

Appendix 8 Social Media Interactions across Facebook and Instagram

This document is a collection of community reactions, official statements, and discussions centred around the proposed closure of Roseheyworth Road Campus, a primary school in Abertillery, within the Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council area. The document captures a timeline of events, public opinions, council responses, and concerns from various stakeholders including parents, community members, and local officials.

Monday 2nd March 2026

Consultation went live

- 17 reactions 59 comments 50 shares

Monday 13th April 2026

Retweeted and shared

- 21 reactions 43 comments 16 shares

Background and Proposal Overview

The council has proposed closing Roseheyworth Road Campus due to surplus pupil places and a significant budget deficit, with the aim to reallocate pupils to other primary campuses within the Abertillery Learning Community (ALC). This proposal is part of a consultation process approved by the council cabinet, with public engagement planned through drop-in sessions and formal consultations to gather feedback before a final decision is made. The closure proposal is stated to address financial sustainability and surplus capacity rather than future use of the site, which remains undecided by the council.

Community Concerns and Opposition

Impact on Students and Families

Many parents and community members express strong opposition to the closure, citing concerns about overcrowding at the receiving schools (Tillery Street and Six Bells campuses), potential negative effects on children's education, and disruption to established social networks and support systems, especially for children with Additional Learning Needs (ALN). There are worries about increased class sizes, reduced educational quality, and insufficient specialist support for SEND pupils after the move. The increased travel distance and transport costs for families without private vehicles are also major points of contention.

Infrastructure and Safety Concerns

Residents highlight the inadequate parking and traffic congestion around the receiving schools, particularly Tillery Street, warning of potential safety risks for children and pedestrians due to increased vehicle numbers. The lack of space for additional classrooms or portacabins to accommodate extra pupils is also noted, raising doubts about the feasibility of the proposal.

Financial and Governance Criticism

The community criticizes the council's financial management, questioning why a relatively modern school building (26 years old) requires closure due to budget issues. There is scepticism about the council's priorities, with accusations of mismanagement, excessive spending on council staff

salaries, and political motives behind the decision. Comparisons are made to other public spending such as the expansion of the Senedd and other projects, which are viewed as misallocated funds that could have supported education instead. The consultation process itself is viewed by many as a formality, with the decision perceived as already made.

Speculation on Future Use of Site

Some community members suspect that the school site may be sold to developers for housing, although the council denies any plans to sell the land or that the closure proposal is related to future site use. This suspicion contributes to distrust towards the council's intentions.

Official Responses and Consultation Process

The Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council has clarified that the decision to consult is to address surplus places and financial deficits, not related to future land use. They emphasize that eligible pupils will receive school transport according to existing policies and that arrangements will be made for the pre-school on site if the proposal proceeds. The council encourages participation in the consultation and has scheduled drop-in events to answer questions from parents and the community.

Community Mobilization and Political Engagement

Parents and community groups are preparing protests and campaigns to oppose the closure, expressing frustration with local elected representatives and politicians who have been perceived as unresponsive or inactive on this issue. Calls for accountability of cabinet members and local officials are frequent, along with demands for transparent financial information and a reconsideration of priorities to protect education services.

Summary of Key Issues Raised

- **Educational Impact:** Concerns about overcrowded classrooms, quality of education, and support for ALN pupils.
- **Transport and Safety:** Increased travel distances, inadequate transport provision, and traffic congestion risks.
- **Financial Management:** Criticism of council spending priorities and scepticism about the necessity of closure.
- **Consultation Integrity:** Perception that the consultation is a formality with decisions already made.
- **Community Trust:** Distrust regarding future use of the school site and political accountability.