

# WELSH LANGUAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT



## Proposal to Reorganise the Catholic Education Provision in Flintshire



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



Consultation Period: Commences 03 June 2025 and Closes Midnight 18 July 2025

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## A. INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

It is proposed to:

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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## **B. PURPOSE OF ASSESSMENT**

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A Welsh Language Impact Assessment ([WLIA](#)) identifies potential impacts on the Welsh Language when a school organisation change proposal has been presented.

The WLIA aims to identify potential positive, neutral and negative impacts, and where possible, outline actions that may enhance or maintain a positive or neutral impact or that may reduce or remove a negative impact.

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## **C. WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN (WESP) 2022-2032**

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Flintshire County Council believes that the Welsh Language belongs to everyone. The Welsh Education Strategic Plan in Flintshire is a long-term strategic tool for us to contribute to the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 Strategy, to reach a million Welsh speakers by 2050, and increase the daily use of Welsh.

We are committed to increasing the number of fluent Welsh speakers within schools and extending those Welsh language skills into the wider community, with the aim of creating an increasingly bilingual county and country. We aspire for people of all ages to improve their Welsh language skills and have the ability to use these confidently within their families and in their places of learning.

We are committed to supporting, expanding and promoting Welsh-medium education within the whole community, increasing the number and percentage of pupils receiving Welsh-medium education in compliance with the Welsh Government's 'Welsh-Medium Education Strategy' of developing learners who are fully bilingual (i.e. fluent in both English and Welsh).

The WESP is our ten year vision for increasing and improving the planning of the provision of Welsh-medium education in our area.

The main Principles are:

- Pre-school and early years Welsh medium provision is easily accessible across the authority to support and encourage parents/carers to choose Welsh medium education for their children.



- Welsh medium education is available to all learners within a reasonable travelling distance of their home (in line with our duties set out under section 10 of the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008).
- Learners in the Welsh medium sector are actively encouraged to transfer successfully at each point of transition e.g. family/toddler groups → playgroup → early education → part time nursery class → primary school → secondary school.
- First language Welsh learners in Welsh medium schools (primary and secondary) achieve the highest possible outcomes in Welsh.
- Second language Welsh learners from English medium primary schools are supported and encouraged to access a Welsh medium secondary education through a dedicated immersion programme.
- Second language Welsh learners in English medium schools (primary and secondary) achieve the highest possible outcomes in Welsh.
- Effective joint working exists with other partners, agencies and services to promote and increase bilingualism in educational and social contexts.
- Learners with additional learning needs receive equal linguistic opportunity.
- All learners become proficient in Welsh and English.
- Progress and commitment to developing the Welsh language across all aspects of the Council is celebrated.

The WESP 2022-2032 can be found here:

<https://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/PDFFiles/Lifelong-Learning/Schools/Welsh-in-Education/Flintshire-WELSH-IN-EDUCATION-STRATEGIC-PLAN-2022-2032.pdf>

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## **D. WELSH MEDIUM EDUCATION IN FLINTSHIRE**

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In Flintshire, there are five Welsh medium primary schools, along with one secondary school:

### Primary

- Ysgol Gymraeg Glanrafon, Mold – includes a KS2 Generic Resource.
- Ysgol Gymraeg Terrig, Treuddyn.
- Ysgol Gymraeg Gwenffrwd, Holywell.
- Ysgol Gymraeg Mornant, Gwespyr Picton.
- Ysgol Gymraeg Croes Atti, Flint and Shotton.

### Secondary

- Ysgol Gymraeg Maes Garmon, Mold.



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## E. WELSH MEDIUM EDUCATION INVESTMENT

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Over recent years and in the future, the Council is striving to expand and invest in Welsh medium across the County in order to ensure that there are enough places for the pupils of Flintshire to access Welsh medium education should they so wish.

We are currently building a Welsh Language School in the Flint area to replace the existing school Ysgol Croes Atti, and this will be opened in the Autumn term 2025.

Flintshire has a generic resource for primary aged pupils with ALN based within one of its Welsh medium schools highlighted above. This resource caters for pupils with a range of learning needs. Funding has also been delegated to the Welsh medium secondary school to provide additional resources for pupils within Key Stages 3/4/5.

At Key Stage 3, there is a purpose-designed immersion programme for pupils from English medium schools who choose to transfer to our Welsh medium secondary school (Trochi), which we are building on as PART of the WESP outcomes.

As part of the Strategic Outline Programme for the next phase of strategic infrastructure funding from the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme we have identified one project in the current forward work programme for Welsh Medium education.

Our Welsh medium growth plans in this programme are a start-up 'seedling' Welsh medium area school located in the Buckley/Mynydd Isa area. This project will create a new 150 full time pupil place Welsh-medium school, along with 30 nursery places to ensure childcare wraparound provision. The proposal plans to include the integration of Mudiad Meithrin onto the site and will have a Nursery and Reception start up provision.

Further opportunities to invest in Welsh medium education will be considered in-line with the Council's strategic objectives.

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## F. CONTRIBUTION TO THE WESP

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There are seven Outcomes the WESP aims to achieve:

- **Outcome 1:** More nursery children/ three-year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh.
- **Outcome 2:** More reception class children/ five-year olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh.
- **Outcome 3:** More children continue to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another.



- **Outcome 4:** More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh.
- **Outcome 5:** More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school.
- **Outcome 6:** An increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) in accordance with the duties imposed by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018.
- **Outcome 7:** Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and teach through the medium of Welsh.

As education at all of the Catholic schools is delivered through the medium of English, this proposal will not directly support the Council's WESP objectives.

However, the Council has made a significant investment in Welsh-medium education since 2020, with over £20m being used on a primary school, extensions to another and refurbishment of another. In addition, funding has delivered a number of Welsh-medium childcare settings to provide access to the Welsh language at an early age.

Whilst the Council supports the drive to increase the number of Welsh speakers, it also has a responsibility to provide high quality opportunities for non-Welsh speaking pupils too.

It is anticipated that the proposal would not negatively impact the Welsh language provision within the County as the number of full-time Welsh-medium pupil places will be unaffected.

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## G. THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

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Under the school Organisation Code 2018 paragraph. 1.4 states that “*Where proposals affect schools where Welsh is a medium of instruction (for subjects other than Welsh) for some or all of the time, local authorities should carry out a Welsh Language Impact Assessment.*”.

Our consultation document invites views on this proposal, as part of the consultation the Council is also seeking your views on how consultees feel the proposal may impact on the Welsh Language and potential development in this area.

Impact assessments are working documents and may be updated throughout the statutory process. Feedback from consultees during the consultation period will be used to further inform the impact assessments.

This assessment has been compiled using information from the Welsh Government School Organisation Code 2018, Flintshire's WESP (2022 – 2032) and various policies and case studies on the Welsh Language standards in respect of Policy making.



*The main aim of the policy making standards is to ensure that organisations give conscientious consideration to the Welsh language when they decide how they will carry out their public duties.*

<https://www.welshlanguagecommissioner.wales/support-resources/public-organisations/policy-decisions>

All our documents in respect of this consultation are published in hard copy in Welsh and English, if you require a paper copy of this document, or a copy of the document in a different format for example braille or large print, or help with interpretation in a different language, please contact the School Modernisation Team on **01352 704014, 01352 704018 or 01352 702188**, or e-mail **CatholicEducationConsultation@flintshire.gov.uk**.

## H. PROFILE OF WELSH SPEAKERS IN FLINTSHIRE

As a local authority, we recognise that we have a responsibility and a duty as a community leader to promote, support and safeguard the Welsh language for the benefit of present and future generations.

**Table: Knowledge of Welsh (2011 & 2021)**

	Flintshire		Wales
	2021 Census		2021 Census
	No.	%	%
All aged 3+	155,000	-	-
No knowledge of Welsh	126,015	81.3%	74.8%
Understands spoken Welsh only	7,750	5%	5.2%
All Welsh Speakers	17,980	11.6%	17.8%
Speak, reads or writes Welsh	21,235	13.7%	20%

Source: Census 2011 & Census 2021

As outlined in the council's Welsh language Promotion Strategy our target during the previous five years was to support the increase in the number of the population in Flintshire who report that they speak Welsh. Our ambition for the longer term period is to increase the number and percentage of Welsh speakers in the county to eventually create a bilingual county and support Welsh Government achieve one million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050.

Welsh-medium education, whether in the form of full Welsh-medium provision via Welsh schools, or the teaching of Welsh as a second language in English-medium schools, directly supports this aim and intrinsically links this strategy with the WESP.



## I. IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS

Welsh language standards in policymaking require public organisations in Wales to consider the impact of their policy decisions on the Welsh language. This includes ensuring that the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than English and promoting its use.

The following possible impacts are identified in relation to this proposal.

Criteria	Potential Impact
Treating the Welsh Language no less favourably than the English language	Neutral
<b>Explanation &amp; Mitigating Actions</b>	
<p>With reference to the consultation, all documents are available in Welsh and English to allow people the option choosing which to use in order to engage with the process. Furthermore, it has been made clear that correspondence is also welcomed in both Welsh and in English, and where replies are required they will be provided in the same language.</p> <p>Implementation of the proposal will also treat the Welsh Language no less favourably than the English language. The schools involved in the proposal deliver their curriculum through the medium of English, which includes Welsh lessons, topics and activities. Following implementation, the new English medium school will be committed to providing learners with the same Welsh based learning opportunities as they currently receive and as they would if the proposal is not implemented.</p>	
Criteria	Potential Impact
Opportunities for people to use the Welsh language	Neutral
<b>Explanation &amp; Mitigating Actions</b>	
<p>As above, people have opportunities to use the Welsh language in all aspects of the consultation. Opportunities during the school day will also remain the same as if the proposal was not to be implemented.</p> <p>With the proposal reducing the number of English-medium pupil places available in Flintshire, the number of Welsh-medium pupil places will increase as a proportion of all pupil places available.</p> <p>In addition, the modern facilities provided by the proposal can be opened up to the community, giving them new spaces to undertake various activities. Such activities could be used to deliver Welsh adult learning classes, Welsh digital inclusion classes and Welsh based sporting activities. Although these are potentially positive impacts, all these supplementary activities are unknown at this point and therefore a 'neutral' potential impact has been anticipated.</p>	



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## **J. CONCLUSION**

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

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