



# Area Schools Review

## Holywell Area

*November 2012 • Consultation on the preferred option*



## Background

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Earlier this year, a number of consultation events were held at Holywell High School and Ysgol y Fron.

The purpose of the events was to allow people to consider a series of options designed to reduce the number of surplus places in Holywell High School, consider the viability of its sixth form, and improve the learning environment of Ysgol Perth y Terfyn and Ysgol y Fron by providing a new school.

The consultation information and supporting documents supplied at that time can be found on the Council's website [www.flintshire.gov.uk/areaschoolsreview](http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/areaschoolsreview).

Attended by Governors, Teachers, Staff, Parents and Carers, the events provided the Council with a wealth of feedback, and at a meeting on Tuesday 17 July 2012 the Council's Cabinet approved the commencement of a further round of informal consultation on a single preferred option.



## Consultation

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During the first round of consultation, Councillors committed to undertake a second stage of consultations before making any final decision about whether or not to formally progress with one single proposal.

This is now that second stage of consultation.

On page 10 of this document you will find details of where and when consultation events will be held.

If following this consultation stage, Councillors decide to continue with the single option, then we will enter the statutory stage. During this statutory stage, the details of one single proposal will be clearly set out and you will be given one month to put forward any written objections you may have.

If the Council receives just one objection at this statutory stage, then the matter will be handed over to Welsh Ministers in Welsh Government who will make the final decision.



## How long will this take?

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## The Preferred Option

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### **Build a new high school for pupils aged 11-16, together with a new primary school to replace Ysgol Perth y Terfyn and Ysgol y Fron.**

This would involve the replacement of Holywell High School with a new, purpose built 21st century secondary school, able to accommodate 600 students.

Sixth form courses would be held at a new purpose built Post 16 Centre at Connah's Quay.

Arrangements will be put in place to ensure continuity of provision for those students who have commenced their AS or A Levels in the school. It is expected that the proposed new Post 16 Centre at Connah's Quay will be ready to accept students in September 2016 and Holywell High School would therefore not recruit to post 16 for September 2016.

This option would also involve closing both Ysgol Perth y Terfyn and Ysgol y Fron, and amalgamating to form a new primary school in a new primary school building on the existing Holywell High School site.

The design of the new schools would include accommodation and facilities that could be used by the whole community. This option would involve working with other partners such as Deeside College and Glyndwr University to provide services including adult education, and develop strong links with all sectors of the community.

A big investment will be needed to replace the existing schools, and this option marks one of the most significant capital investments in education facilities in Flintshire in a lifetime.

A key part of accessing Welsh Government funding is the rationalisation of post 16 education and reducing surplus places which would be addressed if this option was to be approved. Welsh Government has indicated its willingness in principle to contribute to half the costs of building the new schools. Flintshire County Council would therefore need to match fund this contribution.

Welsh Government has also indicated its willingness in principle to contribute half of the cost towards building a new post 16 facility in Connah's Quay. Flintshire County Council and Deeside College would need to pay the other half. This will mean an investment of over £3m by both Deeside College and Flintshire County Council.

## Vision

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This option would provide the biggest and most exciting investment in education ever seen in Flintshire.

The provision of a new community focused Secondary school, located on the same site as a new feeder primary school will mean a re-launch of educational provision in the area, and reviewing three existing schools that, for one reason or another do not provide the best that can be achieved in terms of learning environments.

Holywell would become the focus for education of children and young people from the age of 3 to 16. The town would have entirely new learning environments which would transform the school experience for learners, and for the staff delivering the curriculum. The schools would also be a focus for the local community in providing a resource for adult and continuing education, and for community use of resources. As a local hub, the school will work with the Council, local colleges and training providers to develop training programmes for 16-25 year olds and also lifelong learning, building on existing strengths and local needs.

Sixth form provision would also be transformed, so that students would benefit from a new state of the art Post 16 Centre at Connah's Quay. This would complement the large numbers of post 16 students currently from the Holywell area who already access courses at Deeside College. Students would benefit from brand new accommodation and resources, together with the wide curriculum which could be provided at the one location.



## Why propose any change?

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**Surplus Places** - Some school buildings are too big for the number of students who attend them. Welsh Government says schools should not have more than 10% surplus places overall. This means if a school is big enough to take 500 students then it shouldn't have less than 450 students registered to attend it.

Holywell High School has 545 (Sept 12) surplus places (50.70%). The school's capacity is 1075. This means that over 50% of the school building is below capacity and the suitability and the condition of the existing building does not provide the best learning environment for students.

Wales Audit Office, Estyn (the schools inspectorate) and Welsh Government all say that the Council must reduce its number of surplus places.

The new High School would be smaller and a better match for the needs of the Community. Its design would allow for future expansion if that became necessary. It is expected that the decrease in secondary age students will reverse from 2016/17 and recover only to 2011 levels by 2021/22.

**Sixth Form** - The Welsh Government says that sixth forms must provide at least 30 different subjects that students can choose to study. The Welsh Government also provides schools with funding for sixth forms. The fewer students who register in the sixth form, the less money the school receives. The Council's School Modernisation Strategy says that for a sixth form to be viable it should have at least 120 students. The current number of students in the sixth form at Holywell High School is 73.

The number of students in the sixth form is therefore below the number that makes it viable in terms of funding and the range of subjects that are offered, as is the case with some other sixth forms in Flintshire. Whilst Holywell High School currently works well with other schools in the area to provide students with a wide range of post 16 subjects to study, the present arrangements of students travelling to different locations for different lessons is unsustainable in terms of cost and it does not always provide the best learning experience for them.

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## Why propose any change? (continued)

The preferred option would mean that the present sixth form at Holywell High School would close and sixth form education would be provided at the proposed new Post 16 Centre at Connah's Quay. This Centre would be a joint venture between Flintshire County Council and Deeside College.

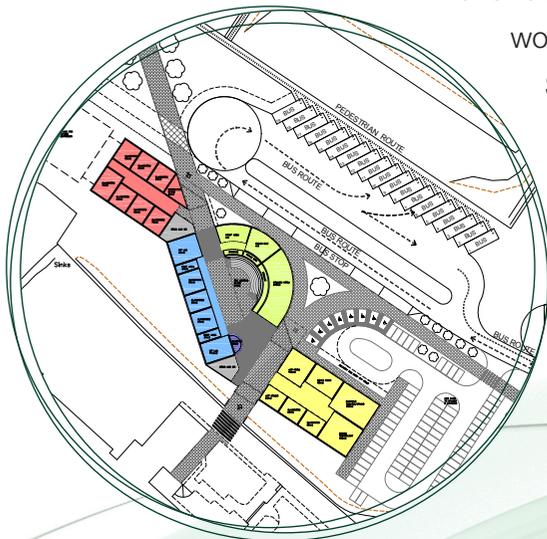
As indicated previously, the school will work with other partners such as Deeside College, Glyndwr University and local training providers, to provide services such as adult and community education and to develop strong links with all parts of the community to enable the new school to provide some elements of post 16 education and training in Holywell.

The new Post 16 Centre would provide students with the full range of subjects from which to choose, both academic and vocational, centred at one location.

**Primary education** - The present Infant and Junior Schools do not provide the best in learning environments.

Both existing schools are on limited sites and have poor access and limited parking facilities.

This option involves the amalgamation of the existing primary schools, with one Governing Body, and one Headteacher. The new school would be built on the same campus of the proposed new High School, and could share some of the facilities, for example kitchen, administrative hub, dance/drama studio etc. It is proposed that the new school would be completed by September 2016.



## Minimising the effects of any change

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If after this consultation process, Councillors decide to formally put forward their preferred option as a single proposal for the Holywell area, arrangements will be made to maintain continuity for students preparing for AS and A2 courses.

If this option was approved, it is envisaged that the new Post 16 Centre would be ready for occupation in 2016. Therefore, students in years 12 and 13 at Holywell High School at the time of any change, would complete their courses in the school under existing arrangements.

The school would actively promote, as it always has done, post 16 studies appropriate to the individual needs and aspirations of its students to those entering year 11 so they may begin to make their choice of where to continue their education after the age of 16. Arrangements would be made to ensure continuity of provision for exam groups.

Transport to the Post 16 Centre at Connahs Quay would be provided in accordance with the Flintshire Post 16 Transport Policy.

Students at Ysgol Perth y Terfyn, Ysgol y Fron and students at Holywell High School would remain in their present accommodation during the building of the new schools. This will minimise the disruption to both young people and the staff.

The school will work closely with colleges, training providers on development of a local community education offer for Holywell as well as transitional arrangements in relation to the Post 16 Centre.

There are a number of ways you can let us know what you think. You can:

- ask questions and let us know your views at these meetings
- complete a questionnaire on-line at [www.flintshire.gov.uk/areaschoolsreview](http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/areaschoolsreview)
- complete a questionnaire and return it to the School Modernisation Team, Lifelong Learning, County Hall, Mold, Flintshire, CH7 6DN; or
- alternatively, put your responses in writing to the School Modernisation Team, Lifelong Learning, County Hall, Mold, Flintshire. CH7 6DN

**The consultation will close on 21 December 2012.**

## Consultation Meetings

Venue	Invitees	Date	Time	Type of Meeting
Holywell High School	Teachers, staff and governors of: Holywell High School Ysgol Perth y Terfyn Ysgol y Fron	22 Nov 2012	4.00 pm	Presentation followed by questions and answers
Holywell High School	Parents and Carers of students attending: Holywell High School Ysgol Perth y Terfyn Ysgol y Fron Primary Schools in the Holywell area	22 Nov 2012	7.00 pm	Presentation followed by questions and answers



# Consultation Response Form

Area Schools Review

November 2012

Before you begin – if you would like to fill this form in on-line please go to [www.flintshire.gov.uk/areaschoolsreview](http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/areaschoolsreview)

Based on the information you have been given in this booklet, at the consultation event and from other documents available on the Council's website, please tell us your views on the Council's preferred option in your area.

Please tick the area which applies to you:

- Buckley
  Queensferry, Shotton and Connahs Quay
  Holywell

How strongly do you agree with the preferred option in this area?

- Strongly Agree
  Tend to Agree
  Neither Agree nor Disagree  
 Tend to disagree
  Strongly disagree

Please tell us why you feel this way

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About you:

To help us understand what different groups of people think, please tell us a little about yourself:  
 Please provide your contact details below *(Unfortunately we are unable to consider responses unless contact details, including full postcode are provided.)*

Name: .....

Address: .....

Postcode: .....

Are you:

- Parent/Carer
  Teacher
  Support Staff  
 Governor
  Other

Name of school:

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