

CONSULTATION REPORT



Proposal to Reorganise the Catholic Education Provision in Flintshire



- Close St Anthony's Catholic VA Primary School in Saltney, which will cease to operate by 31 August 2026
- Amalgamate St David's Catholic VA Primary School in Mold, St Mary's Catholic VA Primary School in Flint and St Richard Gwyn Catholic VA High School in Flint
- Amalgamation would see the individual schools close by 31 August 2026 and a new amalgamated English medium 3-18 Catholic Voluntary Aided school, with a new name and school number, opened in September 2026, operating over the three current sites
- Move the new school to the new buildings from 01 September 2029



Consultation Period: Commenced 03 June 2025 and Closed Midnight 18 July 2025



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1. Introduction

1. Recently, the Catholic Diocese of Wrexham (*the Diocese*) and Flintshire County Council (*the Council*), published a proposal to reorganise the Catholic education provision in Flintshire.
2. Following the conclusion of the statutory consultation period, and in accordance with School Organisation Code 2018 (*the Code*), this report will:
 - summarise each of the issues raised by consultees;
 - respond to these by means of clarification, amendment to the proposal or rejection of the concerns, with supporting reasons;
 - set out Estyn's response to the consultation in full; and
 - respond to Estyn's response by means of clarification, amendment to the proposal or rejection of the concerns, with supporting reasons.
3. Under the Code, this report may also make recommendations about how to proceed, such as to:
 - publish the proposals as consulted on, with any appropriate modifications;
 - abandon the proposals and retain the status quo; or
 - significantly recast the proposals and re-consult.
4. The results from the consultation process should be considered by decision-makers prior to determining any recommendation relating to the proposal.

2. The Proposal

5. The Diocese and the Council sought the views of key stakeholders on a proposal to:
 - Close St Anthony's Catholic VA Primary School in Saltney, which will cease to operate by 31 August 2026.
 - Amalgamate St David's Catholic VA Primary School in Mold, St Mary's Catholic VA Primary School in Flint and St Richard Gwyn Catholic VA High School in Flint.
 - Amalgamation would see the individual schools close by 31 August 2026 and a new amalgamated English medium 3-18 Catholic Voluntary Aided school, with a new name and school number, opened in September 2026, operating over the three current sites.
 - Move the new school to the new buildings from 01 September 2029.

2.1. Key Details

6. The new school will be located on the current site shared by St Mary's and St Richard Gwyn, off Albert Ave, Flint CH6 5JZ.
7. The overall capacity of the school will be for 1185 full-time pupils.



8. Capacity will be divided between 315 full-time primary pupil places and 750 secondary full-time pupil places. Sixth-form accommodation will be provided for 120 part-time pupils.
9. Nursery accommodation will be provided for 45 part-time pupils.
10. For the purposes of school admissions, there will be a published admission number of 45 for entry of full-time pupils into the reception year group, as well as an admission number of 150 for entry of full-time pupils into Year 7.
11. The governing body will be responsible for determining and administering the policy relating to admission of pupils to the school.
12. Accommodation will be constructed in-line with the applicable Building Bulletins and Net Zero Carbon requirements
13. Special Educational Needs (SEN) will be considered during the design development process.

2.2. Transport Clarification

14. Home to school transport arrangements will be made in-line with the Council's School Transport Policy.
<https://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Schools/School-Transport-Application.aspx>
15. The Transport Impact Assessment indicated that if all pupils from St Anthony's were eligible for home to school transport to their nearest alternative Catholic primary school the total cost could be £55,000.
- 15.1. The policy states that "suitable evidence of adherence to the faith of the school such as a baptismal certificate or a letter from a priest may be requested" and if this was a requirement, the St Anthony's figure could be reduced to approximately £11,000 as 20% of the pupils are practicing Catholics.
16. The Transport Impact Assessment indicated that if all pupils from St David's were eligible for home to school transport to their nearest alternative Catholic primary school the total cost could be £157,000.
- 16.1. Using the same principle for St Anthony's, 51.7% of pupils at St David's are practicing Catholics and therefore the total cost of transporting these pupils to their nearest alternative Catholic primary school could be reduced to approximately £80,968.

3. Consultation Process

3.1. Pre-Consultation

17. The proposal was developed over an 18 month period following discussions between the Diocese, the Council, the Chair of the governing body and headteachers at each of the six Catholic schools in the county.

18. In line with the Code, as the proposal involves the reorganisation of schools for which land and/or buildings are held on trust or which have a designated religious character, a consultation with trustees and/or appropriate religious body was required before the consultation document was published.
19. No new options emerged during the consultation with trustees and the preferred option was supported.

3.2. Cabinet Approval to Consult

20. On Tuesday 15 April 2025, the Council's Cabinet decided:
 - That approval be given to commence consultation with relevant stakeholders on the proposal to close St Anthony's Catholic Primary School, St David's Catholic Primary School, St Mary's Catholic Primary School and St Richard Gwyn Catholic High School and open a new 3-18 all-through Catholic school to provide for learning provision for the Catholic community.

3.3. Consultation Period

21. The consultation opened on Tuesday 03 June 2025 and closed midnight, Friday 18 July 2025. This allowed 45 days for responses to be received, 33 of which were school days.

3.4. Documents and Publication

22. The following documents were produced, in Welsh and English, for consultees to consider and enable them to fully participate in the consultation process:
 - Statutory Consultation
 - Statutory Consultation Overview
 - Children & Young Person's Consultation Document
 - Welsh Language Impact Assessment
 - Community Impact Assessment
 - Transport Impact Assessment
 - Integrated Impact Assessment
 - Response Form
23. To allow children and young people to participate in the consultation process, their consultation document was designed using age appropriate graphics and text.
24. Included the Children's document was an adapted, more user friendly version of the response form so that children and young people could provide their views on the proposal.
25. All documents were published electronically on the Council's website.



26. Each of the six Catholic schools were provided with a consultation pack that contained a hard copy of the every document. This allowed people to view the information should they be unable to access the electronic versions.
27. Hard copies and alternative versions (large print, Braille etc) were also made available upon request.
28. All documents can be found in the School Modernisation section page on the Flintshire County Council website at the following link:
<https://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Schools/School-Modernisation-Related/Catholic-Education-Proposal.aspx>

3.5. Consultees

29. On the day of the consultation opening, 03 June 2025, key stakeholders were notified via email.
30. The email contained a link to the page on the Councils' website where the documents could be viewed and where the response form could be accessed.
31. A list of the key stakeholders can be found in Appendix A

3.6. Events

32. Staff at each of the schools directly involved in the proposal were invited to attend a dedicated consultation event with senior members of the Diocese and of the Council.
33. All four staff events were held on Tuesday 18 June 2025 and were conducted virtually.
34. In addition, governors of all six Catholic schools were invited to attend similar sessions, but grouped as two schools per event.
35. Two of the governors' sessions were held on Tuesday 17 June 2025, with a third held on Wednesday 16 July 2025. These events were also conducted virtually.
36. No public consultation events were held.

3.6.(a) Children and Young Person's Events

37. Sessions with pupil representatives from each of the six Catholic schools were delivered during the consultation period.
38. During the pupil sessions, Officer's delivered a short presentation summarising the proposal, asked questions to stimulate debate and recorded the views of participates gave regarding the proposal (see Appendix D).
39. A session was also held with the Young Flintshire Forum (23 June 2025), which is formed from representatives across all Flintshire's Secondary schools. The session involved a presentation of the proposal, group discussions and noting of views given.(Appendix D.7)

3.7. Engagement Options

40. Consultees were provided with the following ways by which they could submit a copy of the response form:
- Online via a link, which was available in the consultation document and on the Council's website;
 - Online via a QR code, which was also available in the consultation document and on the Council's website;
 - Online via a dedicated email address;
 - Posting a hard copy into a dedicated 'post box', located at each of the six Catholic schools;
 - Posting a hard copy direct to the Council at the address specified in the consultation document;
 - Hand deliver a hard copy to a Council office.
41. People were also encouraged to participate in the consultation by:
- Submitting a comment, query or request via the dedicated email address or by post;
 - Request information by telephone.
42. Correspondence was welcomed in Welsh and English, with responses given in the same language without delay.

3.8. Response Forms

43. The response form (Appendix B) asked consultees to indicate whether they agree or disagree with each aspect of the proposal. In addition, the form also:
- provided a comment box to allow responders the opportunity to provide more detailed feedback on their choices.
 - asked people which school(s) they were associated with. And,
 - in what capacity they were responding (e.g. parent/carers, pupil, governor, staff, community member etc).
44. Other sections in the form included questions on how the proposal may impact Welsh language standards and equalities information.

4. Consultation Outcomes

4.1. Method of Communications

45. In total the Council received 2420 submissions from consultees during the consultation. These communications were gathered in the forms of:

Method of Submission / Representations Made	Number Received
Response Form via Link	452
Response Form via QR Code	1207
Response Form Hard Copies (via Post, School Post Box, Hand Delivered)	375
Children and Young Person's Response Form (Hard Copies)	20
Petitions	1
Emails	33
Individual Letters	4
Collective Letters	323
Estyn	1
School Governing Body's	1
Unions	0
Members of the Senedd (MS) and Members of Parliament (MP)	3
Total	2420

Table 1: Number of Communications Received

4.1.(a) Petitions and Collective Letters

46. A petition entitled "[Save St David's Primary School Mold](#)" was submitted with 359 signatures in support of keeping the school open.
47. A collective set of the same letter, entitled "[Objection to the Proposed Closure of St David's Catholic Primary School, Mold](#)", was printed and individually signed by 323 people.
48. Two petitions against the proposals, one on behalf of St Anthony's and one on behalf of St David's, were submitted pre-consultation. The Council has acknowledged receipt of these petitions.

4.2. Response Form Results

49. The tables and figures below show responses given to questions 1, 3 and 4 on the response form.

4.2.(a) Support for the Proposal

50. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each aspect of the proposal

Answer Choices	Yes	No	No Answer	Total
Close St Anthony's Catholic VA Primary School in Saltney by 31 August 2026	99	1,936	11	2,046
Amalgamate St David's Catholic VA Primary School in Mold, St Mary's Catholic VA Primary School in Flint, and St Richard Gwyn Catholic VA High School by 31 August 2026 operating over the three current sites. The new amalgamated English medium 3-18 Catholic Voluntary Aided school will open with a new name and school number, opening in September 2026	66	1,963	17	2,046
Move the new school to new buildings from 01 September 2029	82	1,950	14	2,046

Table 2: Support for the Proposal

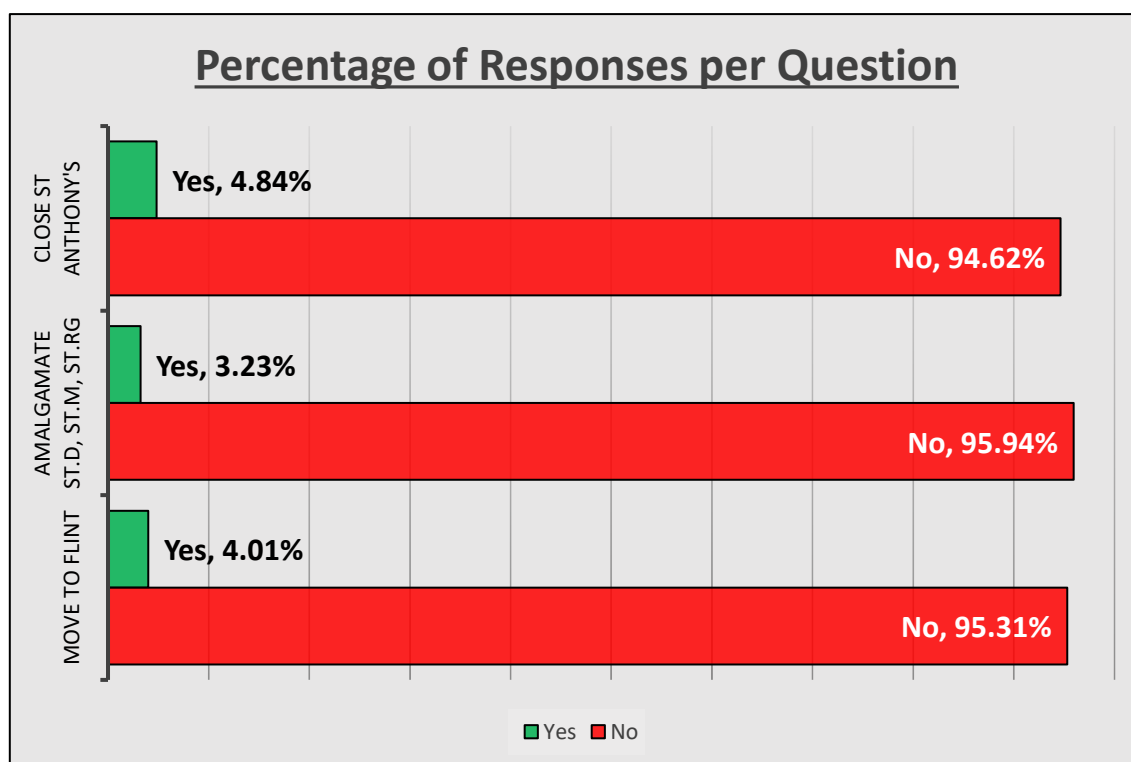


Figure 1: Percentage Support for the Proposal

4.2.(b) School Association

51. Which school/s do you associate yourself with?

Answer Choices	Number	Percentage
St Richard Gwyn Catholic VA High School	417	14.87%
St Mary's Catholic VA Primary School	161	5.74%
St David's Catholic VA Primary School	1412	50.36%
St Anthony's Catholic VA Primary School	658	23.47%
Venerable Edward Morgan Catholic VA Primary School	44	1.57%
St Winefride's Catholic VA Primary School	37	1.32%
Other (please specify):	75	2.67%
Total	2804	100.00%

Table 3: School Association of Responders

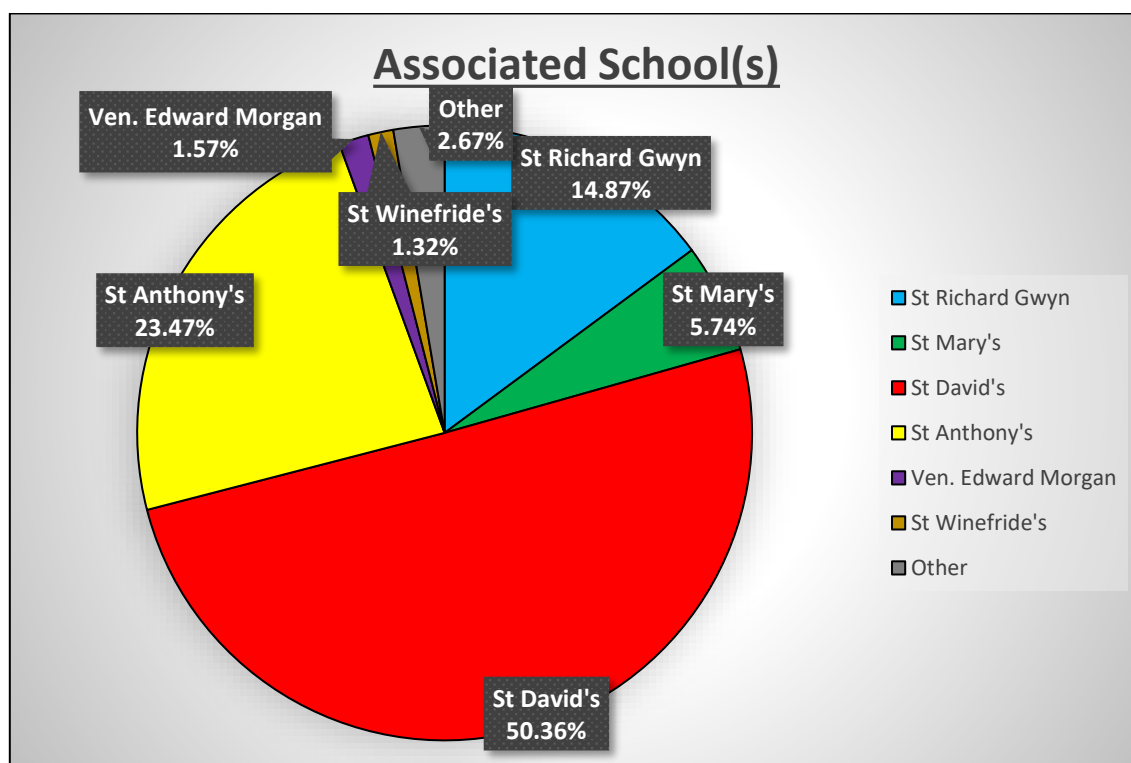


Figure 2: School Association of Responders Percentage

4.2.(c) School Relationships

52. What is your interest/relationship with the school/s you identify with?

Answer Choices	Number	Percentage
I am a parent/carer of a pupil at the school	293	14.32%
I am a pupil at the school	70	3.42%
I am a prospective parent/carer of a pupil at the school	111	5.43%
I am a teacher/other member of staff at the school	49	2.39%
I am a governor at the school	17	0.83%
I am a member of the community	1249	61.05%
Other (please specify):	257	12.56%
Total	2046	100.00%

Table 4: Relationship to Schools of Responders

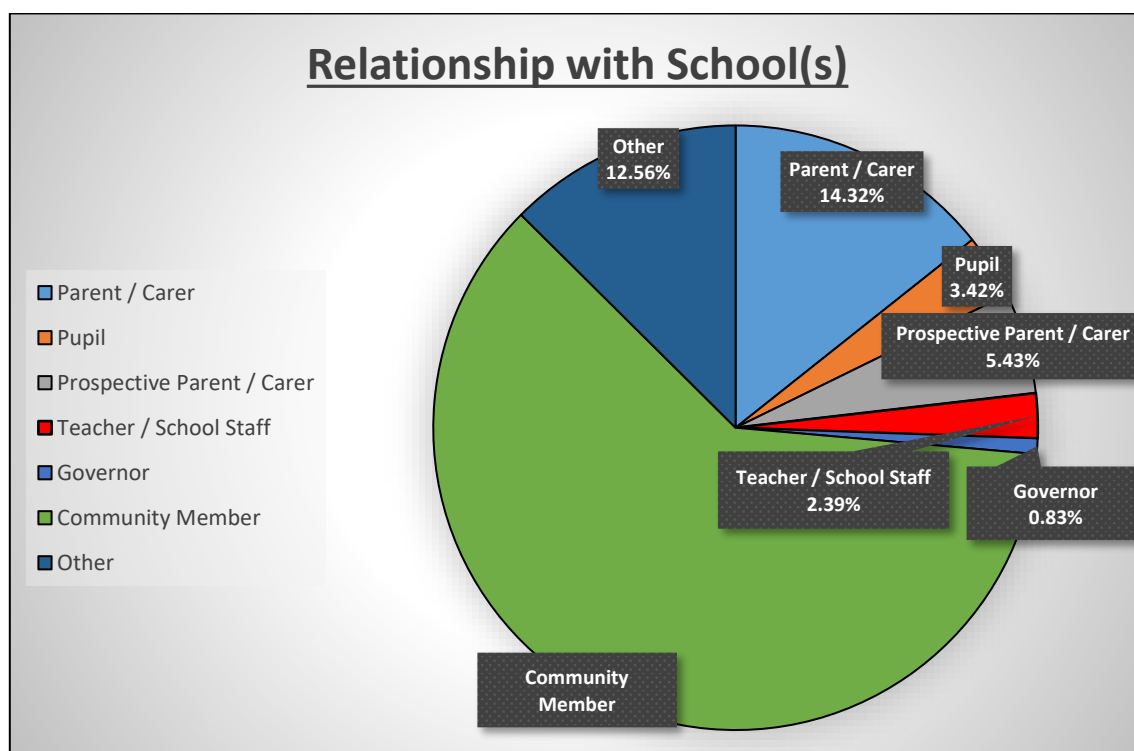


Figure 3: Relationship to Schools of Responders Percentage

4.3. Response Form Themes

53. People were provided with a comment box and asked to provide observations or explain which element of the proposal they did or did not support. Alternative proposals were also welcomed.
54. Comments made have been summarised and grouped together into themes (Table 5).
55. Each theme has been given a heading, a short description and examples of the comments received. The number of comments that have contributed to the theme has also been included.
56. As required by the Code, the Council has responded to each theme by means of clarification, amendment to the proposal or rejection of the concerns, with supporting reasons.

Themes and Example Comments	FCC Response
Strong Community Opposition to School Closures (428 comments) Many respondents expressed clear and heartfelt opposition to the proposed closures. St David's and St Anthony's were described as central pillars of their communities, with deep-rooted significance both educationally and spiritually. Respondents included parents, grandparents, former pupils, teachers, and parishioners. <i>"Closing these schools will tear the heart out of our community."</i> <i>"St David's is not just a school, it is part of our family history and parish life."</i> <i>"If you close the school, you close the community."</i>	We recognise that many respondents strongly oppose the proposed school closure and amalgamation, and we are aware of the emotional impact this has had on the community. It is acknowledged that these schools have historically been central to the Catholic population in the respected areas and that they are still valued amongst their communities. However, the Council has a responsibility to consider the wider context of education in Flintshire and sometimes this means that difficult changes need to be made. This proactive proposal reduces surplus places which can lead to better funded schools and release resources for investment in other areas. This ultimately will benefit many children and make the overall provision more sustainable. The proposal to close and amalgamate the catholic schools has not been brought forward lightly. It is driven by several pressing factors:

	Declining pupil numbers: Many schools are experiencing significant drops in learner numbers, which affects funding, staffing, and the ability to offer a broad and balanced curriculum. Financial sustainability: Maintaining multiple underutilised buildings is increasingly difficult. Resources are stretched, and we must ensure that funding is used effectively to support high-quality teaching and learning. Educational equity: Amalgamation can help ensure that all pupils have access to the same opportunities, specialist staff, and facilities—something that smaller schools may struggle to provide consistently. Future-proofing provision: We must plan for long-term sustainability. This includes adapting to demographic changes and ensuring that our school estate is fit for purpose in the years ahead. We know that change is difficult, especially when it affects children and families directly. That's why we are carefully reviewing all feedback before any decisions are made. We remain committed to working with communities to find the best possible outcomes for learners.
Safeguarding and Wellbeing Concerns About Transporting Young Children (351 comments) There is strong resistance to proposals that would involve transporting nursery and primary-aged pupils to Flint. Specific concerns include: • Long, daily bus journeys (up to 13 miles) • Supervision and safeguarding risks • Loss of routine and stability	We fully acknowledge the concerns raised about increased travel distances and safety. Families have clearly outlined the challenges this would pose for younger pupils, those with additional needs, and those without access to a car. Specific issues such as busy roads, limited pedestrian crossings, and a lack of public transport have been thoughtfully and consistently highlighted. These concerns are valid and deeply understood. However, it's important to consider the wider context: across Flintshire and Wales, many children routinely walk up to

• Impact on children’s mental health and family life <i>“I do not want my 4-year-old on a bus for an hour each day.”</i> <i>“There are serious safeguarding risks with transporting young children.”</i> <i>“The stress of long journeys will damage children’s wellbeing and mental health.”</i>	two miles to reach their primary schools and three miles for their secondary schools, others also access transport to get to their schools. It is noted that free home-to-school transport is generally only available for children of statutory school age (5 years and above). While local authorities must assess the travel needs of nursery-aged children, free transport is not guaranteed and may be offered on a discretionary basis. This may affect families seeking Catholic nursery places in the Saltney and Mold areas, particularly if the chosen nursery is not the nearest suitable school. We are committed to ensuring that any changes are supported by appropriate safety measures and practical solutions. Our goal is to balance individual needs with broader educational and community benefits, ensuring that all children can access school safely and confidently. A comprehensive review of the current road infrastructure will be undertaken as part of a formal assessment of safe walking routes. This will include a detailed evaluation of road safety, pedestrian crossings, and the overall accessibility of the proposed new site. In addition, eligibility for home-to-school transport will be assessed in accordance with local policy to ensure fairness and consistency. To support this process, full transport surveys will be carried out to examine parking availability, site access, and travel routes. These assessments are essential to ensuring that, should the proposal move forward, appropriate and safe arrangements are in place for all pupils and families.
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Loss of Parental Choice and Access to Catholic Education (302 responses)

Respondents were concerned that the closures would significantly reduce educational choice for families seeking a faith-based education. Mold and Saltney residents fear the removal of their only local Catholic school will:

- Force families to choose secular schools
- Diminish Catholic identity in their area
- Undermine church and school partnerships

“Removing the school in Mold means Catholic families here have no choice.”

“We will be forced to send our children to secular schools, which undermines our faith.”

“Parents should have the right to access Catholic education locally.”

The proposal does not remove the choice of parents/carers from selecting a Catholic education for their child. The Council will support those who wish to transfer to their nearest alternative Catholic provision and aim to make any transition as smooth as possible.

The Catholic Church can still be an important presence in areas where Catholic schools are absent. The Church can engage with other venues, including non-faith schools, in order to offer faith-based care and activities.

While the concerns raised by respondents are understandable, especially regarding faith-based education and community identity, several counterpoints suggest that the impact may not be as severe or irreversible as feared:

Continued Access to Catholic Education

Regional Catholic schools remain available: Although the local school may close, Catholic education places are being made available to those learners who need to move and is still accessible in nearby areas. Transportation support or partnerships with other Catholic schools will help maintain access.

Digital and parish-based faith education: Families can supplement school-based religious instruction with parish programs, online resources, and community-led catechesis.

Educational Quality and Inclusivity

Regional Catholic schools remain available: Although the local school may close, Catholic education is still accessible in nearby areas. If parents/carers opt to move their children to a secular school, often these schools accommodate faith needs: Many secular schools respect and support religious

	diversity, allowing for prayer spaces, religious studies, and cultural celebrations. Focus on academic excellence and holistic development: The priority in education is often the quality of teaching, resources, and student outcomes—factors that can be strong in secular schools. Strengthening Catholic Identity Beyond Schools Faith is nurtured in families and parishes: Catholic identity is not solely dependent on school attendance. Families and churches play a central role in transmitting values and traditions. Community resilience: The Catholic community in Mold and Saltney can continue to thrive through parish activities, youth groups, and intergenerational engagement. Strategic Resource Allocation Closures may reflect broader educational planning: Decisions are often based on learner number trends, financial sustainability, and the need to optimise resources for all our learners. Opportunity for reinvestment: Resources saved from maintaining underutilised schools could be redirected to strengthen Catholic education elsewhere or support faith-based initiatives.
Importance of Local, Community-Based Education (247 comments) The importance of maintaining schools within local communities was strongly emphasised. Local schooling is valued for promoting integration, social cohesion, and accessibility. Respondents fear that closure would: • Disrupt community life	It is recognised that schools have an important role to play in their communities and that people value a local education. However, the Council has a responsibility ensure schools are sustainable and provide the best opportunities for pupils. Schools with high surplus places require a disproportionate level of investment to maintain. Whilst it may be aspirational for all pupils to either walk or cycle to school, this is not

• Remove walking and cycling access to school • Eliminate essential wraparound care • Increase pressure on non-Catholic local schools <i>“Children should be able to walk to school with friends, not sit on buses for hours.”</i> <i>“Our school is central to the community, providing wraparound care and support.”</i> <i>“Local schools build social cohesion – once gone, this cannot be replaced.”</i>	practical in certain areas of the county and safe, appropriate transport is used to provide access to education. Any facilities or services (e.g. childcare) either provided directly by the schools or by organisations utilising the school buildings could be relocated to other venues in the area. While the emotional and historical significance of all schools is acknowledged and respected, decisions regarding school closures must be based on strategic priorities, sustainability, and educational outcomes — not sentiment alone. Community Role vs. Educational Viability Although the schools are described as a “community hubs,” their primary function is to deliver high-quality education. If pupil numbers are declining, standards are at risk, or the buildings are no longer fit for purpose, then their continued operation may not be in the best interests of learners. Community use, while valuable, cannot justify maintaining schools that are no longer educationally or financially viable. Alternative Community Spaces The claim that the schools are community hubs must be weighed against the availability of alternative venues in the wider Saltney and Mold areas — including libraries, churches, leisure centres, and other schools with community access. Community identity is important, but it can be preserved and strengthened through collaborative use of shared spaces, not necessarily through maintaining underutilised infrastructure. Legacy vs. Future Needs Generational legacy is meaningful, but it must not override the need to adapt to changing demographics, funding pressures, and
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	educational standards. The future of education in Flintshire depends on strategic consolidation, investment in modern facilities, and ensuring equitable access to resources. Nostalgia cannot be the basis for sustainable planning. Financial and Operational Efficiency Maintaining small or schools with significant surplus places can divert resources from other schools that serve larger populations or have greater needs. Closure decisions are often made to reallocate funding more equitably, improve staffing stability, and ensure that all pupils benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum. Emotional arguments must be balanced against the real costs and opportunity losses of keeping a school open that may no longer meet strategic criteria. Consultation and Accountability While the volume of feedback is significant, consultation does not guarantee preservation. It ensures voices are heard, but decisions must be made in the context of local authority responsibilities, statutory duties, and long-term planning. The Catholic Schools hold emotional and historical value, but the case for their retention must be critically assessed against educational standards, financial sustainability, and strategic priorities. The future of education in the area depends on making difficult decisions that serve the greater good, even when they challenge long-standing attachments.
Criticism of the 3–18 “Super School” Model (212 comments) The proposed 3–18 school in Flint received extensive criticism. Many questioned the	The 3-18 school model is a valid and considered model appropriate for our Catholic provision in Flintshire, this has been fully developed as a potential model with the Diocese of Wrexham. The 3-18 model offers many benefits:

educational soundness of merging all age groups on one site. Concerns include: • Negative comparison with Christ the Word (Denbighshire) • Lack of leadership capacity for a merged model • Risk to educational quality and pastoral care <i>“Christ the Word shows that 3–18 schools don’t work.”</i> <i>“One headteacher cannot lead a school with such a wide age range.”</i> <i>“Merging all ages risks educational quality and pastoral care.”</i>	• An consistent Catholic curriculum • Familiarity between teachers and pupils which can lead to a better understanding of individual needs • Smooth transition between age groups • Opens mentoring opportunities for pupils and staff • Shared experiences With regards to the specific comments: “Christ the Word shows that 3–18 schools don’t work.” This conclusion seems to be based on a single example and may not reflect the broader context. While Christ the Word may have faced challenges, it does not represent all 3–18 schools. Many such schools across the UK and internationally have demonstrated strong outcomes in both academic achievement and student wellbeing With the right leadership and structure, 3–18 campuses can thrive. The Council already has successful examples of colocated campus arrangements where 3-16 learners access their learning. Learning from experience: Any issues faced by Christ the Word could inform better planning and implementation in Flint, avoiding similar pitfalls. “One headteacher cannot lead a school with such a wide age range.” This concern misunderstands the leadership structure of 3–18 schools. Distributed leadership: These schools typically operate with phase-specific leadership teams (e.g., heads of primary, secondary, pastoral care), all reporting to an executive headteacher.
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	Strategic oversight: The executive head provides vision and cohesion, while day-to-day operations are managed by experienced leaders in each age phase. Improved transitions: A unified leadership model can actually enhance continuity and reduce disruption during key transition points (e.g., Year 6 to Year 7). “Merging all ages risks educational quality and pastoral care.” This concern assumes that age integration automatically leads to negative outcomes, which is not supported by evidence. Tailored environments: Modern 3–18 campuses are designed with age-appropriate zones, ensuring that younger and older students have distinct spaces and experiences. Enhanced pastoral care: A unified system allows for consistent pastoral support, better tracking of individual needs, and stronger relationships across years. Continuity and stability: Students benefit from a stable environment throughout their school life, which can improve emotional wellbeing and academic performance. The criticisms of the 3–18 model often stem from misconceptions or isolated examples. With thoughtful design, strong leadership, and community engagement, a 3–18 school can offer: - Improved transitions - Stronger relationships - Consistent support - Efficient use of resources
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Loss of Catholic Ethos and Parish Links (188 comments) Respondents fear closures will: • Sever links between schools and local parishes • Weaken the Catholic mission in local towns • Undermine faith formation and sacramental preparation <i>“Our parish and school work hand-in-hand; closure severs this.”</i> <i>“Faith formation will weaken without a local Catholic school.”</i> <i>“Children will lose vital links to parish and sacramental preparation.”</i>	Catholic and other denominational communities are strong and resilient. With support from the Diocese, removal of schools does not have to mean the loss of faith based education and facilities. In fact, removing the need to maintain inefficient buildings may help the Church explore alternative ways of promoting the Catholic faith and encourage people to become involved in Catholic-based activities. While the concerns raised are heartfelt and valid, it's important to consider that school closures do not necessarily mean the end of Catholic ethos or parish engagement. Here are several points to challenge the assumptions: Catholic Ethos Can Be Preserved Beyond Physical Buildings Catholic values and mission are not confined to a school's physical presence. They can be embedded in regional Catholic education hubs, shared resources, and community outreach. Teachers and leaders committed to the faith can continue to foster Catholic identity in consolidated schools. Parish Links Can Be Strengthened in New Ways Merging schools may encourage broader collaboration between parishes, creating stronger regional networks rather than isolated local ones. Technology and transport improvements allow for continued parish engagement, even if the school is not next door. Faith Formation Is a Shared Responsibility
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	Faith formation and sacramental preparation are primarily the role of families and parishes, not just schools. Parishes can offer enhanced teaching programs, youth groups, and sacramental classes independent of school settings. Closures May Lead to Better Resource Allocation Maintaining small, under-resourced schools can dilute the quality of Catholic education. Consolidation can lead to better facilities, more qualified staff, and enriched religious education, strengthening rather than weakening faith formation. Historical Adaptability of the Church The Catholic Church has a long history of adapting to social and demographic changes. Closures may reflect a strategic evolution, not a retreat from catholic mission.
Financial Transparency and Process Criticism (139 comments) A recurring theme was distrust in the consultation process. Points raised include: • Discrepancies in reported repair costs • Lack of transparency around Diocese funding commitments • Concerns about land sale motivations • Lack of early consultation with governors, parents, and clergy <i>“We do not trust the figures – repair costs are exaggerated.”</i> <i>“The diocese has not been transparent about funding.”</i> <i>“This feels motivated by land sales, not children’s needs.”</i>	It is accepted that a significant number of people have raised concerns over the financial details of the proposal. As such, it is important to address these concerns directly: • The discrepancy in reported repair costs was due when the information was requested. Figures held are subject to change as works are undertaken. When the costs were requested some repairs were in the process of being completed and therefore the overall figure still included this element. • It has always been clearly stated that the proposal would be delivered through Welsh Government’s Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme, should a business case submission be successful, and that this would provide funding of 85% of total capital costs and

	that the Council would fund the remaining 15% capital costs. There is no financial commitment from the Diocese to deliver this proposal. - Any land involved in the proposal is for the benefit and long-term sustainability of education in the respected areas. - There was extensive engagement with the schools Chair of Governors and Headteachers prior to publication of the proposal, as detailed in the consultation document. Discrepancies in Reported Repair Costs Criticism: “We do not trust the figures – repair costs are exaggerated.” Independent Assessment: The repair costs were based on independent surveys conducted by qualified professionals. These reports were not produced by the Diocese or school leadership. The change in reported repair costs arose due to the timing of the information request. Repair figures are subject to change as works progress. At the time the costs were provided, some repairs were still underway, and the total included estimates for those ongoing works. Comparative Benchmarking: Similar buildings in the area with comparable age and condition have shown consistent cost estimates, validating the figures. Lack of Transparency Around Diocese Funding Commitments Criticism: “The diocese has not been transparent about funding.” The Council and Diocese have made public statements outlining the financial funding arrangements for this proposal, including funding and grants. The Diocese and Council
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	had been completely transparent about funding. Open Budgeting Process: Budgeting information has been shared in the consultation documentation. Third-Party Oversight: Financial funding plans for this proposal has been reviewed by external auditors to ensure accountability and transparency. Concerns About Land Sale Motivations Criticism: “This feels motivated by land sales, not children’s needs.” Educational Priorities First: The primary motivation for this proposal is to ensure safe, modern, and sustainable learning environments. Any land sales which arise from this proposal if applicable are a secondary mechanism to fund corporate capital schemes, not the driving force. Reinvestment Commitment: Any proceeds from land sales are reinvested into the council and educational infrastructure, not diverted elsewhere. Stakeholder Involvement: Decisions around land use have involved consultation with corporate, financial and educational planners. Lack of Early Consultation with Governors, Parents, and Clergy Criticism: “There was no early consultation.” Timeline of Engagement: Initial discussions began with key stakeholders over a year ago, with various engagement meetings with Chair of governors and Headteacher and Trustees through the Diocese. Multiple Channels Used: Consultation has included multiple methods to capture feedback including surveys and direct meetings. While some stakeholders may
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	have missed early sessions, the process has been ongoing and inclusive.
Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Provision (117 responses) St David's was praised for its inclusive and nurturing support for ALN and neurodiverse learners. There are serious concerns that larger, consolidated school environments will: • Be less suitable for pupils needing smaller, quieter settings • Lead to regression in learning and confidence • Reduce individualised support <i>"St David's provides a nurturing, quiet space – a large site would overwhelm my child."</i> <i>"ALN children need smaller class settings, not a massive super-school."</i> <i>"My child has thrived at St David's; I fear regression if moved."</i>	The Council will take all practicable steps to minimise disruption to all pupils with specific consideration given to pupils with additional learning needs (ALN). Needs will be reviewed in line with the Council's statutory responsibilities and tailored towards individual learners. One of the benefits of a larger school is that they can offer an enhanced ALN provision due to increased funding and employment of more specialised staff. Facilities in a new school can include dedicated nurture rooms, sensory spaces, quiet zones and adaptable learning spaces. These can all be considered as part of the design process. We acknowledge the concern expressed about the potential impact of this proposal on children's wellbeing, particularly for those with Additional Learning Needs or who rely on routine and familiarity. We understand that for many families, the prospect of change brings genuine worry about increased anxiety, emotional distress, or behavioural regression. We are especially mindful of the reports that some children are already feeling unsettled during the consultation period. Supporting children's mental health is a key priority, and if the proposal progresses, we will work closely with schools, families, and specialist services to ensure that any transition is managed with care, sensitivity, and appropriate support for all learners in-line with local policy. The Council has a strong track record of supporting learners through relocations to new sites, including successful transitions into new accommodation. This has involved enhanced support for schools and all

	learners, with specific measures such as quiet-time visits to help learners with ALN adjust smoothly.
Rising Demand and Local Development (94 responses) Many highlighted that Mold is experiencing significant housing development, with over 300 new homes planned within close proximity of St David's. Respondents argue this should justify: • Retaining the school to meet future demand • Preventing overcrowding in other Mold schools <i>"Over 300 new homes are being built near St David's – we will need more school places, not fewer."</i> <i>"Closing the school ignores the housing growth in Mold."</i> <i>"Future demand will put pressure on other Mold schools if St David's is lost."</i>	Whilst there are planned housing developments in the Mold area, this growth does not necessarily mean that any children from those developments would choose a particular school to attend. Parental preference means that parents/carers may choose any school for their child, where spaces allow. Current schools in the area have sufficient capacity to accommodate any increased demand from the current planned housing developments. While a new housing development in the area may increase demand, not all homes will immediately contribute to school numbers. Families move in gradually, and children enter school at different stages. Robust Capacity Planning The proposed new school has been designed following comprehensive demographic analysis, including housing trends and birth rates. Capacity has been planned to meet current and projected future needs, with flexibility to adapt if demand changes. Scalable Infrastructure The school's design would allow for future expansion if necessary, including the potential for additional classrooms or facilities. This ensures that the school can respond to any unexpected increases in pupil numbers. Ongoing Monitoring and Review

	School capacity and catchment areas are reviewed annually, allowing for responsive adjustments based on actual demand.
Environmental and Logistical Concerns (76 comments) Many argued the proposals contradict environmental and wellbeing goals. Specific concerns include: • Increased traffic and emissions • Loss of active travel options • Incompatibility with the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act <i>“Bussing children increases emissions and traffic.”</i> <i>“Children will lose the chance to walk or cycle to school.”</i> <i>“The proposal contradicts the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act.”</i>	There will be increased travel for some pupils directly affected by the proposal and this could lead to increased traffic on roads and emissions. However, the long-term benefits of the proposal involve removing inefficient buildings from the education portfolio and replacing them with modern, net zero carbon energy efficient facilities, significantly reducing operational carbon emissions. Sustainable transport solutions may be incorporated into the delivery of the proposal where possible. Whilst some children may not be able to walk or cycle to their school of choice, others will see enhanced active travel infrastructure. As detailed in the Integrated Impact Assessment, the proposal does contribute the goals and sustainable development principles of the Well-Being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015. While concerns about environmental impact and wellbeing are valid and important, the proposals can be seen as supportive of long-term sustainability and wellbeing goals, especially when viewed in full context. 1. <i>“Bussing children increases emissions and traffic.”</i> The plan includes the use of modern, low-emission or electric buses, which are significantly cleaner than older vehicles. A single bus can replace dozens of individual car journeys, reducing overall traffic volume and emissions, especially during peak school-run hours. Route optimisation and coordinated transport planning can further reduce unnecessary

	mileage and congestion. 2. “Children will lose the chance to walk or cycle to school.” In many areas, especially rural or semi-rural, walking or cycling is already unsafe or impractical due to distance or road conditions. Where active travel is viable, complementary initiatives such as “walking buses” or safe cycling routes can still be supported. The proposal allows for targeted investment in active travel infrastructure where it will have the most impact. 3. “The proposal contradicts the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act.” The proposal is aligned with the Act’s goals by promoting long-term sustainability, equity, and improved educational outcomes. A key part of the plan involves replacing multiple old, inefficient school buildings with state-of-the-art, net zero carbon facilities. These new buildings will: Significantly reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions. Provide healthier, more modern learning environments. Reduce maintenance costs and environmental impact over time. By consolidating resources into fewer, greener buildings, the plan supports a resilient, low-carbon future for Wales.
Hope for modern, high quality Catholic education facilities (10 comments) Some respondents expressed support for the proposal because they see it as an opportunity to secure the long-term future of Catholic education in Flintshire. They highlighted potential benefits such as:	Support for the proposal is welcomed by the Council. New, modern facilities designed for a contemporary curriculum, built to net zero carbon standards can have a significant positive impact on the education of children. Better learning environments can improve the well-being of both pupils and staff, latest

• Access to modern, updated facilities that current schools cannot provide (e.g., outdated gyms, limited outdoor space). • A more seamless educational journey from early years through to secondary, giving consistency for children and families. • The chance to build a state-of-the-art school that can deliver the curriculum effectively and inclusively, preparing pupils better for the future. • An environment that could serve not only the Catholic community but also the wider local population, supporting diversity, inclusivity, and Gospel values. <i>“This proposal is essential to secure the future of Catholic education in Flintshire and provides state-of-the-art facilities, a seamless curriculum, and outstanding provision for all young people.”</i> <i>“Most viable to close, amalgamate and build new schools.”</i> <i>“The amalgamation is exciting as our high school facilities are outdated; modernisation will create a better learning environment for pupils.”</i> <i>“It makes financial sense, offers a seamless transition, and ensures quality Catholic education across all ages in Flintshire.”</i>	technologies can be incorporated into the design and new equipment can be provided, all of which can enhance the learning experience. Reducing surplus places and maintenance on inefficient buildings will allow more resources to be redistributed to areas of need, helping other learners. Facilities will be designed following the relevant Building Bulletin standards and alongside general classrooms could include: • Primary Specialist Practical spaces, library, small group rooms, nurture rooms. • Secondary Dedicated subject areas such as ICT, Art, Drama, Science, Music, Design Technology. For all age groups the build will also include staff areas, kitchen facilities and sufficient external areas such as sports pitches, hard surfaces, soft informal spaces, habitat areas etc.
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Table 5: Proposal Response Themes

4.4. Welsh Language Impacts

57. The response form included a section requesting individuals to provide their views on the possible effects the proposal may have on the Welsh language.
58. Figure 4 shows that the most popular response to each of the 5 questions was that the proposal would have a ‘neutral’ impact on the Welsh language.

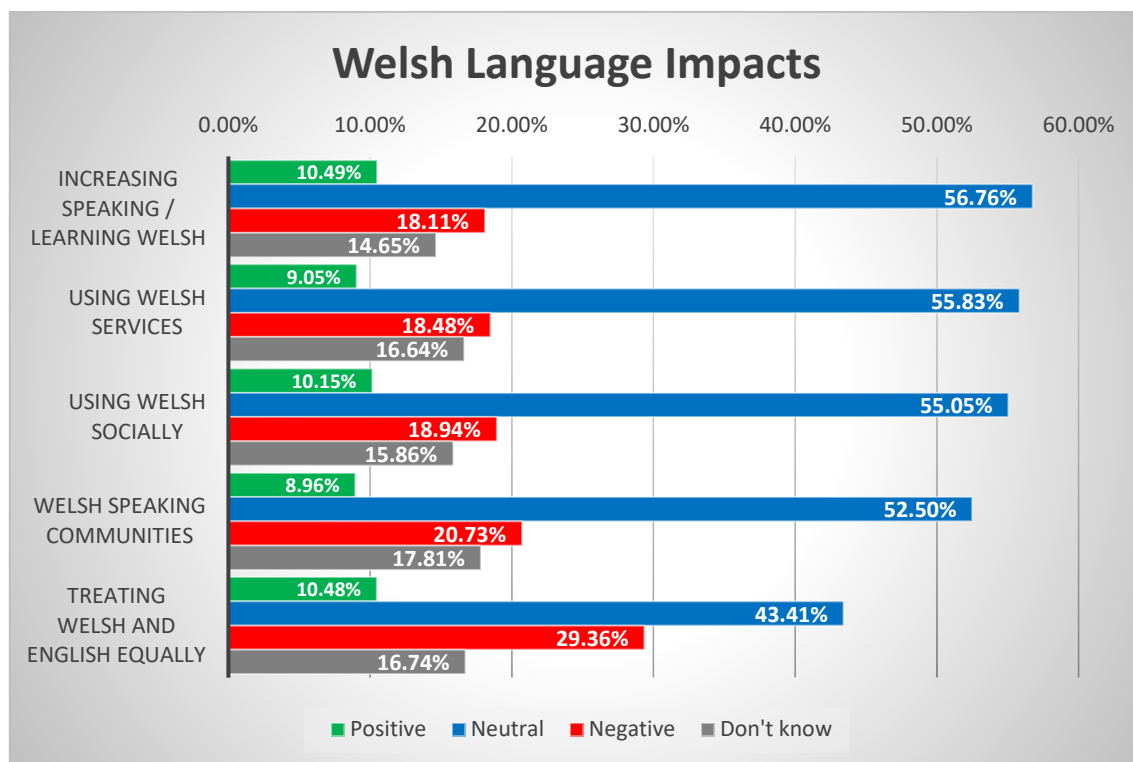


Figure 4: Welsh Language Impacts

4.4.(a) Welsh Language Themes

59. People were provided with a comment box and asked how positive effects could be increased or negative effects could be reduced (Table 6)

Themes and Example Comments	FCC Response
Views on Welsh in the Curriculum (55 comments) Some supported more Welsh lessons; others felt Welsh was being prioritised at the expense of core subjects like English, maths, and science. <i>“Welsh is not as important as core education.”</i> <i>“Treat both languages equally.”</i> <i>“Too much bias towards Welsh.”</i> Several comments argued that the focus on Welsh language distracted from wider educational issues—particularly school quality, SEN provision, staffing, and post-COVID recovery. <i>“Focus should be on core subjects first.”</i>	We recognise that Welsh is valued both as a cultural heritage and as a language skill that can build confidence and independence in learning other languages. At the same time, we appreciate that some families feel other academic priorities or core subjects should not be overshadowed. Our aim is to provide a balanced curriculum that supports Welsh language learning alongside core subjects and other language opportunities, ensuring every child’s education is well-rounded and prepares them to be citizens for the future. The development and promotion of the Welsh language are comprehensively outlined in legislation, most notably in the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act 2025, which sets ambitious targets—such as achieving at least one million Welsh speakers by 2050 and establishes a robust framework

<i>“Stop ramming it down people’s throats.”</i> <i>“Pupils need stability, not disruption.”</i>	for integrating the language into education, public life, and lifelong learning.
Perceived Irrelevance to School Closure Proposal (48 comments) Many respondents questioned why the Welsh language was even part of the consultation, seeing it as unrelated to the core issue of school closures. <i>“What has this got to do with the consultation?”</i> <i>“Language has nothing to do with this proposal.”</i> <i>“Surely not relevant.”</i>	We understand that some respondents felt questions about the Welsh language were not relevant to this particular consultation. However, as a local authority in Wales, we have a statutory duty to consider the impact of any school reorganisation on Welsh language provision and to report on how proposals align with local and national Welsh language strategies. The Welsh Language standards also require public bodies in Wales to consider the impact of policies and consultations on the Welsh language, ensuring it's not treated less favourably than English and the effects on opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language. Including these questions ensures we meet these responsibilities and consider all aspects of the Welsh language, in a consistent and transparent way. This also helps inform our Welsh in Education Strategic Plan. Further information on this is contained in the Welsh Language Impact Assessment for this consultation on our website. https://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Schools/School-Modernisation-Related/Catholic-Education-Proposal.aspx
Border Town Identity and Practicality (44 comments) Respondents frequently cited the location near the English border, stating that Welsh is not commonly spoken and often not relevant to daily life. <i>“Saltney is an English-speaking area.”</i> <i>“Nobody speaks Welsh in our community.”</i> <i>“Flintshire is not truly a Welsh-speaking area.”</i>	We appreciate the views shared about the unique cultural context of Saltney as a border community and other areas where the language may not be as prevalent. We recognise that Welsh language promotion in predominantly English-speaking areas presents particular challenges, and that any efforts need to be balanced. Flintshire County Council believes that the Welsh Language belongs to everyone. Our approach aims to offer inclusive and engaging opportunities for Welsh language learning. We are committed to supporting, expanding and promoting Welsh-medium education, ensuring that all pupils and

	families have the opportunity to improve their Welsh language skills even in areas that it may not be widely spoken.
Concern That School Closures Will Harm Welsh Language Use (38 comments) A major theme was that closing local schools—especially Catholic schools—would push families into English schools over the border, thus reducing opportunities for children to learn or use Welsh. <i>“Closing St Anthony’s will push children out of Welsh education.”</i> <i>“No Welsh Catholic education for miles.”</i> <i>“This proposal does not offer any positives in increasing the Welsh language.”</i> .	We understand the concerns about how school changes might affect Welsh language use, especially the fear that closing St Anthony’s could reduce opportunities for pupils to use and develop confidence in Welsh. Should the proposal proceed, we will work closely with the school community to ensure that Welsh language learning and use continue to be supported and encouraged in the new environment, helping all pupils to engage positively with Wales’s bilingual heritage.
Support for Welsh Language as Cultural Heritage (27 comments) While many questioned its practical use, a number of people expressed support for learning Welsh to preserve culture, particularly in areas like Mold. <i>“It is their cultural heritage and we must not lose this.”</i> <i>“Welsh is a good thing, but only relevant further into Wales.”</i> <i>“Promote Welsh wherever possible.”</i>	We welcome the positive comments recognising the cultural and educational value of learning Welsh. Promoting the Welsh language is a local and national priority, and we’re pleased that many families see its importance. We also understand that this support is often balanced with concerns about wider educational priorities, such as school provision and pupil wellbeing. We want to reassure families that as well as Welsh language education our focus also remains on delivering high-quality, inclusive education for all learners.
Faith-Based Education + Welsh Language (18 comments) Strong concern that removing Catholic primary schools would eliminate access to Welsh-language Catholic education altogether.	We understand the concern that removing the Catholic Education offer in a border area may push some people to consider an English based faith education. However, there are sufficient places within alternative Catholic schools in Flintshire to accommodate all pupils, should they wish to continue their education in Wales.

<i>“Keep St Anthony’s—the only Welsh Catholic school.”</i> <i>“This proposal forces families to cross the border.”</i> <i>“Support Welsh in faith-based education.”</i>	The Council will work closely with schools to ensure families are supported through the admission transition and remain within the Welsh education system. The proposal supports Welsh in Catholic-based education as resources are allocated more efficiently making the sector more viable and sustainable in the long term.
Suggestions for Positive Promotion of Welsh (12 comments) Some provided proactive ideas such as community classes, cultural events, dual-language signage, and better training for staff. <i>“Offer free Welsh lessons to the community.”</i> <i>“Encourage more bilingualism in Mold.”</i> <i>“Involve children in Welsh cultural activities.”</i>	We appreciate the thoughtful suggestions offered to enhance Welsh language learning and engagement, including providing Welsh classes for parents, improving staff training, and involving the wider community. These ideas align well with our commitment of creating an increasingly bilingual county and country and will be carefully considered as part of ongoing efforts to promote Welsh in our schools and communities. The Council has a detailed Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) that can be viewed here https://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Schools/Welsh-Education-Strategic-Plan.aspx

Table 6: Welsh Language Impact Themes

4.5. School Pupil Response

4.5.(a) Response Forms

60. In total, 20 hard copies of the children and young person’s response form were received, all from St Anthony’s VA Catholic Primary School, Saltney.
61. Of the 20 responses, 19 described the proposal as “bad” in some way whilst one child said “I’m not sure because I like this school but I want it bigger”.
62. Some of the reasons given for thinking the proposal is bad were:
 - More bullying larger schools, cannot cycle and walk to school
 - The super school is too big
 - What if it is too far?
 - why close in 2026 when your building the super school in 2029?
 - It’s going to be crowded because it’s a big school.
 - Teachers will lose jobs
63. Alternative suggestions included:
 - Spend more money on the schools we already have

- Don't waste 55 million pounds
- Spend money to upgrade our school
- You could use the 55 MILLION POUNDS you're investing into the schools you're shutting down
- Give more money to staff and give some of the stuff we need to entertain us kids.
- It will be a very far distance just to get to school and some people don't have a car.
- I don't think year 11s should be merged with year 1s

4.5.(b) Pupil Events

64. During the individual sessions at each of the six Catholic schools pupils were invited express their views on four areas:
- Likes of their current school and suggestions of changes (Figure 5)
 - Feelings on if their school was to close (Figure 6)
 - Good and bad things of a new school (Figure 7)
 - Anything else that could be done instead (of the proposal) (Figure 8)

What do you like about your school and what would you change?

Likes	Change
Not too big	Different food
Nice teachers	Mixing classes for activities
Friends	More breaks and golden time
Good food	Make it a bit bigger
Forest school	Nothing
Location	New equipment
Activities	Install a pool and water slide
After school clubs	More after school activities
School trips	PE changing rooms

Figure 5: Current School Likes and Changes

How would you feel if your school was to close?



Figure 6: Pupil Feelings on Closure

What would the good things and bad things be about getting a brand new school?

Good Points of a New School

New friends
 Learn new things
 Better facilities
 Nothing
 Smooth transition from primary to secondary
 Breakfast clubs
 After school clubs
 New teachers

Bad Points of a New School

Miss friends (if they go to different school)
 Travelling further
 Bullying
 Too big, lots of people
 Transport costs
 Confusing
 Transition for ALN pupils
 Lots of traffic in one place
 Might have to move house
 Changing uniforms

Figure 7: New School Good Points and Bad Points

Is there anything you would like to see happen instead?

Keep everything as it is
Use the money to improve the schools
Build more schools
Join St Anthony's and St David's build one school between the two communities
Build a hospital
Build the new school but keep St Anthony's
Build more Catholic schools

Figure 8: Alternative Suggestions

4.6. Estyn's Response

65. Below is Estyn's response to the proposal, in full.
66. Each comment has separated where necessary to allow the Council to provide a response.
67. The full response, without the Council's replies, is included in Appendix C.

<u>Estyn Comment</u>	<u>FCC Response</u>
Description and benefits	
The local authority appears to have presented a clear rationale outlining the reasons for the proposal. These include declining pupil numbers across the four schools along with the declining quality of the buildings and facilities at each site. Current arrangements reduce each school's ability to direct funding for education most efficiently. In response to this, the local authority has carried out an options appraisal exercise which concludes that a proposal to reorganise Catholic provision in the area is favourable.	Noted
The local authority has provided a suitably detailed description of the proposal along with an estimated timetable for statutory procedures. The local authority states that as there are sufficient surplus places in other local schools, and surplus places within the proposed amalgamated site, there would be no requirement for any interim arrangements to accommodate pupils from the sites that are closing. This appears to be reasonable.	Noted
In addition to the main consultation document, the local authority has included a summary version and a child friendly version on the consultation website. The child friendly consultation document includes a framework for children's responses. Both documents appear to be clear and useful.	Noted
The consultation document compares the proposal against the current arrangements in good detail. The council outline several advantages for pupils. These include smoother transition in a 'through school' setting, access to wider opportunities in a larger provision and increased opportunities	Noted

<u>Estyn Comment</u>	<u>FCC Response</u>
to develop health and wellbeing through improved outdoor facilities. In addition, the consultation outlines how the proposal aligns with national and local strategies for transforming education.	
The local authority has identified a few risks to the quality of education standards due to a perceived period of uncertainty for pupils and for staff. Risks include the potential to lose pupils to non-Catholic provision. The consultation document presents apparently suitable mitigation against these risks.	Noted
The local authority has considered a range of alternative options in detail. These include the possibility of maintaining the catholic primary provisions in Saltney and Mold, and amalgamating St Mary's Catholic VA Primary School with St Richard Gwyn Catholic VA High School which are situated on adjacent sites. The local authority appears to have carried out a thorough analysis of each option and has provided what seems to be a reasonable justification for taking the proposal to consultation.	Noted. For clarification purposes, the preferred option was selected because it provides the best balance of advantages and disadvantages of all those considered. Each discounted option had significant disadvantages that eliminated it from consideration. Options 1 & 2 would not: • address high numbers of surplus places • provide a sustainable long-term solution • contribute to FCC Carbon Reduction Strategy Options 3, 5 & 6 all require significant financial investment (the same as Option 4) but Option 3 would not: • address maintenance issues at four other primary schools • not significantly address high numbers of surplus places • not provide a sustainable long-term solution • not contribute to FCC Carbon Reduction Strategy Whereas Options 5: • Removes four schools from their local communities (instead of the proposed two)

<u>Estyn Comment</u>	<u>FCC Response</u>
	- Increases journey times for significantly more pupils - Potentially significantly increases transportation costs when compared to the preferred option Option 6 is similar to the preferred Option 4 but the federation between St Winefride's and Venerable Edward Morgan may be a step too far at this time. The significant change proposed will require a lot of time and resources to ensure its implementation is delivered in the strongest possible way. Trying to also successfully federate and establish collaborative practices between two schools not involved in the main aspect of the proposal may be challenging and could negatively impact those schools.
The proposal has identified that walking distances and travel times will increase significantly for some pupils and that there will be a requirement for additional transport should closure go ahead. The local authority has included a Transport Impact Assessment within the proposal. The assessment appears to be suitably detailed providing useful calculations outlining the difference in average journey distance for all pupils concerned. The proposal states that free home to school transport will be available in accordance with the local authority's home to school transport policy and provides an estimate of the cost.	Noted
The proposal highlights the negative impact of closing St Anthony's Catholic VA Primary School and St David's Catholic VA Primary School on the way current friendship groups interact. The consultation does not suggest how the local authority will seek to address this issue.	Whilst many of the negative aspects of a proposal can be mitigated by the Council, there are some which cannot. There is sufficient capacity at the next nearest Catholic primary school for pupils of St Anthony's to all attend, should their parents/carers choose. Similarly, pupils from St David's will have a place in the amalgamated school if this is what their parent/carers want.

<u>Estyn Comment</u>	<u>FCC Response</u>
	By ensuring all pupils from one particular school can transfer to the same alternative school, the Council has reduced the possibility friendship groups being broken up. However, the Council cannot mitigate the potential negative impacts on the way current friendship groups interact as there are two significant factors that cannot be avoided: 1. When a school is removed from a community the parent/carer must then choose an alternative school for their child(ren) to attend. If all the pupils transferred to the alternative school put forward by the proposal then friendship groups would remain intact but their social time may be reduced by travelling time as an example. 2. Also, parents/carers may choose a different school altogether than parents/carers of children in the same friendship group, which means that those groups may fragment. We understand that friendships formed during early education play a vital role in children's emotional wellbeing, social development, and sense of belonging. The proposal acknowledges this impact, and we recognise that the consultation document could have provided more clarity on how the local authority intends to support pupils through this transition. To address this, the local authority is committed to: Facilitating transitional activities such as joint school events, buddy systems, and shared extracurricular programmes to help maintain and strengthen existing friendships. Providing emotional and pastoral support through school support staff and wellbeing teams to help children adjust to new environments. Engaging families and communities to ensure that the transition plans reflect the needs and preferences of pupils and parents.



<u>Estyn Comment</u>	<u>FCC Response</u>
	Monitoring the impact of the transition on pupil wellbeing and social integration, with adjustments made as needed.
The council seems to have effectively demonstrated the impact of the proposal on surplus places. Forecasts predict these surplus places to increase to 298 across the primary schools and 258 at the high school by September 2029. The proposal demonstrates that where primary pupils do not wish to attend the proposed amalgamation, there is sufficient capacity for them to attend other local schools or the nearest Catholic primary school. However, the consultation is not clear as to whether the local authority would provide transport for pupils should they not wish to attend the new school. Should the proposal go ahead, it is reasonable for the local authority to suggest that surplus places will be reduced.	Surplus Places – Noted Transport Provision – Parents/carers who choose an alternative school for their child(ren), as opposed to their nearest Catholic school, may be entitled to free transport. All applications are assessed on an individual basis in accordance with the local authority's home to school transport policy.
The local authority has taken account of the impact of the proposal on Welsh medium provision within the local authority. The proposal concludes simply that as each of the schools are English medium provisions, closure would neither expand or reduce the availability of Welsh language provision in the area. This appears to be reasonable.	Noted
The local authority has considered the financial costs of the proposal appropriately. Funding will require capital borrowing. The consultation document compares the existing cost of the four schools against the estimated costs of the amalgamated school. The proposal does not explicitly state that savings will be used to repay the amount borrowed. The Transport Impact Assessment provides a useful estimation of the cost for any necessary additional transport.	The potential saving will not be used for a specific purpose, rather it will contribute to a more efficient education budget. Repayment of any borrowing has been thoroughly considered and prior to publication of the proposal and the Council is confident that, should the proposal be implemented, all borrowing liabilities will be met.
The local authority has provided a Welsh Language Impact Assessment as part of this proposal.	Noted
The local authority has provided a Community Impact Assessment as part of this proposal.	Noted
Educational aspects of the proposal	



<u>Estyn Comment</u>	<u>FCC Response</u>
The local authority references pupil standards within the consultation document and states that the new facilities will improve provision and learning opportunities. The consultation document does not evaluate well enough the impact of the proposed changes on pupils' standards.	Recruitment to leadership posts within the Catholic sector can be challenging and this recruitment challenge can be increased for schools with smaller pupil numbers and increasing budget challenges. Two of the schools currently having acting leadership arrangements in place. These proposed changes will facilitate a sustainable leadership model to be developed that will provide more capacity to lead on self-evaluation and school improvement and therefore lead to improved outcomes for pupils. In Estyn's thematic report (September 2024) Transition and pupil progression, Estyn noted that 'schools need to work together more effectively to ensure that pupils make more consistent progress as they move from primary to secondary school'. These proposed changes will support transition for learners, including through rich curriculum planning and provision for the continuity of learning across the full age range.
The proposal appears to consider the impact on pupil wellbeing sufficiently. The main document outlines the anticipated impact on wellbeing and attitudes to learning because of improved resources and amenities. The Integrated Impact Assessment balances the short-term implications of a change of school against longer term benefits such as a wider range of opportunities to develop health and wellbeing through the development of improved sports fields and nature areas. The document also outlines provision for pastoral support through transition where required.	Noted
The consultation considers the impact of the proposal on the quality of teaching briefly. The local authority considers that it will improve through access to enhanced resources and facilities. In addition, the new school will provide additional opportunities for staff professional development and a broader range of curriculum activities.	Noted
The proposal states that the current arrangements for ensuring appropriate levels	There are a number of factors that mean that staff who currently support ALN pupils may



<u>Estyn Comment</u>	<u>FCC Response</u>
of nurture and support for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) in each individual school will automatically transfer to the through school. This includes respective teaching staff. However, the integrated impact assessment states that removing two schools from the network will reduce employment opportunities. It is not clear whether all staff who work with pupils with ALN will continue in their current roles.	not continue in their current roles following implementation of the proposal. 1. Staff may choose to seek employment away from the proposed alternative school for the pupil; 2. Pupils may transfer to a school other than the proposed alternative (Parental Preference), where staff may be employed. 3. New facilities may reduce some of the needs of the pupil and therefore the support they require. The nature of any significant school reorganisation proposal is that every child will experience change. The Council will endeavour to prepare the child and the adults working with the child in the best possible way to minimise impact of the change. Needs will be reviewed in line with the Council's statutory responsibilities and tailored towards individual learners.
The proposal considers that leadership and management will be strengthened by the exchange of best practices between current school leaders and their accumulated experience. However, the proposal does not consider well enough the information from the most recent Estyn reports. In particular, the consultation does not identify that St Richard Gwyn Catholic Voluntary Aided Secondary School, Flint requires 'significant improvement'. Therefore, it is currently unreasonable to suggest that the school will be improved through amalgamation alone.	There was no intention to suggest that St Richard Gwyn Catholic VA Secondary School would be improved through 'amalgamation alone'. The school has a comprehensive post inspection action plan in place, with agreed support from the local authority and diocese. The school is expecting a revisit by Estyn in the next academic year to review progress against its recommendation.
Several areas of the proposal suggest that improved facilities will enhance curriculum provision and learning opportunities at the school. The document states that practitioners will be involved in the design of the new school building. However, further detail is limited, particularly about plans for ensuring effective progression across each phase of education.	The leadership structure of the new school as proposed would be the responsibility of the new governing body. An all age school would however provide the opportunity for responsibilities of leaders within the school to be designated to be cross phase and whole school. This would facilitate greater opportunities for effective curriculum development and planning for pupil progression. The proposed changes would lead to consistent approaches to teaching and learning across all ages, with improved transition between phases.

Table 7: Estyn's Comments and FCC Response

5. Next Steps

68. Members of the Flintshire County Council Cabinet will receive a copy of this report ahead of making a decision on whether to proceed with the proposal and publish a Statutory Notice. This process includes a formal 28-day Objection Period, during which any objections must be submitted in writing. Following this period, the Cabinet will consider a further report summarising the objections received and decide whether to proceed with implementation.
69. This process includes a formal Objection Period of 28 days during which any objections to the proposal must be submitted in writing.
70. Subsequently, the Cabinet will need to review another report that summarises the objections received and determine whether to move forward with implementation.
71. Comments made against the proposal during the consultation period will not be considered as objections.
72. If any consultees wish to formally object, this must be done in writing within the designated objection period.
73. Details on how to submit an objection will be clearly outlined in the Statutory Notice if the decision to proceed is made.

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7. Appendices

Appendix A. Consultees

74. The following were advised by letter or email of the availability of the consultation documents and that, if they wished, they could request a hard copy:
- Parents (and where possible prospective parents) carers and guardians, and staff members of schools affected by the proposals;
 - in the case of proposals affecting secondary provision, parents of pupils attending primary schools from which pupils normally transfer to that secondary school;
 - the maintaining or proposed maintaining authority for any school likely to be affected by the proposals;
 - any other local authority (including those in England, where appropriate) likely to be affected - including in the case of dedicated SEN provision any authority placing or likely to place pupils with SEN in it;
 - the Church in Wales and Roman Catholic Diocesan Authority for the area in which any school likely to be affected is located;
 - any other appropriate religious body for any school likely to be affected by the proposals;
 - the governing body of any school which is the subject of the proposals;
 - the governing body of other schools which the proposer consider are likely to be affected by the proposals;
 - the Welsh Ministers;
 - Constituency and Regional Assembly Members (AMs) and Members of Parliament (MPs) representing the area served by/intended to be served by any school which is the subject of the proposals;
 - Estyn;
 - teaching and staff trade unions representing teachers and other staff at any school which is the subject of the proposals;
 - the relevant Regional Education Consortium;
 - the Police and Crime Commissioner for the area served by/intended to be served by any school which is the subject of the proposals;
 - any community or town council for the area served by/ intended to be served by any school which is the subject of the proposals;
 - in the case of proposals affecting nursery provision any independent or voluntary providers who may be affected including Mudiad Meithrin;



- in the case of proposals affecting nursery provision, the Children and Young People's Partnership and/or the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships where present;
- in the case of proposals affecting SEN provision, any relevant health or third sector bodies with an interest;
- in the case of proposals affecting secondary provision, any further education institutions serving the area of the school; and
- in the case of proposals affecting Welsh language provision, the Welsh Language Commissioner.

Appendix B. Response Form

75. Note: no equalities info included in the example

Catholic Education Consultation

The Catholic Diocese of Wrexham and Flintshire County Council are seeking your views on a proposal to reorganise the Catholic education provision in Flintshire. It is proposed to:

- Close St Anthony's Catholic VA Primary School in Saltney, which will cease to operate by 31 August 2026
- Amalgamate St David's Catholic VA Primary School in Mold, St Mary's Catholic VA Primary School in Flint and St Richard Gwyn Catholic VA High School in Flint
- Amalgamation would see the individual schools close by 31 August 2026 and a new amalgamated English medium 3-18 Catholic Voluntary Aided school, with a new name and school number, opened in September 2026, operating over the three current sites
- Move the new school to the new buildings from 01 September 2029.

Please tell us what you think about the proposal by completing the questionnaire.

Your views matter.

Please note that negative responses made to this consultation will not be counted as objections to the proposal, they will be recorded as adverse comments. Objections can only be registered following the publication of a statutory notice.

If you would like to be notified of publication of the consultation report, you will be able to leave your contact details at the end of the survey form.

1. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each aspect of the proposal:

	YES	NO
Close St Anthony's Catholic VA Primary School in Saltney by 31 August 2026.	☐	☐
Amalgamate St David's Catholic VA Primary School in Mold, St Mary's Catholic VA Primary School in Flint, and St Richard Gwyn Catholic VA High School by 31 August 2026 operating over the three current sites. The new amalgamated English medium 3-18 Catholic Voluntary Aided school will open with a new name and school number, opening in September 2026	☐	☐
Move the new school to new buildings from 01 September 2029.	☐	☐

2. Please use the box below to provide comments or explain which element of the proposal you do or do not support and any alternatives to this proposal.

3. Which school/s do you associate yourself with?

- ☐ St Richard Gwyn Catholic VA High School
- ☐ St Mary's Catholic VA Primary School
- ☐ St David's Catholic VA Primary School
- ☐ St Anthony's Catholic VA Primary School
- ☐ Venerable Edward Morgan Catholic VA Primary School
- ☐ St Winefride's Catholic VA Primary School
- ☐ Other (please specify):

4. What is your interest/relationship with the school/s you identify with?

- ☐ I am a parent/carer of a pupil at the school
- ☐ I am a pupil at the school
- ☐ I am a prospective parent/carer of a pupil at the school
- ☐ I am a teacher/other member of staff at the school
- ☐ I am a governor at the school
- ☐ I am a member of the community
- ☐ Other (please specify):

2. Welsh Language Standards

The Council is continually working to address its Welsh Education Strategic Plan WESP objectives and takes them into consideration when developing proposals in both our Welsh and English Medium schools, to mitigate any potentially negative actions on the Welsh Language; and continue to promote and raise the profile of Welsh medium education for all our learners.

As this proposal relates to the re-organisation of faith-based education in the county we recognise there will be smaller contributions to Council targets. However, with any new school there is opportunity to grow Welsh language skills in the learning environment and the wider community.

Further information on the Welsh Language impacts can be found in our Welsh language Impact Assessment on the consultation page.

We would like to know your views on the effects that this proposal will have on the Welsh language, specifically on:

- opportunities for people to use Welsh; and
- treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English.

What effects do you think there would be ...?

5. Increasing the number of people speaking or learning Cymraeg.

- ☐ Positive
- ☐ Negative
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Don't know

6. Using Welsh services.

- ☐ Positive
- ☐ Negative
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Don't know

7. Opportunities to use Welsh socially.

- ☐ Positive
- ☐ Negative
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Don't know

8. Welsh speaking communities.

- ☐ Positive
- ☐ Negative
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Don't know

9. Treating Welsh equal to English.

- ☐ Positive
- ☐ Negative
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Don't know

10. How could we increase positive effects, or reduce negative effects?

Appendix C. Estyn's Response



Estyn's response to the proposal to reorganise the Catholic Education Provision in Flintshire from the 31 August 2026.

Introduction

This report has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales. 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.

Summary/ Conclusion

Flintshire County Council are consulting on their proposal to reorganise their Catholic Education Provision from the 31 August 2026.

This would result in the following steps:

- Closure of St Anthony's Catholic VA Primary School in Saltney.
- The amalgamation of St David's Catholic Primary School in Mold, St Mary's Catholic VA Primary School in Flint and St Richard Gwyn Catholic VA High School in Flint to create a new amalgamated 3-18 Catholic VA school with a new name and school number.
- Pupils from St Anthony's Catholic VA Primary School to attend the newly amalgamated school.

St Mary's Catholic VA Primary School is sited adjacent to St Richard Gwyn Catholic VA High School. Under the proposed arrangements, a new school building is scheduled to be built across the two sites by September 2029. It is proposed that all pupils in the newly amalgamated school will move into the new build at that time.

Estyn is unclear what the impact of this proposal is likely to be on the standard of education provision in the area, particularly as one of the schools within the consultation requires significant improvement.

Description and benefits

The local authority appears to have presented a clear rationale outlining the reasons for the proposal. These include declining pupil numbers across the four schools along with the declining quality of the buildings and facilities at each site. Current arrangements reduce each school's ability to direct funding for education most efficiently. In response to this, the local

authority has carried out an options appraisal exercise which concludes that a proposal to reorganise Catholic provision in the area is favourable.

The local authority has provided a suitably detailed description of the proposal along with an estimated timetable for statutory procedures. The local authority states that as there are sufficient surplus places in other local schools, and surplus places within the proposed amalgamated site, there would be no requirement for any interim arrangements to accommodate pupils from the sites that are closing. This appears to be reasonable.

In addition to the main consultation document, the local authority has included a summary version and a child friendly version on the consultation website. The child friendly consultation document includes a framework for children's responses. Both documents appear to be clear and useful.

The consultation document compares the proposal against the current arrangements in good detail. The council outline several advantages for pupils. These include smoother transition in a 'through school' setting, access to wider opportunities in a larger provision and increased opportunities to develop health and wellbeing through improved outdoor facilities. In addition, the consultation outlines how the proposal aligns with national and local strategies for transforming education.

The local authority has identified a few risks to the quality of education standards due to a perceived period of uncertainty for pupils and for staff. Risks include the potential to lose pupils to non-Catholic provision. The consultation document presents apparently suitable mitigation against these risks.

The local authority has considered a range of alternative options in detail. These include the possibility of maintaining the catholic primary provisions in Saltney and Mold, and amalgamating St Mary's Catholic VA Primary School with St Richard Gwyn Catholic VA High School which are situated on adjacent sites. The local authority appears to have carried out a thorough analysis of each option and has provided what seems to be a reasonable justification for taking the proposal to consultation.

The proposal has identified that walking distances and travel times will increase significantly for some pupils and that there will be a requirement for additional transport should closure go ahead. The local authority has included a Transport Impact Assessment within the proposal. The assessment appears to be suitably detailed providing useful calculations outlining the difference in average journey distance for all pupils concerned. The proposal states that free home to school transport will be available in accordance with the local authority's home to school transport policy and provides an estimate of the cost.

The proposal highlights the negative impact of closing St Anthony's Catholic VA Primary School and St David's Catholic VA Primary School on the way current friendship groups interact. The consultation does not suggest how the local authority will seek to address this issue.

The council seems to have effectively demonstrated the impact of the proposal on surplus places. Forecasts predict these surplus places to increase to 298 across the primary schools and 258 at the high school by September 2029. The proposal demonstrates that where primary

pupils do not wish to attend the proposed amalgamation, there is sufficient capacity for them to attend other local schools or the nearest Catholic primary school. However, the consultation is not clear as to whether the local authority would provide transport for pupils should they not wish to attend the new school. Should the proposal go ahead, it is reasonable for the local authority to suggest that surplus places will be reduced.

The local authority has taken account of the impact of the proposal on Welsh medium provision within the local authority. The proposal concludes simply that as each of the schools are English medium provisions, closure would neither expand or reduce the availability of Welsh language provision in the area. This appears to be reasonable.

The local authority has considered the financial costs of the proposal appropriately. Funding will require capital borrowing. The consultation document compares the existing cost of the four schools against the estimated costs of the amalgamated school. The proposal does not explicitly state that savings will be used to repay the amount borrowed. The Transport Impact Assessment provides a useful estimation of the cost for any necessary additional transport.

The local authority has provided a Welsh Language Impact Assessment as part of this proposal.

The local authority has provided a Community Impact Assessment as part of this proposal.

Educational aspects of the proposal

The local authority references pupil standards within the consultation document and states that the new facilities will improve provision and learning opportunities. The consultation document does not evaluate well enough the impact of the proposed changes on pupils' standards.

The proposal appears to consider the impact on pupil wellbeing sufficiently. The main document outlines the anticipated impact on wellbeing and attitudes to learning because of improved resources and amenities. The Integrated Impact Assessment balances the short-term implications of a change of school against longer term benefits such as a wider range of opportunities to develop health and wellbeing

through the development of improved sports fields and nature areas. The document also outlines provision for pastoral support through transition where required.

The consultation considers the impact of the proposal on the quality of teaching briefly. The local authority considers that it will improve through access to enhanced resources and facilities. In addition, the new school will provide additional opportunities for staff professional development and a broader range of curriculum activities.

The proposal states that the current arrangements for ensuring appropriate levels of nurture and support for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) in each individual school will automatically transfer to the through school. This includes respective teaching staff. However, the integrated impact assessment states that removing two schools from the network will reduce employment opportunities. It is not clear whether all staff who work with pupils with ALN will continue in their current roles.

The proposal considers that leadership and management will be strengthened by the exchange of best practices between current school leaders and their accumulated experience. However,



the proposal does not consider well enough the information from the most recent Estyn reports. In particular, the consultation does not identify that St Richard Gwyn Catholic Voluntary Aided Secondary School, Flint requires 'significant improvement'. Therefore, it is currently unreasonable to suggest that the school will be improved through amalgamation alone.

Several areas of the proposal suggest that improved facilities will enhance curriculum provision and learning opportunities at the school. The document states that practitioners will be involved in the design of the new school building. However, further detail is limited, particularly about plans for ensuring effective progression across each phase of education.

Appendix D. Children and Young Person's Consultations

Appendix D.1 St Anthony's

1A. What do you like about your school?

Responses	Number of responses
Size: It's fun and it's not that big. You don't get lost easily We like its small Its not big but it's local and good!! I like how it's local and not that big	6
Relationships: We like our friends and classrooms, The teachers are nice We know everyone in this school!	3
Community: We know how everything works and how its developing with communities like	1
School Life: I Like the art, I like the uniform.	1

1B. What would you like to change about your school?

Responses	Number of responses
Nothing.	2
Food: Add more food to the menu Puddings without peanuts	3
Class Structures: Adding all the year groupe together Mixing groups in years for activities	2
Facilities: Add things to the playground	1

2. How would you feel if your school was to close?

Responses	Number of responses
Emotions: Sad, Stressed, Angry, Mad Upset because it's a very good school We would not be happy Deppres about the closing Mad upset as well!	7

Sad, mad, Angry, Crying, Hate Angry, sad, grumpy, scared, annoyed	
--	--

3A. What do you think the good things would be about getting a brand new school?

Responses	Number of responses
Opportunities for new friends: You'll find new friends Interacting with other people and making new friends, learning new things More friends	4
Food: New puddings	1
Building: More modern More space	2
Nothing: its hard to make new friends, you might be bully'd you might have syblings who want to come to St Davids the church is very far away	2

3B. What about the bad things?

Responses	Number of responses
Emotional Attachment: You'll miss your friends and teachers You might miss the whole school	2
Location/Travel: The teachers might not be able to drive that far. And you'll also have to take the bus everyday Getting stress about the trafuling on transport Not local	3
Bullying	1
Size: To big, To many people. Not Local. Save our school Now!!!! Keep as is !!!!!!! More Classes, more stress Lots of people	3
No options for high school	1

4. Is there anything you would like to see happen instead?

Responses	Number of responses
Remain as is: I'd like our school to stay All of the schools affected by the proposal need to stay open Keep the school open like a museum Keep our school don't knock it down	5
Building: Extend the school We could make it a tiny bit bigger	2

Appendix D.2 St David's

1A. What do you like about your school?

Responses	Number of Pupils
It's a nice place with nice teachers good animals and a great forest school area.	1
They have nice children and a big yard	1
It has good people, good food, the football pitch, a good working environment	1
The things that we like the most about are school is its close to our school, there are really nice teachers	1
Forest School	1
We get to see all of our friends	1
Fun lessons	1
Nice kids	1
Forest school	1
It's close to our homes	1
Good topics	1
Good teachers	1
Everyone happy	1
How close it is to my house, the lunch, good work, lots of space	1
I like all the support you get and it is just a good school in general and I love the forest school	1

1B. What would you like to change about your school?

Responses	Number of Pupils
The school food to be cooked on our school premises instead of ordered from a company	1
More break, more art and golden time	1
Some new computers outside our class	1
A bit bigger	1
More stuff on the playground and a fidget area	1
No change	1
More forest school and PE, and more stuff on the playground	1

2. How would you feel if your school was to close?

Responses	Number of Pupils
I would be devastated, sad and angry and I would feel bad for the younger ones	1
Sad and depressed because most of the children wont get an education	1
Sad Annoyed Mad Angry Furious Not fair Devastated Well fuming Proper angry ballistic	1
Very angry, depressed, unfair, unhappy, stress eating, choose education over money Pls!!	1
Depressed and angry and sad	1
Sad because all the kids that like this school have to leave and go to a different school	1

3A. What do you think the good things would be about getting a brand new school?

Responses	Number of Pupils
You don't have to look for a secondary school if you go there	1
Meet new friends/people don't have to move to another high school	1
More kids get more education you don't have to move schools	1
More friends	1
More friends and you won't have to travel much after you finish primary school you can still stay at the school but the high school part	1

3B. What about the bad things?

Responses	Number of Pupils
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DON'T CLOSE smaller kids with bigger kids isn't a good idea if the bigger kids bully the little ones	1
Some people won't be able to travel there everyday and it will be bad for the environment using cares kids who don't wanna be far away from home	1
You need to drive further, I was gonna send my children here	1
Have to get used to everything	1
Too far away	1
What if we don't like the people	1
Too many people there	1
Nursery and years 11's in the same building	1
Very confusing	1
You'll get lost in the hallways	1
Have to get up earlier	1
It'll be a very long way	1
Transport fares	1
Overpopulated	1
Too big	1
You would have to move home	1
More construction is bad for the environment less choices for schools, taxi fars, people get sad of how many people, can't walk to schools	1
The schools will close so they can have land for build it, and it might be to far away	1

4. Is there anything you would like to see happen instead?

Responses	Number of Pupils
I think they could just build more schools	1
Just build a regular school for people closes to that place	1
Just leave the schools separate	1
Why would they do it so suddenly	1
Use the money to improve these schools	1
If it closes, don't close we will protect our school. It'll be better if there were bus	1



passes then you can go to school. Don't close me	
Keep it, everything the same	1
Keep a much schools as you can to keep people from having to travel really far and they would do online school but try do super school	1

Appendix D.3 St Mary's

1A. What do you like about your school?

Responses	Number of Comments
The trees	1
The trim trail	1
The dragon	1
Football	3
The teachers	2
The events	2
Snack time	1

1B. What would you like to change about your school?

Responses	Number of Comments
Have a football pitch for each class	2
Monkey bars	1
Install a pool with a water slide	1
Install a fruit farm	1
Have more clubs running at playtime	1
Proper science/chemistry	1

2. How would you feel if your school was to close?

Responses	Number of Comments
Sad	4
Nervous	1
Disappointed	1
Scared	1
Curious	2
Confused	3
Happy	1

3A. What do you think the good things would be about getting a brand new school?

Responses	Number of Comments
Make new friends	4
Still be with our younger friends	1
Better facilities	2
More room	1

3B. What about the bad things?

Responses	Number of Pupils
Too much people	1
Overwhelming	1

We might lose our headteacher	1
It will be too busy and loud	1
You might get lost in a massive school	1
Stuff will break	1
People bringing weapons to school	1
People smoking/vaping	2
Losing old friends	1
Can't take dogs out	1

4. Is there anything you would like to see happen instead?

Responses	Number of Comments
Keep it as it is	4
Put all the primary schools together	1
Bring new stuff	1
Build a hospital	1
More first aiders	1
Repair the current building	1
Build it somewhere else	1

Appendix D.4 St Richard Gwyn

1A. What do you like about your school?

Responses	Number of responses
Facilities: The new outside food place Food Canteen Sports Hall Top Yard/space Re-done classrooms and toilets (very nice) Nice field to do sports on Refurbished equipment	10
Staff: Teachers Take care of things within a week or 2 (problems) Teachers and Yazoo are quite nice	4
Less hours than other schools	1
Size Smallest high school in Flintshire so its not too busy or big	1
Location: Peacefull area (no construction sites)	1

1B. What would you like to change about your school?

Responses	Number of responses
Facilities: Sports Hall Floor More toilets PE Changing rooms ALN Air con added to every room Re-do more classrooms Don't put heating on in the Summer and put heating on in Winter Bigger canteen (some place outside for the Summer too)	10
Staff/Teaching: Better language curriculum	1

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2. How would you feel if your school was to close?

Responses	Number of responses
Emotional: Sad about a change of uniform Have good memories History of SRG gone Annoyed as this school has 75 years of history made and many people have come to this school because its not as big	3
Facilities/Building A bit happy – new renovations Feel really busy and full Angry as the money raised for re-furbishments for classrooms and equipment will be wasted	3
Staff/teaching: You would get to meet new people/teachers	1
ALN: With people who have ALN big school is better as you already know most teachers	2
Transition: Going from Primary to secondary will be easier	1
Travel/location: The other schools would be travelling way longer People without much money have to pay for petrol in this distance	2
Opportunities: Affect people with after school clubs/sports	1
I'm not affected	1
Happy	1
Uniforms:	2

Annoyed that we would have to share uniforms with another school Sad because many people like the school uniform and feel a sense of belonging	
--	--

3A. What do you think the good things would be about getting a brand new school?

Responses	Number of responses
Facilities/provision: Having a breakfast and after school club	1
Staff/Teaching: New staff/subjects New Safeguarding Team Maybe get access to better education	3
Social: Opportunities to make new friends Everyone can get together	2

3B. What about the bad things?

Responses	Number of responses
Travel/Location The school bus as not many people would want their kid at a young age to go on a bus Early start would make them tired Some may live far away like people in St Anthony's Long distance for people to travel Hard to get to for some people Some children can't access school buses as they are too young	8
Traffic: Very busy traffic There is lots of traffic already around this school with a bigger school, the traffic would be unimaginable for school & residents	2
ALN/Disabilities: New change for mentally disable people	2

Harder for people with disabilities, harder to access, get used to, fit in	
Building: Not knowing your way around Lots of money has already been funded to re-furbish this school	2
Staff: Newer teachers harder to get used to	1
Transition: Hard to get used to again, especially for younger children	1
Uniform: Hard to compromise over uniform with other schools	1
Faith: Not many people are Catholic at this school or at Primary schools generally so would skip the effort and prefer to move to a non catholic school or other alternative school which is closer or smaller. Some teachers may need to leave.	1
Size: Many people that already go to this school will leave so that they can move to a smaller, closer or more familiar alternative school So big, so many young children would have anxiety	2
There are more negatives so don't go ahead with the idea!!!	1

4. Is there anything you would like to see happen instead?

Responses	Number of responses
Longer break	2
Facilities: Bigger prayer room and a whole school mass room 1 canteen for the Primary and 1 for the high school	2
Altogether I agree with the schools joining together	1

St Anthony's and St David's join together somewhere in between Mold & Saltney	2
Keep the schools separate, don't close any schools down	1
Overall it should be the decision of the people in the area and the parents of the kids.	1
The problem is with two small primary schools in some parts of the area so don't bring the High school into the problem to make it bigger. Don't make it more complicated!!!	1

Appendix D.5 St Winefride's

1A. What do you like about your school?

Responses	Number of responses
Our school doesn't have too many kids	1
After School Clubs	1
We have a field	1
Most are work is fun	1
Competitions	1
Nativity	1
Trips	1
Challenges	1
Toy swap	1
Teachers	1
Prizes	1

1B. What would you like to change about your school?

Responses	Number of Pupils
Equipment/Facilities: New shed New netballs/ hoops Beaches Bottom field	5

2. How would you feel if your school was to close?

Responses	Number of Pupils

3A. What do you think the good things would be about getting a brand new school?

Responses	Number of Pupils
Resources: Because there would be more kids there would be more funds for the school to buy things	1
Opportunities for new friends/Teachers: More friends for people New friends New teachers	3
Teaching: learn more Better teaching then the old ones	2
Enjoy it more old school	1

3B. What about the bad things?

Responses	Number of Pupils
Travel/Location: The kids at St Anthony's if their parents want them in a Catholic school they will have to travel far and if they don't have a car they won't get to one Longer traveling time Might have to move house School Bus	3
Separated from their friends	1
Hard to find a school	1

4. Is there anything you would like to see happen instead?

Responses	Number of Pupils
Still build a school but not close St Anthony's	1

Appendix D.6 Venerable Edward Morgan

1A. What do you like about your school?

Responses	Number of Pupils
I like that the teachers help you if your struck with you work than help you so you understand and also like that they give you good oppetutunities	1
More lunch opportunities more breaks atcades in school	1
School trips, lunches, friends, teachers are nice, break, school plays, more after school activities	1
I like how all teachers are different in a good way. I like school trips. The opportunities that we get to do. I like the friends and the big community that we are. The food too.	1
The teachers are kind and there is a simple route through out the school.	1

1B. What would you like to change about your school?

Responses	Number of Pupils
More equipment to change and I think we all Yr 6 should be in one class	1
I'd like more playtime and more subjects e.g. geography	1

2. How would you feel if your school was to close?

Responses	Number of Pupils
It would feel a bit weird but I think it's quite bad because people might not might not be able to make to the new location they could be missing there teachers	1
They might miss all there teachers	1
I feel like some children who live nearby more catholic primary schools but when they close its all gonna be one massive school and the other people who go to a	1

school in Saltney might not be able to get there	
It makes me feel confused and feel like we are the only school in Flintshire with Saint Winefrides as our own school	1

3A. What do you think the good things would be about getting a brand new school?

Responses	Number of Pupils
I think the good thing is that some people get scared of moving but since it's all one school you will be able to make some more friends.	1
I think that we could make new friends and meet new teachers	1
More friends, different teachers, more education, more protection, more facilities	1
The high schoolers could be an inspiration to the younger pupils	1

3B. What about the bad things?

Responses	Number of Pupils
I think the bad things are change of uniform and all the money from all the other school will have to go to the new school and if we have leaks than it won't be fixed because we will have no money.	1
Its really expensive, we have to buy more uniform . Some people might not be able to get there, it's easier to get lost	1
School is too big	1
I think that if the older ones get into fights and say mean words people would be sad. The older ones might use bad words and little ones might hear and tell there parents and there parents might report it to the head teacher and they will get in trouble.	1

4. Is there anything you would like to see happen instead?

Responses	Number of Pupils
-----------	------------------

Instead of shutting down schools add more Catholic schools you can spend money on equipment for the school pens, pencils, rulers, calculator, tv and art books	1
We could change the uniform but people who are already in high school should get the uniform for free and if it was to change uniform the people going SRG keep the uniform but change the colour	1
Spend money on all the school instead of 1 school give to charity for people who can't afford it and uniform for free people already there	1
Make more catholic schools in Flintshire and keep the schools as they are	1

Appendix D.7 Young Flintshire Forum – 23/06/25

Young Flintshire Forum membership is formed from representatives across all Flintshire's Secondary schools.

A presentation on the Catholic School and Saltney Area school proposals was given and groups were asked to discuss and note the pros and cons of the proposals, and highlight anything they would like to see happen instead. They were also asked about what they felt about their schools in general, which is contained in section 2 of this Summary.

Section 1 – Pros and Cons of School Modernisation proposals

Pros	No	Cons	No
Financial benefits: - Cost less - More money efficient - Being pro-active - Merging schools would allow better use of resources & would be more efficient. If Bryn Coch can thrive with 1 Head and 800 kids does Saltney need 2 Heads for 200 kids? - Staffing - Possible higher budget for a start up school	6	Financial: Demanding budget for new schools/lower budget for existing schools	1
Transition: - Helpful for transition (Campus school). Reduces anxiety especially for neurodiversity - Make transitioning to High school easier	3	Transition: - Initial move, gradual transition, different system - New lives	2
Resources: Merging schools would allow better use of resources & would be more efficient	2	Staffing: - Teachers lose jobs - Ratio of students to teachers - May seem hard to find a new job - Loss of jobs - New teachers that don't know you - Lots of pressure on Headteacher	6
Facilities: Cleaner/new facilities	1	ALN: Without facilities	1
Curriculum	1	Welfare of residents	1
Building:	2	Wellbeing of students	2

- Modern Structure/Eco-friendly - New buildings (modernized)		Seeing friends less	
Wellbeing of Students: - They may be more engaged with the idea of a new school. - Encourages interaction/socializing - Joint special events(campus school) - Chance to meet new people	4	Religion: Numbers may decrease	1
Community: Bring Community together	1	Transport: - Funding - Distance/busy Roads - The nearest Catholic school to Saltney is Shotton which is far away and long for transport - Need for more transportation - New site might be too far and you can't stick a 6 year old on a bus. Parents have got jobs and may not be able to take them. If they can, it releases more emissions	5
Staffing: - Staff across both sites encourages familiarity - Teachers may move to schools that need them	2		

How would you feel if our School were to close?

If schools closed, I feel stressed as I would have to apply for a new school & meet new people & staff. Exams are also upcoming
Closing schools will always be difficult as it causes teachers to lose jobs, parents may also struggle to find a new school for their child to attend
Many won't go to some schools and can't go anywhere else
If schools were to close, the number of students would increase meaning the productivity of lessons would decrease, if students were to move to our school.
Joint site/Headteacher – Ysgol Maes Hyfryd already does this on a small scale with the sixth form hub in Shotton and main school in Flint (works well)

Upset because our school would close and we may get separated from our mates
Annoyed and upset because I'm just about to start my GCSE's and I may not be able to do them in another school
Annoyed because more people would come to our school and we are already over-subscribed

What would we like to see happen instead?

Responses	
Saltney: Merging 2 schools (1 Head & 1 GB) but keeping it twin site would save public money – no new school building. Reason is parents chose that school and it functions fine.	1
Merge the 2 non catholic Primary schools to ensure the Catholic Primary can stay so not to decrease numbers of religion	1

Section 2 - Thoughts and Opinions on Flintshire Schools in general

Positives
Extra Curricular activities & lots of sports
Revision after school sessions
Wide variety of clubs (e.g. Tim laith, Eco Club, band, choir, LGBTQIA+, Ambassadors)
Supportive staff/Good teachers
Well being support is available & advertised
Good Mental Health
Variety of subjects
Lesson times
Our Head of Music has a wide variety of musical instruments available. He is great!
School Concerts show off a wide range of talents from school orchestra to choir, to choir, to house band to soloists and duets
Some teachers are really knowledgeable
Really fun events (e.g. Pride, Eisteddfod, concerts)
5 x 1 hour lessons is better than longer lessons
New food provider (Dolce) is very good

Negatives
Opinions of staff
Behaviour of pupils & the way it is dealt with
Bullying
Teachers leaving & being replaced with covers/not being replaced
Need to share space
Opinions from the people
Temporary fixes
Internet
Limited selection of reach lessons
Waste (energy/paper/food/packaging)



Poor salaries for teachers

Low budget to pursue projects to improve the school community e.g eco-projects
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General Comments

Allow students to run after school clubs
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Amount of time spent meeting with school Council to be longer

Make lessons more engaging

Improve classrooms e.g. replace old tables/science labs
