very important for children to be part of their community and be able to share experiences with local people.

[REDACTED]  
4 Oct 2022

I attended the school as a pupil for a year after it opened in 1965 and so did both of my children. I have been a governor of the school for the last 27 years and throughout all of this time the school has been rated as good. The positive and heartfelt comments are much appreciated by the staff and governors and will help to make sure that we will do everything that we can to fight for this arbitrary decision to be reversed.

[REDACTED]  
4 Oct 2022

This school has truly supported my children and made a huge difference to their lives in just a short time. Imagine the difference we could make if we kept the school open?

[REDACTED]  
4 Oct 2022

It's the best school for my grandchildren and at a time when there are MORE children I think it's ridiculous to be closing good schools

[REDACTED]  
4 Oct 2022

As Head teacher of the school, I see evidence every day of the importance of our amazing school in the lives of our children and their families. Our brilliant, caring and committed staff go above and beyond to support all our stakeholders. I am overwhelmed and humbled by the level of support for our school and it just shows how important it is that we can keep on doing what we do so well!

[REDACTED]  
4 Oct 2022

We need local schools

[REDACTED]  
4 Oct 2022

This school is fantastic! They have helped get my child the right help and been completely on my side with referrals etc.  
There is a reason why so many parents choose to travel to scremerston! I had hoped to send my little one to the nursery too and then on to the first school. We all feel a part of the scremerston community, it will not be the same without this school.

[REDACTED]  
4 Oct 2022

It's important to maintain local schools within their community.

[REDACTED]  
4 Oct 2022

I done my teaching assistant course at this school and it was such a lovely friendly place. The staff were amazing with the children and the children got so much out of their time there. I then worked in the pre school group which I enjoyed so much. The children at the school are the main focus and it's so friendly and a great environment for them. The area would be a poorer place if it were to boost to the surrounding community. Small schools are important.

[REDACTED]  
4 Oct 2022

My granddaughters both went to this lovely school and the nursery unit. They enjoyed their time there and have now gone on to the next step in their education with confidence.

[REDACTED]  
4 Oct 2022

Scremerston First School offers parents the choice of a rural school for their children whilst being only 3 miles from the town centre. It is central to the whole community of Scremerston and provides an excellent start to our children's education. Berwick is fortunate to have a provision like Scremerston and I feel lucky that both my children were able to attend school here. The Staff and Governors have worked hard to make this school viable in the current financial uncertainties and to create the warm and nurturing environment it offers for our children. Please sign this petition and help make our voices heard.

[REDACTED]  
4 Oct 2022

The community needs this school.

[REDACTED]  
3 Oct 2022

My son was a pupil at this school.... And now we go to bowls every Monday night term time there. If the school was to close it would be a great loss to our community.

[REDACTED]  
3 Oct 2022

[REDACTED]  
3 Oct 2022

This is a great school and also gives the village a community. This school is a lovely school and lovely staff.

[REDACTED]  
3 Oct 2022

Myself and generations of my family have been through this school and it is important for the village to provide many more children with the education they deserve on their doorstep.

[REDACTED]  
3 Oct 2022

I've worked at the nursery for 18 years and seen so many children start with us as little ones and progress through the school. It's a brilliant school... my girls loved their time here and my granddaughter is already excited to start next September. We need to do whatever we can to keep it open.

[REDACTED]  
3 Oct 2022

I went to this school 25 years ago and now my son attends the same school not because of catchment but through choice. Don't take that away from parents. It will be a huge loss for so many families but also the community of Scremerston.

[REDACTED]  
3 Oct 2022

It's a great school

[REDACTED]  
3 Oct 2022

I'm signing this because I have a huge amount of empathy for your situation, as our middle school is also closing. I hope your petition wins and you get to keep a school that is so obviously cherished and wanted by so many.

[REDACTED]  
3 Oct 2022

This small school is so important for the nurture it provides to the local children who benefit massively from it.

[REDACTED]  
3 Oct 2022

Both of our children went to this wonderful community school, it would be devastating for the village if the school was to close.

[REDACTED]  
3 Oct 2022

This school is an essential place for a lot of local children, my brother, myself and many of my friends were taught at this school. Many schools are overcrowded, we should be supporting the education of the next generation not cramming them into different schools where they will not end up with the support they have at scremerston

[REDACTED]  
3 Oct 2022

I've been a teacher at the school for nearly 12 years. My mother has ran the nursery for 24 years and my daughter attends this school. It isn't just a school to us it such a big part of our lives and I know others will feel the same. It can not close!

[REDACTED]  
3 Oct 2022

This is a local school used by local families this school does not have any cause to close

[REDACTED]  
3 Oct 2022

This brilliant little school will be such a big miss if it closes, I myself went to the school as did my Neice, Nephew, their children and now my Grandchildren. It's such a happy school.

[REDACTED]  
3 Oct 2022

Can't possibly believe how anyone can even think about closing such a good School!

[REDACTED]  
3 Oct 2022

Scremerston school is so important in supporting local children, families and surrounding areas which cannot be lost.

[REDACTED]  
3 Oct 2022

Great school, cannot be allowed to close

[REDACTED]  
3 Oct 2022

This school is the best school in the area and cannot be closed!!! They went above and beyond with my son who has complex needs including epilepsy and learning difficulties he would not be where he is today without Scremerston school!!!

[REDACTED]  
3 Oct 2022

We need a school as brilliant as Scremerston

[REDACTED]  
3 Oct 2022

Scremerston needs a school



To whom it may concern,

I would like to express my shock and outrage at the proposed closure of Scremerston First School.

As a rural school, Scremerston is the heart of the local community and provides a warm and nurturing environment for the children who attend. These are all factors which are documented and praised within the Ofstead school inspection of July 2021, with the 'family feel within the community' being highlighted.

Scremerston is one of only six rural schools in our area and given its close proximity to Berwick-upon-Tweed it ought to be considered vital to our schooling system. As a rural school, the setting offers something unique to its Berwick-based alternatives, something which parents are choosing for their children by travelling beyond their catchment areas to enrol. In comparison to the other rural schools in the Berwick Partnership, Scremerston consistently has a larger student body, higher forms of entry per year group, and higher planned admission number year on year than at least three of the other schools, yet is inexplicably the only one set for closure. We cannot help but question the lack of logic behind this proposal and why section 65 of the Outcomes of Consultation which details Rural Schools and the Presumption Against Closure has been ignored. Seven factors are detailed for consideration before a decision is made to close a rural school and, from what we can see, the closure of Scremerston misaligns with all of these.

All of the staff at Scremerston are caring and committed, providing a nurturing educational setting and unparalleled emotional support. Should a child or parent need anything at all, the staff are approachable and kind, offering support and advice however they can. It is this hard work and dedication that has consistently earned Scremerston a GOOD Ofstead rating, a rating which the school has held for many years. Within the report, the school is praised for pupils' good behaviour, their excitement to learn, lack of bullying, excellent safeguarding practices, the wide variety of memorable experiences on offer, the support of SEND children and their families, and of course the curriculum itself - and this is far from an exhaustive list. It is hard to believe anyone could read this report and still find the closure of Scremerston First School to be an acceptable option.

Strong teacher-parent relationships are proven to be a big factor in how successful a child will be in school. These relationships understandably take time to build and should Scremerston close those already cultivated will be lost instantly. Whether SEND or not, children who need extra support will be stripped of their familiar environment. Indeed, moving schools is a turbulent and upsetting time for even the most resilient of children and studies have shown that children who move schools often have lower self-esteem and a lowered sense of belonging.

While we appreciate that many children enrolled at Scremerston do not live within the catchment area, and perhaps this is part of what has fuelled the decision, we can only see this is a positive attribute to the school. Parents are choosing Scremerston First School. The school is extremely popular and loved by the community, and for many living in town it is the only viable rural school their children have the option of attending. It would be a tragedy to have this choice taken away from parents and see the children forced in to schools which were not the families' first option.

While not mentioned in the Outcomes of Consultation report, the closure of Scremerston First School would undoubtedly go hand in hand with closure of Lucky Ducks Pre School which operates on site. Again, this would be a huge loss to the local community and would result in yet more children being displaced and a greater number of staff facing the very real threat of unemployment.

We cannot help but wonder at the timing of this announcement and whether it has been planned to intentionally harm the school. This month, parents of 2023 reception children are due to start applying for school places but it seems a certainty that parents will be deterred from applying to a school which may not stay open. As we fight for our school to remain open, it would be appalling for the NCC to use the lack of applications against us given that this would not have been the case under normal circumstances.

It is undeniable that due to COVID the past few years have been a turbulent time for everyone but given the long term closure of schools and period of home learning, it is arguable that children have been affected most of all. Further disruption for such young, impressionable minds would surely have a negative impact on their long term education. Instead, our children deserve to be allowed to learn and grow in an environment in which they are already comfortable, without being separated from the friends and teachers they have known since their schooling began.

Instead of closing a perfectly good rural school with a wonderful reputation, we cannot help but think that time and money would be better spent improving the schools within the Berwick Partnership which are known to actually be struggling, if not outright failing. Instead of disrupting the learning and lives of Scremerston pupils, surely efforts should be turned to aiding schools and children that are desperately in need of support?

We urge you: please reconsider closing this wonderful school. Scremerston First School is still more than viable with a good budget and a good intake of children who we do not want to see displaced and torn from their friends and teachers. As a community, we vow to stand alongside the school for as long as it should exist and can assure you that we will fight tirelessly to keep the doors open.

Yours faithfully,

The Parent Body of Scremerston First School

Scremerston First School

Parent Testimonials Enclosed.

Permission has been given to use the enclosed testimonials, including personal details, solely to demonstrate the support for Scremerston First School's proposition to remain open, following the Future of Education in Berwick Consultation.

Personal details should not be used for any other purpose.



Enc.

Kirsh Crosson

What can I say about Scremerston first school. Besides from the amazing teachers, Cooks, Corly the ~~the~~ receptionist and Neil the Sweetie man/ caretaker. They go above and beyond for not just ~~the~~ the kids but us the parents too!

I have <sup>put</sup> four yes four children through Scremerston. My eldest attends the Grove or it would of been five!

~~Our~~ ~~second~~ ~~son~~ ~~is~~ ~~the~~ ~~reason~~ ~~they~~ ~~went~~ ~~through~~ ~~here~~ ~~in~~ Scremerston. He joined in year 2 near the end but he was welcomed with open arms.

His previous school which I won't name as its not important but they werent great with ~~the~~. ~~to~~ Within two years of attending said school my cheeky, funny boy was now a sad lonely soul who hated going. When we went through a loss ~~the~~ struggled and I hoped they would give him more support but it was worse. So I made a decision. I had to move him and his siblings before more damage was done.

We looked at a couple of schools including the school which was along our street we lived on.

Then we thought we will try to see Scremerston. The second we walked through the door we knew it was the school for us!

~~the~~ and his two younger brothers

~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ and ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ made themselves at home.  
It felt homely; safe somewhere the boys would be happy!

Despite the fact I had to drive past three other schools to get to Soremerston I didn't hesitate. They started me following ~~day~~ week.

Within a week of being in Soremerston I had a cheeky happy ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ back. ~~They~~ They thrived ~~in Soremer~~ and have continued to do so as they are in middle and high school now. ~~They~~ ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ felt supported, the teachers had faith in them to reach the potential the previous school had dismissed.

I only have ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ left in first school. She started lucky ducks when the boys started first and she's now in year 3. The love and support shown to all of my children doesn't ever go unnoticed!

The teachers and staff care about the children and the parents and it shows.

I could go on and on but I fear I'd run out of paper.

I will never be able to thank the school enough for the kindness, love and ~~compassion~~ compassion they've shown us. But most of all for saving ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ & love for school + learning!

~~\_\_\_\_\_~~

X

[REDACTED]

We currently have a child attending Scremerston First School and our eldest also attended before moving onto middle school.

We chose to send our boys to Scremerston after our eldest son attended Lucky ducks pre school (which is located within the school grounds) where he had the most enjoyable time.

After viewing the school we made the decision not to view other schools and send our boys there. It was a no brainer really as it was in our catchment area, we had family in the village and to make things more appealing was the fact it was a small school with easy access to and there would be no car congestion like in the town centre to get to school in the morning and pick up time, meaning less stress.

We have not been disappointed in our decision. Both boys have had and currently having the best time.

Our eldest son was a nervous little boy but the school nurtured him and made him confident and thrived. We cannot thank the school enough for that.

Our Youngest who is currently in Y4 at Scremerston  
[REDACTED], he has had his struggles but the  
school have helped him in so many ways and  
he is very settled and happy to go to school  
and learn new things.

His confidence has grown so much in making  
friends, talking and doing his school work.

His current teachers do an amazing job with  
him and seeing him thrive makes us very proud.

We believe he may not of had the care and  
attention or be happy in another school.

We as parents are very upset and disappointed  
about the possible closure of Scremerston First  
School. It is a brilliant school, with great  
staff.

The school is friendly and has a sence of  
community to it and We feel like part of the  
village now too.

It just doesn't make sense to close a perfectly  
good school, which serves the rural and some  
of the town community. It seems unjustified  
and illogical.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

It remains a mystery to myself and others as to why Scremerston first school should face closure. Many children benefit from the smaller class sizes that Scremerston has to offer. My own children included. They did not start school at Scremerston. I decided to move them there at the end of last year, after researching and even visiting other schools within the area to decide on a good fit. My son has struggled in the past with school and really didn't enjoy it at all in the past. He didn't receive the support that he needed to make sure he felt like he belonged at his last school and that affected his home life too. He struggled socially and academically but since moving schools he is like a different child. While he still has some difficulties he is being well supported through them and the staff are always there to speak to. He is now happy to attend school and really enjoying his lessons. He no longer comes home stressed out from his school day. Both children are thriving and actually enjoying their education since moving and I think it is a real shame to close a school that really tries their hardest to meet the needs of the children. I know myself and many others send our children to Scremerston despite being out of the catchment area in order to access the brilliant environment provided. It should also be noted that while I do not object to religion being taught in schools we should all have the freedom to choose schools which are not church schools. Not every family is religious and of those who are some are not Christian. Closing one of the few schools in the area which is not a c o e school takes that choice from families. If that is not enough to make you stop and think, consider this; do we need to further disrupt the children whose education has already had such a rocky start due to covid restrictions, lockdowns and forced isolations? Many of our children have struggled with social and academic difficulties that they otherwise would not have had to deal with, and now they face uncertainty once again. Those who were already likely to struggle have had a harder time receiving the support they should have had. Scremerston school go above and beyond to support their students and I feel that it is unfair to close them with no evidence to suggest that they deserve it.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]





Admin Account <admin@scremerston.northumberland.sch.uk>

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## Testimonial

1 message

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24 January 2023 at 13:30

To: Admin Account <admin@scremerston.northumberland.sch.uk>

[REDACTED]

Here's a testimonial for next week. Feel free to chop bits out if its too long! I'll be at the meeting but don't feel confident reading it myself - I stutter when reading aloud.

[REDACTED]

As a rural school, Scremerston First School offers everything I wanted for my children. In fact, the school is one of the main reasons I chose to purchase a house in the village, so it would be a big blow to us as a family were it to be lost. Yes, we live in the village, but even if we were outside of the school's catchment area Scremerston is still the school I'd choose for my children to attend.

The wide range of activities and visits the school offers never ceases to amaze me and I feel very fortunate that my children are able to experience all this in such a warm environment. They both look forward to going to school and tell me how much they love their teachers, friends, environment, and even the work itself.

In addition, Scremerston First School has been incredible at supporting us as a family. If there's ever something that needs discussing someone is there to listen and help, ensuring the kids are always put first.

I really cannot speak highly enough of the school as a whole. As well as being a wonderful facility for children to be educated and grow, it is also the heart of our local community. I stand behind the school 100% and the last thing I want is to see it close.



Admin Account <admin@scremerston.northumberland.sch.uk>

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## My say

1 message

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27 January 2023 at 08:55

[REDACTED]  
To: Admin Account <admin@scremerston.northumberland.sch.uk>

Scremerston school has been a rock for me and my family these past couple of years. I've struggled with mental health and coping in general.

I've always felt welcomed and understood when asking for help from the staff at this wonderful, caring school. The staff go over and beyond to help and support the children and their families. Its a lovely community for children to grow and learn in.

The facilities are amazing and what a first school should be! Smaller and more attentive to the students who need more support at that age to build confidence for the big wide world.

[REDACTED]



Admin Account <admin@scremerston.northumberland.sch.uk>

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## Testimonial

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[REDACTED] 25 January 2023 at 19:52

To: Admin Account <Admin@scremerston.northumberland.sch.uk>

Both our girls attend scremerston first school starting with lucky ducks age 2, we feel this place is the most wonderful safe environment for our children to grow and flourish, they have wonderful friends and fantastic teachers who care for their individual needs. It has been a tough time with covid and in that time the school fully supported us as parents with home schooling helping in any way they could even just for moral support as we all felt the strain. I was deeply saddened to hear this little school is under threat of closure because we couldn't of wished for a better start for our girls and would highly recommend scremerston with little ones getting ready to start their school life. Please spare a thought for all involved as we love our school and want it to stay for years to come [REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone



Admin Account <admin@scremerston.northumberland.sch.uk>

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## Testimonial for Scremerston

1 message

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25 January 2023 at 21:35

To: Admin Account <admin@scremerston.northumberland.sch.uk>

Hi,

I hope this email finds you all well. I've received Sarah's email, and below have written a testimonial for the school.

Scremerston and all its staff are wonderful. It can be hard to be accepted by an establishment as a step mum, but this was never the case with anyone at Scremerston. I was welcomed, but most importantly recognised and involved in both my step daughters education. I was invited to parents evenings, fun after school events, sports days - everything. And, with all the work at home I did with the girls to support their education, I was so pleased to be able to be part of their school journey in the whole, not just the part.

It is obvious that all of the children's education and welfare are at the forefront of Scremerstons approach. Unfortunately, and without digressing, the school handled an unpleasant situation with my step daughters biological mother efficiently, delicately, and with always both girls safety and well being paramount. Still to this day, we can't thank Sarah and her team enough for not taking the easy road, but for taking the right one. Something both girls recall to this day. Despite being nearly in their teenage years (1) both of my step daughters are still thankful and have joyful memories of Sarah, their teachers, and Scremerston as a whole.

Individually, and collectively for the community, Scremerston provides an invaluable service. Losing Scremerston would have a ripple affect felt by many, and a detrimental effect to its children.

I sincerely hope Scremerston can remain.

I hope this helps,

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Admin Account <admin@scremerston.northumberland.sch.uk>

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## Testimonial

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30 January 2023 at 22:03

To: Admin Account <admin@scremerston.northumberland.sch.uk>

Hi,

Not an easy task but we've tried our best. Please feel free to edit as you please, we really hope to make it on Wednesday too:

It's very hard to put into words why Scremerston first school means so much to us as a family and it's vital place in the community. Perhaps reflecting the size of the school, there's no one big answer to explain the love we have for it. Rather, it's millions of tiny reasons, acts of kindness from the staff, children and parents and the local community which it serves, that add up to a huge part of our lives and our children's happiness.

Every child there gets to be exactly who they are, there are no square pegs in round holes, there's a celebration of individuality, an acceptance of all the child brings, a guidance that's warm and personal, a recognition of all talents and the gifts that everyone has.

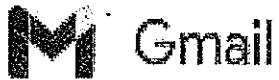
My children flourish here, they are happy, they are celebrated and through that they learn to celebrate others. Their academic progress is excellent but the pastoral care and development is above and beyond. My eldest was a nervous wreck when she arrived at Scremerston, her school experience to that point had left her anxious, unsure of herself and scared of others. She's blossomed since joining the Scremerston community. The family environment was exactly what she needed to rebuild trust in her school environment.

Though much is made of children travelling outwith catchment to enjoy their school life here, for us it's part of my existing commute. In fact my children attending their catchment school would add a school taxi to the morning traffic. The school still serves its local community through a space to play and to meet, and the community is very much engaged with the school, putting on events at Christmas and other times of celebration for the children. Scremerston has lost its pit and its shops but the school endures and the community love that it does.

It's a rural school without a church association for those who wish to not be tied to a particular religion, a unique position among our remaining rural schools, celebrating all religions and cultures.

It's a warm space for anyone who should need it, especially in this time of economic crisis and a place of great warmth for those that attend. We are very lucky to have it and others in the future should have an equal chance to bask in its glow.

Sent from my iPhone



Admin Account <admin@scremerston.northumberland.sch.uk>

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## Testimonials

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29 January 2023 at 19:33

[REDACTED]  
To: admin@scremerston.northumberland.sch.uk

Hi

I just wanted to pass on our testimonials.

In my mind there was no other school that we wanted our daughters to go too. I grew up in Scremerston and my sister and I went to this school. It would be such a shame for Scremerston and the community if this school shut. It is in a good location just outside of Berwick. It has a good Ofsted report. The staff are so friendly and we felt so welcomed. I know my kids are safe here too. My daughter struggled with her speech when she first came and the school reached out and we got the help that my daughter needed. My other daughter is in lucky ducks and I know that she will get the same level of support and education when she moves up this year. Its really not nice knowing that there may be uncertainty and change in my girls education, is there anyone considering how the children are going to feel with all the change?

Many thanks  
[REDACTED]

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## Testimonial

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27 January 2023 at 13:42

To: Admin Account <admin@scremerston.northumberland.sch.uk>

Sorry it's taken so long to write. Hope it's better late than never!

Our children attend Scremerston First School as we live within its catchment area, and we are extremely fortunate that we do.

Scremerston is a fantastic rural school and our children receive a first class education from staff that know them well. Like many village schools, Scremerston has a family-like environment and the children are well looked after and valued. There is a strong community and our children feel part of it. The smaller class sizes suit our children and ensure they are never overlooked or lost within a crowd. They enjoy going to school and it's wonderful to watch them grow in confidence and be enthusiastic about learning.

Many rural schools face falling pupil rolls due to a number of factors, but Scremerston has successfully managed to not only keep the pupils living within its catchment, but also attract pupils out-with the area. It makes no sense to close a rural school with a healthy pupil roll, happy children, excellent staff and great results.

We simply wouldn't choose to send our two children to a school further away, in town with larger class sizes. It would not be the right fit for them; Scremerston first school is the best place for them, as it is for many other families in the Berwick area.

Sent from my iPad

As a toddler, my son was extremely shy, afraid of the noises that other children made, be that a baby crying, a toddler laughing or children shouting while they played; he'd immediately cover his ears and the experience would often reduce him to tears. This school changed that.

Before the pandemic he attended Lucky Ducks and we soon began to see changes in him, his exposure to a small group of children in a nursery setting began to bring him out of his shell and he started to interact with others. Then when the pandemic struck, and he was no longer exposed to the schools small community it had a very obvious effect and he began to once again become upset by noise made by his younger sister.

After lockdown, he returned to the school as a first year student, and it was the changes that the school made and the support he received from the staff that helped him to adjust to school life once again. Initiatives like 'playground pals', which encourages children to play together and actively stops anyone feeling alone or left out.

A school of around 80 means that all of the teaching staff have the opportunity to get to know all of the children, rather than just those who are in their immediate care and therefore have a sense for when something is not right and can act on that, in the best interests of the child.

We have seen firsthand how important this familiarity is, with my son's shy disposition, Mrs Smith and Miss Ridley brought in an assessor to consider any additional support that they could provide in order to help him integrate with his fellow students – and for clarity, there were no recommendations, the school were already providing all relevant options of support - and we are really pleased at how readily he will now join in and enjoy group activities. His attention span, confidence and social skills have all dramatically increased through the encouragement, care and support given by the staff here at Scremerston.

I am concerned that with the current proposals, in three years time my son will be preparing to go to a high school, with a much larger pupil base, where, no matter the ratings of the school, one cannot argue that the familiarity with teachers that children experience in first and middle schools is extremely difficult to achieve, and is very unlikely to be sought by the schools governing body; as the conclusion of their time at those institutions is a series of exams, on which they will rely as they are propelled into their adult lives.