

COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT



**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.**

SUMMER 2026



1. Introduction

1.1. Flintshire County Council is seeking the views of stakeholders regarding a proposal to reorganise Saltney Ferry C.P. School and Saltney Wood Memorial C.P. School. The proposal involves the closure of both existing schools and the establishment of a new maintained community primary school operating initially across both existing sites, prior to the development of a new single-site school building on land at Saltney Wood Memorial C.P.

1.2. A formal consultation document sets out the full details of the proposal and provides the information required for consultees to participate meaningfully in the process. This Community Impact Assessment (CIA) has been prepared in accordance with the Welsh Government's School Organisation Code (2026).

1.3. All data, figures and information included in this document represent the most accurate and up-to-date information available at the time of publication.

2. Purpose of the Assessment

2.1. The purpose of this Community Impact Assessment is to evaluate the potential effects of the proposal on the local community, including community cohesion, access to facilities, local services, and wellbeing.

2.2. This assessment considers both the positive and negative impacts of the proposal, alongside short-term (Phase 1) and long-term (Phase 2) implications.

2.3. Information has been gathered from school leaders regarding the current use of school facilities, links with community organisations, and the role each school plays within its local area.

3. School and Area Profiles

3.1 Local Context

Saltney is a town and electoral ward in Flintshire, located adjacent to the Welsh-English border and neighbouring the City of Chester. The population of Saltney was 5,140 according to the 2021 Census.

The two schools are located approximately 1.31 miles apart, serving broadly the same community.

A safe walking route is already in place, and improvements to active travel infrastructure will be explored.

3.5. The proposed new amalgamated school would represent the nearest suitable alternative school of the same category (community, non-faith, English-medium). In addition to walking routes, public transport options are available, including bus services operating approximately every 20 minutes with a journey time of around 5 minutes. However, the majority of learners are expected to continue to travel on foot.

4. Community Profiles

4.1 Role of the Schools in the Community

Both schools contribute to their local communities, providing access to childcare, activities, and opportunities for engagement, although the level of direct community use of school premises varies.

4.2 Saltney Ferry C.P. School

The school supports:

- Breakfast and after-school clubs
- Playgroup provision (externally run)
- Community events
- Links with local organisations (church, sports clubs, conservation projects)

The school site is used for a limited range of community-related activity, primarily linked to childcare provision and occasional events

4.3 Saltney Wood Memorial C.P. School

The school supports:

- Wraparound childcare provision
- Playgroup Plus and nursery provision
- Extracurricular activities
- Links with community centre and sports facilities

Compared to Saltney Ferry, there is currently more limited direct use of the school premises by wider community groups, although childcare provision at the site is established and remains an important feature.

4.4 Childcare Provision

Both schools host or accommodate childcare providers, including:

- Playgroup provision
- Breakfast clubs
- Wraparound care

These services are important to working families and represent a key element of community infrastructure.

5. Assessment of Potential Impacts

The proposal has been assessed against key factors identified within the School Organisation Code (2026). Impacts are categorised as Positive, Negative, or Mixed (Negative with Mitigation).

5.1 Impact on Community Cohesion and Identity

Impact: Negative (Mitigated)

The closure of Saltney Ferry C.P. School would result in the loss of a local community asset within that part of Saltney. Schools often act as focal points for community interaction, identity, and engagement, particularly for families with young children.

This may:

- Reduce local access to community-linked services
- Affect informal social networks
- Weaken neighbourhood identity in the Saltney Ferry area

Mitigation:

- Retention of a school within the Saltney area
- Development of a new, enhanced school facility designed to support community use
- Opportunity to unify the wider Saltney community through a single school
- Development of a community use strategy for the new school

5.2 Impact on Access to Community Facilities

Impact: Negative (Mitigated)

The proposal would remove direct access to school-based facilities in the Saltney Ferry area. Current evidence indicates that regular community use of the school site is limited, primarily consisting of periodic school-organised events and externally delivered childcare provision.

The loss of the site may therefore reduce some localised opportunities for community engagement and access to services within walking distance for residents, particularly families with younger children.

Mitigation:

- Continued provision of community-accessible facilities at the new school site within Saltney
- Inclusion of flexible spaces within the new school design to support community and partner use
- Engagement with existing childcare providers to ensure continuity of provision
- Consideration has been given to the potential to retain or re-locate community-facing provision within the Saltney Ferry area, and the Council will continue to work with partners to support delivery where feasible.

5.3 Impact on Other Local Services

Impact: Negative (Mitigated)

Saltney Ferry C.P. School forms part of a relatively limited range of community facilities within the immediate local area of Saltney Ferry. While the level of formal community use of the school site is currently limited, the presence of a school contributes to local activity and provides an accessible location for childcare and occasional community events.

The closure of the school would therefore result in the loss of a community-based facility within Saltney Ferry, which may reduce opportunities for local access to services and

activities within walking distance, particularly for families with young children. This impact is likely to be experienced most by residents in the immediate Saltney Ferry area.

Mitigation:

- Continued provision of childcare and community-accessible facilities at the new school site within Saltney.
- Inclusion of flexible spaces within the new school design to support community and partner use.
- Consideration has been given to opportunities to retain or re-locate provision within the Saltney Ferry area, and the Council will continue to work with partners to support delivery where feasible.
- In line with the School Organisation Code, consideration has been given to the possible future use of the existing school site and buildings, including for community use or the co-location of services. Any such opportunities would be subject to separate assessment and decision-making processes.

5.4 Impact on Local Population and Housing Patterns

Impact: Neutral to Minor Negative (Mitigated)

The proposal would result in the closure of one school site within the Saltney Ferry area, which may reduce the availability of a local school within immediate walking distance for some families. This has the potential to influence perceptions of the area for families with young children.

However, a primary school would continue to be available within the Saltney area, and the majority of pupils would still be able to access education within a reasonable distance. The availability of a modern, well-resourced school may also enhance the overall attractiveness of education provision in the area.

There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal would lead to significant numbers of families leaving the area or discourage new families from moving into Saltney.

Overall, the impact on local population patterns is expected to be minimal.

Mitigation:

- Continued availability of local school provision within Saltney
- Investment in improved school facilities
- Maintenance of childcare and community-related services

5.5 Impact on Childcare Provision

Impact: Mixed (Short-term disruption, long-term positive)

There is potential disruption during transition, particularly where provision is linked to school sites.

Mitigation:

- Commitment to retain and reprovide childcare services
- Opportunity to increase capacity and improve facilities in the new school
- Engagement with existing providers to ensure continuity

5.6 Supporting Engagement with the New School and its Facilities

Impact: Positive (with targeted support required)

The proposal will bring together pupils into a single school with access to a broader range of facilities, extracurricular activities, and enrichment opportunities. This has the potential to increase overall participation in activities beyond the classroom.

However, it is recognised that some learners and families may face barriers to engagement, particularly during the transition period or where increased travel distances, cost, or familiarity with the new setting may impact participation.

Mitigation:

- Development of a transition plan to support pupils and families in becoming familiar with the new school environment and its offer
- Continued provision of wraparound childcare and extracurricular activities to support working families
- Ensuring equitable access to after-school activities, including consideration of cost and availability of places
- Monitoring participation levels, with particular focus on disadvantaged learners, to ensure no groups are disproportionately impacted
- Providing clear communication to parents/carers on available opportunities and how to access them

Through these measures, the proposal aims to maintain and where possible enhance engagement with school-based activities for all learners.

5.7 Impact on Local Businesses

Impact: Neutral to Slight Negative

Some local businesses may experience a minor reduction in footfall associated with the closure of one school site.

Mitigation:

- Continued school presence within Saltney
- Concentration of activity at a single site may offset losses

5.8 Impact on Learner Travel and Accessibility

Impact: Negative to Mixed (Mitigated)

Some pupils, particularly those currently attending Saltney Ferry, will experience increased travel distances.

Mitigation:

- Most pupils will still be within walking distance
- Safe walking routes already exist
- Potential improvements through Active Travel measures
- Availability of public transport

The proposal is not expected to have a significant impact on wider public transport provision within the area, as existing services operate independently of school-specific demand.

Further details included in the Consultation document.

5.9 Impact on Health and Wellbeing

Impact: Mixed (Negative and Positive)

The proposal would result in increased walking distances for some learners, particularly those currently attending Saltney Ferry C.P. School. For a small number of pupils, this may reduce the likelihood of walking or cycling to school on a regular basis, particularly for younger children or those with additional needs.

However, the majority of pupils would remain within a reasonable walking distance of the proposed new school site. Continued access to safe walking routes, together with potential improvements to Active Travel infrastructure, may support sustained or increased levels of walking and cycling.

No significant community safety issues have been identified as a result of the proposal, with existing safe walking routes in place and no anticipated increase in road safety risks.

Overall, while there may be a minor negative impact for some learners, opportunities exist to promote active travel and associated health and wellbeing benefits.

5.10 Impact on Welsh Language and Culture

Impact: Neutral (with potential for positive impact)

Both schools currently provide education through the medium of English, and the proposal would not result in a change to the language medium of provision.

Saltney is located on the Wales–England border, and this is reflected in the local linguistic profile, where levels of Welsh language use are relatively low compared to other parts of Wales. The schools serve communities that are closely connected to neighbouring areas in England, and a proportion of pupils travel across the border for education.

The proposal is therefore not expected to have a negative impact on existing Welsh language provision within the community.

However, the development of a new school presents an opportunity to strengthen the promotion of the Welsh language through:

- Increased visibility of bilingual signage and communication
- Enhanced Welsh language learning environments
- Opportunities to support Cymraeg in community use of the school

The proposal aligns with the Council's wider responsibilities to support the ambitions of Cymraeg 2050, by maintaining and potentially enhancing opportunities for learners to engage with the Welsh language. See separate Welsh Impact Statement for more details.

5.11 Impact on Nearby Schools

Impact: Neutral to Minor Negative (Mitigated)

The proposal is not expected to have a significant impact on neighbouring schools, as the new amalgamated school will have sufficient capacity to accommodate all pupils currently attending Saltney Ferry C.P. School and Saltney Wood Memorial C.P. School.

However, it is recognised that some parents/carers may choose to seek alternative school placements as a result of the proposal. This may be influenced by factors such as increased travel distance for some families and the proximity of schools across the Wales–England border.

Given Saltney's border location, patterns of parental preference may already reflect a degree of cross-border movement. As such, some limited redistribution of pupils cannot be ruled out.

Despite this, any impact on neighbouring schools is expected to be minimal, as:

- There is sufficient capacity within local schools to accommodate any movement
- No local school is reliant on significant intake from either school
- The majority of pupils are expected to transfer to the new amalgamated school

5.12 Short-Term vs Long-Term Impacts

Phase 1 (Dual Site Operation):

- Minimal disruption to community access
- Continuity of provision largely maintained

Phase 2 (Single Site New Build):

- Greater impact on accessibility for some residents
- Loss of Saltney Ferry site as a community resource
- Long-term benefits through improved facilities

6. Mitigation Measures

To address identified impacts, the Council will:

- Develop a Community Use Strategy for the new school
- Ensure continuity of childcare provision, working with existing providers
- Design the new school to include accessible, flexible community spaces
- Explore opportunities for enhanced Welsh language use
- Support transition arrangements for pupils, families, and community groups
- Consider Active Travel improvements to enhance accessibility

7. Conclusions

7.1. Retaining the status quo would maintain existing community arrangements but would not deliver the educational and facility improvements associated with the proposal.

7.2. The proposed amalgamation will result in some negative impacts, particularly through the loss of a school site in Saltney Ferry and increased travel distances for some families.

7.3. However, these impacts are considered capable of mitigation, and the proposal also presents significant long-term benefits, including:

- Improved educational facilities
- Enhanced childcare provision
- Opportunities for increased community engagement
- Strengthening of a unified Saltney community

7.4. On balance, while the proposal presents short-term and localised challenges, it also provides an opportunity to deliver a modern, sustainable, and community-focused school that supports the future needs of learners and residents.