



**Consultation Report on the proposed  
change of age range at St David's High  
school, Saltney from 11-18 to 11-16**

**September 2014**

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## **1. Introduction**

Flintshire County Council has recently completed a period of Consultation in relation to St David's High School, Saltney & Saltney Ferry Community School.

The LA consulted on two options:-

The options consulted upon were:

1. To change the age-range of St. David's High School from 11-18 to 11-16 from September 2016.
2. To amalgamate the primary provision at Saltney Ferry Primary School with the secondary provision at St. David's High School from September 2015 and to change the age-range of the High School to 3-16 from September 2016.

## **2. Consultation**

The Consultation has been carried out in accordance with the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 which requires the School Organisation Code 2013 to be issued to and give guidance to relevant bodies (Welsh Ministers, Local Authorities, Governing Bodies).

This document will set out the steps taken during the formal Consultation Period, will refer to findings obtained during the Consultation and will aim to answer and tackle any queries that have been put to the Authority.

### **2.1 Publication of the Consultation**

A letter was sent to all local schools on 2<sup>nd</sup> May to inform all staff, Governors and parents/carers of the proposed consultation.

The formal consultation began on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2014 with both English and Welsh versions of the consultation document being sent out to recipients, via hardcopy and email. The consultation document was also published on the Flintshire County Council webpages and moodle sites bilingually as have all subsequent documentation regarding the proposal.

The table below sets out the list of recipients, as guided by the School Organisation Code that received a copy of the consultation Document.

Name/Organisation	No of Recipients
<b>St David's High School – Staff (teaching and non teaching), Governors and parents/carers</b>	Booklets/letters for school population
<b>Saltney Ferry Primary School (as above)</b>	Booklets/letters for school population
<b>Wood Memorial CP School (as above)</b>	Booklets/letters for school population
<b>Sandycroft CP School (as above)</b>	Booklets/letters for school population
<b>Broughton Primary School (as above)</b>	Booklets/letters for school population
Coleg Cambria	1
Welsh Government	2
Local MP/AM's	4
Chief Inspector, ESTYN	1
NASUWT	1
NUT	1
ATL	1
GMB:	1
UNITE	1
UNISON	1
NAHT	1
FTJNC	1
UCAC	1
ASCL	1
Police & Crime Commissioner	1
Saltney Town Council	1
Cheshire County Council	1
Chief Executive, Betsi Cadwaladr	1
Flintshire County Council, Head of Assets & Transportation	1
Flintshire County Council, Youth & Community	1
Early Years Childcare Partnership, Flintshire County Council	1
GwE	1
Rural N.Flintshire Communities First	1
Church in Wales, St Asaph and Wrexham Offices	1
Diocesan Director of Education, Bishops House, Sontley Road, Wrexham Offices	1
Children in Wales	1

Students at the schools were also consulted at special consultations, conducted by the Flintshire Children and Young People's Engagement Team. A Young people's version of the consultation document was also produced for this phase of consultation.

## **2.2 Consultation Meetings**

Four consultation meetings were conducted on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> of May 2014. Two meetings were held at St David's High school & Saltney Ferry CP. At each school, one meeting was designated specifically for staff and Governors, and the other for parents and carers.

## **2.3 Consultation Feedback**

The responses from the meetings were recorded and those from the returned forms have been collated and analysed.

There were 59 responses recorded at the formal consultations and 320 responses recorded from children and young people at the schools. In addition there were 13 returned response forms and one letter. A petition of 59 names, specifically against the proposal to amalgamate the Primary and Secondary School has also been submitted.

The meeting responses from St. David's High School in relation to option one to establish an 11-16 age-range school are broadly in favour.

Staff and Governors appreciate that when the consortium arrangements for provision of the curriculum come to an end in July 2016, the school will no longer be able to meet the requirements of the Learning and Skills measure in terms of subject choices.

Out of the separate 10 hard-copy responses, 7 strongly or tended to agree with the option to establish an 11-16 age-range school, 2 disagreed and 1 did not indicate a preference.

In the case of responses to the proposal to amalgamate the two schools to form a 3-16 age range school, 5 either strongly agreed or tended to agree with 5 responses strongly disagreeing with this option. Two letters were received from members of the community, one in support of the amalgamation and one against.

An analysis of the other responses received is as follows: How strongly do you agree with the consultation for:

Additionally, 9 people wrote additional notes on the consultation forms, ranging from agreement to disagreement. All 9 persons received a response from the Local Authority outlining the following:-

- Thanking them for their response to the consultation exercise.
- Explaining the consultation period has closed; responses will be reported to Councillors for their consideration.
- Informing them when a decision was likely to be made and when schools and other community respondents will be informed of the outcome.

One Letter was received, which asked the following questions:-

Asking for clarity around:-

- ESTYN Inspection and Standards
- Communication with pupils and staff at both schools
- Asking for Clarity regarding why this area?
- Comparison with other local Authority area school, already have issues and what measures are in place to mitigate this from happening in Flintshire?  
Questioning how do other feeder schools feel?
- What special features will the school have for disability or special needs?
- If dropped will funding drop and if not how long will be sustained by LA?
- Will there be an entrance and exit for traffic?
- What has been considered in regards to this increasing traffic at school times? H thought been given to community as in house pricing,
- Has ordinary residents been consulted ie non school parents?
- What will happen to the land. Would like to be reassured the only thing on the agenda is education of our children.

The response outlined the following:-

- LA has provided support for Saltney Ferry Primary and will continue to do so. There has been excellent progress with the staff and the LA. LA always works with Governing Bodies to try to retain staff.
- School places are ensured by admission process.
- Places are allocated to the nearest residents if over subscription occurred but this is unlikely.
- Any new school building has to be accessible in accordance with the disability act covering a range of needs including physical.
- Funding to all schools is based mainly on pupil numbers; an amalgamated school with combined budget will be more resilient.
- Access to St David's site would have to be reviewed and approved by highways department.
- Consultation process included Saltney Town Council who represent the community.
- The issue of any release of land would be subject of future discussion.

### Option 1: to establish an 11-16 age-range school

#### a) Parents/Carers Staff and Governors

<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>25.42%</b>
Tend to Agree	14	23.73%
Neither Agree or Disagree	10	16.95%
Tend to Disagree	6	17%
Strongly Disagree	14	23.73%
Total	59	100.00%

#### b) Children and Young People

Strongly Agree	83	25.94%
<b>Tend to Agree</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>27.81%</b>
Neither Agree or Disagree	70	21.88%
Tend to Disagree	47	14.69%
Strongly Disagree	31	9.69 %
Total	320	100.00%

### Option 2 to amalgamate and establish a 3-16 age range school:

#### a) Parents/Carers Staff and Governors

Strongly Agree	5	8.5%
Tend to Agree	8	13.6%
Neither Agree or Disagree	8	13.6%
Tend to Disagree	4	6.8%
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>57.6%</b>
Total	59	100.00%

#### b) Children and Young People

Strongly Agree	22	6.88%
Tend to Agree	32	10.00%
Neither Agree or Disagree	66	20.63 %
Tend to Disagree	66	20.63%
<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>40.94%</b>
No Response	3	0.94 %
Total	320	100.00%

### **3. Financial implications**

Transport costs for students from the Saltney area to the new post-16 sixth form centre in Connah's Quay will be incurred, but this will be dampened by the cessation of the consortium travel arrangements.

### **4. Anti Poverty Impact**

There is no direct impact as a result of this proposal

### **5. Human Resources**

With the proposed ending of post-16 provision at St. David's High School, there will be implications for the staffing compliment at the High School. This effect will be lessened by the ring-fencing to the affected schools and college of new posts created at the new Post-16 facility. Arrangements to provide assistance for Early Voluntary Retirement (EVR) and transitional Teaching and Learning Responsibility (TLR) payments for certain staff are being made.

### **6. ESTYN & Teaching Union Feedback**

Estyn's response to the Area Schools Review: St David's High School, Saltney & Saltney Ferry Community Primary School, is as follows:-

Under the terms of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and its associated Code, proposers are required to send consultation documents to Estyn. However Estyn is not a body which is required to act in accordance with the Code and the Act places no statutory requirements on Estyn in respect of school organisation matters. Therefore as a body being consulted, Estyn will provide their opinion only on the overall merits of school organisation proposals.

Estyn has considered the educational aspects of the proposal and has produced the following response to the information provided by the proposer.

#### **Proposal 1. To change the age-range of St. David's High School from 11-18 to 11-16 from September 2016.**

##### **Introduction**

The county council proposes to reduce the upper age limit of St David's High School from the present 18 to 16. St David's is currently part of a consortium arrangement for post 16 provision. Under the proposal St David's along with other schools in the consortium would phase out their post 16 provisions by 2016. From 2016 pupils who wish to study at post 16 would do so at the new purpose built sixth form centre in Connah's Quay.



## **Summary**

The proposal demonstrates clearly the authority's intention to transform post 16 provision. The proposal is part of the Flintshire School Modernisation Strategy and forms part of the wider strategic plan for 14 – 19 provision in North Flintshire. The new sixth form centre at Connah's Quay is part of the 21st Century Schools Programme.

The proposal is likely to improve the standard of education provision for post 16 pupils who will benefit from having access to modern learning facilities and a wider range of courses than presently offered at St David's School and the local consortium.

The county council also propose similar arrangements and timescales to reduce the upper age limits of high schools at Holywell, Connah's Quay and Queensferry.

## **Description and benefits**

The expected benefits of the proposal are clearly defined and link well to the stated purpose and rationale. The consultation document does not provide enough detail of the range of courses to be made available at the sixth form centre, however, the consolidating of provision at one site is likely to give pupils a wider range of learning opportunities with modern facilities.

It is envisaged that the proposed change will make the provision more responsive to the needs of learners and Estyn believes that this is a reasonable assumption. It will centralise resources on one site with the intention of making the provision both efficient and sustainable. Under the current consortium arrangements pupils' access chosen courses by travelling between sites. The proposal should eliminate this.

A disadvantage of the proposal is that pupils from Saltney who want to follow post 16 courses will travel approximately 8 miles to the sixth form centre at Connah's Quay. However, free transport will be provided for these pupils as part of the Flintshire post 16 transport arrangements.

The consultation document does not consider the possible risks and implications on outcomes for pupils at St David's if staff who wish to retain the teaching of post 16 courses leave the school as a result of the proposal. The proposal does not address the existing surplus places at St David's which would need to be re assessed should the upper age limit be reduced. The consultation does not consider any impact on Welsh medium provision in North Flintshire.

The document does not make reference to an equality impact assessment and it is not clear whether one has been carried out. As a result the proposal does not provide enough detail of the impact of the proposed changes on vulnerable groups including those with additional learning needs who want to

follow post 16 courses. The document does state that the proposed changes will be accessible to all learners, however, it does not provide details of how this will be achieved.

**Proposal 2. To amalgamate the Primary provision at Saltney Ferry Primary School with the secondary provision at St. David's High School from September 2015 and to change the age-range of the High School to 3-16 from September 2016.**

**Introduction**

The county council proposes to amalgamate St David's High School, Saltney with Saltney Ferry Primary School. The age range of the High school would then change to 3 – 16.

**Summary**

The document does not provide detailed information concerning the intended impact on standards and outcomes for pupils of this proposal. The intended benefits of the proposed amalgamation are unclear and it is not possible to judge whether the proposal will have a positive impact on standards of education.

The document does not consider the impact of the proposal on the other primary schools who currently feed into St David's High School.

**Description and benefits**

The rationale for the proposal appears to be one of strengthening the leadership and management of Saltney Primary School which was judged unsatisfactory by Estyn in January 2014. This judgement contributed to the school being placed in the category of requiring special measures. The proposal infers that this would be achieved by bringing the school under the leadership of St David's, the leadership of which was judged as being good when inspected by Estyn in 2011. However, this is not clearly stated in the document. The proposal lacks detail of the process that will be followed to bring the leadership and management of the amalgamated school under one headteacher and governing body.

The consultation does not consider other suitable alternative ways of providing leadership support for Saltney Ferry Primary School. Neither does the consultation consider alternative ways of providing closer links with the community which is one of the intended benefits of the amalgamation. The document notes that the majority of pupils already transfer from Saltney Ferry Primary School to St David's. It is unclear therefore how the proposed amalgamation will have a positive impact on reducing the surplus places at both schools.

The document notes that future capital investment in buildings will be dependent upon a number of factors such as the reduction of surplus places.

However, the provision of new accommodation for the amalgamated school is not guaranteed.

The proposal does not provide enough detail of the impact of the proposed changes on vulnerable groups including those with additional learning needs.

### **Teaching Unions**

There were no responses from the teaching unions

## **7. Cabinet Decision**

16<sup>th</sup> September 2014 – cabinet resolved the following:-

That the option to change the age-range of St. David's High School from 11-18 to 11-16 from September 2016 is approved and that members approve the publication of the statutory notice to this effect.

That further work be undertaken with St. David's High School and local primary schools to promote closer collaborative working and development of potential plans for federation.