



# Review of Joint Faith Secondary Provision in the north of Denbighshire

1 May 2013

Equality Impact Assessment

# **Review of Joint Faith Secondary Provision in the north of Denbighshire**

**Contact:** Paul Greatbatch (Customers & Education Support)  
**Updated:** 01.05.13

## **1. What type of proposal is being assessed?**

A project proposal

## **2. Please describe the purpose of this proposal**

The creation of a new joint faith school following the closure of Blessed Edward Jones Catholic High School (BEJ) and St Brigid's School (SB). The new school, initially, will operate from the 2 existing sites of BEJ and SB.

## **3. Does this proposal require a full equality impact assessment?** *(Please refer to section 1 in the toolkit above for guidance)*

No	No - the impact will be neutral as very little will change. The only changes will be: 1. The existing Catholic schools will close; 2. A new school will open but operate from the existing sites; 3. The new school will educate pupils from the Catholic and Anglican traditions as well of pupils of other religious beliefs; and 4. The school will need only one headteacher and that post may be filled by one of the existing head teachers or an external candidate. Accordingly the post of the existing headteachers will be redundant and a single new position will be created. DCC's human resources team will consider this and advise the governing body of the new school to ensure that the process is not discriminatory.
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## **4. Please provide a summary of the steps taken, and the information used, to carry out this assessment, including any engagement undertaken** *(Please refer to section 1 in the toolkit for guidance)*

1. DCC background documents on Equalities Issues.
2. North Wales Public Sector Equality Network Top Ten Tips – EqIA and Due Regard.

3. Denbighshire Corporate Plan: Equality Impact Assessment Research (3) Equality and Education in Denbighshire CIT Research DCC.

4. DCC's Strategic Equality Plan identifies as one of its aims, Reducing unequal outcomes in education to maximise individual potential. This document refers to national research which suggests there is a gap in educational attainment between boys and girls. St Brigid's was formerly an all girls' school. Although it now welcomes boys, there is still a large imbalance in favour of girls; something which is most notable in the secondary years, but which nonetheless exists in the primary years. This Proposal would see an end to the selective practice which used by St Brigid's for around half of its intake into year 7. This should have the positive impact of allowing a greater proportion of boys to enter the new school compared with that entering the two schools at the moment.

5. An informal consultation conducted between 6 December 2012 and 29 January 2013 during which DCC received over 100 letters and emails and over 170 questionnaire responses. The consultation asked questions concerning the provision of faith education in North Denbighshire and invited interested parties to give their views on this. Parents of children with health issues, who relied on their ability to travel quickly and inexpensively to and from school during the day, expressed concern about the possibility of the schools location being changed. However, this is not an issue for this Proposal as it will not result in the location changing.

A further issue identified during the informal consultation was that of faith. The two existing schools are both deemed Catholic. One or two of the responses suggested that they objected to any change of faith provision and that the schools should remain Catholic. However, both schools currently welcome pupils of other faiths. The Project will see a formalising of this situation with a heavy weighting given in the Admissions Policy to applicants of the two main faiths (and the new school will be a church school under the guidance of the two Diocesan Authorities) but other faiths will continue to be welcomed. Accordingly, although the issue of faith is high on the agenda for this project, there is no negative impact on anyone who holds religious beliefs.

6. A member of DCC's School improvement team who specialises in Special Educational Needs (SEN) has confirmed that the correct approach is to continue to offer support to any pupils who have an SEN who are concerned by the change to a dual sited joint faith school. However, this Project is not considered to have a negative impact on anyone with a disability.

## **5. Will this proposal have a positive impact on any of the protected characteristics?**

*(Please refer to section 1 in the toolkit for a description of the protected characteristics)*

The impact will be neutral as very little will change as noted in section 3 above. However, the two separate Catholic schools will become one school with an emphasis on pupils from the Catholic and Anglican traditions but which will also accept pupils from other faiths. This will promote greater inclusion and acceptance.

## **6. Will this proposal have a disproportionate negative impact on any of the protected characteristics?**

No
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**7. Has the proposal been amended to eliminate or reduce any potential negative impact?**

No	<If yes, please provide detail>
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**8. Have you identified any further actions to address and / or monitor any potential negative impact(s)?**

Yes	DCC's Schools Effectiveness and Performance Officers have been asked to consider and comment on the impact of the project on current and future pupils with Special Educational Needs.
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Action(s)	Owner	Date
Continue to monitor responses from parents of children with disabilities and/or SEN. Discuss any issues with Officers from DCC's SEP Team to consider impact on such pupils.	PG	01.05.2013

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**9. Declaration**

Every reasonable effort has been made to eliminate or reduce any potential disproportionate impact on people sharing protected characteristics. The actual impact of the proposal will be reviewed at the appropriate stage.

Review Date:	01.05.2013
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Name of Lead Officer for Equality Impact Assessment	Date
Paul Greatbatch	01.05.2013

**Please note you will be required to publish the outcome of the equality impact assessment if you identify a substantial likely impact.**

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