

# TRANSPORT IMPACT ASSESSMENT



## 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: Commences 03 June 2025 and Closes Midnight 18 July 2025**

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## A. INTRODUCTION

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Within Flintshire there are six schools that are categorised as English-medium voluntary aided Catholic schools:

- St Anthony's Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School, Saltney.
- St David's Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School, Mold.
- St Mary's Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School, Flint.
- St Winefride's Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School, Holywell.
- Venerable Edward Morgan Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School, Shotton.
- St Richard Gwyn Catholic Voluntary Aided High School, Flint.

Following the regulatory guidance of the School Organisation Code 2018 (*"the Code"*), the Catholic Diocese of Wrexham (*"the Diocese"*) and Flintshire County Council (*"the Council"*) wish to consult interested parties regarding 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.

For the purposes of this document, the schools will be referred to by their shortened unique name. For example, St Anthony's Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School, Saltney, will be referred to as St Anthony's.

The schools of St Winefride's and Venerable Edward Morgan are outside the scope of the proposal and would not be directly affected should it be implemented.

This document supplements the Statutory Consultation document which consultees should consider to fully participate in the consultation process.

<https://flintshire.gov.uk/CatholicEducationConsultation>

**This consultation commences 03 June 2025 and closes Midnight 18 July 2025.**

Any figures, statistics and material referenced in this document are the most accurate available at the time of preparation and publication.

Impact Assessments are working documents which will be updated in light of information and feedback from the consultation process.

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## **B. PURPOSE OF ASSESSMENT**

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A Transport Impact Assessment (TIA) identifies the current transport arrangements for pupils attending schools that are subject to a school organisation change proposal.

The assessment shows the existing financial burden to the Council and how implementation of the proposal may impact overall transportation costs.

Also included is how the potential change may impact journey times of current pupils attending the potentially affected schools.

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## **C. TRANSPORT POLICY**

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The Council is required to determine whether the provision of transport for pupils of statutory school age is necessary to facilitate the attendance at a designated school of the pupil concerned. If such transport is deemed necessary, then the transport must be provided free of charge.

The Council provides free transport for children of compulsory school age (i.e. 5-16yrs) as follows:

- where a child receiving primary education lives over two miles from the nearest appropriate school.
- where a child receiving secondary education lives over three miles from the nearest appropriate school.

In addition to its statutory obligations, the Council also provides free transport for pupils of statutory age to the nearest voluntary aided school where the admission to the school is on denominational grounds, subject to the distance criteria.

The full Transport Policy can be found via the following link:

<https://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Schools/School-Transport-Application.aspx>

## C.1. Journey Times

As part of the duty on the Local Authority to make transport arrangements for children to attend school, arrangements are deemed not to be suitable if:

- They cause unreasonable levels of stress for the child;
- They take an unreasonable amount of time; or
- They are unsafe.

The Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2014 sets out school travel policy for Wales. It sets out entitlement to transport for young children, making it free for primary school children if they live two miles or further from the nearest suitable school.

Neither the Measure nor the Statutory Guidance (Learner Travel Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance 2014) specify a time limit for school journeys. However, local authorities are required to assess the individual needs of learners when considering if a journey time is reasonable. An assessment should take in to account the nature, purpose and circumstances of each journey and should consider the following:

- The learners age.
- Whether the learner has any disability or learning difficulties that need to be accounted for.
- The locality of the learner's home in relation to available schools in the vicinity.

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## D. TRANSPORT PROFILE

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### D.1. St Anthony's Catholic Primary School

Of the 62 full-time pupils registered at St Anthony's in January 2025, 61 were attending their nearest English-medium voluntary aided Catholic primary school, which equates to 98.39%.

If all pupils eligible for free transport to St Anthony's applied for the service, the total annual cost to the Council could be approximately £9,500.

The current annual cost to the Council is £0.

Of the 61 full-time pupils attending St Anthony's as their nearest English-medium voluntary aided Catholic primary school, 59 live within 2 miles of the school.

The average walking distance from the home address of the 62 pupils to St Anthony's is 0.74 miles.

## **D.2. St David's Catholic Primary School**

Of the 69 full-time pupils registered at St David's in January 2025, 55 were attending their nearest English-medium voluntary aided Catholic primary school, which equates to 79.71%.

If all pupils eligible for free transport to St David's applied for the service, the total annual cost to the Council could be approximately £60,000.

The current annual cost to the Council is £8,800.

Of the 55 full-time pupils attending St David's as their nearest English-medium voluntary aided Catholic primary school, 35 live within 2 miles of the school.

The average walking distance from the home address of the 69 pupils to St David's is 2.12 miles.

## **D.3. St Mary's Catholic Primary School**

Of the 237 full-time pupils registered at St Mary's in January 2025, 218 were attending their nearest English-medium voluntary aided Catholic primary school, which equates to 91.98%.

Of the 218 full-time pupils attending St Mary's as their nearest English-medium voluntary aided Catholic primary school, 208 live within 2 miles of the school.

The average walking distance from the home address of the 237 pupils to St Mary's is 1.26 miles.

## **D.4. St Richard Gwyn Catholic High School**

All pupils attending St Richard Gwyn are attending their nearest English-medium voluntary aided Catholic secondary school as it is the only one in Flintshire.

Of the 783 pupils attending St Richard Gwyn as their nearest English-medium voluntary aided Catholic secondary school, 290 live within 3 miles of the school.

The average walking distance from the home address of the 783 pupils to St Richard Gwyn is 3.87 miles.

## E. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

It has been assumed that parents have selected a particular school for their child to attend based on a school's category.

Each school involved in the proposal is an English-medium voluntary aided school which deliver a Catholic faith-based education.

On this basis, it has been assumed that all affected pupils will either remain at (if possible) or transfer to (where closure is proposed) their nearest English-medium voluntary aided Catholic school.

Should the proposal be implemented, the potential impacts have been assessed on school places, transportation costs and on pupil journey times and distances.

### E.1. Impact on Surplus Places

In September 2024, the surplus places at the three primary schools that would be retained was as follows:

School	Current St Mary's	St Winefride's	Venerable Edward Morgan	Totals
Capacity	317	187	281	785
Numbers on Roll	232	150	167	549
Surplus Places	85	37	114	236
Surplus Places %	26.81%	19.79%	40.57%	30.06%

Two of the three remaining primary schools (in Flint and Shotton) would each receive pupils who would transfer from St Anthony's and St David's (site) respectively.

For all 62 full-time pupils registered at St Anthony's in January 2025, their nearest English-medium Catholic primary school would be Venerable Edward Morgan Catholic Primary School in Shotton.

Of the 69 full-time pupils registered at St David's in January 2025, as they will become part of the amalgamated school on 01 September 2026, it is assumed they will transfer to the new school buildings in Flint in September 2029.

The potential surplus places at the three primary schools that would be retained could be as follows:

School	Flint New	St Winefride's	Venerable Edward Morgan	Total
Capacity	315	187	281	783
Numbers on Roll	301	150	229	680
Surplus Places	14	37	52	103
Surplus Places %	4.44%	19.79%	18.51%	13.15%

## E.2. Impact on Transportation Costs

If all current St Anthony's pupils eligible for free transport to their next nearest English-medium voluntary aided Catholic primary school applied for the service, the total annual cost to the Council could be approximately £55,000.

Similarly, if all current St David's pupils transferred to the Flint site, the total annual cost to the Council could be approximately £157,000.

The costs associated with St Mary's and St Richard Gwyn would not change as both primary and secondary English-medium Catholic education would still be delivered from the current shared site.

Therefore, the total annual cost to the Council could be an additional £212,000.

## E.3. Impact on Journey Times and Walking Distances

None of the 62 full-time pupils registered at St Anthony's in January 2025, live within 2 miles of their nearest English-medium voluntary aided Catholic primary school, if the proposal was implemented.

The average walking distance from the home addresses of these 62 pupils to their nearest Catholic primary school would be 6.26 miles.

Of the 69 full-time pupils registered at St David's in January 2025, 2 live within 2 miles of the Flint site.

The average walking distance from the home addresses of the 69 pupils to the Flint site would be 6.34 miles.

The average walking distance from the home addresses of pupils at St Mary's and St Richard Gwyn would not change as both primary and secondary English-medium Catholic education would still be delivered from the current shared site.



## E.4. Impact Summary

Impact Area	Impact Detail
Surplus Places % (Primary)	Significant decrease from 30.06% to 13.15%
Transportation Costs	Potential increase of £212,000 per annum
Average Walking Distances	Potential increase from 1.46 miles to 6.30 miles
Journey Times	Significant increase due to increased distance

## E.5. Safe Routes in the Community

A range of safety and accessibility improvements have been implemented around schools in the Flint area. These measures included junction tightening, tactile paving at crossing points, parking restrictions, and the installation of new zebra crossings—one outside the front of St Mary's and another on Coed Onn Road at the rear.

Additionally, the footpath over Pen Coch Hill has been upgraded to a shared-use facility. It has been widened and resurfaced to accommodate pedestrians, cyclists, and mobility users.

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## F. CONCLUSION

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Implementation of the proposal would impact transport arrangements. With faith schools not established in every community and spread over the county, removal of any schools will have impacts for those who decide to continue a Catholic education.

Average walking distances and journey times to their nearest Catholic school will increase if the proposal is fulfilled. As a result transport costs are likely to increase also, however to what extent is unknown as some may choose alternative forms of transport to get to their new school. The consequence of this could be an increased amount of vehicles on the road and a greater impact on the environment.