

# Scattering of pupils to remain at village primary



**STILL STANDING: Six of the remaining pupils at Monks Eleigh Primary School, pictured (top) with parents.**

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**The parents of a handful of pupils at a primary school facing closure are committed to keeping them at the school for as long as possible.**

After Easter, it is expected that only five pupils will return to classes at Monks Eleigh Primary School.

The school, which was placed in special measures after an Ofsted inspection last summer, is being run by interim headteacher Karen Harman and temporary staff.

During a Suffolk County Council meeting on Thursday, members of SaveMe – a group set up to save the school – questioned why the education authority had not intervened quicker to improve failings and falling pupil numbers.

“We feel we have been left high and dry and are very worried that other small rural schools are under threat,” said Jenny Maynard, from SaveME.

“We want the council to admit responsibility for what has happened and are in a situation where we have a core of parents who want their children to stay at the school, as other schools are full and pupils cannot get in.”

In a recent report, Ofsted stated that the council’s support for schools was “weak” and “inconsistent”. Despite this, a motion of no confidence in the political leadership of education in Suffolk was defeated last week.

Les Hines, 70, a villager who went to the school and whose grandson Alfie now attends, said the authority had “undeniably and miserably” failed the community.

“In my view, it is entirely the fault of the county council that our village finds itself in this position and I am utterly dismayed,” he said.

Members of SaveME believe the interim executive board at the school should have been put in place sooner, as pupil numbers plummeted from 30 to nine.

“Small schools should receive the support and strategic direction to allow them to thrive,” said Merle Barbrook, ex-chairman of governors.