



CONSULTATION REPORT

Proposal to Reorganise Saltney Ferry C.P and Saltney Wood Memorial C.P
Closing Saltney Ferry C.P and Saltney Wood Memorial C.P and opening a new
maintained school operating on the current two sites whilst a new building is
approved and constructed.

September 2026

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1. Introduction

1.1 Following the end of a school organisational consultation period, the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code requires the proposer (the Council) to publish a consultation report. In this document the proposer is required to:

- Summarise each of the issues raised by consultees;
- responding to these by means of clarification, amendment to the proposal or rejection of the concerns, with supporting reasons;
- setting 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.

1.2 The results from the consultation process should be considered by decision-makers prior to determining any recommendation to initiate the next stage and to issue a statutory notice to enter into a 28-day period for objections to the proposal.

2.0 The Proposal and Consultation

2.1 On Wednesday 13 May 2026, Cabinet resolved to:

Open a period of formal consultation with key stakeholders for a proposal to close Saltney Ferry C.P and Saltney Wood Memorial C.P and open a new maintained 3-11 school operating on the current two sites whilst a new building is approved and constructed.

2.2 The Council proposes to deliver this organisational change by:

- Closing Saltney Ferry C.P. and Saltney Wood Memorial C.P.
- Opening an amalgamated 3 -11 primary school initially on the current two sites, while a new building is approved and constructed.
- Opening a new Community English Medium Primary School for pupils aged 3–11, with capacity for 315 full-time places, on the site currently occupied by Saltney Wood Memorial C.P. The school would have a Pupil Admission Number (PAN) of 45 per year group, making it a one-and-a-half form entry school.

2.3 Consultation was carried out in accordance with the School Organisation Code 2026. The consultation period ran from, Tuesday 16 June 2026 and ended, Wednesday 29 July 2026.

2.4 In accordance with the code, the consultation documents were published on Flintshire County Council's website, Tuesday 16 June 2026, and a link to the consultation documents was provided to stakeholders. A complete list of recipients can be found in **Appendix A**.

2.5 Age-appropriate versions of the consultation document for children and young people were also made available on the Flintshire County Council website, along with a concise 'Easy Read' document summarising the key points from the main consultation

document. All versions of the consultation 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/Proposal-To-Reorganise-Saltney-Ferry-C.P-And-Saltney-Wood-Memorial-C.P.aspx>

- 2.6 Hard copies of the consultation documents were delivered to Saltney Ferry C.P and Saltney Wood Memorial C.P for people to view if they were unable to access the website. Hard copies were also available on request.
- 2.7 A post box was made available at both Saltney Ferry C.P. School and Saltney Wood Memorial C.P. School to enable the submission of hard copy consultation responses.
- 2.8 The Council produced a response document (standard response form) to assist and encourage people to give their views. This formed part of the consultation document and was also published on the Council's website. The children and young people's version of the consultation document contained an adapted more, user-friendly response form. The consultation response form was converted into an online survey using the Smart Survey online tool. Links to the survey and a QR code were also published on the website during the consultation period.
- 2.9 All consultees listed in **Appendix A** received an e-mail with the link directing them to the formal consultation document, supplementary documents, and also the link to the online survey on the first day of the consultation 16 June, 2026.
- 2.10 Documents were produced in both Welsh and English.

3.0 Consultation events/meetings

- 3.1 Consultation events for staff and governors were conducted online for each school on Tuesday, June 16, 2026. No public consultation meetings were held. In order to maximise accessibility and engagement, consultees were provided with a range of alternative opportunities to submit comments and questions, including an online consultation survey, dedicated consultation email address, written submissions and direct contact with officers throughout the consultation period.

4.0 Consultation responses

- 4.1 The Council collected a total of 221 responses during the consultation period, with 217 submitted through the online consultation form. Furthermore, three responses were received from Estyn, RhAG, and the NEU, in addition to one email complaint.
- 4.2 A school pupil consultation session was arranged at both Saltney Ferry C.P and Saltney Wood Memorial C.P. The findings of these are set out in **Appendix F**.
- 4.3 In addition, a formal response was submitted from Estyn - the full response is set out in **Appendix G**.

- 4.4 Comments supplied by the NEU and RhAG have been included within the analysis of overall consultation feedback themes. These are set out in **Appendix H** and **Appendix I**.
- 4.5 The table below show the methods people used to respond to the consultation:

Method of contact	Number of Contacts Received
Consultation Standard Response Forms (online)	217
Consultation Standard Response Forms (paper)	0
Children & Young People's Response Forms (responses were gathered from both schools during their consultation events)	0
Letters and E-mails (complaints)	1
Children and Young People Letters and E-mails	0
School Governors Responses (no formal response from Governing Bodies but some Governors filled in the online form counted above)	0
Union Response	1
RhAG Response	1
Estyn Response	1
Online Petitions	0
FOI's	0
AM and MP Response	0
Total number of contacts	221

5.0 School Pupil Response

- 5.1 Consultation sessions to capture pupil voice were conducted at each primary school. These sessions were facilitated by the Flintshire County Council School Modernisation Team. Each school hosted sessions with representatives from various year groups, assisted by a staff member. The children received a summary of the proposal and were then invited to share their positive and negative feedback, along with any alternative suggestions. **Appendix F**.
- 5.2 Furthermore, members of Young Flintshire, which includes members of Flintshire's Youth Council and Associate Pupil Governors from Flintshire Secondary Schools, were given the opportunity to provide feedback during a session conducted at Ty Dewi Sant on June 24th, 2026. The outcomes are detailed in **Appendix F**.
- 5.3 The Council places significant importance on the views expressed by children and young people during the consultation process. The detailed findings from consultation sessions held with pupils at Saltney Ferry C.P. School, Saltney Wood Memorial C.P. School and members of the Young Flintshire Forum are set out in **Appendix F**.

Pupils from both schools identified a number of potential benefits associated with the proposal, including access to modern facilities, larger learning environments, improved resources, enhanced sporting opportunities and the opportunity to develop new friendships.

Pupils also expressed concerns regarding the impact of change, travel arrangements, leaving familiar teachers and friends, adapting to a new environment and uncertainty regarding transition arrangements. A consistent theme emerging from discussions was the value pupils place on their existing school communities and the relationships they have developed within them.

The Council has carefully considered these views when assessing the proposal and recognises the importance of supporting learner wellbeing, maintaining effective transition arrangements and preserving the strengths and identities of both existing school communities throughout any future implementation process.

- 5.4 An age-appropriate summary of this Consultation Report will be produced and shared with pupils at Saltney Ferry C.P. School and Saltney Wood Memorial C.P. School. This summary will be designed to ensure that children and young people who participated in the consultation are able to understand the consultation outcomes and how their views have been considered as part of the decision-making process.

6.0 Response from Estyn

- 6.1 The main points made by Estyn in response to the proposal and the Council's response to them are set out below. The full response received from Estyn is set out in **Appendix G**.

Estyn Comment	FCC Response
It is Estyn's opinion that the proposal is likely to at least maintain the current standards of education and provision in the area.	Noted
The proposer has given a clear rationale for the proposal. The consultation document explains that the proposal has been developed to address high levels of surplus school places, improve the quality of school accommodation, secure sustainable leadership, further develop the Welsh language and make more efficient use of resources. It also identifies limited future pupil growth within the area, providing a clear justification for reorganising provision. The proposer has provided a detailed description of the proposal, the projected timetable for statutory procedures and implementation, and the interim arrangements necessary for implementation. It also sets out the statutory consultation timetable, decision-making process and explains that the new school would operate temporarily across the existing two sites.	Noted

The proposer has set out clearly and fairly the expected benefits and disadvantages when compared with the status quo. The document identifies the anticipated educational, organisational and financial benefits of the proposal, whilst acknowledging potential disadvantages, including disruption during transition, staffing implications and changes to travel arrangements for some families.	
The proposer has identified the risks associated with the proposal suitably. The consultation identifies key project risks, including funding, planning, construction, staffing and legal compliance. The proposer appears to offer appropriate mitigation measures to minimise the impact of risks. However, whilst the proposal states that funding and planning will be kept under review, the proposer does not appear to outline what would happen if ultimately, sufficient funding is not secured.	The Council acknowledges Estyn's comments regarding the need for greater clarity should sufficient funding not be secured. The proposal remains dependent upon capital funding approval through the Welsh Government Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme and the Council's approved Capital Programme. The Council will continue to monitor funding arrangements throughout the development process. The proposal would not proceed to implementation unless a viable and affordable funding package has been secured. Should the necessary funding not be available, the Council would review the position, consider alternative options and determine whether any further school organisation proposals should be developed. Any subsequent decisions would be subject to the appropriate governance and decision-making processes. The Council remains satisfied that appropriate project management and risk management arrangements are in place to monitor and manage potential risks associated with the proposal.
The proposer has considered suitable alternatives to the proposal and given reasons why these have been discounted. The document explains that several	Noted

options, including retaining and refurbishing the existing schools, were considered. It concludes that these options would not adequately address failing buildings, surplus capacity, long-term sustainability or provide access to capital investment for new school facilities. The proposer has considered the impact of the changes on learner travel arrangements and accessibility of provision. The consultation includes a detailed assessment of travel distances, safe walking routes and transport eligibility. It concludes that most learners would remain within walking distance of the proposed school and that existing transport arrangements would continue to apply, including consideration of individual learners' additional needs. This appears reasonable. The proposer has shown clearly how surplus places will be affected. The document provides current and projected pupil numbers and demonstrates that amalgamating the two schools would significantly reduce surplus capacity and create provision that is more closely aligned with projected demand. It also identifies the risk that demand for places increases beyond current projects and notes that building designs will remain flexible and capable of future adaption.	
The proposer has outlined the financial aspects of the proposal suitably, including anticipated funding from Welsh Government and the Council, alongside future potential savings. The consultation identifies the estimated capital investment, proposed funding arrangements and the expected efficiencies arising from reduced surplus places. However, although the document outlines the capital investment required, it does not clearly outline what will happen if the necessary funding can't be secured. In addition, the proposal does not appear to demonstrate the extent of any ongoing revenue savings once the costs of financing the new school are considered. Furthermore, as the projected budget for the new school appears broadly comparable with	The Council notes Estyn's comments regarding the need for greater clarity on funding arrangements and the longer-term financial implications of the proposal. The proposal is dependent on the availability of capital funding from Welsh Government and the Council's approved Capital Programme. Should the necessary funding not be secured, the Council would review the position and consider alternative options before proceeding. The Council would not implement the proposal without a viable and affordable funding solution being identified.

the current combined budgets of the two existing schools, the overall financial advantage of the proposal over retaining and improving the existing buildings is not sufficiently clear.	Whilst financial efficiencies are anticipated through the removal of surplus places and the operation of a single school on one site, the proposal is primarily driven by educational considerations. The Council recognises that the projected delegated budget of the new school is broadly comparable to the combined budgets of the existing schools. However, the proposal would deliver wider benefits, including modern learning environments, reduced maintenance liabilities, improved accessibility and a more sustainable model for the long-term delivery of education. The Council therefore remains satisfied that the proposal represents an appropriate investment in future educational provision.
The proposer has provided details of the potential transfer of land and buildings. The document explains that the new school would be built on the existing Saltney Wood Memorial site and confirms that no decisions have yet been made regarding the future of the Saltney Ferry site, which would be considered separately in accordance with the Council's policy on surplus land and buildings. The proposer has outlined clearly how stakeholders can respond to the proposal. The consultation sets out the consultation period, response methods, contact details and the subsequent statutory process, including the publication of a consultation report, statutory notice, objection period and final decision-making arrangements. The proposer has considered the impact of the proposal on Welsh-medium provision and the local authority's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan. The document concludes that the proposal would not have a significant adverse impact on Welsh language provision and confirms the Council's continued commitment to its Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.	Noted

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.	
The proposer has considered the impact of the proposals on the quality and standards in education, including teaching and learning. The consultation considers the educational benefits of the proposal, including improved learning environments and greater opportunities to share effective practice through a single school. It concludes reasonably that these changes are expected to at least maintain current standards.	Noted
The proposer has considered information from the most recent Estyn reports for each school likely to be affected. The document refers to the findings of the most recent Estyn inspections and states that both schools are currently judged to provide a good standard of education. However, this assessment does not appear to acknowledge the historical concerns relating to one of the schools included in the proposal. That school experienced significant challenges in the past and has only recently been removed from Estyn follow-up.	The risks identified in previous core inspections have been mitigated. Changes in school leadership have strengthened leadership capacity, which continues to develop effectively. Recent senior leadership team (SLT) and staffing changes are contributing positively to improvements in pupil outcomes. Senior leaders are proactively involved in a wide range of self-evaluation activities, ensuring that they have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They use this knowledge well to plan for improvement and maintain a strong focus on raising standards and improving outcomes for pupils. Evidence from evaluations indicate that leadership capacity has strengthened further through regular and structured engagement. Leaders have developed greater confidence and accuracy in evaluating provision and monitoring progress. Collaborative self-evaluation activities, including learning walks, scrutiny of pupils' work and pupil voice exercises, have helped to establish a stronger culture of reflection and continuous improvement across different leadership levels.

	Leaders are increasingly effective in identifying strengths and areas for development and aligning their findings with School Development Plan priorities. The growing involvement of middle leaders and staff in planning, monitoring and review processes is helping to build wider leadership capacity and strengthen collective responsibility for school improvement. In addition, leaders have demonstrated an increased focus on improving provision, including the learning environment, outdoor learning opportunities and pupil engagement, reflecting a stronger emphasis on pedagogy and curriculum design. Despite this positive progress, some inconsistencies remain. Variability in the implementation of agreed approaches, including marking practices and the consistent use of strategies such as '3 Before Me', suggests that monitoring and evaluation processes have not yet secured a fully consistent approach across the school. Addressing these inconsistencies remains an important next step in ensuring that improvements in provision are embedded and lead to sustained improvements in outcomes for all pupils.
The proposer has considered the impact of the proposals on leading and improving. The consultation identifies suitably the benefits of establishing a single leadership team and governance structure to provide greater strategic capacity and long-term sustainability. It concludes reasonably that this would strengthen school improvement and leadership across the new school. The proposer has considered the likely impact of the proposals on the ability of schools affected by the proposals to deliver the full curriculum. The consultation concludes reasonably that the new school would be better	Noted

placed to deliver the Curriculum for Wales through improved facilities and learning resources. It also considers the impact on neighbouring schools and concludes that sufficient capacity exists to accommodate any changes in parental preference. The proposer has considered the impact of the proposals on well-being, care, support and guidance. The document recognises that school reorganisation may cause uncertainty for learners and families and explains that transition arrangements will be carefully planned to support pupils' wellbeing and ensure continuity of pastoral care throughout the process.	
The proposer has considered the impact of the proposals on vulnerable groups, including children with Additional Learning Needs (ALN). The document includes consideration of learners with ALN and explains that statutory duties would continue to apply throughout the reorganisation. It confirms that individual needs would be assessed and supported through transition planning and refers to a separate ALN Impact Assessment that accompanies the consultation. The proposer has considered how disruption to learners will be minimised. The consultation explains that transition arrangements will be carefully managed to ensure continuity of learning, wellbeing and pastoral support. It also states that the amalgamated school would operate as a single school community during the interim period, with shared leadership, policies and ethos, and that progress would be monitored throughout implementation.	Noted
The proposal considers a temporary multi-site arrangement during transition and explains why refurbishment of the existing schools has been discounted. While the document does not explicitly consider alternative organisational models, such as community hub arrangements or the co-location of public services within the existing school buildings, this appears reasonable given the current condition and suitability issues identified at both sites.	Noted

6.2 The response from Estyn sets out its view that the proposal is likely to, at least, maintain the current standards of education and provision in the area.

7.0 Standard Response forms

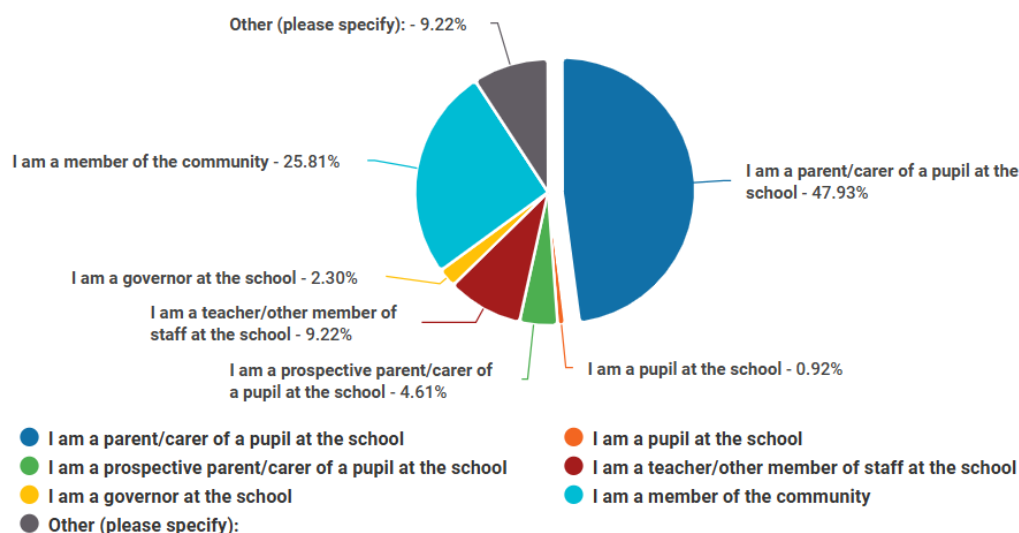
7.1 The standard response form was designed to establish:

- the capacity in which they were responding;
- whether or not people were in favour of the proposal and any comments they wish to make;
- the impact on opportunities to use the Welsh Language;
- whether they wanted to be notified of publication of the consultation report;
- Equalities Information.

7.2 On the response forms, we asked people to confirm whether they were responding as a pupil, parent/carer, prospective parent/carer, governor, teacher, support staff, member of the community or other. Further details of the respondents are set out in **Appendix C**.

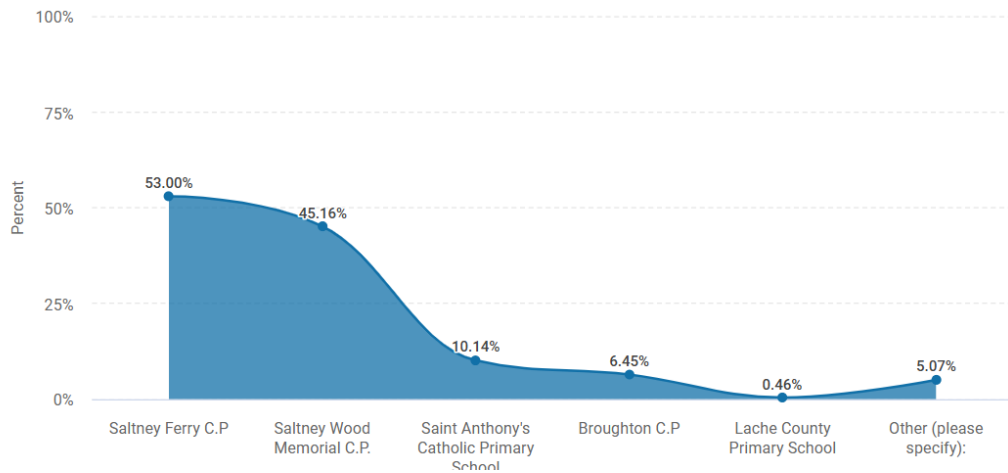
7.3 47.93% of overall responses were received from current parents/carers at Saltney Wood Memorial C.P and Saltney Ferry C.P. 51.4% of these current parent/carer responses were received from Saltney Ferry C.P whilst 42.2% of current parent/carer responses were received from Saltney Wood Memorial C.P.

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



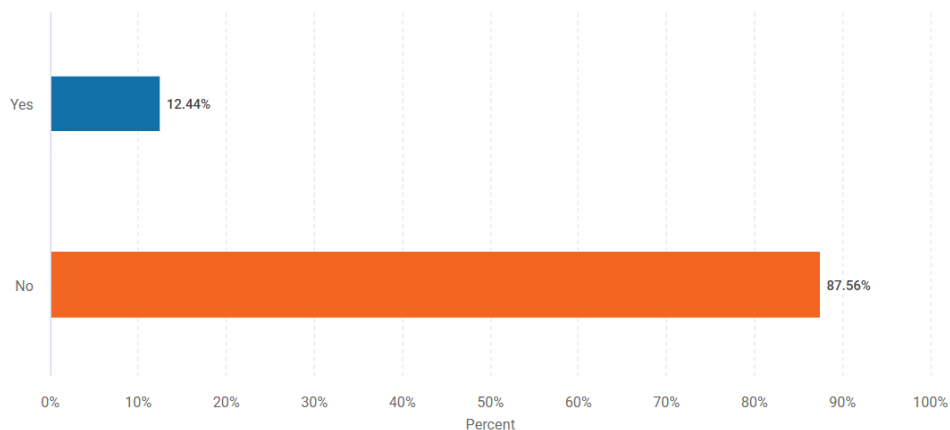
7.4 53% of total respondents associated themselves with Saltney Ferry C.P whilst 45.16% associated themselves with Saltney Wood Memorial C.P.

Which school/s do you associate yourself with?



7.5 87.56% of respondents disagreed with the proposal. 91.3% of respondents associated with Saltney Ferry C.P disagreed with the proposal whilst 84.7% of respondents associated with Saltney Wood Memorial C.P disagreed with the proposal. Further details of the respondents are set out in **Appendix B**.

Do you support the proposal to: Close Saltney Ferry C.P and Saltney Wood Memorial C.P and open a new maintained school operating on the current two sites whilst a new building is approved and constructed.



7.6 88.5% of current parents/carers at both Saltney Wood Memorial C.P and Saltney Ferry C.P disagreed with the proposal. 80% of prospective parents disagreed with the proposal as did 100% of governors. 30% of teachers/support staff agreed with the proposal whilst 70% disagreed. 40% of teachers/support staff agreeing with the proposal associated themselves with Saltney Wood Memorial C.P. 100% of teachers/support staff from Saltney Ferry C.P disagreed with the proposal. Further details of the respondents are set out in **Appendix D**.

	What is your interest/relationship with the school/s you identify with?								
Do you support the proposal to:Close Saltney Ferry C.P and Saltney Wood Memorial C.P and open a new maint...		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):	Row Totals
	Yes	12 11.5%	1 50.0%	2 20.0%	6 30.0%	0 0.0%	5 8.9%	1 5.0%	27 12.4%
	No	92 88.5%	1 50.0%	8 80.0%	14 70.0%	5 100.0%	51 91.1%	19 95.0%	190 87.6%
	Column Total	104 47.9%	2 0.9%	10 4.6%	20 9.2%	5 2.3%	56 25.8%	20 9.2%	217 100%

7.7 Respondents were able to provide additional comments on whether they did or did not support the proposal. 173 individual comments were received. An analysis of the frequency of issues being raised within the comments section and those from Estyn, RhAG and the NEU is below. The responses have been grouped into the categories which should be taken into account by relevant bodies when exercising their functions of preparing and publishing school organisation proposals, or approving/determining them.

8.0 RESPONSE THEMES

Theme	FCC Response
1. Travel Distance, Accessibility and Safety Key points • Respondents believe the proposed site is too far from Saltney Ferry for primary-aged children. • Concerns about busy roads, narrow pavements, crossings and winter weather. • Lack of confidence in walking routes and transport arrangements. • Concerns for families without access to a car, grandparents, carers and younger siblings. Examples • <i>"45 minute walk on a main road for Saltney Ferry children is not safe."</i> • <i>"Children from Saltney Ferry cannot safely walk from their homes to the proposed new school."</i> • <i>"The proposed site for the new school would mean that children currently attending Saltney Ferry would have to walk along one of the main commuter roads linking Flintshire with Cheshire."</i>	The Local Authority acknowledges the concerns raised regarding increased travel distances, accessibility and the safety of walking routes to the proposed new school site. Respondents highlighted a range of issues including the length of journey for some pupils, road safety concerns, busy traffic routes, crossing points and the practical challenges faced by families without access to private transport. Concerns were also raised regarding younger children, those with additional needs and families with multiple children attending different settings. The Authority recognises that travel arrangements would change for some families should the proposal proceed. As part of the development of the project, detailed assessments of access arrangements, active travel routes, highways considerations and site accessibility would continue to be undertaken. Eligibility for home-to-school transport would be considered in accordance with the Council's School Transport Policy.

	The views expressed through the consultation demonstrate the importance stakeholders place on safe and accessible journeys to school and these concerns will continue to be considered as part of the overall assessment of the proposal.
2. Community Identity and Loss of a Community Asset Key points - Schools are viewed as community hubs, not just educational facilities. - Many respondents see Saltney Ferry and Saltney as distinct communities. - Concerns that Saltney Ferry has already lost key services and amenities. - Closure is considered likely to weaken community cohesion and identity. - Many families have long-standing, multi-generational links to the schools. Examples <i>"Saltney Ferry CP is the heart of our community."</i> <i>"Closing the school would remove the last remaining place that truly brings people together."</i> <i>"Removal of the school would destroy a sense of cohesion delivered via the school."</i>	The Council accepts the strength of feeling expressed regarding the important role that both schools play within their respective communities. Many respondents described the schools as more than educational establishments, highlighting their contribution to community identity, local relationships and social cohesion. The Authority acknowledges the historical significance of both schools and the long-standing connections many families have developed across generations. Whilst the proposal seeks to establish a single new school for the Saltney area, the Authority recognises concerns regarding the potential impact on community identity and local connections. These comments have been carefully considered and form an important part of the consultation feedback. Should the proposal proceed, opportunities would be explored to celebrate and preserve the histories, traditions and achievements of both existing school communities within the new provision.
3. Small School Ethos, Nurture and Individual Support Key points - Respondents strongly value the smaller scale of both schools. - Schools are described as welcoming, nurturing and family-orientated. - Staff are perceived as knowing children and families well. - Parents believe children receive more personalised support. - Concerns that children could become overlooked in a larger school. Examples	The Council understands that consultees place significant value on the small-school ethos within both schools. Respondents highlighted the strong relationships that exist between pupils, families and staff, and the value placed on the welcoming, nurturing environments that support pupil wellbeing, confidence and a sense of belonging. The Council recognises that these characteristics are significant strengths of both school communities and that maintaining high-quality pastoral support will be a key consideration in the development of the new school. Whilst consultees have expressed concerns that pupils may receive less individual attention within a larger school, educational outcomes are influenced

• <i>"Both schools currently provide a small family type environment where the staff know every pupil."</i> • <i>"Smaller schools give the pupils a better education with more time spent with each pupil."</i> • <i>"The small, local and nurturing ethos of the school is what made us choose it."</i>	primarily by the quality of teaching, leadership, curriculum provision and pupil support rather than school size alone. The proposed arrangement seeks to retain the positive aspects of a caring and inclusive school culture whilst providing a more sustainable model for the future. Increased staff collaboration, enhanced leadership capacity, improved access to resources and a broader range of learning and enrichment opportunities have the potential to support both pupil wellbeing and educational outcomes. The Council expects the new school to maintain a strong focus on relationships, pastoral care and the individual needs of learners, combining the benefits of a nurturing environment with the advantages afforded by greater capacity and resources.
4. Impact on Vulnerable Learners, ALN Pupils and Wellbeing Key points • Significant concerns regarding the impact on children with ALN, SEN and additional support needs. • Respondents raised concerns relating to autism, ADHD, anxiety and medical conditions. • Change of school and travel arrangements were viewed as potentially disruptive. • Parents believe small school environments help vulnerable learners thrive. • Concerns that support could be diluted in a larger setting. Examples • <i>"Having a SEN child I know change to their routine can be very difficult."</i> • <i>"A dramatic change like a new school in a different location would not work for my child."</i> • <i>"They will not get the same level of support and attention in a larger school."</i>	The Council recognises the concerns raised by consultees regarding the potential impact of the proposal on vulnerable learners, including pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN), autism, ADHD, anxiety and other additional support needs. The Council recognises that many learners benefit from familiar routines, established relationships and environments where they feel secure, and that any significant change can be a source of concern for both pupils and their families. Whilst consultees have expressed concerns that support could be diluted within a larger school, evidence indicates that the quality, consistency and continuity of support are more significant factors in determining outcomes for pupils with additional needs than school size alone. The proposal provides opportunities to strengthen provision through enhanced staffing capacity, more consistent approaches to identifying and meeting learners' needs, improved access to specialist expertise and facilities, and greater opportunities for collaboration between staff. The Council recognises that the success of the proposal will depend on the effective management of transition arrangements and is committed to ensuring that pupils requiring additional support receive personalised assistance before, during and after any transition to minimise disruption and support their wellbeing.

5. Existing Schools are Successful and Should be Retained Key points • Many respondents questioned the need for change. • Schools are described as thriving, successful and valued. • Positive comments were made about leadership, staff and educational provision. • Increasing pupil numbers and full nursery/playgroup places were referenced regularly. • The NEU also challenged the suggestion that the schools are underperforming or unsustainable. Examples • <i>"Don't fix a system that isn't broken."</i> • <i>"The numbers are going up. The playgroup is full."</i> • <i>"Saltney Ferry school is now in a strong position and leading in areas of learning where other schools are seeking to come and share good practice."</i>	The Council welcomes the positive feedback received from consultees regarding both schools. Respondents highlighted the commitment of school leaders, staff and governors, the quality of educational provision, and the important role that each school plays within its community. The Council recognises that both schools have many strengths and are valued by pupils, parents, staff and the wider community. The proposal is not being brought forward because either school is considered unsuccessful or underperforming. Rather, it is intended to secure a sustainable model of educational provision that meets the future needs of learners and the community. Whilst recognising the strengths of both schools, the Council must also consider wider factors including the significant number of surplus places across the two schools, the condition and suitability of the existing buildings, and the long-term sustainability of provision. The Council believes that bringing together the strengths, expertise and resources of both schools within a modern learning environment would provide opportunities to enhance educational provision, improve the efficient use of resources and create a sustainable school capable of meeting the needs of future generations.
6. Preference for Investment in Existing Schools Rather Than Amalgamation Key points • Many respondents support investment in education but not through amalgamation. • Refurbishment and improvement of current schools were suggested as alternatives. • Respondents questioned whether a new school represents the best use of public funding. • Some comments referred to council tax implications. • Concerns were also raised about ownership of publicly funded assets. Examples • <i>"Invest in the schools we have."</i>	The Council notes the preference expressed by some consultees for investment in the existing school buildings, rather than the development of a new school through amalgamation. The Council recognises the attachment that many stakeholders have to the existing schools and understands why refurbishment of the current sites has been suggested as an alternative option. In developing the proposal, the Council considered a range of options and assessed their ability to meet the long-term educational, operational and financial needs of learners and the community. The proposed investment is linked to funding through the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme, which is intended to support projects that address strategic objectives, including the provision of sustainable school places and the efficient

• <i>"Money would be better spent on both existing schools."</i> • <i>"The local authority should use capital spending to make improvements to the two sites."</i>	use of educational assets. Given the significant number of surplus places across the two schools, investment in the existing buildings would not address the underlying sustainability issues that the proposal seeks to resolve and would be unlikely to align with the criteria for this level of investment. The Council therefore considers that the proposal represents the most effective way of securing external funding, reducing surplus capacity and providing a modern learning environment that supports the long-term delivery of high-quality education.
7. Community Views, Consultation and Trust in Decision-Making Key points • Respondents frequently stated that they felt ignored. • References were regularly made to the previous consultation process. • A perception exists that local views have not influenced the proposal. • Concerns were raised regarding transparency and evidence supporting the proposal. • Several respondents requested clearer justification for the educational benefits. Examples • <i>"We are being ignored."</i> • <i>"96% of people who responded do not want this to happen."</i> • <i>"The public's views and opinions have not been listened to."</i>	The Council understands that some consultees feel the views expressed during the consultation have not influenced the proposal and notes the concerns raised in this regard. The Council recognises the strength of feeling within the community and appreciates the time taken by pupils, parents, staff, governors and other stakeholders to engage with the process. All consultation responses have been carefully considered and recorded as part of the statutory consultation process. Whilst the Council notes that many respondents are opposed to the proposal, the purpose of consultation is to gather and consider all views, evidence and information before a decision is made, rather than to determine the outcome through a vote. The Council is required to consider a range of factors, including educational outcomes, learner wellbeing, sustainability, financial implications, school capacity and the efficient use of resources. Feedback received during consultation has helped to identify areas where further clarification is required, particularly in relation to the educational benefits of the proposal, transition arrangements and the long-term sustainability of provision. The Council remains committed to maintaining an open and transparent process and ensuring that all representations are fully considered before any final decision is taken.
8. Impact on Attendance, Disadvantaged Families and Equality Key points	The Council has carefully considered the concerns raised by consultees regarding the potential impact of the proposal on attendance, disadvantaged families and pupils with additional needs. Respondents

• Respondents linked increased travel requirements to lower attendance. • Concerns were raised regarding financial pressures on families. • Particular concern was expressed about families living in areas of deprivation. • The NEU highlighted the proportion of pupils eligible for Free School Meals and with Individual Development Plans. • Respondents argued that the proposal could create additional barriers to accessing education. Examples • <i>"Attendance figures will drop massively."</i> • <i>"Many families live below the poverty line."</i> • <i>"Moving the school will decimate this figure and subsequently those vulnerable pupils and families."</i>	highlighted concerns that increased travel distances could create barriers to accessing education, particularly for families experiencing financial hardship, and may adversely affect attendance, wellbeing and engagement. The Council recognises the importance of ensuring that all learners are able to access education equitably and that any potential impacts on vulnerable groups are carefully considered. Whilst these concerns are understood, there is no evidence to suggest that the proposal would, in itself, result in a significant decline in attendance. The Council has considered the potential impact on learners through the Equality Impact Assessment and recognises the need to support those families who may be more affected by changes to travel arrangements. In addition, the proposal provides an opportunity to enhance educational provision through improved facilities, greater access to resources and a more sustainable model of support for learners, including those eligible for Free School Meals and those with Individual Development Plans. The Council is committed to working closely with families and schools to ensure that any transition arrangements are implemented sensitively and that barriers to participation are minimised wherever possible.
Positive Theme: Benefits of a New School and Modern Facilities Key points • A minority of respondents supported the proposal. • Supporters cited the condition and age of existing buildings. • Modern facilities were seen as potentially improving the learning environment. • Some respondents felt a single school would make better use of resources. • A small number expressed support after reviewing the consultation information. Examples • <i>"The current schools are not fit for purpose."</i>	The Council notes that a number of consultees expressed support for the proposal and recognised the potential benefits that could be achieved through the creation of a new school. Respondents highlighted concerns regarding the age and condition of the existing buildings and considered that modern, purpose-built accommodation could provide an improved learning environment for pupils and staff. Some consultees also acknowledged the potential advantages of operating a single school rather than maintaining two schools with significant surplus places. The Council agrees that the proposal provides an opportunity to deliver high-quality, modern learning facilities that are designed to support the delivery of the Curriculum for Wales and meet the needs of current and future learners. The proposed development would provide

• "A new modern state of the art building will be better planned." • "It makes financial sense to have one full school rather than two schools not full to capacity."	improved learning environments, enhanced accessibility, greater flexibility in the use of space and more efficient use of resources. The Council considers that bringing together the strengths of both schools within a new purpose-built facility would support the long-term sustainability of educational provision and deliver benefits for pupils, staff and the wider community.
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8.0 In the response forms, we requested individuals to provide their views on the possible effects of this proposal on the Welsh Language. Further details of the respondents are set out in **Appendix E**. Despite the fact that most respondents opposed the proposed plan, approximately two thirds of those who responded to the Welsh language questions believed that, if enacted, the proposal would yield positive or neutral effects on the Welsh language. Only about 18% thought the proposal would adversely affect the identified areas. This is consistent with our WLIA, which also acknowledged that any new school presents an opportunity to enhance Welsh language skills both in the educational setting and the broader community.

8.1 49.07% of respondents believe this proposal will have a neutral impact on the number of people speaking or learning Cymraeg.

8.2 49.06% of respondents believe this proposal will have a neutral impact on the use of Welsh services.

8.3 49.30% of respondents believe this proposal will have a neutral impact on the use of Welsh language socially.

8.4 50.70% of respondents believe this proposal will have a neutral impact on Welsh speaking communities.

8.5 43.87% of respondents believe this proposal will have a neutral impact on treating Welsh equal to English.

8.6 Respondents were able to provide additional comments on how this proposal could increase positive effects, or reduce negative effects on the Welsh Language. 82 individual comments were received. An analysis of the frequency of issues being raised within the comments section is below.

WELSH LANGUAGE THEMES

Theme	FCC Response
Theme 1: Proposal Could Reduce Welsh Language Use Through Increased Cross-Border Education Key points	The Council is mindful of concerns regarding the potential impact of the proposal on Welsh language use and the possibility that some families may choose to access education in England. Respondents expressed concerns that changes to local school provision could influence parental choice and reduce opportunities for

• Respondents believe the proposal may encourage more families to choose schools in England. • Reduced participation in Welsh education is viewed as limiting opportunities to learn and use Welsh. • Concerns that increased travel distances may lead families to seek alternative provision across the border. • Some respondents considered this contrary to Welsh language promotion aims. Examples • <i>"Closing the schools will inevitable encourage more pupils to use cross border schools."</i> • <i>"Combining these schools will see pupils withdrawn and looking for other options. In my case, this would likely be my 2nd child attending an English school."</i> • <i>"Removing the 3 schools in Saltney will only force local parents to send their children to schools in England."</i>	learners to access Welsh language education within Flintshire. The Council recognises that cross-border education is already a well-established feature of the area and that families have historically exercised their right to choose schools across the Wales-England border for a variety of reasons. Whilst parental decisions cannot be predicted with certainty, Flintshire remains committed to the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 ambition and to increasing the number of Welsh speakers. The Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) aims to increase Welsh language skills for all learners, including those attending English-medium schools. The WESP includes actions to increase participation in Welsh-medium education, improve Welsh language attainment in English-medium schools, and support learners transferring into Welsh-medium education through immersion programmes. While Saltney's location close to the English border is acknowledged, the Welsh Language Impact Assessment notes that Welsh language use in that area is already relatively low compared with other parts of Flintshire. The Council will continue to promote Welsh language learning and Welsh-medium education opportunities for local families regardless of the outcome of this proposal. The proposal is intended to provide a sustainable, high-quality educational environment that remains an attractive option for local families whilst continuing to support Welsh language development.
Theme 2: Welsh Language Benefits of the Proposal Have Not Been Demonstrated Key points • Many respondents could not identify how the proposal would improve Welsh language outcomes. • Concerns that amalgamation does not automatically lead to greater use of Welsh. • Respondents questioned the evidence supporting any positive Welsh language impact.	The Council is mindful of concerns regarding the potential impact of the proposal on Welsh language outcomes. A number of respondents questioned whether the amalgamation of the schools would, in itself, lead to increased use of Welsh or improved Welsh language attainment, and sought clearer evidence of how the proposal supports Welsh Government's ambitions for the Welsh language. The Council recognises that school reorganisation alone does not automatically result in improved Welsh language outcomes. The proposal's contribution to Welsh language objectives is linked to the opportunities created through a sustainable school model, including enhanced collaboration between staff, greater consistency in curriculum delivery and increased capacity to support the teaching and learning of Welsh.

- Stakeholder responses highlighted a lack of measurable Welsh language outcomes. - Calls were made for clearer links between the proposal and Welsh language objectives. Examples <i>"I do not anticipate this proposal having a significant positive impact on Welsh language opportunities in the area."</i> <i>"This isn't going to increase Welsh language."</i> <i>"The Welsh Language Impact Assessment does not demonstrate how this proposal contributes to fulfilling those commitments."</i>	The Council acknowledges that the proposal should not be viewed as a standalone mechanism for increasing Welsh language use; rather, it provides a platform from which Welsh language provision and opportunities can be developed and strengthened over time. The Council remains committed to supporting the aims of Cymraeg 2050 and working with school leaders to promote the use of Welsh across the curriculum and wider school life as set out in the WESP. The Council will continue to monitor the impact of the proposal on the Welsh language and will consider feedback received during the consultation process as part of the ongoing Welsh Language Impact Assessment. Should the proposal proceed, the Council will work with the governing body and school leadership to identify opportunities to strengthen Welsh language provision and support delivery of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan. This may include enhanced visibility of the Welsh language throughout the new school environment, increased opportunities for curricular and extra-curricular Welsh language activities, staff professional learning opportunities and continued promotion of Welsh-medium education pathways. The Council recognises that delivery of Welsh language objectives should be actively monitored and will consider how progress against these aims can be reflected within future school improvement and WESP arrangements.
Theme 3: Existing Schools Already Support Welsh Language Learning Effectively Key points - Respondents frequently stated that Welsh language learning is already promoted successfully. - Current school staff were praised for encouraging Welsh language use. - Smaller schools were viewed as supporting language learning and confidence. - Respondents felt Welsh language outcomes could continue to improve within existing arrangements.	The Council welcomes the positive comments made by consultees regarding the promotion of the Welsh language within the existing schools. Respondents highlighted the commitment of staff to embedding Welsh language learning within everyday school life and recognised the positive contribution that both schools make in supporting learners' confidence and engagement with the Welsh language. The Council welcomes these views and recognises the important work currently being undertaken by staff to promote Welsh language development. The proposal is not based on a view that current Welsh language provision is ineffective or requires improvement as a result of underperformance. Rather, it seeks to build upon the strengths that already exist within both schools by creating a sustainable educational environment that can continue to support Welsh language learning in the long term. The Council recognises that improvements in Welsh language outcomes are driven by high-quality teaching, leadership and whole-school commitment rather than school organisation alone. It is anticipated that the expertise and good practice currently evident across both schools would be retained and shared within the proposed new

- Some suggested strengthening Welsh provision without reorganising schools. Examples <i>"They do amazingly within Saltney Ferry incorporating Welsh into everyday speaking and learning."</i> <i>"Let us keep our school, our teacher ... is the best at Welsh and we'll learn more with ..."</i> <i>"This can be best achieved by addressing the curriculum within the existing school arrangements."</i>	school, creating further opportunities to promote Welsh language learning and support the aspirations of Cymraeg 2050 and the WESP.
Theme 4: Saltney's Border Location Creates Challenges for Welsh Language Development Key points - Saltney was frequently described as a predominantly English-speaking area. - Respondents highlighted the proximity to the English border. - Many felt opportunities to use Welsh outside school are limited. - Some viewed this as a barrier to increasing Welsh language use. - Others felt this made Welsh language promotion particularly important. Examples <i>"It's very hard in this area to increase Welsh as we are so near the English border."</i> <i>"Saltney is on the border with England, I do not think Welsh language is widely spoken here anyway."</i>	The Council is mindful of the views expressed by consultees regarding Saltney's unique linguistic context and the challenges associated with promoting the Welsh language in a border area. Respondents noted that Saltney is predominantly English-speaking and that opportunities to use Welsh outside of school may be more limited than in other parts of Wales. The Council recognises that the local context can influence learners' opportunities to practise and use Welsh beyond the classroom. The Council considers that these factors reinforce, rather than diminish, the importance of schools in promoting Welsh language learning and supporting the ambitions of Cymraeg 2050 through use of their facilities. It is intended to provide a sustainable educational environment in which learners can continue to develop their Welsh language skills through high-quality teaching and meaningful opportunities to engage with Welsh across school life and beyond the school day. The Council remains committed to supporting Welsh language development and ensuring that learners are provided with opportunities to use and develop their Welsh language skills regardless of the community's proximity to the English border. We will continue to promote Welsh language learning and Welsh-medium education opportunities for local families regardless of the outcome of this proposal and support the growth of Welsh medium education in the area through the use of existing facilities.

• <i>"This has nothing to do with language. Saltney is, and always will be an English speaking community."</i>	
Theme 5: Welsh Language Should Be Promoted Through Practical and Positive Measures Key points • Respondents generally supported opportunities to learn Welsh. • Suggestions included additional teaching, Welsh language activities and community learning opportunities. • Several respondents supported learning Welsh from a young age. • Some favoured encouraging Welsh rather than mandating its use. • Comments highlighted the importance of Welsh culture and heritage. Examples • <i>"Promote the language and offer free courses."</i> • <i>"Continue with current set up and have dedicated Welsh days once per week."</i> • <i>"Employ an English and Welsh speaking teacher in primary schools."</i>	The Council acknowledges the views expressed by consultees regarding the promotion of the Welsh language and the importance of providing opportunities for learners and the wider community to develop their Welsh language skills. Respondents suggested a range of practical measures, including additional Welsh language activities, dedicated Welsh language learning opportunities and increased access to Welsh language support. The Council welcomes the positive support expressed for Welsh language learning and recognises the important contribution that schools make in promoting Welsh language and culture from an early age. The Council recognises that promoting the Welsh language requires a range of ongoing initiatives and opportunities that extend beyond school organisation arrangements alone. Whilst the proposal is not specifically intended as a mechanism for increasing Welsh language use, it is expected that the new school would continue to support Welsh language learning through the Curriculum for Wales and through wider school activities that promote Welsh language and culture. The Council remains committed to supporting the ambitions of Cymraeg 2050 and will continue to work with schools and partners to encourage learners to develop confidence in using Welsh in meaningful and positive ways. 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
Positive Theme: Support for Welsh Language and Cultural Promotion Key points • A smaller group of respondents expressed clear support for growing Welsh language use.	The Council notes that a number of consultees expressed support for the promotion and development of the Welsh language and recognised its importance as part of Wales' culture, heritage and identity. Respondents highlighted the value of bilingualism, supported opportunities for children to learn Welsh from a young age and acknowledged the role that education can play in creating future Welsh speakers. Some consultees also identified the need for greater opportunities to use Welsh within the wider community.

• Welsh was viewed as an important part of Welsh identity and culture. • Support was expressed for bilingual education and second-language learning. • Some respondents wanted more opportunities to use Welsh in the community. • Respondents recognised the importance of creating future Welsh speakers. Examples • <i>"Welsh is dying and I'd like it to be revived."</i> • <i>"I think all children should be taught a second language."</i> • <i>"There are no opportunities to use Welsh in the community, so having more Welsh speakers in the area can only improve on this."</i>	The Council shares these aspirations and remains committed to supporting the objectives of Cymraeg 2050 and the local Welsh in Education Strategic Plan. Whilst the proposal is primarily concerned with the organisation of school provision, the Council recognises the important role that schools play in developing learners' Welsh language skills and fostering an appreciation of Welsh language and culture. The proposed school would continue to promote Welsh language learning through the Curriculum for Wales and provide opportunities for learners to engage with Welsh language and cultural activities beyond the school day. The Council also acknowledges the importance of working with partners to encourage opportunities for the use of Welsh within the wider community. Further information on how we plan to mitigate some of the issues raised in the consultation, and how we hope to improve Welsh Language opportunities are provided in the Welsh Language Impact Assessment alongside the Consultation document. This document will be updated to reflect feedback from the consultation.
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9.0 Next Steps

In accordance with the School Organisation Code, the Council has reviewed and considered all consultation responses received, including those submitted by pupils, parents, carers, staff, governors, trade unions, community representatives, Estyn and Rhieni dros Addysg Gymraeg (RhAG).

A number of issues were consistently raised throughout the consultation process, including concerns regarding travel arrangements, community identity, the impact on vulnerable learners, the future use of existing school sites, the potential impact on attendance and the contribution of the proposal towards Welsh language objectives.

Consultees also proposed a range of alternative approaches, including:

- Retaining both schools in their current form;
- Refurbishing the existing school buildings;
- Investing separately in both schools rather than constructing a new school;
- Developing a new school on an alternative site;
- Exploring alternative school organisation arrangements involving other schools within the local area.

The Council has carefully considered these alternatives alongside the evidence presented within the consultation document. Whilst the consultation responses have provided additional information regarding the strength of local opinion and stakeholder

concerns, no new evidence has been identified that materially alters the assessment contained within the consultation document.

The Council remains of the view that retaining and refurbishing the existing schools would not sufficiently address the challenges associated with building condition, suitability, surplus places and the long-term sustainability of educational provision within the area. Similarly, alternative organisational models would not secure the same educational, operational and financial benefits associated with the proposed amalgamation and development of a new school.

Having considered all consultation responses and alternative suggestions, the Council's assessment of the proposal remains unchanged.

The Council continues to consider that implementation of the proposal represents the most appropriate response to the need to provide sustainable educational provision, improve learning environments, reduce surplus school places, strengthen long-term leadership capacity and support the efficient use of public resources whilst maintaining educational standards for current and future learners.

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.

Comments made against the proposal during the consultation period will not be considered as objections. If any consultees wish to formally object, this must be done in writing within the designated objection period. Details on how to submit an objection will be clearly outlined in the Statutory Notice if a decision to proceed is made.

We would like to thank everyone who responded to the consultation.

APPENDIX A

List of all stakeholders in receipt of the consultation documentation.

Consultees	Distributed to / via
parents (and where possible prospective parents), carers and guardians of learners currently attending schools which are the subject of the proposals and any other school the proposer considers is likely to be affected by the proposals;	Via schools: Saltney Ferry C.P Saltney Wood Memorial C.P
in the case of proposals affecting secondary provision, parents, carers and guardians of learners attending primary schools from which learners normally transfer to that secondary school;	
staff members of schools which are the subject of the proposals and any other school the proposer considers is likely to be affected by the proposals;	Via schools: Saltney Ferry C.P Saltney Wood Memorial C.P
the maintaining or proposed maintaining authority for schools which are the subject of the proposals and any other school the proposer considers is likely to be affected by the proposals (including relevant transport and highways teams);	Flintshire County Council
any other local authority (including those in England, where appropriate) the proposer considers is likely to be affected by the proposals, including in the case of dedicated ALP any authority placing or likely to place learners with ALN in the school which is subject to the proposals;	Cheshire West and Chester Council Wrexham County Borough Council Denbighshire County Council Conwy County Borough Council
the Church in Wales and Roman Catholic Diocesan Authority for the area in which any school which is the subject of the proposals and any other schools the proposer considers are likely to be affected by the proposals are located;	Church in Wales Diocese of St Asaph Catholic Diocese of Wrexham
any other appropriate religious body for any school which is the subject of the proposals and any other school the proposer considers is likely to be affected by the proposals;	N/A
the governing body of any school which is the subject of the proposals and any other school the proposer considers is likely to be affected by the proposals;	Governing Body: Saltney Ferry C.P Saltney Wood Memorial C.P Saint Anthony's Catholic Primary School Broughton C.P Lache County Primary School
the Welsh Ministers;	
Members of the Senedd (MS) and Members of Parliament (MPs) representing the area served by/intended to be served by any school which is the subject of the proposals;	<u>Members of the Senedd (MS)</u> Cristiana Emsley; Carrie Harper; Marc Jones; Sam Rowlands; Ken Skates; Nigel Williams; Louise Emery; Llyr Gruffydd; Becca Martin; Adrian Mason; Darren Millar; Tom Montgomery <u>Members of Parliament (MPs)</u> Sir Mark Tami; Becky Gittins; Aphra Brandreth
Estyn;	His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales

teaching and staff trade unions representing teachers and other staff at any school which is the subject of the proposals;	Representatives of NASUWT; NEU; UCAC; ASCL; UNISON
the relevant school improvement services;	
the Police and Crime Commissioner for the area served by/intended to be served by any school which is the subject of the proposals;	Police Commissioner for North Wales
any community or town council for the area served by or intended to be served by any school which is the subject of the proposals;	Saltney Town Council
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;	
the local authority Family Information Service, any independent or voluntary providers who are likely to be affected and the national umbrella organisations supporting them, Mudiad Meithrin, NDNA Cymru, Clybiau Plant Cymru, Early Years Wales, PACEY Cymru and Play Wales;	Clwb Hampus Saltney Methodist Church Woody Wraparound Saltney Small Steps
in the case of proposals affecting Additional Learning Provision (ALP), any relevant health or third sector bodies that the proposer considers have an interest;	SNAP Cymru Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board
in the case of proposals affecting secondary provision, any further education institutions serving the area of the school which is the subject of the proposals;	Coleg Cambria
in the case of proposals affecting school sixth forms, Medr; and	Medr: Commission for Tertiary Education and Research
in the case of proposals affecting Welsh language provision, the Welsh Language Commissioner and Mentrau Iaith.	
Other	All Flintshire Council Councillors

APPENDIX B

Indication of how respondents from different schools support the proposal.

	Which school/s do you associate yourself with?							
Do you support the proposal to:Close Saltney Ferry C.P and Saltney Wood Memorial C.P and open a new maint...		Saltney Ferry C.P	Saltney Wood Memorial C.P.	Saint Anthony's Catholic Primary School	Broughton C.P	Lache County Primary School	Other (please specify):	Row Totals
	Yes	10 8.7%	15 15.3%	0 0.0%	3 21.4%	0 0.0%	1 9.1%	29 11.1%
	No	105 91.3%	83 84.7%	22 100.0%	11 78.6%	1 100.0%	10 90.9%	232 88.9%
	Column Total	115 44.1%	98 37.5%	22 8.4%	14 5.4%	1 0.4%	11 4.2%	261 100%

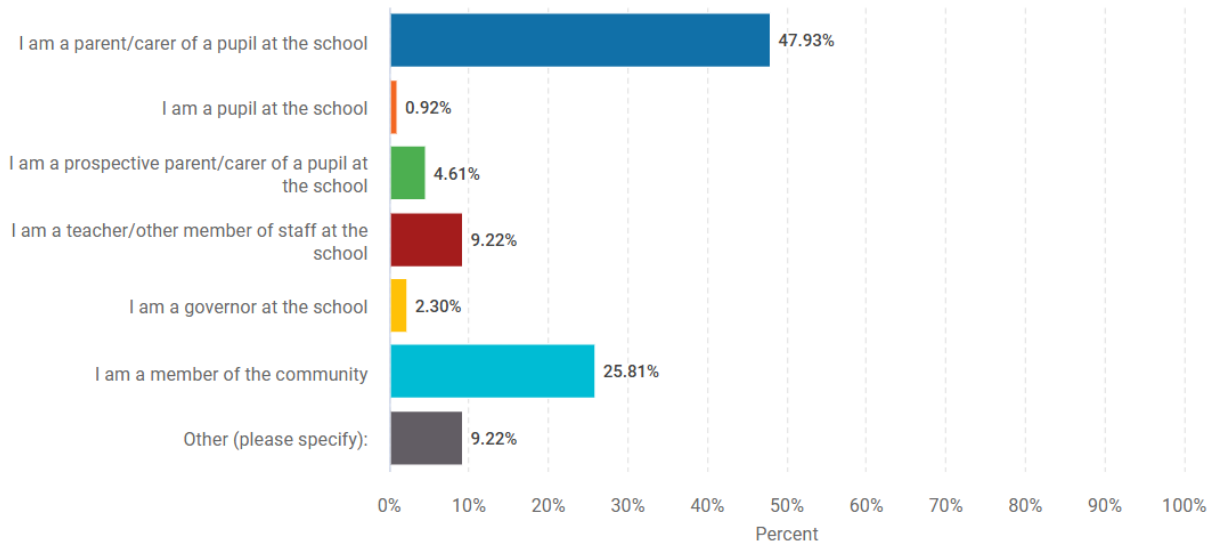
Comments

- The overwhelming majority of respondents from all the likely affected schools disagreed with the proposals.
- The majority of respondents identifying as 'other' agree with the proposal. Respondents in this category were mostly associated with St David's High School, Saltney or a previous association with either Saltney Ferry C.P or Saltney Wood Memorial C.P.

APPENDIX C

Indication as to the interest/relationship respondents have with the school they identify with.

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



Comments

- The majority of respondents (47.93%) were parents/carers of a pupil at the school.
- A quarter (25.81%) of respondents identified as members of the community.
- Those identifying as 'other' included grandparents, former parents/pupils of the affected schools and Saltney Town Council.

APPENDIX D

An examination of the responses from various groups of respondents regarding the proposal.

	What is your interest/relationship with the school/s you identify with?								
Do you support the proposal to:Close Saltney Ferry C.P and Saltney Wood Memorial C.P and open a new maint...		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):	Row Totals
	Yes	12 11.5%	1 50.0%	2 20.0%	6 30.0%	0 0.0%	5 8.9%	1 5.0%	27 12.4%
	No	92 88.5%	1 50.0%	8 80.0%	14 70.0%	5 100.0%	51 91.1%	19 95.0%	190 87.6%
	Column Total	104 47.9%	2 0.9%	10 4.6%	20 9.2%	5 2.3%	56 25.8%	20 9.2%	217 100%

Comments

- The vast majority (88.5%) of parents/carers do not agree with the proposal.
- The vast majority (91.1%) of the community do not agree with the proposal.
- The vast majority (95%) of the 'other' category do not agree with the proposal. These include grandparents, former parents/pupils and Saltney Town Council.
- Staff respondents are split 70/30 against the proposal.

Analysis of how those respondents groups associating **only** with Saltney Wood Memorial C.P.



	What is your interest/relationship with the school/s you identify with?								
Do you support the proposal to:Close Saltney Ferry C.P and Saltney Wood Memorial C.P and open a new maint...		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):	Row Totals
	Yes	4 8.7%	1 100.0%	1 25.0%	6 40.0%	0 0.0%	2 9.1%	1 12.5%	15 15.3%
	No	42 91.3%	0 0.0%	3 75.0%	9 60.0%	2 100.0%	20 90.9%	7 87.5%	83 84.7%
	Column Total	46 46.9%	1 1.0%	4 4.1%	15 15.3%	2 2.0%	22 22.4%	8 8.2%	98 100%

Comments

- The vast majority (91.3%) of parents/carers do not agree with the proposal.
- The vast majority (90.9%) of the community do not agree with the proposal.
- The vast majority (87.5%) of the 'other' category do not agree with the proposal. These include grandparents and ex-parents and pupils.
- Staff are split (40/60) against the proposal.

Analysis of how those respondents groups associating **only** with Saltney Ferry C.P.



	What is your interest/relationship with the school/s you identify with?								
Do you support the proposal to: Close Saltney Ferry C.P and Saltney Wood Memorial C.P and open a new maint...		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):	Row Totals
Yes	7 12.5%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2 5.9%	1 7.7%	10 8.7%
No	49 87.5%	1 100.0%	4 100.0%	6 100.0%	1 100.0%	32 94.1%	12 92.3%		105 91.3%
Column Total	56 48.7%	1 0.9%	4 3.5%	6 5.2%	1 0.9%	34 29.6%	13 11.3%		115 100%

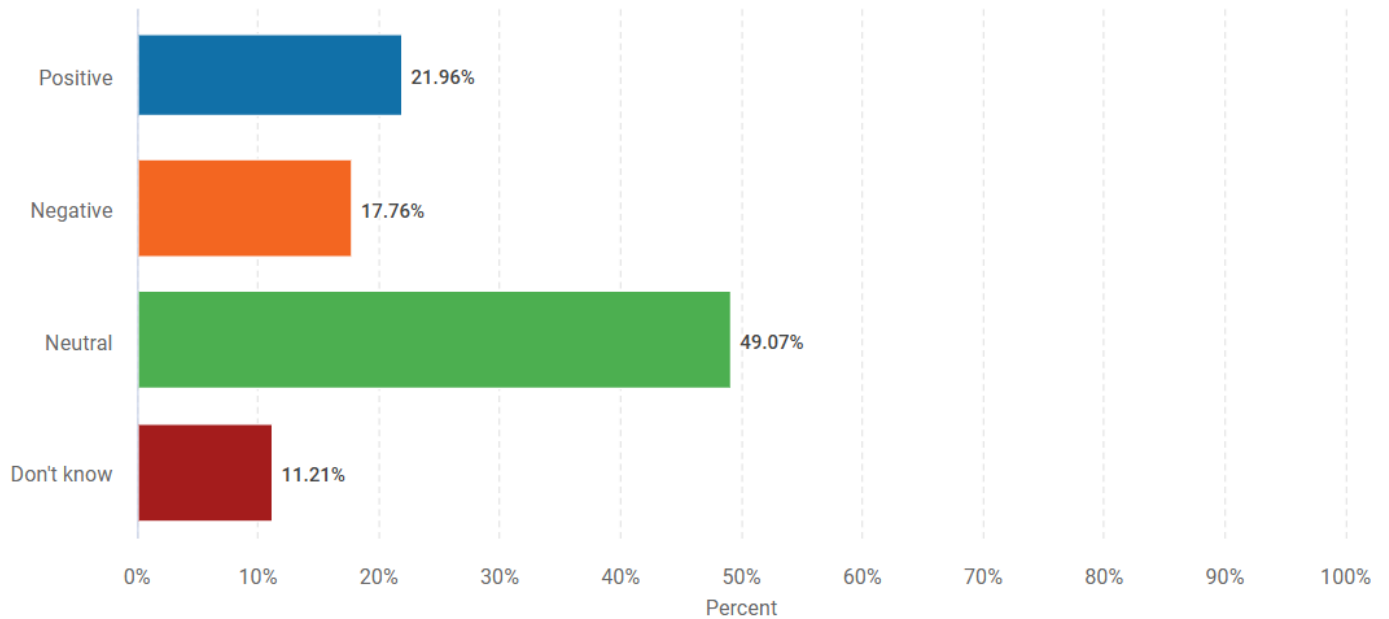
Comments

- The vast majority (87.5%) of parents/carers do not agree with the proposal.
- The vast majority (94.1%) of the community do not agree with the proposal.
- The vast majority (92.3%) of the 'other' category do not agree with the proposal. These are made up of grandparents and ex-parents and pupils.
- 100% of pupils, prospective parents, staff and governors disagree with the proposal.

APPENDIX E

Analysis of responses to Welsh Language Impact questions.

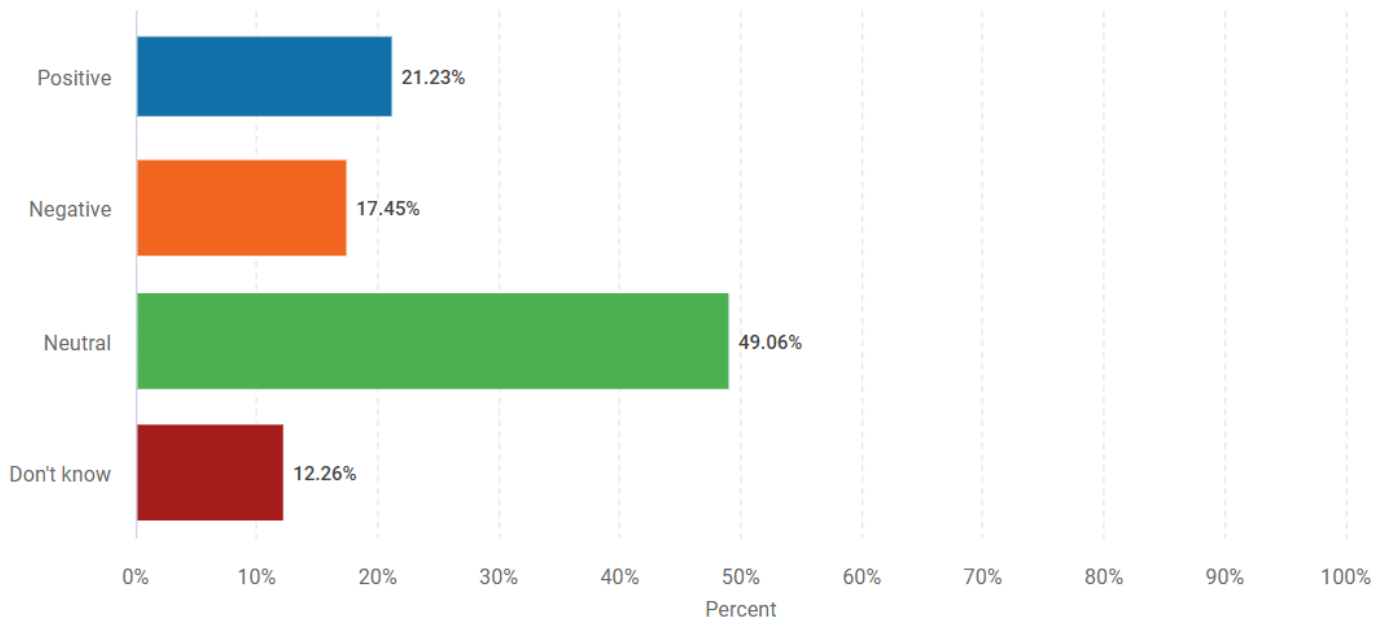
Increasing the number of people speaking or learning Cymraeg.



Comments

- 49.07% of respondents assessed there would be a neutral impact on increasing the number of people speaking or learning Cymraeg if the proposal was to proceed.

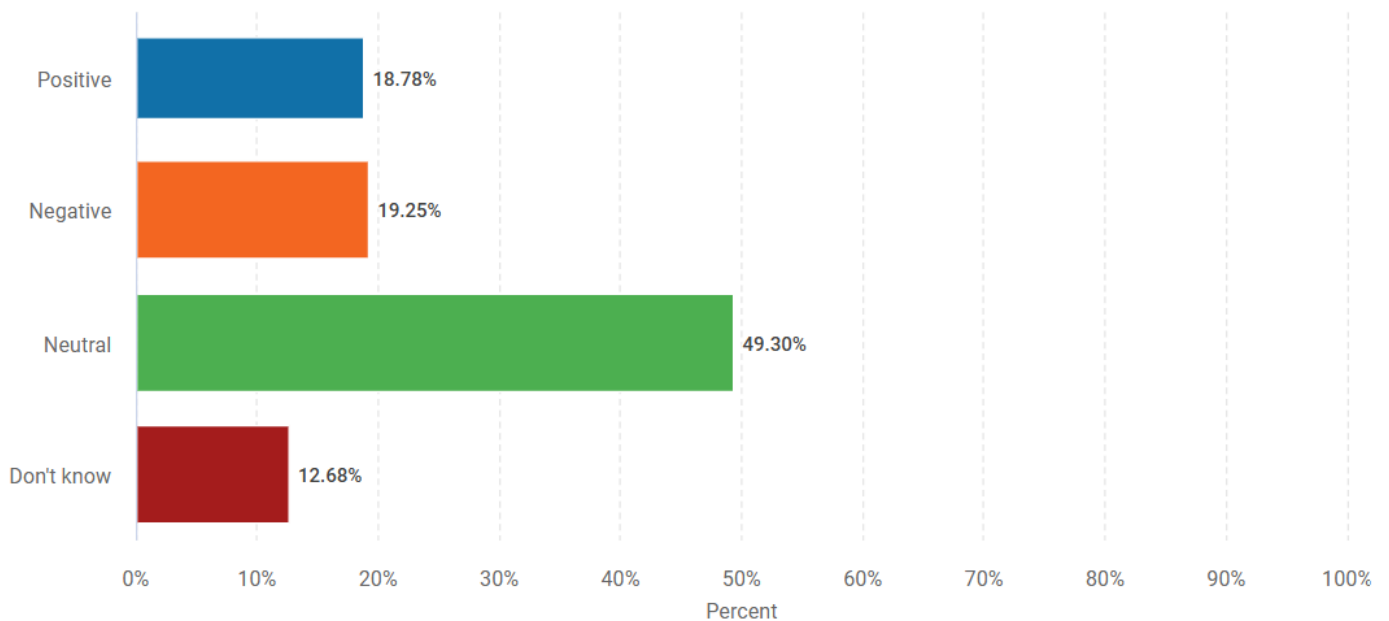
Using Welsh services.



Comments

- 49.06% of respondents assessed that there would be a neutral impact on the use of Welsh services if the proposal was to proceed.

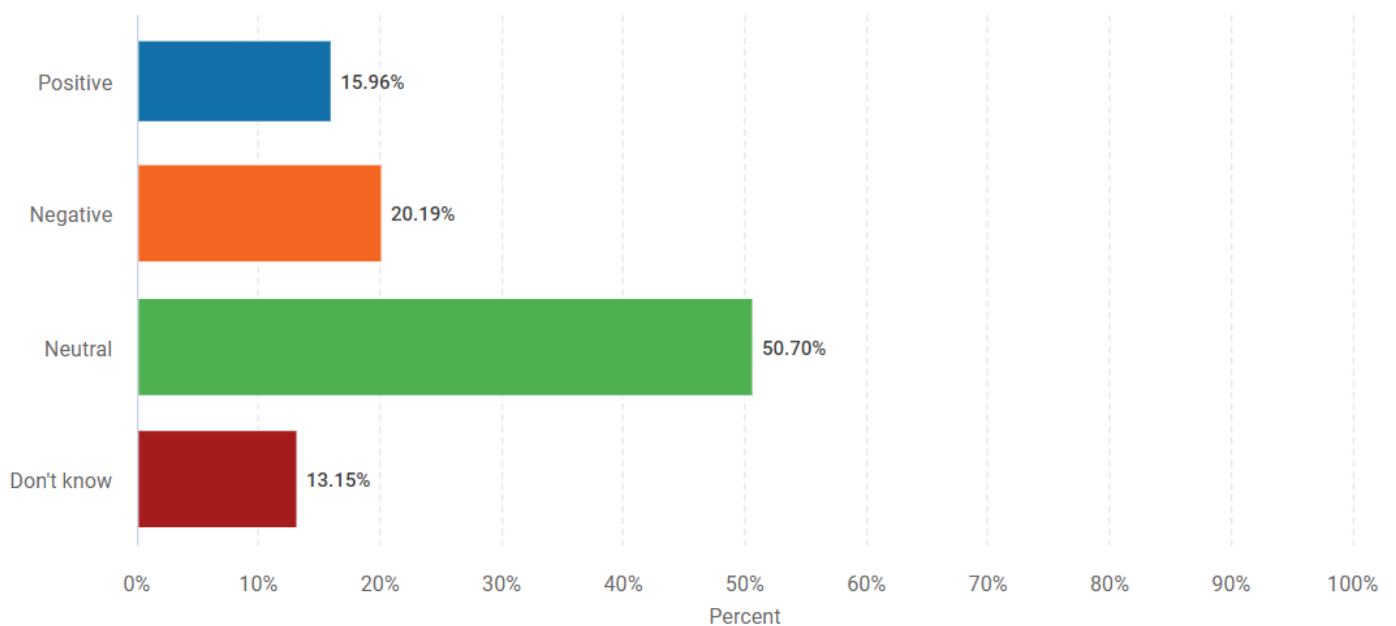
Opportunities to use Welsh socially.



Comments

- 49.30% of respondents assessed that there would be a neutral impact on the use of Welsh socially if the proposal was to proceed.
- 18.78% of respondents assessed that there would be a positive impact on the use of Welsh socially if the proposal was to proceed. However, this is caveated by the conclusion that some respondents assessing a positive impact of the proposal were not in favour of it overall.

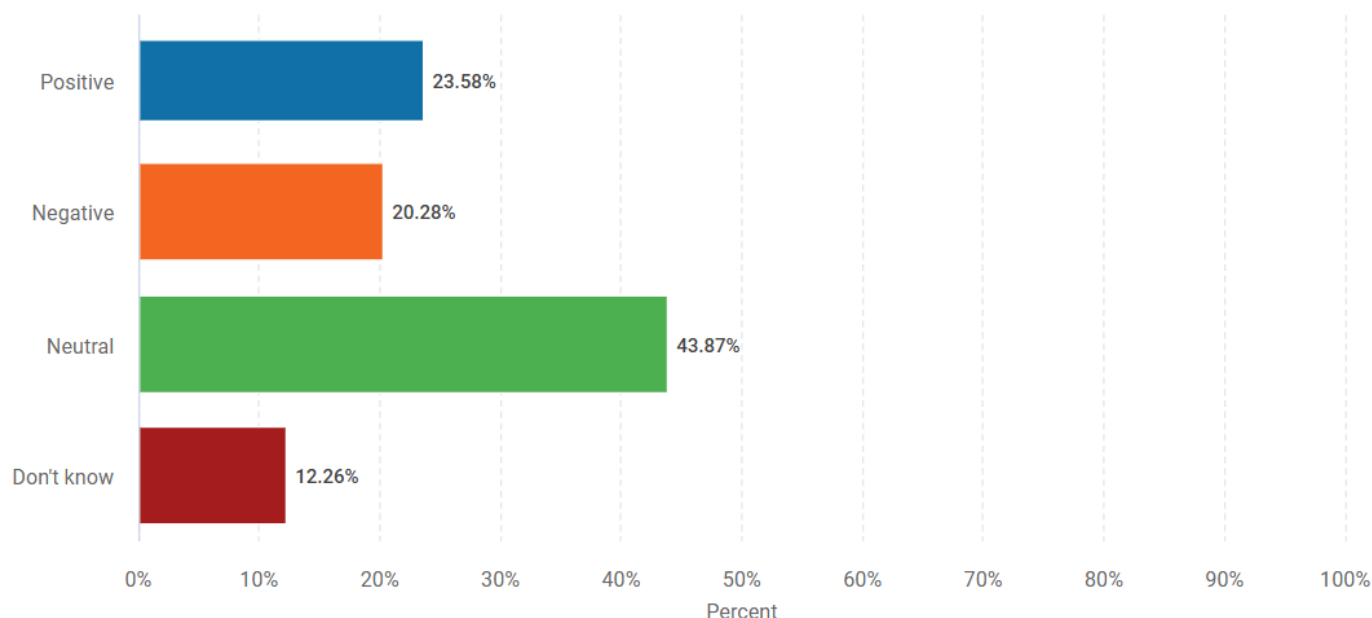
Welsh speaking communities.



Comments

- 50.70% of respondents assessed that there would be a neutral impact on Welsh speaking communities if the proposal was to proceed.

Treating Welsh equal to English.



Comments

- 43.87% of respondents assessed that there would be a neutral impact on treating Welsh equal to English if the proposal was to proceed.
- 23.58% of respondents assessed that there would be a positive impact on treating Welsh equal to English if the proposal was to proceed. However, this is caveated by the conclusion that some respondents assessing a positive impact of the proposal were not in favour of it overall.

APPENDIX F

An examination of the responses from the School Council consultation events held at Saltney Ferry C.P. School and Saltney Wood Memorial C.P. School, as well as the Young Flintshire Forum.



Saltney Ferry C.P School Council Consultation

Summary

1)

a) What do you like about your school?

Responses
• Our teachers • The farm • Swimming • Sports Day • The trips we go on • Subjects that we learning e.g. digital literacy, topic, maths and literacy. • Friendship and community

b) What would you like to change about your school?

Responses
• Learn more maths • Have more resources for the play group forest • Do a little more sport • Be able to go on more trips

2) What might be good about a brand-new school?

Responses
• We could make new friends • The school will be bigger • That we have new teachers • More topics that we could learn • We would have new stuff

3) What might be difficult of worrying?

Responses
• Having to make new friends • It will be hard to find the classes • It will take too long to build • It's too far to Wood Memorial

- First day would be scary as we don't know anyone or the building
- Having to walk to the new school
- Losing friends and teachers

4) Is there anything else you think should happen instead?

Responses
• Keep things as they are • Improve both of the schools as they are • Put St Anthony's and Wood Memorial together instead as they are next to each other • Build the school here instead • Add a big school in the middle between the two schools

Comments

- Learners spoke positively about their current school experience, particularly valuing their teachers, friendships, sense of community, enrichment activities, and opportunities such as swimming, trips and sports events.
- When considering a new school, pupils identified several potential benefits, including access to a larger building, new facilities and resources, a broader range of learning opportunities, and the chance to make new friends.
- Concerns centred primarily on the impact of change, with pupils expressing worries about leaving familiar teachers and friends, adjusting to a new environment, the distance they would have to travel, and navigating an unfamiliar school building.
- Alternative suggestions focused on retaining local provision, with pupils proposing improvements to existing schools, locating a new school closer to the community, or exploring different amalgamation arrangements between schools.



Summary

1)

a) What do you like about your school?

Responses
• The friends that we currently have • Ice cream pots • The chicken curry • Trips that we go on • Small school makes it quieter for students • Teachers and Headteacher • Residential and friends • The size of the classrooms

b) What would you like to change about your school?

Responses
• More reading books and corners • More fidget toys • Better furniture • Bigger food portions • Bigger football pitches and goals • Better dinner menu • More playground games and equipment

2) What might be good about a brand-new school?

Responses
• More people to make friends with • More football pitches • That it would be bigger and more modern • Meeting new people • A bigger team for sporting events • New resources and equipment

3) What might be difficult or worrying?

Responses
• It would feel different and difficult • Won't be like our school

- Having to make new friends
- Some teachers and staff may be upset and leave
- Not knowing the layout of the new school
- We might lose our really kind staff and our headteacher
- Your friends might find new friends and not want to spend time with you
- I don't think my brother/sister would like it

4) Is there anything else you think should happen instead?

Responses
• Rebuild Saltney Ferry instead • Build a new Woody and a new Saltney Ferry instead

Comments

- Learners valued the close-knit nature of their school, highlighting friendships, supportive staff, trips and residential experiences, and the quieter environment associated with a smaller school community.
- Suggested improvements to the current school focused mainly on enhancing resources and facilities, including reading materials, playground equipment, sporting facilities, classroom furniture, and catering provision.
- Pupils identified a number of potential benefits of a new school, including access to modern facilities, improved resources, expanded sporting opportunities, and the chance to develop new friendships within a larger school community.
- Concerns centred on the impact of change and loss of familiarity, with pupils expressing worries about leaving existing friendships and staff relationships behind, adapting to a different environment, and uncertainty about how the transition might affect themselves and their families.

Young Flintshire Forum 24 June 2026

Summary of feedback session

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

A presentation outlining the Catholic School and Saltney Area school proposals was delivered, after which participants were invited to discuss and provide their overall views on the proposals. Groups were asked to identify and record the perceived advantages and disadvantages of the proposals from the perspectives of both learners and the wider community. A summary of the feedback received is provided below the table.

1. Your Overall View of the Proposal	Count
• I fully support the proposal "Making one school combined together creates more space." "It will be a modern school and combining the school would make sense."	2
• I mostly support the proposal "It would improve efficiency." "It will be difficult for the students to join a new school." "If the building isn't going to be used for something else then it is pointless." "It will make the schools better by merging them together." "Accessibility to the new site is an important consideration." "Need to consider the cost of new uniform and travel for pupils from Saltney Ferry C.P." "They are both community primary schools and one additional mile travel isn't super long for pupils to travel." "Why have two schools within a mile when you can come together?" "It may be hard to manage two buildings a decent distance away for the initial 3 years."	17
• I'm unsure "It's a big change and some people don't like change." "Some children may struggle to get to the new school." "As long as the new school is big enough and supplies enough opportunities for learners." "May be challenges with transport and traffic." "Both primaries may be old and need modernising and one may have a high amount of students and one a low amount."	8
• I mostly do not support the proposal	1

1. Your Overall View of the Proposal	Count
“Some kids may need to find a new school.” • I do not support the proposal No comments	0

2. Impact on Learners
What do you think the proposal would mean for learners? Consider learning, friendships, travel, wellbeing, opportunities, and daily routines. Positive impacts: “Chance to make new friends and socialise with people” “Better resources and a newer building.” “Building new school community.” “More opportunities may come with a new school.” “Larger school would help learners prepare for high school.” “Different variety of teachers and teaching experience.” Negative or worrying impacts: “Walking distance for pupils leading to tired children.” “More children in one place could be cramped.” “Possibly less personal learning experience due to size of new school.” “Old friendships may be split up.” “Cost of having to purchase new uniform.” “Change may be disruptive to students who struggle with adapting.”

3. Impact on the Community
How might families, local services, and the wider area be affected? Possible benefits: “More money being directed into the Saltney community.” “People will come together for wider community events.” “School can fit more children in it.” “Newer and nicer facilities for pupils.” “Larger footfall on high street could boost local businesses.” “The old buildings could be converted into community use spaces.” Possible challenges: “Jobs could be lost.” “Families could be spending more money on travel.”

3. Impact on the Community

“Building may just be abandoned.”

“Could be a lot more traffic on the roads.”

“Some communities will lose their school.”

“Wouldn’t be able to switch schools easily if unhappy.”

“Difficulties with travelling to the new site.”

Comments

- Feedback indicated a generally positive view of the proposal, with the majority of participants either fully supporting or mostly supporting the plans, citing the benefits of bringing two schools together within a modern learning environment.
- Participants recognised the potential for improved educational opportunities, including access to enhanced facilities, better resources, a wider range of teaching expertise, and a school environment that could better prepare learners for secondary education.
- The opportunity for learners to develop new friendships and become part of a larger school community was identified as a key benefit, although concerns were also raised about the possible disruption to existing friendship groups.
- Travel and accessibility emerged as important considerations throughout discussions. Participants highlighted potential challenges relating to increased travel distances, transport arrangements, traffic congestion, and the impact on pupils' daily routines.
- Some respondents expressed concerns about the scale of the proposed school, noting that larger pupil numbers could affect the personal nature of learning experiences and potentially create capacity pressures if not carefully managed.
- Financial implications for families were raised, particularly in relation to transport costs and the potential requirement to purchase new school uniforms following the transition.
- Community feedback reflected a balance of perceived benefits and challenges. While participants noted opportunities for greater community cohesion, enhanced local facilities, and increased economic activity, concerns were also expressed regarding the future use of existing school sites, the potential loss of local school identity, and the impact on employment and local services.

Response to the Proposal to reorganise Saltney Ferry C.P and Saltney Wood Memorial C.P

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

It is Estyn's opinion that the proposal is likely to at least maintain the current standards of education and provision in the area.

Description and Benefits

Flintshire County Council are proposing:

- The closure of Saltney Ferry Community Primary School and Saltney Wood Memorial Community Primary School with effect from 31 August 2027.
- The establishment of a new amalgamated community primary school, initially operating across the existing two school sites, from 1 September 2027.
- The development, subject to planning approval and funding confirmation, of a new purpose-built 315-place English-medium community primary school (including 30 full-time equivalent nursery places) on the current Saltney Wood Memorial C.P. School site, with an anticipated opening date of 1 September 2030.

The proposer has given a clear rationale for the proposal. The consultation document explains that the proposal has been developed to address high levels of surplus

school places, improve the quality of school accommodation, secure sustainable leadership, further develop the Welsh language and make more efficient use of resources. It also identifies limited future pupil growth within the area, providing a clear justification for reorganising provision.

The proposer has provided a detailed description of the proposal, the projected timetable for statutory procedures and implementation, and the interim arrangements necessary for implementation. It also sets out the statutory consultation timetable, decision-making process and explains that the new school would operate temporarily across the existing two sites.

The proposer has set out clearly and fairly the expected benefits and disadvantages when compared with the status quo. The document identifies the anticipated educational, organisational and financial benefits of the proposal, whilst acknowledging potential disadvantages, including

disruption during transition, staffing implications and changes to travel arrangements for some families.

The proposer has identified the risks associated with the proposal suitably. The consultation identifies key project risks, including funding, planning, construction, staffing and legal compliance. The proposer appears to offer appropriate mitigation measures to minimise the impact of risks. However, whilst the proposal states that funding and planning will be kept under review, the proposer does not appear to outline what would happen if ultimately, sufficient funding is not secured.

The proposer has considered suitable alternatives to the proposal and given reasons why these have been discounted. The document explains that several options, including retaining and refurbishing the existing schools, were considered. It concludes that these options would not adequately address failing buildings, surplus capacity, long-term sustainability or provide access to capital investment for new school facilities.

The proposer has considered the impact of the changes on learner travel arrangements and accessibility of provision. The consultation includes a detailed assessment of travel distances, safe walking routes and transport eligibility. It concludes that most learners would remain within walking distance of the proposed school and that existing transport arrangements would continue to apply, including consideration of individual learners' additional needs. This appears reasonable.

The proposer has shown clearly how surplus places will be affected. The document provides current and projected pupil numbers and demonstrates that amalgamating the two schools would significantly reduce surplus capacity and create provision that is more increases beyond current projects and notes that building designs will remain flexible and capable of future adaption.

The proposer has outlined the financial aspects of the proposal suitably, including anticipated funding from Welsh Government and the Council, alongside future potential savings. The consultation identifies the estimated capital investment, proposed funding arrangements and the expected efficiencies arising from reduced surplus places. However, although the document outlines the capital investment required, it does not clearly outline what will happen if the necessary funding can't be secured. In addition, the proposal does not appear to demonstrate the extent of any ongoing revenue savings once the costs of financing the new school are considered. Furthermore, as the projected budget for the new school appears broadly comparable with the current combined budgets of the two existing schools, the overall financial advantage of the proposal over retaining and improving the existing buildings is not sufficiently clear.

The proposer has provided details of the potential transfer of land and buildings. The document explains that the new school would be built on the existing Saltney Wood Memorial site and confirms that no decisions have yet been made regarding the future of the Saltney Ferry site, which would be considered separately in accordance with the Council's policy on surplus land and buildings.

The proposer has outlined clearly how stakeholders can respond to the proposal. The consultation sets out the consultation period, response methods, contact details and the subsequent statutory process, including the publication of a consultation report, statutory notice, objection period and final decision-making arrangements.

The proposer has considered the impact of the proposal on Welsh-medium provision and the local authority's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan. The document concludes that the proposal would

not have a significant adverse impact on Welsh language provision and confirms the Council's continued commitment to its Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.

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 proposer has considered the impact of the proposals on the quality and standards in education, including teaching and learning. The consultation considers the educational benefits of the proposal, including improved learning environments and greater opportunities to share effective practice through a single school. It concludes reasonably that these changes are expected to at least maintain current standards.

The proposer has considered information from the most recent Estyn reports for each school likely to be affected. The document refers to the findings of the most recent Estyn inspections and states that both schools are currently judged to provide a good standard of education. However, this assessment does not appear to acknowledge the historical concerns relating to one of the schools included in the proposal. That school experienced significant challenges in the past and has only recently been removed from Estyn follow-up.

The proposer has considered the impact of the proposals on leading and improving. The consultation identifies suitably the benefits of establishing a single leadership team and governance structure to provide greater strategic capacity and long-term sustainability. It concludes reasonably that this would strengthen school improvement and leadership across the new school.

The proposer has considered the likely impact of the proposals on the ability of schools affected by the proposals to deliver the full curriculum. The consultation concludes reasonably that the new school would be better placed to deliver the Curriculum for Wales through improved facilities and learning resources. It also considers the impact on neighbouring schools and concludes that sufficient capacity exists to accommodate any changes in parental preference.

The proposer has considered the impact of the proposals on well-being, care, support and guidance. The document recognises that school reorganisation may cause uncertainty for learners and families and explains that transition arrangements will be carefully planned to support pupils' wellbeing and ensure continuity of pastoral care throughout the process.

The proposer has considered the impact of the proposals on vulnerable groups, including children with Additional Learning Needs (ALN). The document includes consideration of learners with ALN and explains that statutory duties would continue to apply throughout the reorganisation. It confirms that individual needs would be assessed and supported through transition planning and refers to a separate ALN Impact Assessment that accompanies the consultation.

The proposer has considered how disruption to learners will be minimised. The consultation explains that transition arrangements will be carefully managed to ensure continuity of learning, wellbeing and pastoral support. It also states that the amalgamated school would operate as a single school community during the interim period, with shared leadership, policies and ethos, and that progress would be monitored throughout implementation.

Additional Factors - Specific factors in the consideration of school closures

The proposal considers a temporary multi-site arrangement during transition and explains why refurbishment of the existing schools has been discounted. While the document does not explicitly consider alternative organisational models, such as community hub arrangements or the co-location of public services within the existing school buildings, this appears reasonable given the current condition and suitability issues identified at both sites.

APPENDIX H

The response to the proposal received from the NEU teaching union.



Flintshire NEU District

District & Branch Secretary: Cheryl Latham

Email: cheryl.latham@neu.org.uk

15.07.2026

The National Education Union (NEU) believes that every child deserves access to a high-quality, inclusive, and fully resourced education in their local community. Our vision for education is rooted in the principles of equity, opportunity, and wellbeing for all learners.

We are committed to:

- Protecting the right of every child to be educated in a safe, nurturing, and stimulating environment.
- Championing local schools as vital community assets that foster belonging, identity, and lifelong learning.
- Opposing educational inequality, especially where proposals disproportionately affect children from disadvantaged backgrounds or those with additional learning needs.
- Ensuring that decisions about school organisation are made transparently, democratically, and in the best interests of pupils, staff, and communities—not driven solely by financial or administrative convenience.

In responding to this consultation, we urge Flintshire County Council to uphold these values and to place the needs of children, families, and educators at the heart of its decision-making.

Formal Consultation Response – Saltney School Reorganisation

This document outlines a formal response to the proposed reorganisation of Saltney Ferry C.P. and Saltney Wood Memorial C.P. schools.

NEU Flintshire see no educational benefit to the proposals. The proposed changes, in our view, will only have a detrimental impact on the education and life changes of the pupils of the area.

The staff in Saltney Ferry have worked hard to improve attendance at the school. They know that many will not travel to the proposed new site in Saltney Wood Memorial. They will be lost to formal education. Saltney Ferry school is now in a strong position and leading in areas of learning where other schools are seeking to come and share good practice, pupil numbers are at their highest and the school is not in a financial deficit. Whole school attendance has improved. It takes some work with families to have them travel a short distance, largely down to socio-economic barriers. Moving the school will decimate this figure and subsequently those vulnerable pupils and families.

The facilities available at Saltney Ferry, including the newly established farm, serve the pupils well. The size of the school also helps to cater to the needs of the pupils. Saltney Ferry has 44% of pupils on Free School Meals and 24. % on Individual Development Plans.

Saltney Wood Memorial also has excellent facilities to serve the needs of its pupils. The school has 37% of pupils on Free School Meals and 12% on Individual Development Plans. The pupils get the support that they need. They will not get the same level of support and attention in a larger school.

The size of the school and the notion of surplus places (although a visit to the school suggests that they are perfect for the number of pupils on roll) is being portrayed as a weakness when it is a strength. We are not considering very small schools with barely double-digit pupil numbers. Saltney Ferry has 116 on roll, and Saltney Wood Memorial has 147. As regards pupil numbers in relation to the square metre floor plan per pupil, where is this calculation / process derived from and does it take into account the new curriculum where pupils are enabled to move around more than they would have done previously? Our concern is this has been used to push the narrative of pupil numbers not adequate for the building when in fact it may not take into account how pupils use their learning space.

The local authority should use capital spending to make improvements to the two sites. Which would be significantly less than the capital spending on a new build (regardless of any match funding from Welsh Government). This would cost less and build on the current strengths of the two schools without undermining the education of the pupils.

Welsh identity would be eroded. Families can get a free bus pass to an English school thus undermining all the hard work done to promote Welsh identity.

We are very concerned about the safety of travel routes. The proposal assumes safe walking routes exist but lacks detailed safety audits or traffic assessments. The proposed site for the new school would mean that children currently attending Saltney Ferry would have to walk (or cycle or scooter) along one of the main commuter roads linking Flintshire with Cheshire. NEU Officials have visited both schools, made the journey, and the potential hazards are significant.

APPENDIX I

The response to the proposal prepared for and received RhAG.



Swyddfa Mudiad Meithrin,
11 Tŷ Nant Court,
Treforgan,
Caerdydd,
CF15 8LW.

Response of Parents for Welsh-medium Education to the Consultation on the Merger of Saltney Ferry Primary School and Saltney Wood Memorial Primary School

Parents for Welsh-medium Education (Rhieni Dros Addysg Gymraeg – RhAG) welcomes the opportunity to respond to this consultation. We recognise the challenges facing local authorities in relation to school capacity, demographic change and ensuring suitable educational buildings for the future. However, we have significant concerns regarding the quality and robustness of the Welsh Language Impact Assessment published alongside the proposal.

In our view, the assessment does not adequately demonstrate how this proposal contributes to Flintshire County Council's strategic duties to promote the Welsh language, increase the number of Welsh speakers and support the growth of Welsh-medium education.

Lack of Connection to the Council's Own Strategies

The Council has made a public commitment through its Welsh Language Promotion Strategy 2025–2030 to increase the proportion of Welsh speakers in Flintshire to 15% by 2030 and to create a more bilingual county where Welsh is a natural part of everyday life.

Similarly, Flintshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) sets out a clear commitment to increase both the number and proportion of learners receiving Welsh-medium education, strengthen the Welsh language skills of all learners, and ensure that school modernisation developments support the objectives of Cymraeg 2050.

However, the Welsh Language Impact Assessment does not demonstrate how the £12.5 million investment in a new school in Saltney will contribute to any of these objectives, nor does it identify any mitigation measures aimed at helping to achieve them.

Failure to Seize a Strategic Opportunity

The Council acknowledges in its own assessment that Saltney is one of the areas with the lowest levels of Welsh language use in the county—and indeed in Wales—with only 6.8% of the population able to speak, read or write Welsh. The assessment also describes the area as one of linguistic sensitivity.

RhAG believes that this makes consideration of the Welsh language even more important within this decision-making process.

Where a local authority is making a significant investment in new educational infrastructure in an area where the Welsh language is particularly weak, that project should be used as a strategic opportunity to strengthen the status, visibility and use of Welsh. The assessment does not demonstrate how this will happen.

A Passive Rather Than Proactive Approach

RhAG is concerned that the assessment treats the growth of the Welsh language as something that may happen as a consequence of the project, rather than something that should be deliberately planned for.

The document includes general references to opportunities to promote Welsh, but it contains no firm commitments, targets or specific actions.

In particular, there is no clarity regarding:

- how the project will support the objectives of the WESP;
 - how it will contribute to the Council's target of 15% Welsh speakers;
 - how it will promote Welsh-medium education among local families;
 - how it will increase the social use of Welsh in Saltney; or
 - how any positive impact will be monitored or evaluated.
- Welsh-medium Education Is the Most Effective Means of Creating New Welsh Speakers

Welsh Government policy and Flintshire's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan recognise that the education system is the primary means of increasing the number of Welsh speakers and ensuring the long-term growth of the language.

From RhAG's perspective, every major decision regarding school organisation should be assessed in the context of its contribution to expanding the use and reach of Welsh-medium education, as set out in the latest School Organisation Code.

This assessment does not do so. Instead, it focuses primarily on describing the current situation and listing the Council's policies, without demonstrating how the proposal will directly contribute to strengthening the Welsh language in the area or across the county.

Conclusion

RhAG is of the view that the Welsh Language Impact Assessment does not meet the expectations of the School Organisation Code 2026 nor reflect the ambition of either the Welsh Language Promotion Strategy or the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan.

The Council has acknowledged that Saltney is an area where the Welsh language is particularly vulnerable. It has also committed to increasing the number of Welsh speakers, expanding Welsh-medium education and ensuring that educational developments contribute to those objectives.

However, the assessment does not demonstrate how this proposal contributes to fulfilling those commitments.

Therefore, RhAG calls on Flintshire County Council to review the Welsh Language Impact Assessment and clearly demonstrate how this project will contribute to the growth of the Welsh language, promote Welsh-medium education and increase the number of Welsh speakers in Saltney and across Flintshire more broadly.

There is an opportunity here to consider Welsh-medium education as part of this reorganisation and, indeed, the reorganisation of Catholic education, which is also currently undergoing consultation.

There is a genuine opportunity to consider developing Welsh-medium education in a new area of the county alongside these reorganisations, and we would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further with you.

Elin Maher

National Director

Parents for Welsh-medium Education (RhAG)

elin@rhag.cymru

Thank you to everyone who took part in this process.