COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Derwen Foundation School: Propose to change from a foundation primary school to a community school.

Proposed implementation date 1st September 2027.

A.1. INTRODUCTION

It is proposed to change the category of Derwen Foundation School, Higher Kinnerton, from a foundation primary school to a community primary school from 1 September 2027, subject to consultation and the necessary approvals.

The consultation proposal describes the foundation school closing on 31 August 2027 and the community school opening on 1 September 2027. Education would continue at the existing site. Pupils would not be required to relocate to another school site as a result of the proposal.

This assessment supplements the statutory consultation document and considers the potential effects on pupils, families, local services and the wider Higher Kinnerton community. It is a working document and will be reviewed in light of consultation responses and confirmed implementation arrangements.

The statutory consultation will be published on **22nd October 2026**, and will end **11:59pm** on **3rd December 2026**. This allows at least 42 days for responses to be received, with at least 20 of these being school days.

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 following information and feedback from the consultation process.

A.2. PURPOSE OF ASSESSMENT

The assessment considers transport and access, health and wellbeing, community safety, use of facilities, population trends, the wider economy and wraparound childcare. It identifies likely impacts and measures that could maintain continuity or address concerns.

The overall anticipated community impact is neutral because the school would remain on its current site with the same age range, language of instruction and capacity. The proposal aims to strengthen financial sustainability, formalise local authority support and improve capital planning; any longer-term benefits depend on implementation and future resources

A.3. SCHOOL LOCATION

The School is located just off Main Road, Higher Kinnerton, Flintshire, CH4 9AJ. Higher Kinnerton is a village and community in the Higher Kinnerton electoral ward, close to the Wales–England border, south of Broughton and near Chester.

The 2021 Census recorded 1,731 usual residents in the Higher Kinnerton electoral ward.

A.4. TRANSPORT PROVISION

A.4.i. Existing Transport Profile

The school provides English-medium primary education for children aged 3–11. The consultation proposal records a capacity of 201 full-time places, an admission number of 28 and capacity for 27 part-time nursery pupils. In January 2026, there were 153 full-time pupils and 48 surplus places, equivalent to 23.88% of capacity.

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Distance	Number of Pupils	Percentage of Pupils
Within 2 miles		
Over 2 miles		
Total		

A.4.ii. Potential Transport Profile

The school would remain on its existing site. No change to pupils' destination, walking distances or journey times is anticipated solely because of the change of category. Transport arrangements would continue in accordance with the Council's School Transport Policy.

A.5. Existing Facilities

A.5.i. Services Provided by the School

The proposal retains the existing accommodation and grounds. It lists teaching and nursery accommodation, a hall, administrative and storage areas, a sports field, hard play areas and forest school provision. No building alterations or specialist ALN resource base are proposed as part of the category change.

A.5.ii. School Facilities Used by Local Groups

In a typical year school facilities are used by the following groups:

- None

A.5.iii. Local Facilities Used by the School

In a typical year the school makes use of the following community facilities within the local area:

- **Local village and surrounding environment:** Pupils undertake supervised walks around Higher Kinnerton to support curriculum objectives, including environmental learning, science, mathematics and road safety. These activities provide opportunities to apply classroom learning in a familiar local setting.

A.5.iv. Facilities Available Near the School

Other community facilities that are available and located near to the school include:

Public House x2

Café

Village Hall

Church

Local shop

Scout hut and field

3 x public play parks

A.5.v. Childcare Provision

The following childcare providers are available within, or located near to, the school:

Little Acorns as the on-site provider of breakfast club, after-school club, Nursery Plus, Early Entitlement, holiday provision and pre-school.

Local childminders

No displacement of this provision is proposed.

A.5.vi. Alternative School Facilities

No alternative school site is required for pupils as part of the proposal. Education would continue in Ysgol Derwen's existing buildings and grounds. A comparison of replacement school facilities is therefore not applicable.

A.6. TRANSPORT SUMMARY

A.6.i. Walking Distances:

No proposal-related change is anticipated because the school site would remain the same.

A.6.ii. Journey Times:

No proposal-related change is anticipated. There is no proposed transfer to a different site

A.6.iii. Transportation Costs:

No additional cost or saving arising directly from relocation is expected, as no relocation is proposed.

A.7. Potential Impact: Neutral and Positive

A.7.i. Public Transport

Potential Impact: Neutral

No change to the school's location or public transport services is proposed. The category change is not expected to alter families' access to the school by public transport.

Potential Mitigation: Maintain information and review concerns

Provide current travel information to families and refer any access concerns raised during consultation to the Council for consideration.

A.7.ii. Health and Wellbeing

Potential Impact: Neutral

Pupils would continue to attend the existing site, preserving access to familiar surroundings and local activities. No additional travel burden or reduction in opportunities to walk or cycle is anticipated. Some pupils and families may experience uncertainty about the change of category, especially where change causes anxiety.

Potential Mitigation: Communication and continuity of support

- Provide clear, age-appropriate explanations and opportunities for pupils and families to ask questions.
- Maintain pastoral care, safeguarding arrangements and support for pupils with additional learning needs, including continuity of individual development plans.
- Use individual reassurance, visual supports or social stories where helpful, with liaison between the ALNCo, teachers, families and external agencies as needed.

A.7.iii. Community Safety

Potential Impact: Neutral

The proposal does not introduce a new school site, access point or travel destination. No increase in traffic or change in routes is anticipated solely because of the category change. This assessment does not certify existing walking routes as safe or non-hazardous; no Ysgol Derwen route assessment has been supplied.

Potential Mitigation: Maintain existing safety arrangements

Continue school access and traffic management arrangements. Consider concerns raised during consultation and seek Council review of particular routes or access issues where necessary.

A.7.iv. Alternative Local Facilities

Potential Impact: Neutral

School facilities would remain on the existing site. There is no proposed displacement of activities requiring replacement premises. The availability of local facilities remains relevant to community partnerships and contingency planning.

Potential Mitigation: Confirm current use and access

Verify the current community facilities inventory and school use of local venues. Discuss continuity with groups if any premises arrangements need updating.

A.7.v. School-Based Local Services

Potential Impact: Neutral subject to confirmation of arrangements

The proposal does not require removal of nursery provision, childcare or other services delivered from the school site. Changes in responsibilities for premises and administration could require existing agreements to be reviewed.

Potential Mitigation: Maintain service and premises arrangements

Confirm the current service inventory and review relevant agreements with the Council and providers before implementation, so the change of category does not interrupt access.

A.7.vi. Local Population

Potential Impact: Neutral

The village would retain its local primary school with the same capacity and age range. No direct change in residential demand or population patterns is anticipated. The proposal forecasts an increase from 153 full-time pupils in January 2026 to 174 in September 2030, and states that the category change is not expected to affect that forecast.

Potential Mitigation: Monitor pupil and population trends

Review enrolment, nursery demand, local housing developments and updated forecasts with the Council. Consider capacity pressures through normal school place planning.

A.7.vii. Wider Economy

Potential Impact: Neutral

Education would continue on the same site, so there is no anticipated loss of school-related footfall from Higher Kinnerton or displacement of families to another locality. The proposal aims to strengthen financial sustainability, but does not establish a quantified wider economic benefit.

Potential Mitigation: Maintain continuity during implementation

Manage administrative and premises changes to support continued school operations and local services. Confirm staffing and provider arrangements through implementation planning.

A.7.viii.Engagement with Alternative Schools

Potential Impact: Neutral

Pupils would not need to attend an alternative school because of the proposal. Existing links with nearby schools and arrangements for normal transition to secondary education could continue. Admissions responsibility would transfer to Flintshire County Council.

Potential Mitigation: Clear admissions information

Explain the future admissions arrangements and how families can obtain advice. Confirm arrangements for existing pupils and prospective applicants before implementation and maintain normal school partnerships and secondary transition support.

A.7.ix. Access to Same Language Medium Education

Potential Impact: Neutral

Ysgol Derwen would continue to provide English-medium education. The category change does not propose a reduction in access to the existing language medium. Welsh language effects are considered separately in the Welsh Language Impact Assessment.

Potential Mitigation: Maintain provision and clear communication

Confirm continuity of English-medium provision in consultation information and coordinate any Welsh language actions with the separate assessment.

A.7.x. Walking Distances and Journey Times

Potential Impact: Neutral

Pupils would continue travelling to the same site, so walking distances and journey times are not expected to increase as a result of the proposal. No transfer journeys or familiarisation visits to a replacement school are required.

Potential Mitigation: Confirm travel arrangements

Verify current travel data and Council transport arrangements. Respond to individual access concerns and distinguish existing travel issues from effects of the category change.

A.7.xi. Nearby Schools

Potential Impact: Neutral

The proposal does not involve transferring pupils to nearby schools, changing Ysgol Derwen's capacity or altering its age range. No direct effect on nearby school rolls is anticipated. Future admissions would be managed by the Council.

Potential Mitigation: Coordinate admissions and place planning

Work with the Council to communicate admissions arrangements and monitor demand across local schools. Review any specific effects identified through consultation.

A.7.xii. Wraparound and Childcare Provision

Potential Impact: Neutral subject to continuity of provider arrangements

Little Acorns provides on-site childcare and early years services. Retention of the school site means that this provision would not need to relocate because of the proposal. Continuity remains important for working families and children accessing early years support.

Potential Mitigation: Agree continuity with Little Acorns

- Review any lease, license, service or access arrangements with the Council and provider before implementation.
- Communicate confirmed arrangements to families and monitor any concerns about access, affordability or disruption.

A.8. Conclusion

The anticipated overall community impact is neutral. Ysgol Derwen would remain in Higher Kinnerton on its existing site, retaining local access to English-medium primary and nursery education with the same pupil capacity. No pupil relocation, increased travel distance or displacement of community activities is proposed.

The intended benefits relate to school sustainability, local authority support and capital planning. These are potential longer-term benefits rather than confirmed improvements to buildings or services. Effective communication and continuity planning would help address uncertainty for pupils, families and providers.

The assessment should be updated following consultation and once transport, childcare, community use and faith designation details have been confirmed. Any newly identified adverse effects should be assessed and accompanied by appropriate mitigation before a final decision.