

Monks Eleigh: Campaign to keep educational facility in village

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Monks Eleigh Primary

Villagers are campaigning to preserve their recently abandoned primary school as an educational facility.



Monks Eleigh

Primary School

Despite no official decision from Suffolk County Council to close Monks Eleigh Primary School, the last students left at Easter after months of uncertainty following a poor Ofsted report. Most of the staff have left and the equipment has been logged for disposal.

A county council consultation over whether the school in Churchfield should close has just ended. The results will be analysed and reported back to the council's cabinet before an official decision is announced.

In the meantime, Monks Eleigh residents who set up the SaveMe campaign have now turned their attention to the future of the building.

Jenny Maynard, who is a spokeswoman for the group, said: "We knew that by the time we got involved, there were too few children at the school but we wanted the local education authority to admit some responsibility for the school closing.

"We have always felt that it should be kept for educational use, particularly for a pre-school because it could bring families into the village.

"The council has to consider it for another educational use before it can sell the building. We have a meeting with the council to discuss it and will carry out a feasibility study in the hope that the need will be found."

The school went downhill after it was judged 'inadequate' by education inspectors last July and the number of students plummeted from 37 to just nine.

The county installed an interim executive board and a new head teacher, but the school was unable to function effectively with so few students.

Last night, a spokesman for the council said: "The current proposal is to close Monks Eleigh Primary School on October 24.

“We have received a number of consultation responses, which officers are now looking at and analysing with a view to taking it to cabinet on September 9 when a decision will be made on whether to keep the school open or not.

“After that, a further consultation will take place about the future use of the building.

“If the decision is taken to stop using it for educational purposes, there will then be a further consultation about alternative uses.”