

## THE PROPOSAL

AREA PLANNING EA DISTRICT	Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
DP NUMBER	667 and 668
SCHOOL NAME	Mid Down Integrated College (DP 667) and Blackwater Integrated College (DP 668)
SCHOOL REFERENCE	Blackwater IC reference: 426-0309 Not applicable at this stage
TYPE	Post-Primary (11-18)
MANAGEMENT	Grant Maintained Integrated College
DP PUBLICATION DATE	Week commencing 17 May 2021
PROPOSAL	<p>Proposal 667 - Establish a new non-selective, 11-18, co-educational grant maintained integrated post primary school in the Mid Down area with effect from 1 September 2023, or as soon as possible thereafter. The school will have an enrolment number of 600 pupils and an admission number of 100 pupils</p> <p>This proposal should be read in conjunction with Development Proposal No 668.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Proposal 668 - Blackwater Integrated College will discontinue with effect from 31 August 2023, or as soon as possible thereafter.</p> <p>This proposal should be read in conjunction with Development Proposal No 667.</p> <p><b>The Proposal (668) is predicated upon concurrent approval of the Department of Education (DE) being given to the proposed discontinuance of Blackwater Integrated College Development as per Development Proposal No 668 noted above.</b></p>

## STATUTORY CONSULTATION

<p><b>CONSULTATION</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lorna McAlpine, NICIE, met with the Board of Governors in October 2017 regarding possible solutions for Blackwater IC. Further meetings were held after this.</li> <li>• Consultation with Stakeholders through public meetings (parents, staff and governors of feeder primary schools) ran from 28<sup>th</sup> November 2018 to 29<sup>th</sup> March 2019. Meetings were held on 29 November 2018 in Cedar IPS, followed by meetings in Drumlins IPS (28 Feb 2019) and Millennium IPS (21 Mar 2019) to gather interest in the formation of a Steering Group to explore the opportunity of increasing Integrated provision in the Mid Down area.</li> <li>• Consultation with all staff, Board of Governors, parents, teachers, and pupils at Blackwater IC took place through January and February 2020.</li> <li>• A staff meeting was held on the 6<sup>th</sup> January 2020.</li> <li>• An information evening for parents was held on the 16<sup>th</sup> January 2020 in the College.</li> <li>• Form tutors spoke with classes about letters that were sent home on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2020 and there was also a full school assembly on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2020 further outlining the case. Small focus groups of students were consulted on the future proposal.</li> <li>• Expressions of Interest (EOI) were collected in the window March 2019 to February 2020</li> <li>• Due to the impact of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, further consultations were carried out with all new staff, new Y8 pupils and parents at Blackwater IC on the 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> January 2021.</li> <li>• Further EOIs were collected in Jan 2021</li> </ul> <p>*More detail on the various consultations is in Appendix 1.</p>
<p>Confirmation by the Proposer</p>	<p>We confirm, on behalf of the members of the Mid Down Integrated College Steering Group, and Board of Governors at Blackwater Integrated College, that the work detailed in this proposal has been carried out by the members of the group supported by the Development Team at NICIE and the Integrated Education Fund.</p> <p>We confirm, on behalf of the Board of Governors, staff, parents and pupils of Blackwater Integrated College, were consulted on <u>various dates in January 2019 (refer to the above paragraph and Appendix 1 for details)</u> and Equality Screening of the proposal has been carried out and the statutory requirements of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 (where appropriate) have been considered.</p>

**Name:**



Frances Lowry



Tim Jackson (Co-chairs)

**Position Held:** Chair, Mid Down Integrated College Steering Group

**Date:** 12/02/2021

**Name:**



Ann Toman

**Position Held:** Chair Blackwater Integrated College Board of  
Governors

**Date:** 12/02/2021

Case for Change: Statutory Consultation

**EDUCATION AUTHORITY COMMENTARY ON PRE-PUBLICATION STATUTORY CONSULTATION**

*The following is to be completed and signed off by the EA.*

**The Education Authority (EA)**

I confirm that the schools which the Education Authority consider might be impacted by this proposal were consulted on 6 May 2021 with a return date of 3 June 2021.

Name:	Michele Corkey
Office Held:	Director of Education
Signed:	
Date:	16 September 2021

Provide detail of consultation with schools that may, in the EA's opinion, be affected by the proposal - list of schools, dates of letters issued to schools/meetings.

In accordance with Article 14 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 a copy of the proposal was sent, on 6 May 2021, to schools which might be affected by the proposal. A total of 432 schools were forwarded the draft proposal for their comments. Comments were invited from the Boards of Governors and Trustees, to be returned to the Education Authority by 3 June 2021.

Summary of views received (number of responses, recurring themes, petitions, community support or opposition).

The Education Authority received a total of 192 responses. Nine responses were received from affected schools, one response from the Controlled Schools' Support Council, one response from the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools with the remaining 177 responses being received from governors, staff, parents/guardians and pupils from Saintfield College.

Responses/Assurances in respect of issues raised during consultation.

The information below provides a summary/emerging themes of the responses received.

Dates of EA meetings e.g. Education Committee/ Board etc.

Details of issues raised by members of EA Board

Respondent	Agree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Total
Board of Governors – Affected Schools				
- Saintfield College		1		
- St Colman’s HS and Sixth Form		1		
- Our Lady and St Patrick’s College		1		
- Nendrum College		1		8
- Millennium Integrated PS	1			
- Cedar Integrated PS	1			
- Loughview Integrated PS	1			
- Drumlins Integrated PS	1			
Principal – Moneyrea PS		1		1
Other - Controlled Schools’ Support Council		1		1
Other – Council for Catholic Maintained Schools		1		1
Others		4		4
Saintfield College: Governors		2		2
Saintfield College Staff – Teaching and Non-Teaching		44		44
Saintfield College - Parents/Guardians		55		55
Saintfield College - Pupils		76		76
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>188</b>		<b>192</b>

### Responses that do not support DP 667 and DP 668

*There is existing post-primary providers in the area that provide for the educational needs of the community within an integrated environment.*

- Both St Colman’s HS and St Colmcille’s HS are already to some extent ‘integrated’ since they both have pupils from the Catholic, Protestant and Other religious backgrounds.
- Saintfield HS is more than committed to the promotion of integration and diversity within our school community.
- It would not offer a further enhancement of the educational opportunities for the children of the area as provision offering high quality educational experiences already exist.
- Nendrum College, along with our colleagues in other post-primary schools in NDALC and Mid Down from both controlled and maintained sectors, are open to children of all faiths and none.
- Saintfield HS may not carry the title of integrated status but we are nonetheless a very diverse school community - staff and pupils - which we welcome and celebrate!
- Regarding integration, it is crucial that the Department of Education acknowledge that simply because a school within the controlled sector does not have the term ‘integrated’ in its title, fundamentally this does not equate to a lack of inclusivity or openness.

*Rather than establishing a new integrated post-primary school existing providers in the area should be expanded and investment made at these schools.*

- The Mid Down Integrated College Case for Change states on page 31 that it is essential that 'provision carries through to sixth form ... to allow students to have the full period of their school lives at their integrated provision of choice'. This is exactly the same argument that Saintfield HS has been making for its pupils for decades, and yet there has been absolutely no movement with regard to this type of expansion for our young people.
- Nendrum College has repeatedly advocated for post-16 provision given the excellent GCSE results and the support and parental and pupil desire to stay on in the college at post-16. Also, there have been requests to EA and indeed through the Development Proposal written by EA Area Planning which was turned down for North Down and Ards for the increase in enrolment to 100 pupils.
- It is my opinion that investing in a new school could have a detrimental impact on the Saintfield HS community.
- Rather than attempting to rebrand Blackwater IC, would it not be much more logical and financially prudent to increase Saintfield HS's admissions, allowing it to welcome the many pupils who wish to attend? Why would a school with consistently falling numbers and therefore unsustainable, be rewarded with a brand new school at a cost of millions?
- One could surely not fathom that the Department of Education could contemplate granting 100 places at Year 8 to a new integrated college along 'the main arterial route which extends from Carryduff to Crossgar' when for over two decades Saintfield HS has pleaded for additional places.
- Feedback from the pupils in relation to how Saintfield HS prepared them for the post-16 transition was extremely positive, but it did not prevent a number of respondents commenting that they would have preferred the option to stay on at Saintfield HS if it had a sixth form college.
- If the DE and EA have decided that the community of Saintfield and Crossgar need a post-primary school which can cater for 11-18 year olds then it need look no further than Saintfield HS.
- I would ask the Department of Education to consider allowing my school to grow, rather than creating a new post-16 educational setting within this area.

*DP 667 and DP 668 will have a negative impact on established post-primary providers in the area. The proposals do not provide an area solution.*

- A particular consideration in this case must be the existing number of vacant school places within the Mid Down area. Currently there are approximately 500 surplus places in the area covered by this development proposal. This proposal has not considered that there are vacant places within the schools in this area and therefore the opening of a new integrated school, with 20 additional places per year, will impact most of the post-primary schools in this area, particularly the non-selective schools.
- CCMS is of the view that the impact of the proposed establishment of the Mid Down Integrated College would impact most in post-primary schools in Ballynahinch, Crossgar and Downpatrick.
- CSSC object to this proposal due to the potential impact for controlled schools.
- Very little detailed analysis was made in the proposal on the impact of local controlled non-selective post-primary schools.

- Suggest that before this Development Proposal is approved, Saintfield HS should be allowed to expand to meet the needs of all those children who year-on-year express a desire to attend.
- The proposal has stated that the new sixth form provision “will not directly impact other post-primary schools in the immediate vicinity as no sixth form provision is currently available within the immediate area of Saintfield and Crossgar.” However, what this statement does not consider is that these areas form part of our wider catchment area and so any new sixth form provision in this area will have an adverse impact on our sixth form intake.
- We believe it would be prudent for EA/DE to await the outcomes of the numerous 2019-2020 development proposals from Belfast/Greater Belfast/Ballynahinch/ Downpatrick schools before any change to post-primary provision in Mid Down is considered.
- As a controlled non-selective 11-16 college, Nendrum would be put at a further disadvantage in not having post-16 provision. This along with the recent and ongoing increase in Strangford IC’s enrolment numbers would have a serious detrimental effect on the future enrolment at Nendrum College.
- A new school offering opportunities for Years 8 to 14 can only have a negative impact on Saintfield HS.
- Irrespective of where it is sited within the ellipse, it has certainly the potential to negatively impact the enrolments in St Colman’s HS, Ballynahinch and St Colmcille’s HS, Crossgar.
- I am concerned as to the impact on local post-primary schools given that the total intake will not rise incrementally over a period of time but indeed quite sharply with immediate effect when opened.
- I am not opposed to the idea of Integrated Education but I do feel that the area that has been chosen in which to build a new school takes away from the existing already well-established post-primary schools.
- Lagan College is a very successful school and is oversubscribed, so why is it not being given more places and facilities to meet that demand?
- Options for change in any sector must be cognisant of the ‘bigger picture’, from an area planning perspective, including consideration of the availability of empty places within the entire school estate. Area solutions require consideration of all options, for an area as a whole, in order to address their potential impact.
- The DE Census 2020-21 shows the religious breakdown in Blackwater IC to be 39.3% Catholic, 37.1% Protestant and 23.6% Other. Thus, if that trend were to continue, it is reasonable to extrapolate that the greatest negative impact on enrolments will be on schools which depend primarily on pupils coming from a Catholic background.
- CCMS has already a DP awaiting a ministerial decision pertaining to the Downpatrick area. Area Planning must be well coordinated across all sectors.

*The case for change fails to give sufficient information on the location of the new in the integrated post-primary school for respondents to make an informed response*

- The lack of specific detail on the location of the proposed Mid Down Integrated College also causes concern as it may impact negatively on the sustainability of some Co Down schools.
- There is no clear and definite explanation of where the proposed new post-primary school will be located, making the public consultation process a challenging one, due to the lack of this pertinent information.

The 'main arterial route' of the A7 from Carryduff to Crossgar stretches for ten miles, which means that Mid Down Integrated College (MDIC) may be anything from five to fifteen miles (approximately) from the existing Blackwater IC site. As a result of the location of the site not being disclosed, there is therefore a significant difference in distance between where pupils are attending integrated education at the Blackwater IC site, and where it is proposed the new integrated institution should be built to better serve the alleged demand for integrated post-primary places.

- The lack of a precise location for the proposed school does present difficulties in attempting to define what neighbouring schools may be affected and by the reorganisation and in assessing the potential impact it may have on such existing schools.

*There is insufficient evidence that there is sufficient demand to warrant the establishment of a new integrated post-primary school.*

- It should be noted that significant investment has already been directed into the provision and promotion of integrated education within this area, with little success. Blackwater IC and Rowallane IS were both established with the aim of providing integrated education to the Mid Down area; yet, Rowallane IS closed in 2008 and Blackwater IC is being proposed to be closed in 2021. With this pattern of costly failures, there is little suggestion that a third attempt to establish integrated education in this area will be anything other than futile.
- The proposal implies that it is Lagan's integrated status that is largely the result of its oversubscription. However, this does not take into consideration that Lagan College, as Northern Ireland's first integrated school, has a long-established reputation within the community, coupled with its high academic success rate. It is important to note that, currently, Blackwater IC does not acquire those students who fail to achieve a place in Lagan College, therefore it is naïve to suggest that a newly-formed integrated school with no established academic record would be able to achieve this.
- Page 31 of the Mid Down Integrated College Case for Change identifies that of 305 pupils who were unsuccessful at gaining a place in Lagan College (year undisclosed), '65 children went on to accept places in seven other integrated post-primary schools'. Therefore, 78.7% of pupils rejected went on to find places in non-integrated education. This is, arguably, not a clear indication that demand for integrated education is a priority in this area over other factors that parents and carers are considering when deciding the best school for their child/children.
- The paper continues to say, regarding pupils who have not secured a place at Lagan College, 'it would not be unreasonable to accept that a realistic percentage of these pupils would avail of Mid Down Integrated College' – on what basis is this assumption being made? No such facts or figures are available to substantiate such claims, is this simply based upon probability, and if so, is this sufficient substance to warrant the Department of Education granting the creation of a new school?
- Enrolment in Blackwater IC from 2017–2021 has clearly shown that it cannot fill the spaces it has available. A new building on a new site is not going to increase numbers at all.
- The population of 0-15 year olds in the three LGDs (Ards and North Down, Lisburn and Castlereagh and Newry, Mourne and Down), cited as the principal catchment areas for the proposed integrated school, is set to decrease by 3,600 children between mid-2018 and mid-2028. In the

Ards and North Down LGD, NISRA projects a decline of 2,700 children over that period. Over the same period in Newry, Mourne and Down the projection is for a decrease of 1,300 children whereas for Lisburn and Castlereagh there is a projected increase of 400 children, giving overall the net decline in the population of 0-15 year olds of 3,600, six times the size of the proposed enrolment number of the new school.

*There are existing post-primary providers in the area that provide for the educational needs of the community within an integrated environment.*

- Rather than establishing a new integrated post-primary school, existing providers in the area should be expanded and investment made at these schools.
- DP 667 and DP 668 will have a negative impact on established post-primary providers in the area. The proposals do not provide an area solution.
- The case for change fails to give sufficient information on the location of the new integrated post-primary school for respondents to make an informed response.
- There is insufficient evidence that there is sufficient demand to warrant the establishment of a new integrated post-primary school.
- While a number of applicants to Lagan College fail to gain entry, it is noted that a large number of these pupils will transfer to non-integrated post-primary provision, not to existing integrated providers such as Blackwater IC or to Malone IC. Both of these schools have available places and parents have the opportunity to apply to these schools.
- Support for Saintfield HS as a school which is continually oversubscribed.

#### **Responses that support DP 667 and DP 668**

- The Department has a statutory duty to facilitate growth in the Integrated sector.
- Mid Down College will be able to offer an additional post-primary path for children in this geographical area. When the collective admissions (and assumed leavers) numbers are collated, it is clear that Lagan College will not be able to meet the needs of all parents in integrated primary schools.
- As a school we are aware of the excellent controlled and maintained post-primary schools and integrated colleges which already serve this area, but are acutely aware that year on year we have pupils transferring from primary seven who have been unsuccessful in gaining a place in their first choice integrated college, or in some cases, in any local integrated college. We would therefore view an increase in the number of integrated places, as something very positive.
- It addresses the clear evidence of population growth in these areas forecast within the next five years.
- Currently due to the criteria of distance in Lagan College's admission criteria, a significant number of our pupils have not been successful in securing a place at Logon College. In addition, many want to have a school with a sixth form college and so Blackwater IC may not be an option for many of our families.

These development proposals were discussed by the Education Authority's Strategic Planning and Policy Committee at its meeting on 16 September 2021.

**EDUCATION  
AUTHORITY  
COMMENTS**

In the context of planning on an area basis - what is the EA's view of the proposal, taking into account any pre-publication consultation. Does the EA support the proposal?

Name:	Michele Corkey
Office Held:	Director of Education
Signed :	
Date:	16 September 2021

The Education Authority does not support Development Proposals 667 to establish a new non-selective, 11-18, co-educational grant maintained integrated post-primary school in the Mid Down area with effect from 1 September 2023, or as soon as possible thereafter. The school will have an enrolment number of 600 pupils and an admission number of 100 pupils, or DP 668 that Blackwater Integrated College will discontinue with effect from 31 August 2023, or as soon as possible thereafter.

The Education Authority is aware of its duty to support the Department of Education to encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education, however, in considering the proposal for a New Mid Down Integrated College. The Education Authority has strong concerns over the lack of evidence in the case for change to support the development of a new Mid Down Integrated College with a location somewhere in the wider Saintfield area. The responses from affected post-primary schools and the Council for Catholic Maintained schools mirror the Education Authority's concerns as outlined below:

The Education Authority believes that the case for change fails to provide sufficient supporting information for the establishment of a new Mid Down Integrated College in the Mid Down area. The case for change fails to:

- Provide compelling evidence that the establishment of a new post-primary integrated school will mitigate the oversubscription at Lagan College. Assumptions are being made that pupils from Loughview and Forge Integrated Primary Schools will transfer to the new integrated post-primary school however only minimal information was provided on the existing transfer patterns from these two schools to other, non-integrated, post-primary schools in the area.
- Provide sufficient detail in the case for change on the proposed location of the new school. Failing to disclose exactly where these sites are means respondents are unable to fully assess the impact of the new post-primary school.
- Explain why Malone Integrated College is not a suitable alternative to Lagan College. The intake to Malone Integrated College has improved in recent years and this can be attributed to the school attracting pupils from a number of primary schools in the south Belfast area – an area that the proposer has indicated as a potential source for the new school. Malone Integrated College has available places.
- Fully explore the impact of the current Development Proposals for the potential expansion of controlled provision in Belfast, non-selective and selective, may have on the need for the proposed new school.
- Fully explore the proposals from CCMS on maintained provision in Downpatrick – these proposals could impact on the religious balance of Blackwater Integrated College and their intake levels. This in turn would impact on the sustainability of the proposed new integrated post-primary school.
- The establishment of a new Mid Down Integrated College, DP 667, does not contribute to an overall area planning solution.
- Most importantly the case for change has not fully examined the impact DP 667 will have on established post-primary provision. The case for

change does not take into account the established transfer patterns of the proposed feeder primary schools and makes assumptions that many parents will bypass these providers which have met the needs of their respective communities for many years. With a number of schools in the area undersubscribed, the proposal fails to consider the potentially detrimental impact of the establishment of another school in the area on these existing schools. The Education Authority has concerns about the potential impact on the breadth of curricular offer currently available in the area, if the existing schools' current enrolments fall as a result of the establishment of a new school.

The approval of DP 667 and DP 668 will have a severe negative impact on established post-primary providers in the area. The table below outlines the schools which will be most impacted based on the September 2020 main destination schools for pupils who did not secure a place in Lagan College.

**Destination schools of pupils who applied but did not secure a place at Lagan College – 2020 Year with schools receiving more than 5 pupils**

School	Sector	Number of pupils enrolled who did not secure a place at Lagan College for September 2020
Breda Academy	Controlled Non-selective	45
St Joseph's College, Belfast	Maintained Non-selective	42
Priory College	Integrated	28
Malone Integrated College	Integrated	27
Dundonald High School	Controlled Non-selective	25
Ashfield Girls' High School	Controlled Non-selective	17
Wellington College	Grammar	10
The High School Ballynahinch	Controlled Non-selective	8
Bloomfield Collegiate School	Grammar	8
Fort Hill Integrated College	Integrated	8
Blackwater Integrated College	Integrated	7
St Colman's High & Sixth Form College	Maintained Non-selective	7
Nendrum College	Controlled Non-selective	6
St Colmcille's High School	Maintained Non-selective	6

The proposals do not provide a strategic area planning solution to the oversubscription of Lagan College, the main impetus of taking forward the proposals. Appendix 1 provides further information on the impact of establishing a new Mid Down Integrated College.

## Appendix 1

### Education Authority: Supporting Information – Does not support DP 667 and DP 668

#### 1 Oversubscription at Lagan College

The case for change states:

1.6.4: *“new proposed MDIC will address the oversubscription at Lagan College”*,

4.2.4: *“it would not be unreasonable to accept that a realistic percentage of these pupils would avail of this option if MDIC was in a suitable location”*.

The Education Authority is aware of the ongoing high level of demand for places at Lagan College, however, it is also aware that there is a significant percentage of pupils who fail to gain a place at Lagan College, who then choose to transfer to a number of non-integrated providers in the area.

Within the case for change the proposer acknowledges that a significant percentage of pupils who fail to gain a place at Lagan College end up transferring to non-integrated post-primary schools

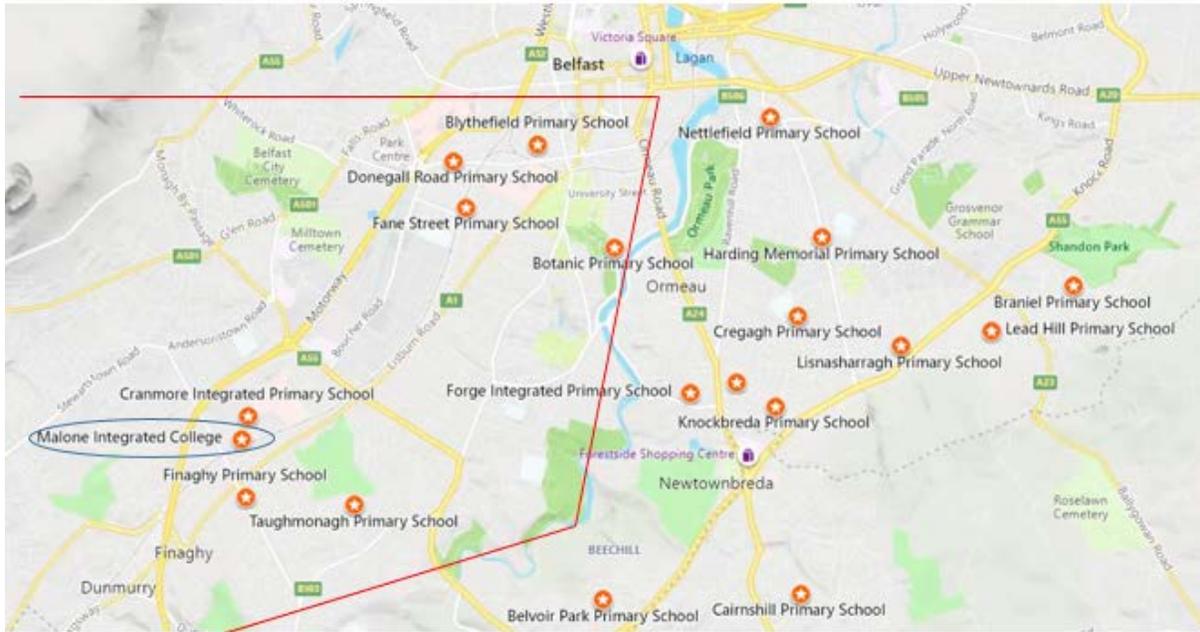
The data clearly shows that parents have been flexible to which post-primary school they prefer should they fail to gain entry into Lagan College – parents are able to avail of established non-integrated provision such as Ashfield Girls’ HS, Dundonald HS, Breda Academy, St Joseph’s College, Wellington College etc.

The proposer assumes that a number of these parents will, when the new integrated post-primary school is opened, decide to select the new integrated post-primary school for their child. This new school will operate for an underdetermined time across a split campus with the Key Stage 3 pupils sited in Downpatrick and the Key Stage 4/post-16 sited at the unknown site with the pupils accommodated in temporary accommodation. This split site model will continue until such times that the Department of Education approve the release of major capital funding for a new build school. The Education Authority would question how practical such an arrangement might be for those parents that live to the most northerly part of the suggested area the new school will attract its pupils from ie from the south Belfast area.

The proposer does not fully examine the established links primary schools, across all management types, have with established post-primary schools. There is no evidence that the assumption that parents will bypass established, local, non-selective controlled and maintained schools, as well as grammar schools, to attend an unknown entity located somewhere in the Saintfield area is reasonable. If parents who fail to gain entry to Lagan College wanted integrated post-primary education for their child they have an alternative to Lagan College within relatively close proximity ie Malone Integrated College.

Rather than establishing a new integrated post-primary school to mitigate the oversubscription at Lagan College, the Education Authority believes the potential for Malone Integrated College to take these pupils should be explored.

The map below is provided to highlight the area from which Malone Integrated College attracts the majority of its pupils from - it does not detail all the feeder primary schools and is provided to illustrate the widening area that Malone Integrated College is attracting its pupils from. The area bounded in red should be viewed as the school’s main source of pupils, the schools outside of the area have provided pupils over the last three years.



The improvement in Malone Integrated College’s intake can be attributed by the widening of the area the school attracts its pupils from - in the past the main feeders have been from primary schools to the west of Belfast and North Lisburn. However, in recent years Malone Integrated College has attracted pupils from schools such as Belvoir PS, Carryduff PS, Leadhill PS, Rosetta PS, Forge IPS, Knockbreda PS, Cregagh PS, Knockbreda PS etc.

While the intake to Malone Integrated College’s Year 8 has improved in recent years the Education Authority would highlight the ongoing level of available places at the college. For September 2021 the school had 103 applications for the 130 Year 8 places – leaving 27 integrated places not filled at the end of the application process.

Table A – Malone Integrated College Enrolment History										
Year	Approved Enrolment	Available Places	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	Year 14	Total
2015/16	800	246	92	58	92	94	121	88	46	591
2016/17	800	298	77	83	60	90	91	87	47	535
2017/18	800	346	69	69	88	63	85	74	37	485
2018/19	800	323	127	69	77	83	58	49	45	508
2019/20	800	280	140	123	65	76	84	48	19	555
2020/21	800	210	138	141	130	69	74	44	32	628

It should also be noted that the Education Authority, and a number of Belfast voluntary grammar schools, have development proposals with the Department of Education to increase the admissions and approved enrolments of a number of schools – no decision has been made on these proposals. The case for change references these proposals under paragraph 4.10.3 and states the following:

*“There are also proposals to alter enrolment numbers in several grammar schools and some non-selective schools in Belfast. As there are so many schools involved is unlikely that any school in the area will be adversely impacted.”*

However, these proposals for the Belfast area have the potential to increase the number of places available over the coming years. The Education Authority believes that should these changes be approved to alleviate pressures within the Belfast area, their impact would need to be monitored over a number of years before any further major changes are introduced. If approved there is the potential for an increased number of parents who fail to gain entry to Lagan College. This has the potential to decrease the number of parents transferring their child to the proposed new integrated post-primary school which will in turn impact on the long-term sustainability of the new school.

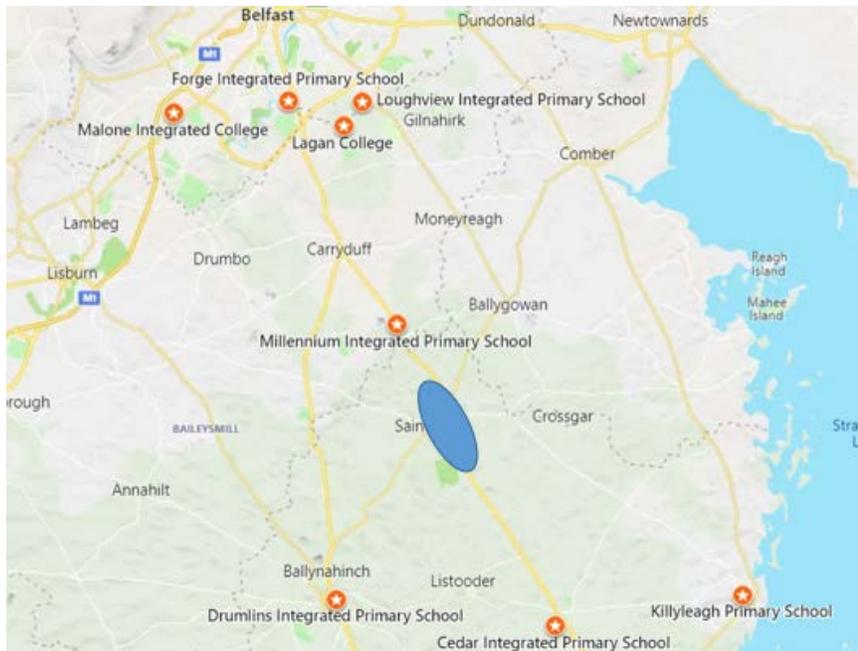
## 2 Proposed New Site for New Integrated Post-Primary School

The Education Authority is aware that the development proposal to establish the new school needs to be approved before any detailed work can be undertaken in relation to the completion of a business case to obtain major capital funding for the acquisition of the site and the construction of the new school. However, the proposer should be in a position, even at this early stage, to identify the proposed site or sites?

While the case for change highlights a geographical area where the proposed new integrated school may be located – the failure to identify the location of the preferred location of the new school severely hampers the ability of any respondent, including the Education Authority, to make an informed response on the impact the proposed new school may have on provision in the area.

## 3 Feeder Primary Schools

Within the case for change the proposer refers to six primary schools which they see as being main feeders to the proposed new school – these schools are Loughview IPS, Forge IPS, Millennium IPS, Cedar IPS, Drumlins IPS and Killyleagh IPS.



The above map shows the location of the six named feeder primary schools along with the existing integrated post-primary schools in the area – Lagan College and Malone Integrated College. The blue oval is the potential location of the new integrated post-primary school.

It is important to note that both Loughview IPS and Forge IPS are located closer to Lagan College and Malone Integrated College.

Table B overleaf summarises the last three years transfer patterns of these six schools - the table clearly shows that the parents at Cedar IPS, Drumlins IPS, Killyleagh IPS, Millennium IPS, Forge IPS and Loughview IPS have a history of transferring to non-integrated post-primary schools. The following should be noted:

- A number of Cedar IPS pupils transfer, in the main, to two integrated post-primary schools, Lagan College and Shimna College. However, a significant percentage of pupils have transferred to local grammar schools such as Assumption GS, Down HS and St Patrick's GS. There is also a history of pupils transferring to local non-selective schools such as Saintfield HS, St Colman's HS and St Colmcille's HS.
- Drumlins IPS also have pupils transferring to Shimna College and Lagan College but there is a history of pupils moving to local grammar schools such as Assumption GS and St Patrick's GS as well as to non-selective schools such as St Colman's HS and The High School Ballynahinch.
- In the case of Millennium IPS pupils' transfer to Lagan College, pupils also transfer to a number of grammar schools in the Belfast area such as Methodist College, Wellington College and Our Lady and St Patrick's College as well as to Assumption GS in Ballynahinch.
- Killyleagh IPS pupils mainly transfer to Blackwater Integrated College. However, pupils have transferred to a local grammar school, Down HS, as well as local non-selective schools such as St Colman's HS and Saintfield HS.
- The majority of pupils from Loughview IPS transfer to Lagan College with the local grammar schools being the other main recipient of pupils, ie Grosvenor GS, Wellington College, Bloomfield Collegiate etc. The proposer has assumed that a number of pupils who fail to get a place at Lagan College will travel to the new integrated college, however, this assumption is not supported by the history of the pupils from Loughview IPS, which shows that parents favour other established, local, non-integrated provision.
- Forge IPS follows a similar transfer pattern as Loughview IPS with the majority of pupils transferring to Lagan College with other pupils transferring to local grammars such as Wellington College, Grosvenor GS, Methodist College etc. Once again the proposer is assuming a number of pupils will move to the proposed new integrated school and ignore the established provision with a history of taking pupils from Forge IPS.

The Education Authority believes that the proposer has failed to provide sufficient evidence to support an admissions figure of 100 for the proposed new integrated post-primary school.

The proposer assumes that the proposed new integrated post-primary school will attract pupils from the six feeder primary schools who either fail to gain entry to Lagan College or view Lagan College as too far to travel to. The Education Authority believes this assumption is misplaced given that there is a strong history of pupils from the feeders transferring to non-integrated schools. Factors which make it extremely difficult to break these established links include:

- that pupils will have to travel outside of their own area;
- the new school will be operating a split campus for an unknown time;
- KS4/post-16 pupils will be accommodated within temporary accommodation for an unspecified time; and
- the established provision will remain stable and predictable throughout.

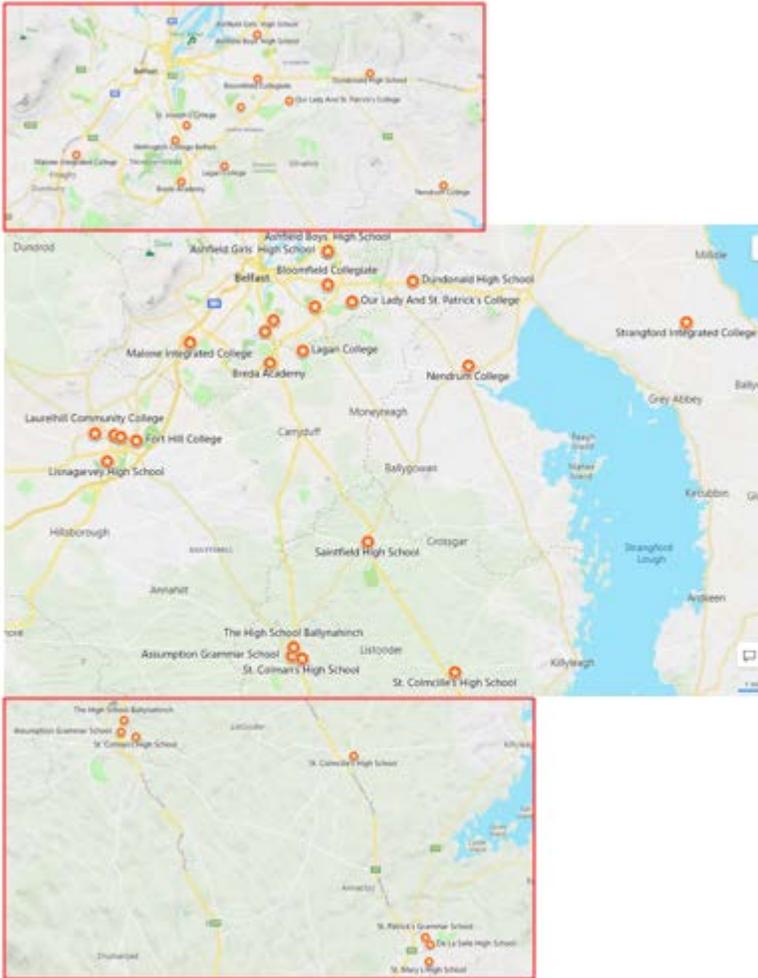
It is likely that some pupils from the local Mid Down integrated primary schools, Cedar IPS, Drumlins IPS and Killyleagh IPS, may transfer to the new post-primary school, however, the assumption that pupils from Loughview IPS and Forge IPS, and to some extent Millennium IPS will travel to the new school has to be questioned. Without significant numbers from these three large feeder primary schools it is doubtful that the new integrated post-primary will be in a position to meet a year 8 intake of 100.

**Table B – Proposed Feeder Primary Schools – Transfer History**

	Cedar IPS	Drumlins IPS	Millennium IPS	Killyleagh IPS	Loughview IPS	Forge IPS	Cedar IPS	Drumlins IPS	Millennium IPS	Killyleagh IPS	Loughview IPS	Forge IPS
<b>2018</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>44</b>						
Controlled Non-selective	3	1	0	1	2	0	11%	5%	0%	9%	4%	0%
Maintained Non-selective	6	0	0	0	1	5	22%	0%	0%	0%	2%	11%
Grammar	9	12	18	2	23	15	33%	57%	58%	18%	43%	34%
Controlled Integrated	0	1	0	0	0	1	0%	5%	0%	0%	0%	2%
Grant Maintained Integrated	9	7	13	8	28	23	33%	33%	42%	73%	52%	52%
<b>2019</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>47</b>						
Controlled Non-selective	3	1	0	0	1	1	11%	4%	0%	0%	2%	2%
Maintained Non-selective	9	4	3	0	2	2	32%	14%	11%	0%	3%	4%
Grammar	9	5	11	4	14	8	32%	18%	41%	31%	24%	17%
Controlled Integrated	0	1	1	0	0	0	0%	4%	4%	0%	0%	0%
Grant Maintained Integrated	7	13	12	9	42	36	25%	46%	44%	69%	71%	77%
<b>2020</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>41</b>						
Controlled Non-selective	7	0	7	5	0	0	23%	0%	18%	31%	0%	0%
Maintained Non-selective	11	8	2	3	0	7	37%	32%	5%	19%	0%	17%
Grammar	7	4	13	0	12	11	23%	16%	34%	0%	20%	27%
Controlled Integrated	0	3	1	0	0	0	0%	12%	3%	0%	0%	0%
Grant Maintained Integrated	5	10	15	8	47	23	17%	40%	39%	50%	80%	56%

## 4 Impact on Existing Post-Primary Schools

The map below shows the location of post-primary schools in the immediate area, many of which will be directly impacted by the proposed new integrated post-primary school to be located somewhere in the Saintfield area.



The Education Authority believes that the proposer has failed to fully examine the impact the new integrated post-primary school will have on schools throughout the area. The proposer has made the following statements:

4.10.3: *“As illustrated in Table 4.10.3 below, on average, data from the last few academic years indicates that of these 12 schools, six are oversubscribed and six are undersubscribed to such a level that any alteration in integrated provision is unlikely to have any impact.”*

4.11.5: *“The net growth for Integrated provision therefore will rise from 80 places available at BIC to 100 places available at MDIC; therefore the impact upon neighbouring schools will be minimal.”*

The proposer suggests that parents choose the non-integrated pathway due to the lack of integrated post-primary provision in the area, and the closure of Blackwater Integrated College, and subsequent establishment of a new integrated post-primary school, will bring integrated provision closer to the parents.

The proposer indicates within their case for change that the new school will have six main feeder primary schools, see previous comments on feeder primary schools, however, the proposer has not undertaken any detailed examination on established links these primary schools may have with the existing, non-integrated, post-primary schools. As shown previously, see Table B, many parents have chosen to leave the integrated sector to attend alternative non-integrated providers whether that be non-selective (controlled or maintained) or grammar schools. Breaking these links will not be as easy as implied within the case for change.

The table below provides the 2020/21 enrolment profile of all the schools shown on the map above:

Table C - Schools in the immediate area with the potential to be impacted by DP 667								
Approved Enrolments	Available Places	Actual Years 8 to 12	Actual Post-16	School Name	Management Type	% Protestant	% Catholic	% Other
660	0	617	110	Ashfield Girls' High School	Controlled	65%	5%	29%
700	0	703	148	Ashfield Boys' High School	Controlled	73%	3%	25%
380	138	302	0	The High School Ballynahinch	Controlled	70%	10%	21%
400	0	445	0	Nendrum College	Controlled	76%	1%	23%
500	0	563	62	Lisnagarvey High School	Controlled	77%	3%	19%
340	0	382	0	Saintfield High School	Controlled	73%	4%	23%
948	175	723	86	Laurelhill Community College	Controlled	65%	4%	31%
600	91	591	0	Dundonald High School	Controlled	69%	1%	30%
1000	324	539	168	Breda Academy	Controlled	61%	9%	31%
600	168	378	67	St Mary's High School, Downpatrick	Catholic Maintained	*	96%	#
450	185	285	0	St Colmcille's High School, Crossgar	Catholic Maintained	3%	89%	8%
550	62	363	162	St Colman's High and Sixth Form College	Catholic Maintained	8%	79%	12%
760	46	700	91	St Joseph's College, Belfast	Catholic Maintained	7%	70%	24%
430	83	343	44	De La Salle High School	Catholic Maintained	1%	94%	5%
1075	0	832	278	Grosvenor Grammar School	Controlled Grammar	52%	5%	43%
770	34	588	182	Wellington College	Controlled Grammar	46%	13%	41%
710	0	535	186	Bloomfield Collegiate	Controlled Grammar	68%	7%	25%
850	37	786	90	Fort Hill College	Controlled Integrated	56%	11%	33%
800	210	552	76	Malone Integrated College	Grant Maintained Integrated	44%	29%	27%
1300	0	1121	303	Lagan College	Grant Maintained Integrated	31%	38%	31%
670	0	701	95	Strangford Integrated College	Grant Maintained Integrated	43%	22%	34%
970	9	717	269	Friends' School	Voluntary Grammar	58%	17%	25%
1160	0	895	311	Wallace High School	Voluntary Grammar	68%	9%	23%
840	7	648	196	Assumption Grammar School	Voluntary Grammar	2%	95%	3%
1260	0	967	362	Our Lady and St Patrick's College	Voluntary Grammar	2%	92%	6%

The following should be noted from Table C:

- The number of available places across the schools, including integrated (Malone Integrated College).
- That a number of schools attract a significant number of pupils from families that do not align to either Catholic or Protestant. This is important because it is this type of family the new school would attract from.

Within the case for change, under 3.6, the proposer states that:

*“Other than the integrated schools and the non-denominational grammar school, there is no significant level of mixing of the two main communities in the proposed catchment area. Within the non-selective schools and denominational grammar there is no evidence for a ‘naturally integrated’ provision as the religious community balance is skewed towards a single religious community group in these schools. This indicates that there is no current provision that meets the demand for integrated provision in the area, except in the existing Integrated post-primary schools, which cannot meet the demand.”*

The Education Authority rejects this statement – as shown in Table C there are a number of schools that attract pupils from families that do not align with either main community. A number of these schools attract a significant percentage from “other” families, eg Breda Academy, Saintfield HS, Nendrum College etc. The proposer completely disregards the significant percentages of “Other” families that send their child to a non-integrated school and how this may impact on their rationale for the new integrated post-primary.

It should also be noted that Table 3.6.1 within the case for change fails to detail schools located within Belfast City Council – this lack of information is significant given that the majority of pupils who fail to gain entry to Lagan College transfer to Belfast based post-primary schools, see Table 1 of this submission. In addition, a number of these schools attract families designated as “Other”, ie Breda Academy, St Joseph’s College.

The Education Authority contends that given that there are already schools undersubscribed in the immediate area, there is no evidence that there is sufficient demand to warrant the establishment of another school. Furthermore, there is no evidence that the new school would itself be sustainable and as illustrated in other areas, its establishment would potentially create further sustainability issues for existing schools. Such an impact could potentially reduce the ability of the existing schools to maintain their current curricular provision, therefore, effecting a potential deterioration in the quality of educational provision for pupils within the area.

## 5 Blackwater Integrated College

The proposal for the discontinuance of Blackwater Integrated College is central to the establishment of the proposed new integrated post-primary and the case for change makes it clear that the pupils, and staff, will transfer to the proposed new school. The school has an admissions number of 80 and an approved enrolment of 400, the school’s enrolment profile is as follows:

Table D – Blackwater Integrated College Enrolment History							
Year	Available Places	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Total Pupils
2015/16	251	42	30	47	42	52	213
2016/17	251	44	45	35	48	40	212
2017/18	248	32	44	49	38	49	212
2018/19	259	33	32	43	48	38	194
2019/20	231	65	39	33	42	46	225
2020/21	220	50	65	37	34	43	229

Blackwater Integrated College attracts its pupils across the three main management types as shown in the Table 6 and the school has maintained a good religious balance, for example in 2020 – 37% Protestant, 39% Catholic and 24% Other.

To maintain this religious balance the school has continued to attract pupils from a number of maintained primary schools in the Downpatrick area, ie St Colmcille's PS, Our Lady and St Patrick's College, St Brigid's PS, as well as maintained schools outside of Downpatrick in areas like Saul, Legamaddy, Killough and Comber.

The proposer has acknowledged within the case for change development proposals brought forward by CCMS in relation to the potential closure of the three maintained post-primary schools in Downpatrick and the establishment of a new 11-19 co-educational voluntary grammar which would have an approved enrolment of 1,600 pupils. Even though the school will be a grammar school a transfer test will not be required to be undertaken by the majority of the pupils to gain entry.

CCMS has detailed a number of schools where pupils can apply for admission without the need for a transfer test, referred to as Category A within the CCMS submission. The list is all schools within a three radius of the proposed new school and included as Category A are a number of schools Blackwater Integrated College relies upon eg Our Lady and St Patrick's College, St Brigid's PS, St Colmcille's PS, St Patrick's PS (Legamaddy), St Patrick's PS (Saul), St Joseph's PS (Killough).

The establishment of a new voluntary, co-educational, grammar school sited in Downpatrick, where the majority of pupils will be admitted without a transfer test, could have a detrimental impact on Blackwater Integrated College intake and its ability to maintain a religious balance. The proposer does not fully explore the potential impact the CCMS proposals may have on Blackwater Integrated College's intake and its religious balance. Conversely the proposer has not examined the impact the new integrated post-primary school may have on the proposals brought forward by CCMS.

As with the current proposals for the Belfast area, the Education Authority recommends that the impact of the approved CCMS proposals for the Downpatrick area would need to be established and monitored over a period of time before any further changes are introduced to the area.



# **Mid-Down Integrated College**

## **CASE FOR CHANGE**

**February 2021**



# Contents

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Foreword</b>	
Section 1. Background	2
Section 2. Sustainability Assessment	9
Section 3. Area Planning Impact	20
Section 4. Rationale for Proposal	28
Section 5. Educational Impact	45
Section 6. Special Education Needs (SEN) Provision	49
Section 7. Implementation Plan	55
Section 8. Resource Implications	63
<b>Appendices</b>	<b>72</b>
Appendix 1 Details Of Consultation	
Appendix 2 Policy Context	

## **FOREWORD**

It was the original intent of the Mid-Down Steering Group to submit this Development Proposal in June 2020. However due to the impact of the current Covid-19 pandemic, the group suspended all works, including consultations, marketing and collection of Expressions of Interest (EOI) to support the Development Proposal in early March 2020 and were not able to resume the same until September 2020.

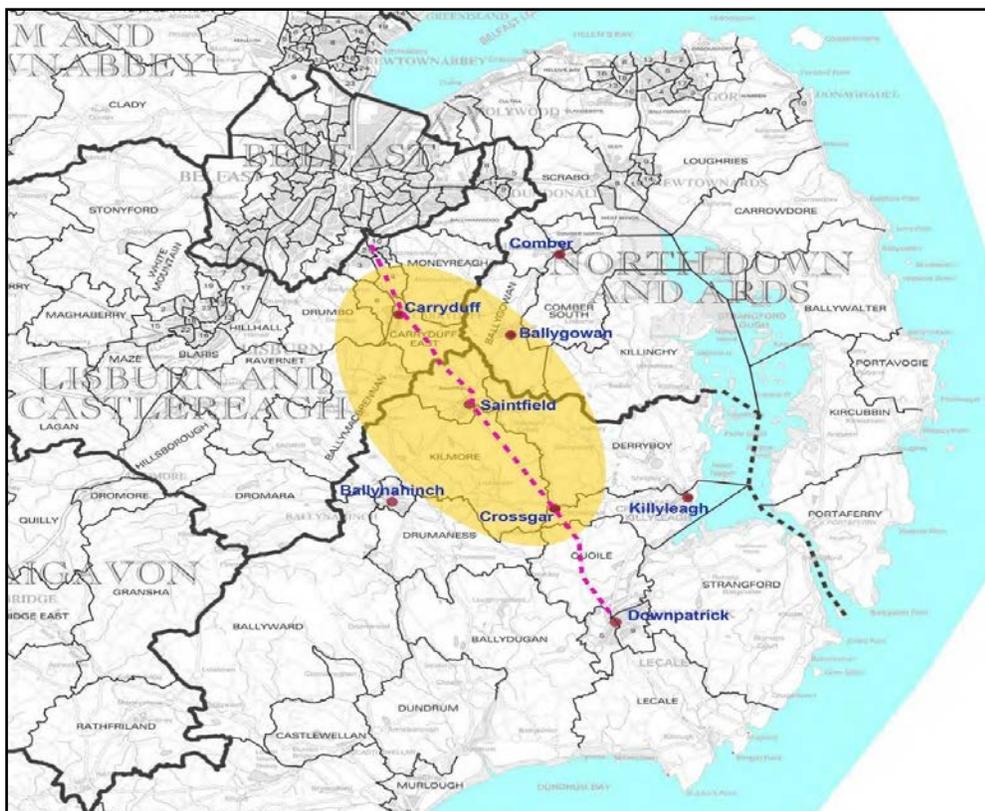
The Steering Group acknowledge that given the ongoing issues due to the impact of the pandemic, that processes, procedures, analysis and decisions pertaining to this Development Proposal may take longer than 'pre-pandemic' times. As a further result, the Steering Group agreed that the original timescale of the establishment of the new College in 2022 or as soon as possible thereafter, would be revised to 2023 or as soon as possible thereafter.

## SECTION 1: THE PROPOSAL AND BACKGROUND

### 1.1 The Proposal

1.1.1 A new co-educational, 11-18 all-ability grant-maintained Integrated College located in the 'Mid Down' area. The 'Mid Down' area for the purposes of this Proposal, is defined as the area within the ellipse as indicated on **Map 1.1.1** below, with a centre as Saintfield, a semi-major axis of 6 miles and semi-minor axis of 3 miles. An integral part of this process is the interdependent second proposal for the closure of Blackwater Integrated College (BIC) and associated Learning Support Centre and a third proposal for the opening of new SEN specialist provision. It is envisaged that the pupils and staff currently employed by the Board of Governors of BIC, will transfer to the new proposed College. This Proposal responds to the significant parental demand for integrated post-primary provision as demonstrated by the over subscription of Lagan College, and rising expressions of interest. The proposal addresses several points raised in the "Providing Pathways, Strategic Area Plan for School Provision 2017 - 2020" published by the Education Authority (EA) and the latest EA document "Annual Action Plan for Primary, Post Primary and Special Schools April 2019 – March 2021", namely, provision of school places in locations where they are needed, including sixth form provision, specialist SEN provision and access to post primary integrated education.

**Map 1.1.1 Extent Of The 'Mid Down' Area As Defined In This Development Proposal**



1.1.2 The aim of this proposal, which is an area solution, is to provide post primary integrated provision in the Mid-Down area through the creation of a new, integrated, all ability, sustainable 11-18 co-educational college. The proposed College will deliver high-quality education through a holistic approach committed to the development of every pupil's intellectual, emotional, social, physical and creative potential.

1.1.3 The proposed College, herein known as Mid-Down Integrated College (MDIC) or the College, will have an admissions number in year 8 of 100, with an overall enrolment number of 600. The College proposes to offer all-ability post 16 provision through a 6<sup>th</sup> form curriculum providing high quality academic and vocational qualifications tailored to each pupil's gifts and needs.

## 1.2 Policy Context

1.2.1 The Steering Group has crafted this Proposal with full consideration and implementation of the following policies, legislation and Area Planning strategy documents:

- New Decade, New Approach 2020<sup>1</sup>
- Schools For The Future: Sustainable Schools Policy (SSP) 2009<sup>2</sup>
- Every School a Good School 2009<sup>3</sup>
- Entitlement Framework Policy (The Education (NI) Order)<sup>4</sup>
- EA 'Providing Pathways' 2017-20 Strategic Area Plan for School Provision 2017-20<sup>5</sup>
- EA 'Providing Pathways' 2017-20 Strategic Area Plan for School Provision 2017-20, Action Plan April 2019 – March 2021<sup>6</sup>
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)<sup>7</sup>
- Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998)<sup>8</sup>
- Rural Needs Act (2016)<sup>9</sup>
- Education Reform (NI) 1989, Section 64<sup>10</sup>
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Order (NI) 2005 (as amended)<sup>11</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/parliament-and-elections/devolution/northern-ireland-assembly- new-decade-new-approach/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/a-policy-for-sustainable-schools.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/every-school-good-school-esags>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/entitlement-framework>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.eani.org.uk/publications/providing-pathways-strategic-area-plan-2017-2020>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.eani.org.uk/publications/providing-pathways-strategic-area-plan-2017-2020>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/47/section/75>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/rural-needs>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/1989/2406/article/64>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/2005/1117/contents>

- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (NI) 2016<sup>12</sup>

1.2.2 Since 2011, statutory planning authorities and the Board of Governors of BIC have been engaged in implementing the vision for education for BIC. As set out in the Sustainable Schools Policy (SSP), the objective is to ensure ‘that every learner achieves his or her full potential at each stage of development’. The relevant elements of the SSP form the cornerstone of this proposal as follows:

- ensure that the excellent quality of education available to some young people is made available to all, in both urban and rural settings, in accessible, modern, fit-for-purpose accommodation;
- improve outcomes for all but, in particular, to provide additional support to those who require it, including those children with Special Educational Needs, to realise their full potential;
- encourage schools to co-operate in sharing best practice to support children with Special Educational Needs and those with other barriers to learning;
- sustain strong, successful and viable schools, well led by their Governors, representing local stakeholders, principals and their staff, to be the centre of the education system, supported by effective administrative and strategic direction;
- encourage schools to become closely integrated with their wider community, with much better links to early years’ provision and to informal educational opportunities beyond the school;
- implement a revised curriculum offering fresh opportunities, particularly to those for whom education is currently not working well enough;
- move away from the division of academic and vocational education to ensuring access to a broader educational experience for all young people, supported by better quality careers advice, signposting the appropriate pathways to the future;
- ensure that each school or set of schools can sustain the ethos which it values and has upheld for many years;
- create a new set of relationships amongst schools and colleges, based on strong, successful and sustainable institutions, well-funded and equipped but building on the expertise of the different sectors;
- sustain the quality, morale, health and well-being of the teaching workforce, youth workers and other educational professionals and support staff, helping them to prepare and implement the major education reforms and deal with the range of social challenges affecting young people, particularly in an increasingly diverse population; and

---

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nia/2016/8/contents>

- uphold an education system that plays a powerful and positive role in the normalising of society, helping to make it sustainable and vibrant, with greater sharing amongst communities.

1.2.3 The new College may come under Lisburn City and Castlereagh (LCCC) Local Government District (LGD), Newry, Mourne and Down (NMD) LGD, or Ards and North Down LGD. All LGD areas specifically identify in ‘Providing Pathways’ (p.30 and p.84) the need to develop proposals for the area to:

- ensure that school places are located as required;
- address school provision where sustainability is an issue;
- ensure equitable access to the Entitlement Framework pathways at Key Stage 4;
- establish additional learning support and autism-specific provision within primary and post-primary schools;
- re-configure Post 16 provision to give pupils equitable access to the Entitlement Framework pathway in collaboration with the Further Education sector;
- encourage and facilitate the development of sustainable Irish Medium and Integrated schools; and
- promote shared education solutions which provide sustainable schools.

### **1.3 Background To The Proposal**

1.3.1 NICIE, as the sectoral support body, represents the GMI schools at the various Education Authority (EA) area planning meetings (Area Planning Local Group (APLG), Working Group and Strategic Group). Following the publishing of EA document ‘Providing Pathways’ recommendation “Trustees to consult on options for future provision by February 2020”, NICIE met with the Board of Governors of BIC to discuss a way forward highlighting the following relevant issues:

- the legacy issue of BIC being outside its intended catchment area;
- the restricted site on which BIC is located, compounded by older buildings, little investment, and no capacity to house a 6th form;
- the over-subscription at Lagan College, and the demonstrated rising demand for a second-level Integrated school that could cater for the increasing number of pupils in the South East Belfast and Mid Down areas.

1.3.2 After extensive consideration of options, a workable solution to address some of the key issues raised in the Strategic Pathways document was not deemed possible on the current BIC site. With the agreement of the Board of Governors of BIC, NICIE had BIC placed on the Area Action Plan in 2017 to allow further consultation to take place.

1.3.3 NICIE also undertook discussions with the nearest integrated post-primary schools; Lagan College and Shimna College, Newcastle for a co-ordinated approach to the provision of integrated post primary education in this area.

1.3.4 NICIE further co-ordinated Public Meetings on the matter at Cedar IPS Crossgar (29 November 2018), Drumlins IPS Ballynahinch (28 February 2019) and Millennium IPS Saintfield (21 March 2019).

1.3.5 Following these meetings a Steering Group of 16 members was formed. The Steering Group comprises parents and representatives from BIC, the feeder schools, and other schools in the area. Members participate on a voluntary basis, and are supported by NICIE. The Steering Group is constituted with Office Bearers and a Community Engagement Team. The Steering Group has met monthly, with subgroups carrying out activities between meetings to canvas support for the concept of a new integrated post-primary school in the Mid Down area.

#### **1.4 Testing For Transformation**

1.4.1 The Steering Group wrote to other post-primary schools within an 8 mile radius of the Saintfield area to ask if they would consider transforming to integrated status. The list of schools written to was supplied by DE. Seven post primary schools in total were written to.

1.4.2 Two schools requested further information. No school, to our knowledge, has yet decided to pursue the route of transforming to integrated status. However, it is noted that even if one of these schools were to transform, the level of demand for integrated post-primary education in the area is sufficiently high to support both initiatives.

#### **1.5 Expression Of Interest Forms**

1.5.1 As no school expressed a desire to transform to integrated status, the Steering Group began the collection of Expression of Interest (EOI) forms during 2019. This commenced with collections from integrated feeder primary schools in the area including Millennium IPS, Cedar IPS, Killyleagh IPS, Loughview IPS and Drumlins IPS. The Steering Group also participated in community events to widen the awareness of the project and create interest amongst families whose children attend other schools. Examples of the type of events and venues attended from March 2019 to February 2020 include:

- Saintfield Agricultural and Community Show
- Various Shopping Centres
- Soft Play Locations
- Primary school end of year events

- Primary school Christmas events
- Nursery school activities
- Crossgar Sports Club cross community summer schemes
- Saintfield Christmas Fair
- Montalto Estate open day

1.5.2 Other activities, allied to integrated primary schools where possible, have resulted in a sizable number of EOIs being collected for the proposal for both Years 8 – 12 and Years 13 – 14.

1.5.3 Due to the impact of the current Covid-19 pandemic, the group suspended all works in relation to completion of the Development Proposal in early March 2020. As a result, the collection of further EOI's to support the Development Proposal stopped.

## **1.6 Oversubscription At Lagan College**

1.6.1 The over-subscription at Lagan College shows a high number of pupils are not being placed in their school of choice. For example, in 2019/20 a total of 537 applicants, of which 423 were first preference applicants, applied for 220 places at Lagan College.

1.6.2 In 2020 a significant number of pupils attending Lagan College's 'feeder' integrated primary schools, who had cited Lagan College as their first preference choice, did not get a place in the college. This included the pupils currently attending integrated primary schools who are the eldest child in the family.

1.6.3 The issue of some Integrated primary school pupils not gaining a place a Lagan College, particularly those who attend primary schools that lie to the South of Lagan (Millennium, Cedar and Drumlins Integrated Primary Schools), has been enhanced in the past few year due to the change in Lagan College's admission criteria (tie-breaker) which allocates places depending on distance from the college. This may effectively reduce the breadth of the catchment area for Lagan over time.

1.6.4 The new proposed MDIC will address the oversubscription at Lagan College as identified in the "Providing Pathways, Strategic Area Plan for School Provision 2017 - 2020" published by the Education Authority (EA) and the latest EA document "Annual Action Plan for Primary, Post Primary and Special Schools April 2019 – March 2021" which highlights the need for the Integrated body to "develop options to deal with over subscription in Integrated education in South East Belfast and Castlereagh by Jan 2021". Refer to Section 5 Rationale for Proposal.

## **1.7 Statutory Duty**

1.7.1 There is a statutory duty on the Department (DE) under Article 64 of the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) 1989 Order “***to encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education, that is to say the education together at school of Protestant and Catholic pupils***”.

## **1.8 New Decade New Approach January 2020.**

1.8.1 The Agreement promises to deliver ‘*a fair and compassionate society that supports working families and the most vulnerable. The Executive will develop and implement an Anti-poverty Strategy.*’ It also highlights as one of its priorities the need to ‘*help build a shared and integrated society, the Executive will support educating children and young people of different backgrounds together in the classroom*’. Integrated education has a key role to play in delivering this outcome and this Proposal is aligned with this.

## **1.9 The new College (MDIC)**

1.9.1 It is envisaged that, if approved, all the pupils of Blackwater IC will transfer to the new College from ‘Day 1’.

1.9.2 It is envisaged that, if approved, all the staff at Blackwater IC will transfer under Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE) to the new College from ‘Day 1’

1.9.3 It is envisaged, that if approved, the new College may operate initially (Day 1) on a split site basis, utilizing the current Blackwater site located in Downpatrick and a second site yet to be identified.

1.9.4 In relation to all of the above, refer to Section 7 for the proposed ‘Day 1’ models.

## **1.9 Summary**

1.9.1 Details on the educational benefits of this proposal can be viewed in Section 6. Resourcing including estimated three-year budget plan issues are contained in Section 9. A preliminary implementation plan for the preferred option for Years 1, 2 and 3 is included in Section 8 along with a proposed Schedule of Accommodation for the same.

1.9.2 These proposals will be subject to the Education Minister making the final decision. If approved, the implementation plan will be co-ordinated to manage the transition arrangements effectively, ensuring that BIC is fully integrated into the new school.

## **SECTION 2: BLACKWATER INTEGRATED COLLEGE SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT**

### **2.1 Background**

2.1.1 Blackwater Integrated College opened in September 2008. It was formed from two previously existing schools; Down Academy (Controlled Integrated High School) (DA) and the independently funded Rowallane Integrated College (RIC). RIC had opened in 2005 and whilst two Development Proposals (Proposals 178 and 189) for funding were submitted to the DE, neither were approved. The reason given was the potential negative impact the new school would have had on other post primary integrated provision. A third Development Proposal was then submitted after talks between the DE and the Steering Group. The proposal was for a new school on the DA site which would replace both DA and RIC. Whilst the proposed solution was far from what the steering committee had envisaged in terms of location of the school and its ability to meet the demands of the growing population in the Northern corridor between Lagan and Crossgar, the group acknowledged, given the numbers of pupils they were responsible for after two years of independence, that this was the only viable interim solution. The new school was called Blackwater Integrated College (BIC).

2.1.2 In addition, Down Academy (DA) was itself the result of an amalgamation of Killyleagh, Castlewellan and Quoile High Schools, which took place in 1991. As Downpatrick was central to the catchment area of the three schools, the DA site became the location for the three school amalgamation. DA transformed to 'controlled integrated' status in 1998.

2.1.3 BIC has helped to address the need for increased provision of integrated post primary places in the Mid-Down area. However, BIC is on a restricted site at the southern end of the catchment area and so is not in a good geographical location to meet the expressed need.

2.1.4. It is significant to note that although BIC has been under-subscribed in recent years, the 2019-2020 enrolment has shown a significant increase and the LSC in Year 8 for the same year is at full capacity. There are also very strong indications that this improving trend will continue due to close primary links.

### **2.2 The Sustainable Schools' Policy**

2.2.1 The characteristics of a sustainable school are widely recognised and have been promoted in Government policy and guidance and highlighted by the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI).

2.2.2 There are a number of quantitative and qualitative criteria and indicators which provide a framework against which a view of how effectively a school is functioning and performing.

- Quality Educational Experience
- Stable Enrolment Trends
- Sound Financial Position
- Strong Leadership and Management by Boards of Governors and Principals
- Accessibility
- Strong Links with The Community

## **2.3 Blackwater Integrated College and Sustainability**

2.3.1 Information contained in this section demonstrates how BIC compares with the six SSP indicators above.

## **2.4 Quality Educational Experience**

2.4.1 In October 2013, the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out Follow-up Inspection in BIC; the provision was evaluated as “Good”.

2.4.2 In September 2019, the ETI conducted a Post-Primary Inspection (Involving by Action Short of Strike). Although ETI were unable to award a performance level due to the strike action, they did make the following comments:

*“The outcomes attained by the pupils in most of the subjects at GCSE grades A\* to C are in line with, or above, the corresponding NI subject averages”.*

*“Over the past three years, the pupils who require additional support with aspects of their learning have attained well at GCSE (including equivalents)”.*

*“Key Stage (KS) 4 pupils appreciate how the school provides subjects which allow them to follow courses that meets their needs, aspirations and abilities. They also spoke positively about the opportunities that pupils from the unit and mainstream have to learn together”.*

*“The curriculum at KS4 meets the entitlement framework through collaboration within the Lecale area learning community. Curriculum provision has been a key area for development prioritised by the school. It is kept under constant review in order to address the changing pupil profile, subject currency of qualifications and progression to enable pupils to proceed to the next phase of education or employment”.*

2.4.3 With reference to **Table 2.4.3** below, it should be noted that two out of the last three years results have been above the NI Average for similar schools with one year significantly lower for including English and Mathematics. The recent ETI inspection shows all results were in line with baseline data. The target in the 2016-2019 SDP was to maintain at 70% +5 A\*-C and increase to 40% the +5 A\*-C including English and Maths over the span of the Development Plan. The results achieved were 87% +5 A\*-C and 40%+5 A\*- C including English and Maths - above one of the targets by 17% and on target with the including English and Maths. The 2020 results are also included below to show the upward trend in results but are not included in the 3 year cycle.

**Table 2.4.3 - Key Stage 4 Results for Years 2017 to 2019**

	5+ A*- C (%)	5+ A*- C (%)	5+ A*- C inc English & Maths (%)	5+ A*- C inc English & Maths (%)
Year	BIC %	NI (Non Grammar)	BIC%	NI (Non Grammar)
2017	82	77	55	49
2018	87	80	19	51
2019	92	n/a	54	n/a
2020 *	90	n/a	63	n/a

\*2020 Results only released August 2020 and not yet included in 3 year average cycle.

Note: the three-year average for 2017 - 2019:

5+ A\*- C = 87% - increase of 23%

5+ A\*- C including English and Maths = 40% - increase of 4%

2.4.4 Small numbers within cohorts are very relevant to all statistics with individual students often counting for between 3-4% each in final results for whole school results and a much higher % in relation to departmental stats. Looking at results in a more detailed manner and comparing against baseline scores such as CAT, PTE and PTM often gives a more realistic representation of the results within each cohort.

2.4.5 2017 and 2019 results were above the NI average for similar schools. It is important to note fluctuations in 2018 with lower results for including English and Math and to compare results with baseline scores and target grades for students which show that all three years of results reflect value added and are in line with baseline predictions as noted by ETI. This is done on an annual basis through departmental and whole school analysis

of results with tracking of student attainment throughout KS3 and KS4 very important in ensuring that curriculum provision at KS4 is suitable.

2.4.6 The large increase in +5 A\*- C was brought about by an increase in vocational subjects. This was not done to the detriment of GCSE subjects and all subjects are selected according to student ability levels and the curriculum tailored to suit the individual needs of students and cohorts. The Options process at Year 10 has been changed to give further guidance and trials take place over a number of weeks to get the best possible options for all students within the confines of timetabling in a small school.

2.4.7 Entitlement Framework (EF) at BIC: Audit figures were as follows for the last three years.

2016/17 – Access to courses in Year 11 – **24** with 16 Applied courses and 8 General courses

2017/18 – Access to courses in Year 11 – **22** with 13 Applied courses and 9 General courses

2018/19 - Access to courses in Year 11 – **26** with 16 Applied courses and 10 general courses

This meets the requirements of Circular 2018/06 regarding students having access to a minimum of 21 courses at KS4 of which at least 33% must be general and at least 33% applied.

2.4.8 Examination of the 2018/2019 leavers from BIC show that 47% of students moved on to level 3 qualifications at a variety of destinations. 14% to Belfast Met, 56% to SERC and 22% to other post primary providers including Lagan College and Shimna IC.

2.4.9 A retention rate of 47% at level 3 would augur well for the establishment of post 16 provision at MDIC, given that the NI average for non-selective post-primary schools is 48.7%. Some of the students who chose level 2 courses at Belfast Met or SERC may well have been able to access level 3 courses in a location in which they would have been familiar with. The supportive pastoral care system that would exist in the 11-18 integrated College would help young people of all abilities to achieve their full potential. Anecdotal evidence from parents and children in BIC indicates that remaining in the College for post 16 provision would have been the preferred option. With reference to the fact that BIC has an MLD unit, appropriate provision for statemented children at post 16 would be catered for in the new College.

## 2.5 STABLE ENROLMENT TRENDS

2.5.1 **Table 2.5.1a** below shows the number of enrolments and admissions numbers in BIC and **Table 2.5.1b** shows the profile of students who attend the college.

**Table 2.5.1a Admissions and Applications 2017-2020**

Year	Admissions Number	1 <sup>st</sup> Preference Applications	1 <sup>st</sup> Preference Admitted	Total Applications	Total Admitted
2017/18	80	22	22	34	34
2018/19	80	21	21	38	38
2019/20	80	38	38	67	67
2020/21	80	38	38	53	53

\*Including SEN students

**Table 2.5.1b Profile of BIC Students 2017- 2020**

Blackwater Integrated College	2017/18		2018/19		2019/20		2020/21	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Year 8 Intake	34		38		67		53	
Total enrolment	212		194		227		235	
Free School Meal Entitlement	91	42.9%	88	45.3%	100	44%	107*	45.5%*
Pupils on SEN Register	139	65.6%	118	60.1%	115	50.6%	126*	53.6%*
No of Pupils with Statement of SEN	60	28%	53	27%	56	25%	49*	21%*
No of newcomer students	12		10		12		14*	

\*Figures still to be confirmed

2.5.2 2019 - 2020 has seen a significant increase in enrolment to year 8 due to effective community engagement. This is a very encouraging sign and shows the College and integrated education within the Mid-Down area is clearly becoming more popular. However, ability to meet this demand is severely limited because the facilities at the College are limited and expansion of the current site is not possible.

## 2.6 Sound Financial Position

2.6.1 The audited accounts for the financial year ending 31.03.19 show an overall deficit of £57,719. This has significantly decreased over the last 3 years in a very difficult financial climate.

2.6.2 The year-on-year figures since 2016 are shown below in **Table 2.6.2**. There has been a surplus in the last 3 financial years, which in the current financial climate is a significant achievement.

**Table 2.6.2 – Year End**

Year	In- Year Surplus	Accumulative Deficit
2016 – 2017	£29,523	(£144,303)
2017 – 2018	£872	(£143,431)
2018 – 2019	£38,913	(£103,613)

*\*Figures for 2019/20 not yet completed*

2.6.3 Over the last 3 fiscal years BIC has had three successive surpluses totaling £70,208. Through prudent financial management BIC has therefore managed to reduce a historical deficit since the inception of the school. This has been very difficult in recent years with reductions in funding. There has been a reduction in non-teaching staff hours in BIC and all classroom assistants are funded by EA. Accessing KS4 courses at SERC during the 2016-2019 continued but reductions in EF funding reduced the capacity and breadth of available courses for students due to other collaborative schools also withdrawing from the provision.

2.6.4 The academic year 2019 – 2020 has shown a significant increase in pupil numbers, and with the guarantee of further IEF Primary Links funding for the year the level of P6 and P7 students visiting BIC, ensuring continuity into post-primary education for them. The Primary Links Programme has proven very successful in increasing enrolment in the 2019 academic year and this is anticipated to continue in 2020.

2.6.5 Significant government reductions in budget and no indication as regards future funding levels makes financial planning extremely difficult. With overheads such as electricity increasing above the rate of inflation and a meeting with DE confirming that less funds towards teacher pension increases than required. Staff progression through pay scales has also had an impact upon the finances of BIC as with a very stable and motivated staff remaining at the college, salary costs have risen.

2.6.6 A legacy issue of landlord responsibility still remains a concern for BIC with DE and EA still to resolve the matter of who ultimately has Landlord responsibility for the site at BIC and this is a contributory factor to some of the problems that exist with the premises including the lack facilities to meet the needs of the curriculum. .

## **2.7 Strong Leadership And Management By Board Of Governors And Principal**

2.7.1 As a GMI school the Board of Governors (BoG) at BIC are the employing authority. The principal has been in post since October 2014. There are currently six members of staff on the Senior Leadership Team. Each of these have an area of responsibility for whole school areas and report regularly to the BoG. A recent inspection (Sept 2019) found the ETI's evaluation to be that there can be confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated stating that *'The governors are committed to and have a clear understanding of the work and life of the school particularly in the areas of finance and staffing'*.

2.7.2 The inspection from ETI in Sept 2019 also concluded that the current school development plan, running from 2019-2022 was *'informed by ongoing consultation with the whole school community, analysis of performance data and evaluation of the actions to promote improvement. It outlines the strengths in the provision and identifies areas for further development'*.

2.7.3 There is a high degree of confidence shown in the leadership of BIC from teaching staff. A recent Kirkland Rowell survey showed 84% of staff rated 'Quality' of the 'College Management' as outstanding and 86% rated 'School Communication' as outstanding also. Staff attendance rates and motivation levels are also very high with recent surveys and data to support.

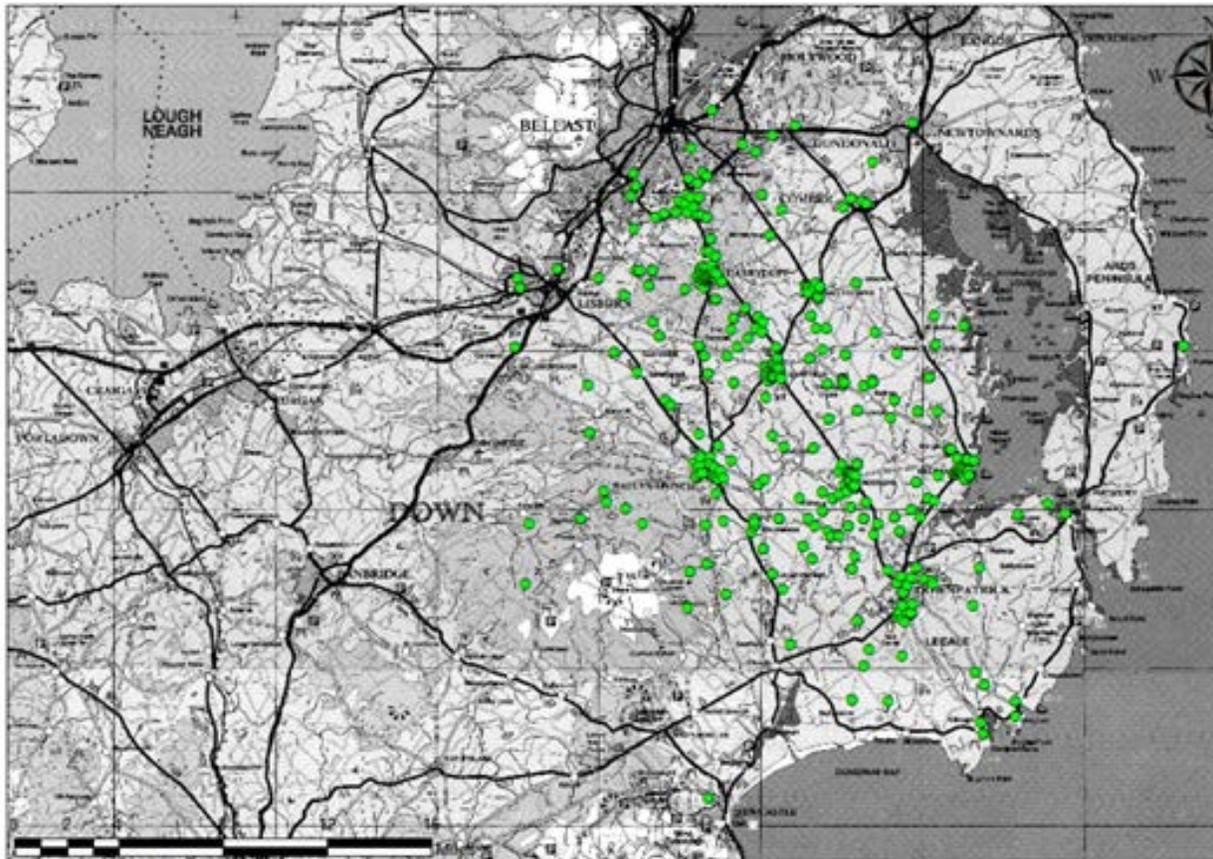
2.7.4 BIC has developed very close links with the community and with the parents, some of whom founded BIC in 2008. There is an active Parents' Association and parental representation on the BoG.

## **2.8 Accessibility**

2.8.1 BIC is currently situated on a small, restricted area, which has no playing fields on site and was originally built in the 1950's. The school is located 0.9 miles from the bus station in Downpatrick where many students access their transport to and from the school.

BIC is situated at the southern tip of its catchment area with many children travelling from the north to access it and only a few children coming from further south than the school's site (Ardglass) (refer to Map 2.8.1 detailing pupil postcodes). The catchment is extensive with children travelling from as far away as Holywood in the north and Newcastle in the south west; Portaferry to the east, and Dromara in the west. The map below shows the pupil postcodes for current students at BIC (dataset January 2020):

**Map 2.8.1: Current BIC Pupil Postcodes**



This material is based upon Crown Copyright and is reproduced with the permission of Land & Property Services under delegated authority from the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office © Crown copyright and database rights.

Source: NICIE

2.8.2 **Table 2.8.2** below provides the corresponding information on distance travelled by BIC pupils from home to school.

**Table 2.8.2 Travel Distance**

<b>Distance - Home to School</b>	<b>% of pupils</b>
0 - 1 mile	17%
1 - 5miles	32.40%
5 - 10 miles	28.80%
>10 miles	21.60%

Source: Blackwater College Data

## **2.9 Strong Links With The Community**

2.9.1 Parental participation at BIC is encouraged through regular consultation and Parents' Association group meetings. This is further evidenced by a Parental Survey in 2019. Parents have indicated high levels of support for the school, commenting positively on the high- quality education, levels of support and care provided to their children.

2.9.2 BIC also reaches out to the local community and over the last four years has successfully been involved in a Shared Education Programme with two local post primary colleges, St Mary's and De la Salle.

2.9.3 As a member of Lecale Learning Community BIC collaborates on a range of different areas including curriculum provision, SEN, CEIAG and pastoral matters. This professional dialogue contributes to the school being a respected part of the local community.

2.9.4 As part of the on-going work with pupils, raising awareness for the needs of others both in the community and beyond is very important. Pupils are encouraged to be active in charitable organisations and fundraising activities and pupil voice is encouraged through Junior Leaders and Senior Prefects who have an input into the running of BIC.

## SECTION 3: AREA PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

### 3.1 Area Planning

3.1.1 This section covers the area planning impact of the Proposal across mainly two relevant Local Government Districts (LGD), Newry, Mourne and Down (NMD), Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council (LCCC) and marginally on Ards and North Down Borough Council (AND) (Ballygowan and Comber area).

3.1.2 Providing Pathways, and the April 2019-March 2021 Action Plans for NMD and LCCC areas, refers to development of proposals to *'encourage and facilitate the development of sustainable integrated schools'*.

3.1.3 In the 2017 - 2018 Annual Action Plan for Primary, Post-Primary and Special Schools an emerging issue was stated as *'In areas/schools with experience of growth/decline, enrolment numbers need to be amended to ensure effective and efficient provision of education within an area through sustainable schools and, in doing so, explore shared education, integrated education, Irish Medium education and/or collaborative provision'*.

3.1.4 Specific detail in the 2017-18 Action Plan relating to LCCC LGD area contained Key Issue for South East Belfast and Castlereagh (regarding Lagan College oversubscription): *'Ensure school places are located as required and encourage and facilitate sustainable integrated provision'*; and associated action: *'Sectoral body to develop options to deal with oversubscription for integrated education in South East Belfast and Castlereagh'*.

3.1.5 Specific detail in the 2017-18 Action Plan relating to NMD LGD contained Key Issue and Required Action for Blackwater IC and the High School Ballynahinch *'Address school provision where sustainability is an issue'* and associated action: *'Managing authority and Trustees to consult on options for future post-primary provision in mid and south Down area by March 2018.'*

3.1.6 In order to resolve these issues, which have remained on subsequent annual Action Plans (essentially over-subscription to the north of the Mid Down area, and sustainability issues to the south of the Mid Down area), NICIE consulted initially with the Board of Governors of BIC, and subsequently with the wider community through a series of public meetings, leading to the establishment of a Mid Down Integrated College Steering Group.

3.1.7 Article 64 of the Education Reform Order NI, 1989 places a duty on the Department for Education's duty to *'encourage and facilitate the growth of integrated education'*. The Steering Group believes this proposal will assist the Department in demonstrating its support for the growth of integrated education by meeting the indisputable demand for integrated education in the area.

3.1.8 LCCC has repeatedly raised the issue of over-subscription at Lagan College in Area Planning considerations for the last 3 years. The current location of BIC to the south of its catchment area does not allow the current Area Plan key issues in NMD and LCCC to be addressed. The proposed area location of the new MDIC has been identified to meet these Key Issues of both the LCCC and NMD Area Plans, serving both areas, without conflicting existing post-primary schools, as well as addressing parental demand for integrated post-primary provision in the area, evidenced through the Expressions of Interest (EOI) forms collected.

### 3.2 Characteristics Of The Relevant Local Council Areas

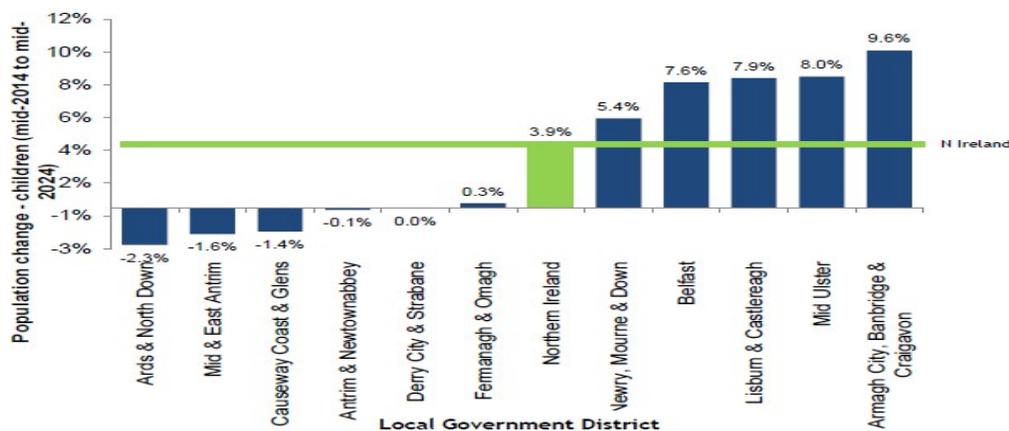
3.2.1 One of the stated aims of Area Planning is to create a network of sustainable schools. This Proposal aims to create a sustainable school in terms of the ‘Independent Strategic Review of Education (the Bain Review) 2006’\*. Key factors that support the proposal include:

- Population growth in the catchment area
- Population increase and the development of housing

### 3.3 Population Growth

3.3.1 Table 3.3.1 indicates below, NMD and LCCC Local Government Districts (LGD), are two of only five Northern Ireland LGDs currently experiencing population growth. LCCC LGD has the third highest level of growth of the 11 LGDs. At 7.9% increase during the next 5 years, LCCC LGD population growth is more than double the Northern Ireland average. This population increase demonstrates a need for the future expansion of provision of integrated education to create a sustainable integrated post-primary school in a location that supports and responds to parental demand.

**Table 3.3.1 Population Change 0-15 Year Olds**



Source: Providing Pathways EANI

3.3.2 Examination of birth rate data, **Tables 3.3.2 (a & b)**, in the relevant LGDs indicates high birth rate of approximately 4400 births per year 2008 – 2012. This represents a peak need of high demand for post-primary education in the area extending over the ten year period. (A child born in 2012 would expect to be in post-primary education in 2023 – 2029). The 2008 birth rate in the local areas is particularly high at 4563 births.

**Table 3.3.2(a) All Births By Year 2007-2018 In Post 2015 LGDs**

Total Post-2015 LGD Births by Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Lisburn & Castlereagh	1807	1826	1812	1805	1760	1732	1752	1716	1745	1723	1791
Newry Mourne &Down	2613	2579	2588	2514	2594	2476	2547	2509	2499	2408	2360
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4420</b>	<b>4405</b>	<b>4400</b>	<b>4319</b>	<b>4354</b>	<b>4208</b>	<b>4299</b>	<b>4225</b>	<b>4244</b>	<b>4131</b>	<b>4151</b>

Note 2015 reform of local government district areas results in two data sets.

Source: NISRA/NINIS

**Table 3.3.2(b): All Births By Year 2008-2017 Pre 2014 LGD**

Total Pre-2015 LGD Births by Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Castlereagh	862	830	846	811	829	818	820	778	826	820
Down	979	979	951	926	1000	936	911	916	891	872
Lisburn	1751	1767	1759	1789	1737	1681	1666	1649	1693	1582
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3592</b>	<b>3576</b>	<b>3556</b>	<b>3526</b>	<b>3566</b>	<b>3435</b>	<b>3397</b>	<b>3343</b>	<b>3410</b>	<b>3274</b>

Source: NISRA/NINIS

### 3.4 Population Characteristics

3.4.1 **Table 3.4.1** below shows population characteristics for the two relevant LGDs.

**Table 3.4.1 Characteristics of Relevant LGD**

Characteristics	NMD	LCCC
Male	89,286 (49.6%)	70,856 (49.1%)
Female	90,726 (50.4%)	73,525 (50.9%)
Children 0-15 years	40,701	29,126
Young adult 16-39 years	54,310	42,555
Adult 40 – 64 years	57,196	47,748
Adult . 65 years	27,805	24,952
Catholic (2011 census)	72.32%	23.95%
Protestant / other (2011 census)	23.91%	66.90%
<b>Total Population (2018)</b>	180,012	144,381
Population increase		
2008 - 2018	11,993 (7.1%)	13,797 (10.6%)
(NI average 5.8%)		

Source: NISRA / NINIS

3.4.2 It is notable that both NMD and LCCC LGDs are growing faster than the average across Northern Ireland, and that religious community ratios between LCCC and NMD are almost a reverse of each other.

3.4.3 Religious community balance in current BIC pupils, and also evidenced within the EOIs collected, aligns to combined census information from the local LGDs. This supports the proposal that post-primary provision of integrated education located conveniently for all 3 LGDs, would serve increasing population need, whilst also achieving religious community balance.

### **3.5 The Increasing Demographic of Primary School Pupils Who Designate as ‘Other’**

3.5.1 There is an increasing demographic of people and pupils who now do not subscribe to the traditional Catholic or Protestant faiths. There is also an increase in the number of other faiths across Northern Ireland. This change is also reflected in the religious balance in primary schools and is particularly significant in the South East Belfast area, where Controlled primary schools, in particular, have seen a major shift in pupils who now are designated as Other. A number of Controlled primary schools also are now attracting sizeable numbers of pupils from the Catholic faith, shown in table 4.

3.5.2 Whilst the growth of 'Others' can also be seen across primary schools in the 'Mid-Down area, it has not been as stark as the numbers seen in the South East Belfast/Castlereagh primary schools.

**Table 3.5.2 Religious Breakdown of Local Primary Schools**

Area	Postcode	Primary School	Approximate Total Enrolment	Protestant	Catholic	Other
BELFAST	BT6 9AG	Euston Street Primary School	372	136	52	184
BELFAST	BT6 0JA	Rosetta Primary School	320	111	35	174
BELFAST	BT6 8PZ	Harding Memorial Primary School	217	85	29	103
BELFAST	BT6 8BG	Nettlefield Primary School	379	216	59	104
BELFAST	BT7 1QY	Botanic Primary School	217	53	26	138
BELFAST	BT7 3DB	Holy Rosary Primary School	500	30	275	195
BELFAST	BT6 0BW	St Michael's Primary School*	386		386	
BELFAST	BT7 2BJ	St Malachy's Primary School	401	5	220	176
BELFAST	BT7 2EP	Scoil An Droichid	179	6	136	37
BELFAST	BT7 3HE	Forge Integrated Primary School	393	86	124	183
NEWTOWNARDS	BT23 6JJ	Carrickmannon Primary School*	74	74		
BALLYNAHINCH	BT24 8BB	Ballynahinch Primary School*	163	163		
CROSSGAR	BT30 9LY	Derryboy Primary School*	57	44		13
NEWTOWNARDS	BT23 5BX	Comber Primary School	282	265	6	11
BELFAST	BT6 0FL	Cregagh Primary School	169	98	12	59
BELFAST	BT6 9LS	Lisnasharragh Primary School	363	223	25	115
BELFAST	BT6 0JJ	Knockbreda Primary School	180	101	9	70
NEWTOWNARDS	BT23 6BB	Moneyreagh Primary School*	139	139		
BELFAST	BT8 7DL	Belvoir Park Primary School	267	146	19	102
BELFAST	BT8 6RT	Cairnshill Primary School	588	280	45	263
BELFAST	BT6 9RD	Lead Hill Primary School	168	83	6	79
BELFAST	BT8 8EE	Carryduff Primary School	179	114	14	51
NEWTOWNARDS	BT23 5TN	Alexander Dickson Primary School *	70	70		
CARROWDORE	BT22 2JJ	Carrowdore Primary School	106	106		
BALLYNAHINCH	BT24 8QB	Spa Primary School	197	143	5	49
SAINTFIELD	BT24 7JA	Academy Primary School	463	234	51	178
DOWNPATRICK	BT30 6AF	Downpatrick Primary School	202	52	83	67
NEWTOWNARDS	BT23 6PN	Killinchy Primary School	349	208	16	125
DOWNPATRICK	BT30 8RB	Cumran Primary School	204	144	24	36
DOWNPATRICK	BT30 9EG	Glasswater Primary School	97	53	14	30
DOWNPATRICK	BT30 7EL	St Joseph's Primary School*	36		36	
BALLYNAHINCH	BT24 7EQ	St Caolan's Primary School*	75		75	
CROSSGAR	BT30 9HS	St Joseph's Primary School*	109		109	
BELFAST	BT8 8EX	St Joseph's Primary School*	518		497	21
BALLYNAHINCH	BT24 8DN	St Patrick's Primary School	269	11	230	28
BELFAST	BT6 0JS	St Bernard's Primary School*	440		440	
DOWNPATRICK	BT30 9RB	St Mary's Primary School*	74		65	9
DOWNPATRICK	BT30 6NL	St Brigid's Primary School*	268		268	
DOWNPATRICK	BT30 6PZ	St Colmcille's Primary School*	272		272	
CASTLEWELLAN	BT31 9DN	St Malachy's Primary School*	417		417	
BELFAST	BT8 6YY	St Ita's Primary School*	633		633	
DOWNPATRICK	BT30 6JD	Our Lady and St Patrick Primary School*	440		440	
DOWNPATRICK	BT30 9SR	Killyleagh Integrated Primary School	139	64	23	52
BELFAST	BT6 9SA	Loughview Integrated Primary School	472	170	189	113
CROSSGAR	BT30 9HJ	Cedar Integrated Primary School	224	59	96	69
SAINTFIELD	BT24 7HF	Millennium Integrated Primary School	422	158	146	118
BALLYNAHINCH	BT24 8EU	Drumlins Integrated Primary School	202	63	71	68

\*Denotes fewer than 5 cases or a number which has been suppressed to prevent the disclosure of information about identifiable individuals

Other religions includes Christians and non-Christians

Area/Postcode of School Location	% Protestant	% Catholic	%Other
BT6, BT7 & BT8	26.47	44.01	29.52
BT22,23 & 24 (excluding central N'ards schools)	58.13	21.34	20.53
BT30 & 31 (excluding Castlewellan and Newcastle schools)	16.38	72.75	10.87
<b>Overall</b>	<b>31.46</b>	<b>44.74</b>	<b>23.80</b>

Source DENI

3.5.3 The rise on the number of 'Others' in the South/East Belfast area, could be viewed as a significant contributing factor to the rise in applications to Lagan College. Whilst this has not been researched in full, it would be a logical pathway for young people and their parents who now currently designate themselves as Others to seek an integrated post primary education.

3.5.4 It was also noted in the NI Census 2011 (see Table 3.5.4 below extracted from NI Assembly paper), that an increasing number of people are not designating as one of main two traditions or as another religion. NICIE asked the Department of Education to consider the addition of 'mixed religion' to the religious designations as is used by the NIHE to help to establish Shared Housing areas. NICIE is working with schools to help them understand that religion in terms of data capture is not necessarily about observance but more about perceived community background. 'Others' may be being used to mask mixed-religion family backgrounds. A modified data capture form would be very useful to reflect the changing society within Northern Ireland.

**Table 3.5.4: Religion (or religion brought up in): a comparison between 2001 & 2011**

Religion (or religion brought up in)	Census 2001		Census 2011		% Change
	Count	%	Count	%	
Protestant and Other Christian	895,377	53.1	875,717	48.4	-2.2
Catholic	737,412	43.8	817,385	45.1	10.8
Other religions	6,569	0.4	16,592	0.9	152.6
None	45,909	2.7	101,169	5.6	120.4

Source: NISRA, Table KS07b (2003); KS212 (2012)

### 3.6 Religious Community Balance in local Post Primary Schools

3.6.1 Other than the integrated schools and the non-denominational grammar school, there is no significant level of mixing of the two main communities in the proposed catchment area. Within the non-selective schools and denominational grammar there is no evidence for a ‘naturally integrated’ provision as the religious community balance is skewed towards a single religious community group in these schools. This indicates that there is no current provision that meets the demand for integrated provision in the area, except in the existing Integrated post primary schools, which cannot meet the demand. The table below provides details:

**Table 3.6.1: Percentage of Religious Community Background at each Post Primary Schools in Catchment Area (2019/2020)**

Post-primary schools	No. of Protestants	% Protestants	No. of Catholics	% of Catholics	No. of Other	% Other	Total
Assumption GS	16	1.9	793	95.1	25	3	834
Breda Academy	442	63.7	47	6.8	205	29.5	694
Blackwater IC	89	39.6	81	36	55	24.4	225
De La Salle HS	5	1.3	375	95.2	14	3.5	394
Down HS	575	61.4	189	20.2	172	18.4	936
Lagan College	454	32.8	527	38	405	29.2	1386
Nendrum College	337	79.1	5	1.2	84	19.7	426
Saintfield HS	283	73.9	11	2.9	89	23.2	383
St Colman’s HS & SFC	46	9.3	401	81.5	45	9.2	492
St Colmcille’s HS	*	*	247	92.5	#	#	267
St Mary’s HS	*	*	404	96.7	#	#	418
St Patrick’s GS	6	0.8	703	97.4	13	1.8	722
The High School Ballynahinch	172	68	32	12.6	49	19.4	253

Source: DE 2019/2020 figures \* refers to less than five cases where data is considered sensitive. # figure has been suppressed under rules of disclosure.

### 3.7 Local Demographics – Free School Meals Entitlement (FSME)

3.7.1 In 10 of the 13 schools in the catchment areas of the proposed new Mid-Down IC,

the level of Free School Meals is higher than the NI figure for post-primary schools in 2019/20 of 28.4% (Source DE). The current level in Blackwater IC is the highest with 48% however, it is anticipated that this may change with a change in the catchment area. The current information on Free School Meals in the post-primary schools in the area is shown below:

**Table 3.7.1 FSME in Local Post Primary Schools (2019/2020)**

<b>Post-Primary School</b>	<b>Number of students with FSME</b>	<b>Percentage FSME students of the total enrolment</b>
<b>Breda Academy</b>	298	42.9%
<b>The High School Ballynahinch</b>	101	39.9%
<b>St Colman's HS &amp; SFC</b>	147	29.9%
<b>Assumption GS</b>	81	9.7%
<b>St Colmcille's HS</b>	94	35.2%
<b>De La Salle HS</b>	128	32.5%
<b>Down HS</b>	65	6.9%
<b>St Patrick's GS</b>	100	13.9%
<b>Nendrum College</b>	146	34.3%
<b>Saintfield HS</b>	78	20.4%
<b>Lagan College</b>	348	25.1%
<b>Blackwater IC</b>	108	48%
<b>St Mary's HS</b>	147	35.2%

Source: DE NI School Census October 2019/2020

### 3.8 Development of Housing

3.8.1 Between 2008 and 2018, population has increased by 10.6% in LCCC LGD, and by 7.1% in NMD LGD. Accordingly housing requirement is estimated as follows:

- NMD Local Development Plan (2012-2030) <sup>13</sup> indicates requirement for 15,092 new housing units, as set by the former Department for Regional Development (DRD).
- LCCC Local Development Plan (2017-2032)<sup>14</sup> states requirement for 10,500 new housing units, identified by a LCCC-commissioned Housing Growth Study., based on Department for Infrastructure’s revised Housing Growth Indicators (HGIs) in 2016. This also takes account of the different types of housing needed, for example, affordable housing in accordance with the Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) provided by Northern Ireland Housing Executive.<sup>1</sup> Of the 10,500 new units required, the greater Carryduff/Newtownbreda and Cairnshill have been allocated to provide a potential 2,367 units, as shown in **Table 3.8.2** below:

**Table 3.8.2 Housing Allocation 2017-2032 Plan Period**

Housing Allocation 2017-2032 Plan Period Settlement	Potential Units Remaining (Undeveloped Zoned Sites)	Potential Units Remaining (Ongoing Zoned Sites)	Potential Units Remaining (Ongoing Committed Sites with Planning Permission - Not Zoned)	Total Potential Units Remaining (Undeveloped & Ongoing Sites)
Castlereagh - Newtownbreda/ Cairnshill Area	360	386	57	803
Carryduff	410	888	266	1,564

3.8.3 Currently in greater Carryduff/Cairnshill area, which is one of main catchment areas for Lagan College, there are substantial number of dwellings recently built, currently in construction, with planning authorities awaiting approval or zoned for future build. Refer to **Map 5.3.2a and 3.5.2b** below. This significant number of dwelling could potentially add to further demand for both primary and post primary schools in the area, impacting upon the already exceptional demand for Lagan College.

<sup>13</sup>

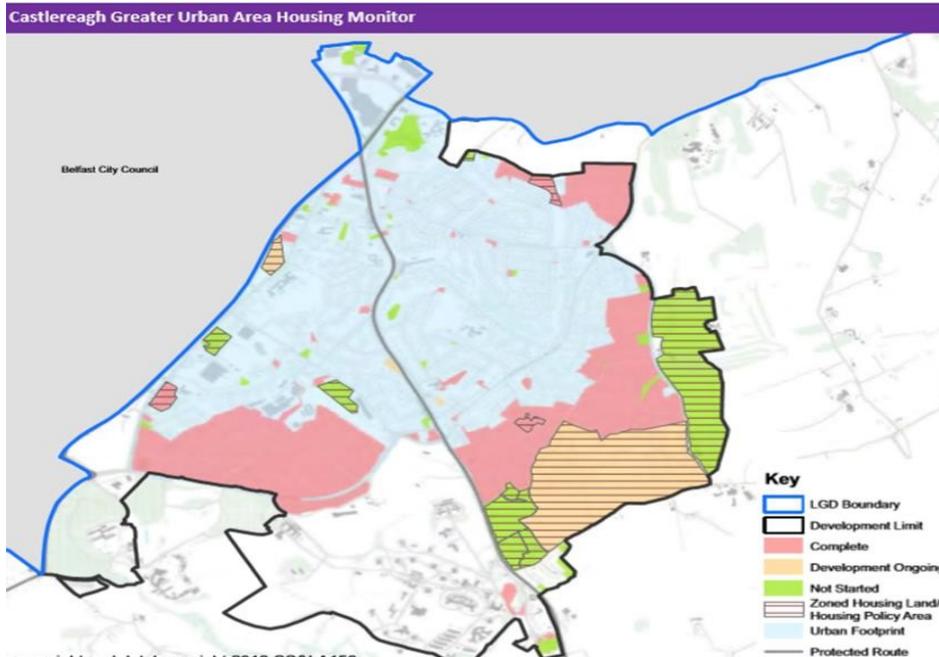
[https://www.newrymournedown.org/media/uploads/nmd\\_local\\_development\\_plan\\_2030\\_pop\\_medium\\_web\\_version.pdf](https://www.newrymournedown.org/media/uploads/nmd_local_development_plan_2030_pop_medium_web_version.pdf)

<sup>14</sup>

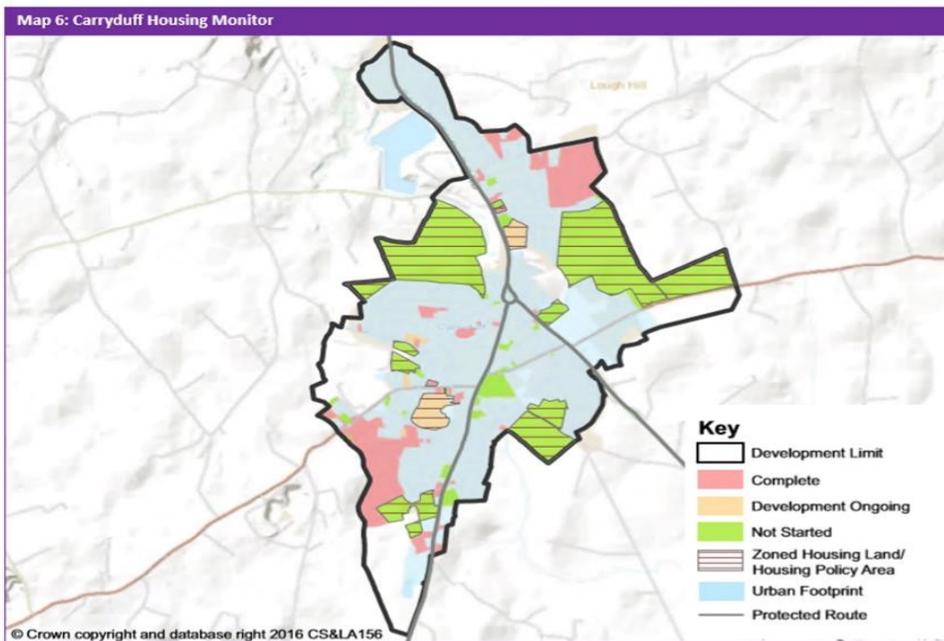
[https://www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/uploads/business/TECHNICAL\\_SUPPLEMENT\\_1\\_HOUSING\\_GROWTH\\_STUDY.pdf](https://www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk/uploads/business/TECHNICAL_SUPPLEMENT_1_HOUSING_GROWTH_STUDY.pdf)

3.8.3 It is envisaged that this demand for post-primary Integrated education, partially driven by these new developments, will potentially be met by the new MDIC which will help alleviate admissions pressure on Lagan College and provide an integrated post-primary education for all pupils within the proposed catchment areas.

**Map 3.8.3 a Housing Monitor Castlereagh/Cairnshill**



**Map 3.8.4 b Housing Monitor Carryduff**



## SECTION 4: RATIONALE FOR PROPOSAL

### 4.1 Consideration of Options

4.1.1 In October 2017, NICIE, met with the Board of Governors of BIC to discuss the sustainability issues due to the location of BIC, and possible solutions to increase the integrated provision in the Mid-Down area.

4.1.2 Issues in relation to the constraints of the BIC site, limited facilities, no available land for future growth and no ability to upgrade current facilities to meet the requirements of the curriculum were discussed. It was noted throughout the meeting that BIC was never located in catchment area that was always identified in previous Development Proposals which has significantly contributed to sustainability issues. Two options were proposed by NICIE, Option One was to relocate BIC to a new site that would be near to the centre to the original catchment area (between Saintfield and Crossgar) or to close BIC and Option Two, to open a new college that would cater for the pupils at BIC and address integrated provision as highlighted by Area Plans for Lisburn and Castlereagh and Newry, Mourne and Down Council areas.

4.1.3 It was agreed that the BoG would take time to consider the challenges and opportunities that both options would present.

4.1.4 Both options proposed by NICIE required a Development Proposal. Option 1 was a significant change in character and size in a post primary school and Option 2 a new post primary school to meet the demand for integrated post primary places to the north of Downpatrick in the mid-Down area.

4.1.5 Following discussion and a vote it was decided by the BoG of BIC that the most appropriate course of action was to adopt Option Two and work with NICIE to establish a new integrated college to meet the requirements of all the pupils at BIC and those identified in EA Area Plans.

### 4.2 Increasing Integrated Provision in the 'Mid-Down' Area.

4.2.1 Under provision of post primary integrated places across South East Belfast and Lisburn and Castlereagh areas has been evidenced for several years by the over subscription at Lagan College. **Table 4.2.2** below shows the level of over-subscription in Lagan College has been consistently very high for at least the last six years. In 2019 - 2020 Lagan College was granted a Temporary Variation to help deal with over subscription. Even with the variation (additional 20 pupils), the college had its highest level of total applications and the highest level of pupils whose first preference was for post primary integrated education, rejected.

4.2.2 Discussions have taken place between NICIE and Lagan College about possible solutions to increase the integrated provision in the area due to their over subscription. Lagan College Board of Governors have also expressed an interest in reaching a viable solution which will address this problem and meet the clear demand for integrated provision.

**Table 4.2.2 Applications and Admissions to Lagan College 2016/17-2019/20**

Year	1 <sup>st</sup> Pref Apps	1 <sup>st</sup> Pref Admitted	1 <sup>st</sup> Pref Not Admitted
2016/17	323	181	142
2017/18	365	192	173
2018/19	362	186	176
2019/20	423	211	212

Source: EA

4.2.3 Taking into consideration the number of pupils whose first preference was Lagan College but who were not admitted, Table 4.2.3 below, over the six years, the average number of pupils not getting into their provision of choice is 186 per year.

**Table 4.2.3 First Preference Applications Not Admitted to Lagan College**

Year	Admissions	1 <sup>st</sup> Pref Apps	1 <sup>st</sup> Pref Admitted	Total Applications	Total Admitted
2016/17	200	323	181	406	200
2017/18	200	365	192	456	200
2018/19	200	362	186	468	200
2019/20	220	423	211	554	222

Source: EA

4.2.4 It is not possible to assume that all of these pupils would opt for an alternative integrated college, but it would not be unreasonable to accept that a realistic percentage of these pupils would avail of this option if MDIC was in a suitable location.

4.2.5 In addition, in recent years Lagan College has revised its criteria to include, as a tie-breaker, attendance at the closest Integrated primary school, with the distance being measured using the Ordnance Survey Digital Distance and Area Measurement Tool (Map Console). This change may reduce the breadth of the catchment area for Lagan, see Map 4.12.5 over time, resulting in a catchment more centered around the school.

As the feeder Integrated primary schools addressed by this proposal are at some distance from Lagan College, (see Table 4.2.5) the change in the criteria has the potential to reduce the chances of the children from these more southerly schools including Millennium, Drumlins, Cedar and Killyleagh IPSs to gain places in Lagan College.

4.2.6 Furthermore, Harding Memorial has lodged a Case for Change for transformation to Integrated status, which if approved, may add to the demand for places at Lagan as it would also become the third closest Integrated school to Lagan, potentially further displacing children attending more distant Integrated primary schools.

**Table 4.2.5 Distance From Lagan College**

School	Distance using OS measurement (in Miles)	Current enrolment years 1-7
Lough View IPS	0.66	420
Forge IPS	1.51	396
Cranmore IPS	4.09	203
Millennium IPS	4.75	370
Oakwood IPS	5.9	196
Drumlins IPS	10.98	202
Cedar IPS	12.37	198
Killyleagh IPS	14.24	111
Harding Memorial PS - Transformation DP lodged	1.59	217
Knockbreda High School site (proposed new site for Forge IPS )	0.94	

4.2.7 This current proposal will address the undoubted demand for Integrated post-primary places in the Mid-Down area, some of which has been directed towards Lagan College, see **Map 4.12.5** but much of which has also been unmet owing to Lagan's oversubscription.

4.2.8 Pupils and their parents choose schools of different education sectors for many different reasons, as can be seen from the figures in the tables above, a high number of pupils have chosen the integrated sector as their sector of preference for which there is insufficient provision at present in the Lisburn/Castlereagh/Mid-Down area.

4.2.9 In 2019 -2020 Lagan College had 220 places to offer, instead of the usual 200, because of a temporary variation granted by DE. The EA Admissions booklet notes that there were 554 applications (all preferences) of which 222 were admitted.

4.2.10 Information from EA which was discussed at the Belfast subgroup of the Area

Planning Local Group stated that 305 pupils were not successful at gaining a place in Lagan College. Of that 305 pupils, 65 children (21.3%) went on to accept places in seven other integrated post-primary schools, many of them at a considerable distance from Lagan College.

4.2.11 Four of these seven schools were themselves over-subscribed so perhaps this is an underestimate of the demand for integrated provision. If there had been another integrated post-primary within a reasonable distance of Lagan, then perhaps more of the children would have been able to get places in Integrated provision and it would have relieved some of the pressure on Lagan College.

4.2.12 It should be noted that the 305 children who did not secure places at Lagan College went on to a total of 45 other schools (including the 7 Integrated schools), spread over a large area from north Belfast to Downpatrick in the south, Carrowdore in the east and Lisburn and Lurgan in the west. This indicates that the impact on these schools of a new school drawing roughly 50 children from the catchment will be relatively small as it so widespread.

4.2.13 In addition, in 2020, due to oversubscription at Lagan College many of pupils from feeder Integrated primary schools did not get a place at the college, even under Lagan College's admission's criteria (all ability) 1b (eldest child) and 1c (enrolled in a GMI or CI primary school). This situation has been exacerbated this year (2020/2021) as Millennium IPS's first cohort of double entry transfer to post-primary education, with a significant number of pupils stating Lagan College as their first preference.

4.2.14 BIC do not normally attract the over subscription from Lagan College. This is predominately due to the location of the school and the restricted site which limits the availability of subjects BIC can provide. The site also has very poor outdoor hard play area and no grass play area or pitch facilities. Travel to Downpatrick can also be complicated by the lack of public transport, particularly for after school provision. However, in 2020/2021 year, BIC have enrolled six pupils from Millennium IPS, whose first preference was Lagan College, but wanted above all, access to an integrated post primary education.

### **4.3 The Rationale For A Sixth Form**

4.3.1 With the current proposal being for a new post primary Integrated College it is very important that this provision carries through to sixth form provision to allow students to have the full period of their school lives at their Integrated provision of choice. This continuity will enable MDIC to plan curriculum pathways from 11-18 in an Integrated setting.

4.3.2 The College proposes to offer an all ability post 16 provision through a 6th form curriculum of high academic quality, suitable for the majority of children, allied to a

specialist post 16 provision for pupils with SEN who may have come through the Learning Support Centre at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4.

4.3.3 A number of post primary schools in the surrounding area are 11-16, resulting in students having to change school in order to attend 6th form. This often results in significant travel out of the area which may affect outcomes at age 18. Provision of an 11-18 education within the local area, and in an Integrated context, would enable more children to attend one school for all of their post-primary education, and for others to progress into 6th form.

4.3.4 The new 6th form will therefore afford opportunities not just to children from the Mid-Down database but also those originating from Blackwater IC, and the other 11-16 post-primary schools in the area, including Saintfield, Nendrum, Ballynahinch and St Colmcille's. MDIC will be very willing to collaborate with other post 16 providers in the Area Learning Community that it is situated to ensure that it complements existing curricular provision and where possible increases it.

4.3.5 The proposed MDIC 6th form provision will not directly impact other post primary schools in the immediate vicinity as no 6th form provision is currently available within the immediate area of Saintfield / Crossgar.

4.3.6 As part of the Lagan College Proposal 482 in 2017 to increase sixth form provision the following comments were made by the minister upon approving the proposal which correlate directly with the rationale behind the need for sixth form provision to be in place at MDIC.

*It is also necessary to consider the strategic development of the Integrated sector as a whole, rather than simply to respond to development proposals for individual schools.*

*The Department is mindful that parents and pupils make a specific choice for education at an Integrated school setting. Although this proposal will primarily benefit the existing students of Lagan College it may also benefit other students at local Integrated post-primary schools without a sixth form (e.g. Blackwater Integrated College) by providing an opportunity to complete their studies at an Integrated setting, if that is their preference.*

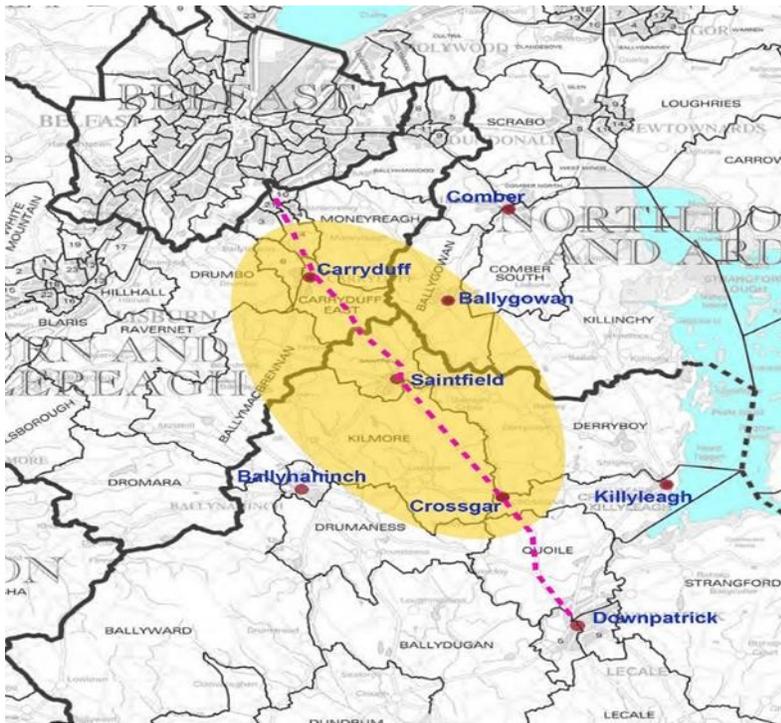
4.3.7 There is a statutory duty on the Department of Education (DE) under Article 64 of the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) 1989 Order, to encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education, that is to say the education together at school of Protestant and Roman Catholic pupils. This duty should extend to post 16 provision for children who have chosen integrated education at the proposed MDIC

#### **4.4 Location of MDIC**

4.4.1 The site location for MDIC to facilitate the current pupils at BIC, maximise enrolment numbers and capture the demand for integrated places displayed through the oversubscription at Lagan College and as identified in key Area Plans, is paramount and will be key to the success of the new College.

4.4.2 From information gathered from current BIC pupil locations, EOI's and areas identified within the key Area Plans, it was agreed that the location of the new college should be within the shaded area indicated on **Map 4.4.2 below**. This location also minimises the impact of MDIC on Shimna Integrated College.

**Map 4.4.2 Proposed Location of MDIC**



4.4.3 The Steering Group would be hopeful that the site location would be along or just off the main arterial route (A5) which extends from Carryduff to Crossgar. It would be the preference of the Steering Group to have MDIC located as close as possible to an urbanized area but the group are also mindful this may not be possible due to planning difficulties

4.4.4 The breakdown of the religious demographics for the Mid-Down shows that there is a good religious balance in the area. This degree of a mixed community would provide the optimum balance for a post primary integrated college located in this area.

4.4.5 Living Places, An Urban Stewardship and Design Guide for Northern Ireland published by DOE in 2014 states:

*“Northern Ireland has a unique set of socio political circumstances, tragically defined by the Troubles conflict of the late 20th Century. Much progress has been made since the 1998 Good Friday Agreement. However, a legacy of division remains which materialises in many of our urban centres and inner city neighbourhoods. As long as tension and mistrust exists between communities of different community and political backgrounds, the existence of physical barriers (or Peace Walls), of invisible territorial barriers and of*

*spatial demarcation through murals and flags will continue to greatly impede the ability of these urban areas to prosper.”*

and

*“In the context of continued efforts to jointly resolve such complex issues, the provision of ‘neutral’ urban space, not only for commerce and leisure, but also as places to live, will remain especially important.”*

4.4.6 A neutral location is of great importance to the growth, sustainability and community balance that is achieved in an integrated school. Again the Living Places document helps us to understand this factor as it talks about good and bad urban places and states that:

*“Good places are important to all of us. As individuals, we are drawn to them and their ability to provide for our needs, to make us feel safe and even happy. As a society, good places are a focal point of social and economic activity, and help to define our collective sense of identity.”*

4.4.7 A good location for an integrated school is one which is neutral and safe and helps to build a collective sense of identity for the school.

## **4.5 Rural Needs Act 2016**

4.5.1 Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 (‘the Act’) requires public authorities to have due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or reviewing a policy, strategy or plan and when designing or delivering a public service. Steering Group is aware of the articles of the Rural Needs Act. It is envisaged that MDIC will attract pupils from certain areas which are according to the Inter-Departmental Urban-Rural Definition Group (A Guide to the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 for Public Authorities (Revised) April 2018, p16), defined as rural. Therefore, the Steering Group will take “due regard” in considering the location of the school.

## **4.6 Equality Legislation**

4.6.1 Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998: A Guide for Public Authorities advises

*“The first duty is the Equality of Opportunity duty, which requires public authorities in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between the nine equality categories of persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation; men and women generally; persons with a disability and persons without; and persons with dependants and persons without” (p 7).*

4.6.2 . The current building is not suited to the needs of pupils with physical disabilities. Whilst the BoG of BIC have done all that they can by way of their own reasonable

adjustments for pupils where required, pupils with physical disabilities cannot access most of the school. Remaining in the current building could result in a legal challenge. BIC has been notified that there will be works carried out sometime in the future to allow this pupil to access areas of the school required for their quality of education, however the BoG have not been advised as to when this will occur.

#### **4.7 Support for the Proposal**

4.7.1 All members of the Steering Group and governors of BIC live within the catchment area of the new College and there has been considerable community support when collecting Expressions of Interest (EOIs)

4.7.2 Support for the Proposal has also come from Lagan College' Board of Governors, Shimna College and the local integrated primary schools and wider Integrated community including NICIE and the IEF.

4.7.3 The staff, pupils and wider community of BIC are fully supportive of this Proposal and this has been demonstrated through consultation meetings and EOI's from current pupils.

#### **4.8 Expressions Of Interest**

4.8.1 The four existing Integrated primary schools in the area have demonstrated their support by joining the Steering Group and collecting EOI forms from their primary schools.

4.8.2 A further significant element of the parental demand from the area for the new college is demonstrated by the high level of EOIs.

4.8.3 **Table 4.8.3** below shows the EOIs gathered generally in the community including those from BIC pupils. This reflects strong interest especially for years 2020 to 2025. The religious balance is also very encouraging and bodes well for the future of the MDIC.

4.8.4 EOI collected and their postcodes are shown **Map 4.8.4** below to illustrate the density of interest within the catchment area:

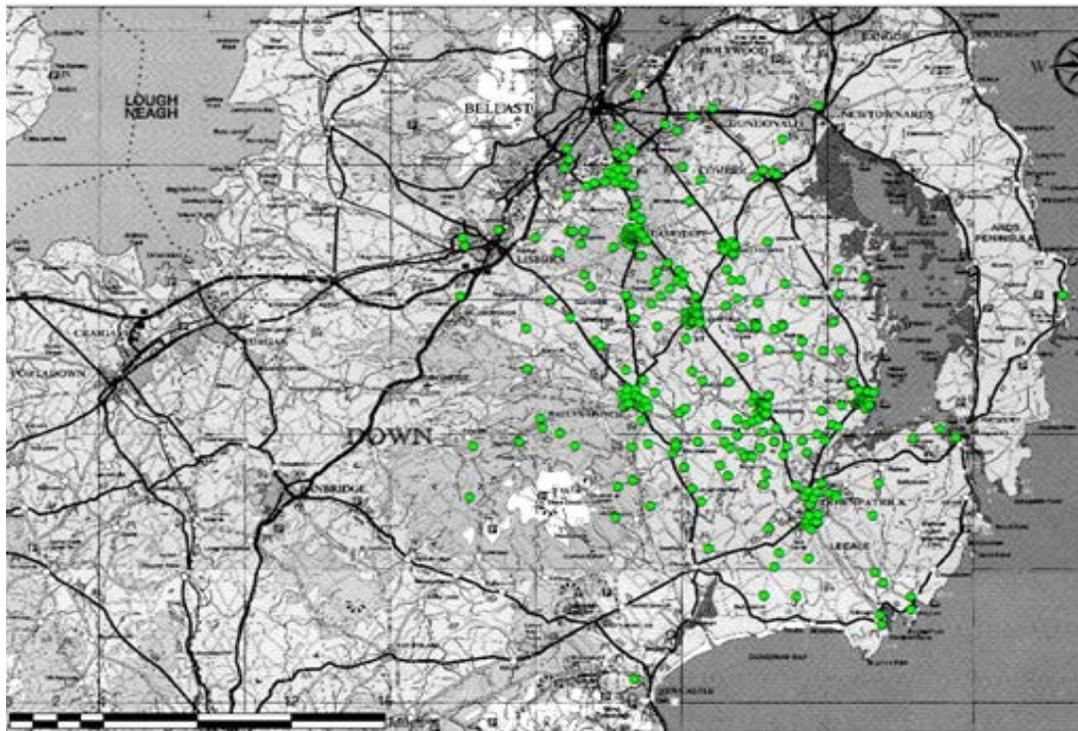
4.8.5 It is notable that many of the EOIs collected (relating to both existing BIC pupils and others) concern a sizeable number of interested young people resident in the LCC area.

**Table 4.8.3 EOIs**

Birthdate		Year of Entry	Total Number to Date	Catholic / Prodestant / Other		
				RC	P	O
02-Jul-08	01-Jul-09	2020	94	38	31	25
02-Jul-09	01-Jul-10	2021	90	31	17	42
02-Jul-10	01-Jul-11	2022	78	18	23	37
02-Jul-11	01-Jul-12	2023	65	21	19	25
02-Jul-12	01-Jul-13	2024	71	21	21	29
02-Jul-13	01-Jul-14	2025	85	20	28	37
02-Jul-14	01-Jul-15	2026	56	11	22	23
02-Jul-15	01-Jul-16	2027	36	9	8	19
02-Jul-16	01-Jul-17	2028	25	6	12	7
02-Jul-17	01-Jul-18	2029	14	8	3	3
02-Jul-18	01-Jul-19	2030	18	2	7	9
02-Jul-19	01-Jul-20	2031	7	4	0	3
<b>Total</b>			<b>639</b>			

(source NICIE)

**Map 4.8.4 Postcode Locations of EOIs**



This material is based upon Crown Copyright and is reproduced with the permission of Land & Property Services under delegated authority from the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office © Crown copyright and database rights.

## 4.9 Blackwater Integrated College Support For The Proposal

4.9.1 Building on community support for EOIs a high percentage of families of students currently attending BIC completed an EOI for their young person and in some cases their

siblings.

4.9.2 BIC has undertaken an exercise as part of consultation to ascertain the level of support for moving to a new MDIC. Years 8-10 are the pupils most affected by this proposal so the consultation focused around them.

4.9.3 The level of support for each year group in Key Stage 3 (in 2020) was:

Year 8 - 95% of students

Year 9 - 87% of students

Year 10 - 82% of students

4.9.4 In January 2021, further consultations with the new Y8 group took place remotely. Again there was a very high level of support for the proposal and many of the Y8 pupils and their parents managed to submit EOIs to demonstrate this despite the difficulties associated with the current pandemic situation.

4.9.5 A unique feature of this Proposal is the proposed establishment of a sixth form from the outset. This is supported by the significant percentage of the pupils who wish to transfer across from BIC to the proposed MDIC to continue their studies within an integrated sixth form environment.

4.9.6 The level of support from both existing and prospective families at BIC for the new MDIC is very high. Alongside the oversubscription at Lagan College, the number of EOIs collected bode well for the establishment and growth of a new sustainable post primary integrated school which meets the needs identified in the Area Plan.

#### **4.10 Impact On Other Schools**

4.10.1 **Map 4.10.1** below shows most post-primary schools in the possible catchment area of the proposed MDIC. The purple circle indicates a 8 mile radius of Saintfield.

#### Map 4.10.1 Post-Primary Schools (8 Mile Radius In Purple)



4.10.2 The envisaged size of the proposed MDIC's catchment area is demonstrated on Map 4.7.4 Postcodes For Expressions of Interest. The impact of opening MDIC and transferring the pupils from BIC will be spread across at least 12 different post-primary schools. The 12 schools are contained within **Table 4.10.3** below. The impact may extend to some schools in South East Belfast.

4.10.3 As illustrated in **Table 4.10.3** below, on average, data from the last few academic years indicates that of these 12 schools, six are oversubscribed and six are undersubscribed to such a level that any alteration in integrated provision is unlikely to have any impact. It is important to note that CCMS has brought forward a Case for Change which involves three Downpatrick schools; De La Salle HS, St Mary's HS and St Patrick's GS which if approved would remove approximately 95 places from this group of affected schools. This would have a dissipating effect of any impact from the new integrated school. There are also proposals to alter enrolment numbers in several grammar schools and some non-selective schools in Belfast. As there are so many schools involved is unlikely that any school in the area will be adversely impacted.

**Table 4.10.3 Applications and Admissions Numbers for Local Post Primary Schools**

School	Year	Year	2016		2017		2018		2019	
	Adm No 2018/2019	Enrol No 2019/2019	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm
Breda Academy	170	1000	120	120	132	132	82	82	77	77
The HS Ballynahinch	76	380	25	25	27	27	21	21	65	65
St Colman's HS & SFC	95	550	53	53	61	61	60	60	87	87
Assumption GS	120	840	173	120	142	120	173	120	198	131
St Colmcille's HS	90	450	44	44	23	23	50	50	57	57
De La Salle HS	86	430	55	55	65	65	67	67	61	61
Down HS	128	934	163	128	121	121	182	128	176	136
St Patrick's GS	96	665	117	96	119	96	141	96	117	96
St Mary's HS	125	600	69	69	66	66	76	76	77	77
Nendrum College	80	400	138	80	134	80	164	80	187	83
Saintfield HS	68	340	110	68	98	68	101	68	126	68
Lagan College	200	1300	406	200	456	200	468	200	537	220

Note: App/Adm figures do not contain statemented pupils. Apps include all preferences.

Source: EA – figures as at conclusion of Transfer process (May) and subject to change by September start

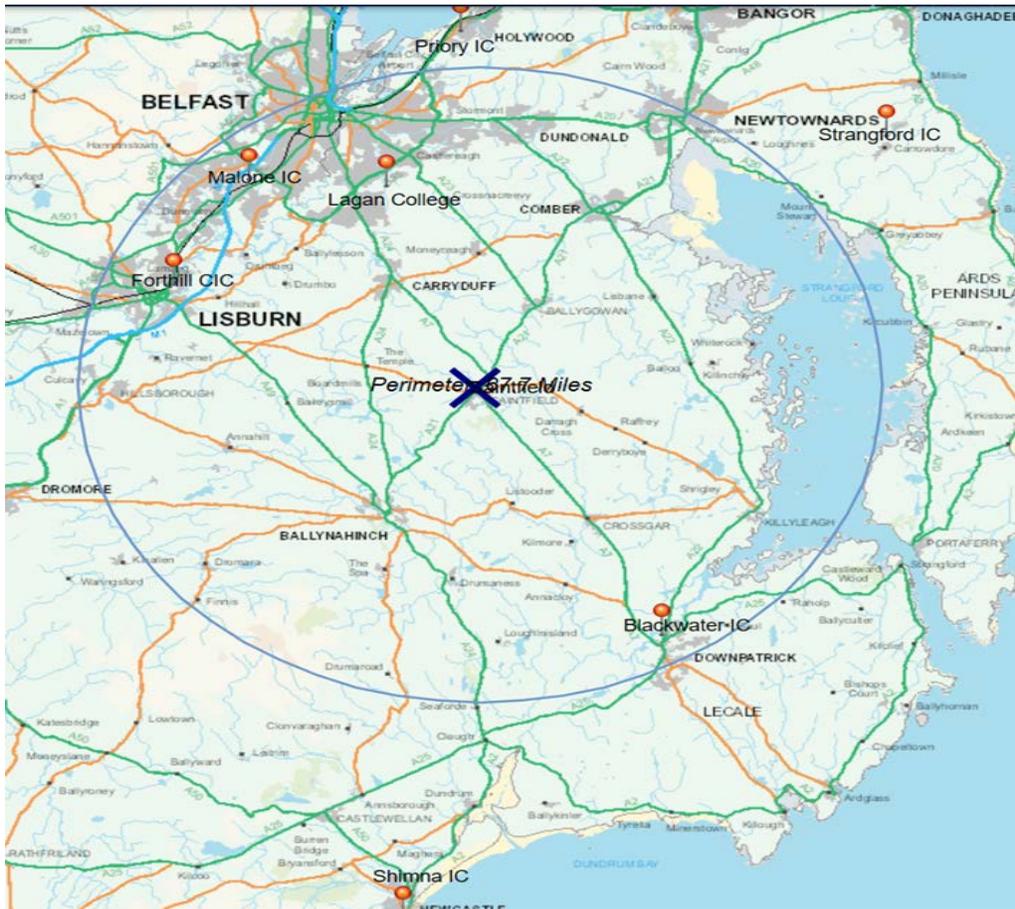
4.11.4 It should be borne in mind that while the anticipated admissions number for the MDIC after 2 years will be 100, the current admissions number at BIC is 80. In the year 2019/20 66 students were admitted (including statemented pupils).

4.11.5 The net growth for Integrated provision therefore will rise from 80 places available at BIC to 100 places available at MDIC; therefore the impact upon neighbouring schools will be minimal.

## 4.12 Impact On Other Integrated Post-Primary Schools

4.12.1 There are six Integrated post primary schools in the greater area, locations shown on **Map 4.12.1**, however five are either located some distance away, or with lack of public transport for 'cross country' travel, journeys to and from these schools incurs significant travel time. Times can be impacted further due traffic flow at peak hours. Assuming the MDIC is located close to Saintfield, **Table 4.12.2** shows the following approximate distances to travel and time of journey if taking public transport.

### Map 4.12.1 Integrated Post Primary Schools Within 10 Mile Radius Of Saintfield



**Table 4.12.2 Distance and Travel Time (Public Transport) From Saintfield to Other Integrated Colleges**

From Saintfield	Lagan College	Shimna Integrated College	Fort Hill Integrated College	Strangford College	Priory Integrated College	Malone College
Distance	8.8 miles	21.5 miles	10 miles	18.7 miles	15.1 miles	11.8 miles
Approximate Travel Time Via Public Transport	50 mins	1hrs 30mins	1hr 15mins	2hrs 50mins	1hr 15mins	1hr 15mins

Source Google Maps at Weekday at 3pm

4.12.3 In addition, as can be seen from **Table 4.12.3** below, the nearest Integrated post primary is Lagan College, which is heavily over-subscribed with first preference applications as is Strangford Integrated College. Priory and Fort Hill Integrated Colleges are also oversubscribed in their total applications. Shimna Integrated College is slightly under subscribed. Malone College has seen a recovery in its enrolment in the last two

years.

**Table 4.12.3 Applications And Admissions To Integrated Post Primary Schools In The Area**

SCHOOL		Year 2017/18				Year 2018/19				Year 2019/20			
	Adm No	1 <sup>st</sup> Pref Apps	1 <sup>st</sup> Pref Adms	Total Apps	Total Adms	1 <sup>st</sup> Pref Apps	1 <sup>st</sup> Pref Adms	Total Apps	Total Adms	1 <sup>st</sup> Pref Apps	1 <sup>st</sup> Pref Adms	Total Apps	Total Adms
Blackwater IC	80	22	22	29	29	21	21	29	29	38	38	52	52
Shimna IC	100	99	99	103	100	90	90	102	101	78	78	93	93
Lagan IC	220	365	192	456	200	362	186	468	200	423	211	537	220
Strangford IC	150	151	98	208	120	166	91	296	130	178	122	268	150
Fort Hill IC	160	111	111	152	152	157	114	238	160	126	104	201	160
Malone IC	130	50	50	65	65	69	69	105	105	85	85	125	125
Priory IC	123	78	63	135	105	79	53	230	105	84	66	212	123

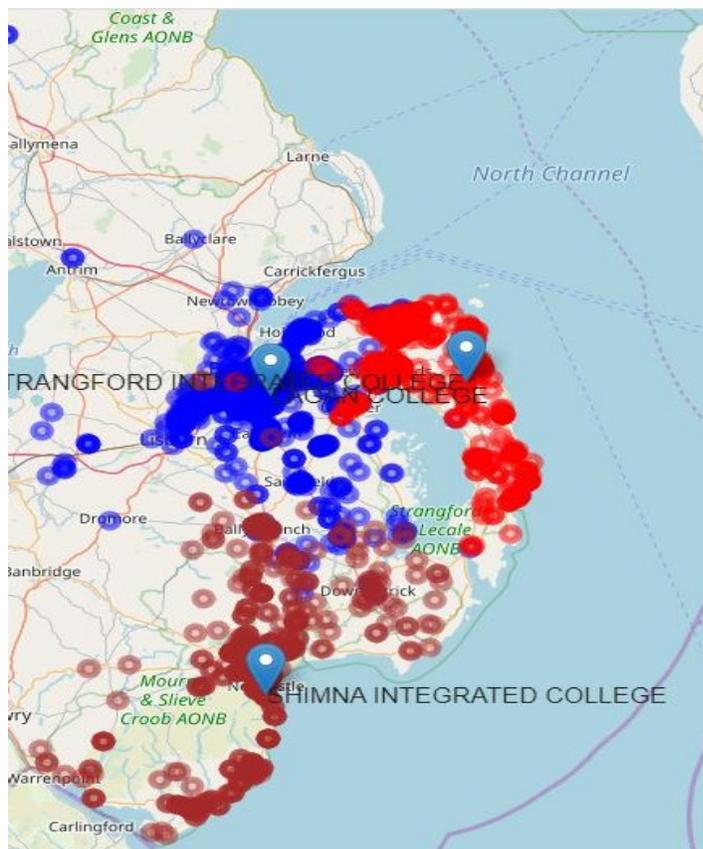
Source EA Admissions Office. Figures as at the end of the admissions procedure in May/June

**Note:** Admissions Number includes approved Temporary Variations

4.12.4 Given the above information, it is unlikely that the new college will have an adverse impact on any of the nearest post primary integrated schools as pupils from the proposed catchment area would incur significant travel time accessing available integrated post primary places. The new MDIC would go some way to meeting the demonstrated need for more post-primary integrated places in the catchment area of Mid Down and Castlereagh/South East Belfast.

4.12.5 **Map 4.12.5** below indicates the pupils density/catchment areas for three of the above schools. It would appear that pupils from Strangford IC are centered around the Ards Peninsula and the new MDIC would therefore not impact upon them. Lagan College's pupil density stems predominately from South and East Belfast stretching to Lisburn and Newtownabbey. They also have high pupil density around the Castlereagh area and further South all the way to Crossgar. As Lagan is substantially oversubscribed, the new MDIC will have little or no impact upon the College's enrolments. Shimna IC has a pupil density that is concentrated around the greater Newcastle area, stemming Northward to Ballynahinch and South as far as Carlingford. It is envisaged that MDIC will work with Shimna IC and agree a catchment area that will not encroach on Ballynahinch in order to preserve the religious balance that Shimna currently have.

## Map 4.12.5 Pupil Density/Catchment Area of Lagan College, Strangford IC and Strangford IC

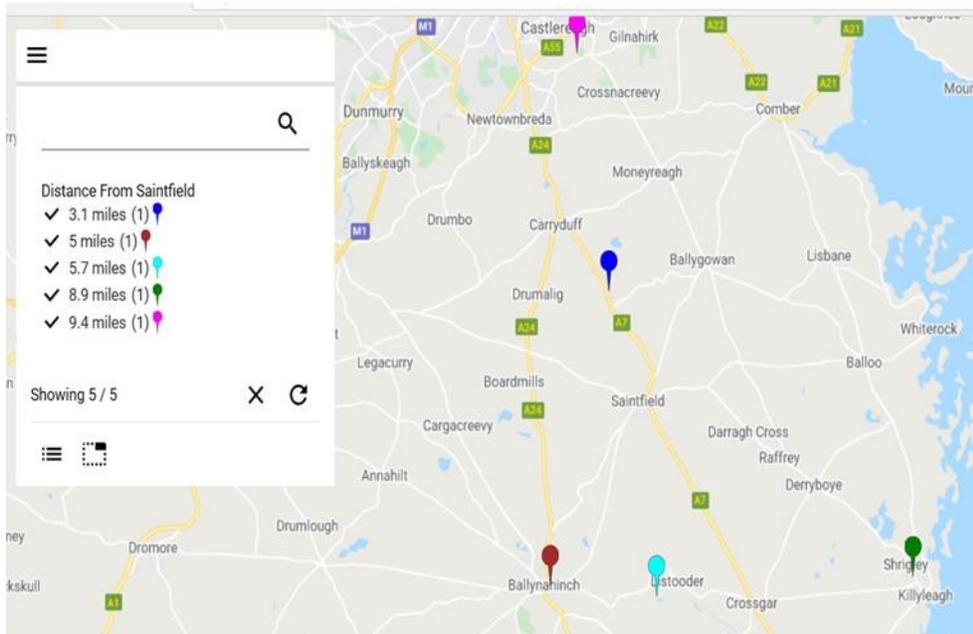


Lagan College  
Strangford College  
Shimna College

### 4.13 Integrated Primary Schools

4.13.1 There are four Integrated primary schools in the greater 'Mid Down' area. The schools are: Millennium IPS, Cedar IPS, Killyleagh CIPS and Drumlins IPS. There are an additional two integrated primary schools located further to the North; Loughview IPS and Forge CIPS. Location of the schools and their distances from Saintfield are shown on **Map 4.13.1** below:

#### Map 4.13.1 Integrated Primary Schools In The 'Mid Down' Area



4.13.2 The four greater 'Mid-Down Integrated primary schools outlined above, could be 'feeder' schools to the MDIC due to their location and/or their current relationship with BIC. Loughview IPS and Forge IPS that could also fall within a reasonable distance for the catchment area of the new College. Three of these schools traditionally have a large cohort of pupils who apply to Lagan College (Millennium, Forge and Loughview), however due to oversubscription at Lagan in recent years, many of these pupils are not getting a place at the College, even under Lagan's admission's criteria (all ability) 1b (eldest child) and 1c (enrolled in a GMI or CI primary school). This situation has been exacerbated this year (2020/2021) as Millennium IPS's first cohort of double entry transfer to post-primary education, with a significant number of pupils stating Lagan College as their first preference.

4.13.3 In addition, Killyleagh Primary School recently transformed to Integrated status and has been increasing its intake over the past couple of years. **Table 4.13.3** below shows the number of pupils attending integrated primary schools in the 'Mid Down' and wider catchment area over the past four years and also the increase in numbers over the same period.

4.13.4 It is also of note, that one of the conclusions reached from the Community Conversation; Primary School provision in the South Belfast (Castlereagh/Carryduff) area, that due to the demand for integrated primary school places in the area, the 'longer term feasibility of a new Integrated primary school in East Belfast should be explored'.

**Table 4.13.3 Feeder Integrated Primary Schools Enrolments**

Integrated Primary School	Enrolments*				Increase in 4 Years (2016-2020)
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	
Millennium IPS	285	322	347	370	85
Cedar IPS	189	201	200	198	10
Killyleagh ICPS	99	104	111	111	12
Drumlins IPS	183	190	201	202	19
Loughview IPS	416	415	421	421	5
Forge CIPS	351	374	385	396	45
<b>Total Numbers</b>	<b>1523</b>	<b>1606</b>	<b>1665</b>	<b>1698</b>	<b>176</b>

## **SECTION 5: EDUCATIONAL IMPACT**

### **5.1 The Ethos**

**'Inclusive, Individual, Inspiring'**

### **5.2 The Vision**

#### 5.2.1 The new MDIC will:

- Pursue the highest academic standards by tailoring learning to individual abilities through learning strategies and improving outcomes for all pupils regardless of their abilities.
- Promote a happy and caring environment centered on the needs of the individual in preparing them for a creative and satisfying life in a shared society.
- Promote the right of the parents and pupils to be involved in the decision making of the college community whilst respecting the role of teachers as professionals.
- Promote the respect and understanding of all traditions and cultures within the community and ensure pupils feel welcome, have a sense of community and belonging
- Promote high levels of pastoral care for the college pupils and staff.
- Pursue active engagement with the wider community.

### **5.3 Benefit of the Proposal**

5.3.1 This Proposal will deliver a new College that will provide a high-quality education through a holistic approach committed to the development of every pupil's intellectual, emotional, social, physical and creative potential.

5.3.2 This Proposal will allow more pupils to access integrated education in the greater Castlereagh and Lisburn/Mid Down area.

5.3.3 This Proposal will also allow more pupils to access Sixth Form provision in the greater Castlereagh and Lisburn/Mid Down area.

5.3.4 This Proposal will provide more pupils with SEN to access mainstream and specialist SEN provision in the greater Castlereagh and Lisburn/Mid Down area (refer to Section 7.2) and addresses several points raised in the "Providing Pathways, Strategic Area Plan for School Provision 2017 - 2020" in relation to SEN provision.

5.3.5 This Proposal will provide a new College that would seek to partner with all local 11-19 schools, through Shared Education, and in an Area Learning Community thereby enabling more students to access the Entitlement Framework.

## 5.4 High Quality Education

5.4.1 The College will strive to promote equality of opportunity for all pupils, a desire for learning and encourage partnerships with parents, to ensure all pupils reach their full potential. The approach to learning will focus on pupils developing the necessary dispositions required to pursue educational excellence.

5.4.2 The curriculum and learning experience, will engage pupils by making relevant connections to teenage life and the world of work. All pupils will follow the Northern Ireland Curriculum and enjoy a wide range of subjects using innovative learning and teaching strategies. The College's aim will be to ensure that every child, regardless of their academic ability at the point of entry, reaches their full academic potential, developing their skills and talents. Within ability bands pupils will be provided with opportunities to thrive, reach success and meet personal and academic goals.

5.4.3 Educating pupils from the most academically able to those who require support in their learning will be a key component of the new College with every pupil equally valued and a curriculum experience provided to support and challenge.

5.4.4 The staff of the College will continuously develop their skills to respond to the ever-changing landscape of education. The College will provide a stimulating learning environment where academic study and intellectual pursuits are cherished and valued. The College will recognise and develop the unique potential of each individual pupil ensuring that stretch and challenge is coupled with the necessary support. This in turn will enable the pupils to become questioning, independent, reflective young people who can appropriately use their knowledge to understand, interpret and interact with today's society

5.4.5 One measure of this educational excellence will be in very strong outcomes in public examinations. Another measure will be in the inclusive way in which the school will seek to provide appropriate pathways for all students who attain a place in 6th form.

5.4.6 In addition, MDIC will place a high value on a multi-disciplinary approach to education and enlist an extensive variety of external educators, from health promotion professionals, business and enterprise ambassadors and experts in other disciplines to support and enhance the learning experience of the pupils.

5.4.7 It is envisaged that the College will provide an 'Accelerated Pathway' for those more academic pupils if they choose. Pupils would be allocated a place on the Accelerated Pathway based on academic evidence. Pupils will not be selected for a pathway based on the AQE or GL tests. Pupils may also move from the 'All Ability' pathway to the 'Accelerated Pathway' and vice versa. This, the Steering Group believe, may be an attractive option for some pupils and parents who maybe considering the College as a post primary choice.

## **5.5 Integrated Ethos**

5.5.1 The integrated ethos will be an integral part of the College life and permeate all aspects of the school. The Steering Group believe that the right 'balance' (refer to 5.8.3) will be achievable due to the location and demographics of the proposed area and current required balance in Blackwater Integrated College students who will transfer across. This community balance will also be reflected in the governance, leadership team, and staff at the new College.

5.5.2 The College will generate an ethos whereby opportunities are afforded to pupils and teachers alike to engage with, and take seriously, all forms of difference, rather than retreat into a culture of silence. Moreover, inclusive practices will be firmly enshrined within the principles of the College. The College will provide a learning environment whereby all pupils, including those with special educational needs, feel welcome and a commitment to developing pupils' academically, socially, emotionally and with independent living skills

5.5.3 Integrated Education (as defined in Article 64 Education Reform Order NI 1989) at the College will allow pupils the opportunity to develop not only their own cultural identity but to share and learn from their peers. The pupils will develop an understanding of the richness of cultural and religious community diversity by working alongside, in the same school, those of different views and faiths. They will be provided, within the curriculum and the extracurricular programme through opportunities that cultivate their understanding of themselves and others. The pupils will develop confidence and self-worth and have respectful attitudes to others.

## **5.6 Sixth Form Provision (refer also to Section 4.3)**

5.6.1 The College will seek to provide a broad based curriculum which is suited to those students seeking to progress to third level education at university or college. It will also seek to provide access to other routes leading to more direct employment, such as modern apprenticeships, in keeping with the expressed needs of students, families and the economy. The delivery of this curriculum will take place in an environment with the highest level of technology available as befits a brand new 21st century school.

## **5.7 SEN Provision (Refer to Section 6)**

5.7.1 This Proposal is also to cater for young people in Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 year groups for whom the Education Authority maintains a Statement of Special Educational Needs. This will be the first provision of this kind in the area and will complement the wider model of inclusion through specialist provision across the Education Authority. The provision is to include for Autism Specific Class at post-primary phase to form part of the continuum of support for the young people assessed as requiring specialist provision at Key Stage 3.

## **5.8 In The Community**

5.8.1 The new College on its new site, will form relationships with the Area Learning Community. Over the medium and long term the College would be keen to promote and establish a learning community in the local area that develops a close relationship with other post-primary providers.

5.8.2 MDIC will seek to work closely with all primary and post primary schools in the local community as well as provide facilities for the local people to use. With new purpose built facilities there will be the opportunity for all sectors of the local community to access the new College buildings. It will be important that the new College meets the needs of its locality with facilities that can allow local sporting and community groups to benefit from increased access to resources.

5.8.3 In relation to reflecting community balance, the Steering Group believe that the entrance criteria should reflect the increasing demographic who designate as no religion or 'Other'. For example, using percentages 35% Catholic, 35-%, Protestant, and 30% Other rather than 40% Catholic, 40% Protestant and 20% Other as traditionally used within Integrated schools. The Group believe that this would provide greater flexibility and support for those parents who do not wish to designate their children as either Catholic or Protestant, while still ensuring an Integrated school is sufficiently mixed.

5.8.4 As MDIC becomes established greater links will grow with the surrounding community with business, sporting, cultural and educational benefits. As an Integrated College it will be important to reach out to all sides of the surrounding community to allow the school to become a focal point within the area that can be accessed by the community for a range of different activities. The facilities will be available for the community to utilise out of school hours. The school will seek to link with local businesses and organisations to provide a thorough career education to all learners in order to ensure that students are able to develop the skills needed to join the local workforce and to develop tomorrow's sustainable society.

5.8.5 Parental involvement is a key value of integrated education and the new MDIC BoGs will involve parents at all levels in the College and reach out beyond that to the wider community for governors with valued experience to bring to the College.

## **SECTION 6: SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN) PROVISION**

### **6.1 SPECIALIST PROVISION CLASSES**

6.1.1 With the phased implementation of the new SEND Act (2016) and the future description of Special Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) as Learning Support Coordinators, there is the potential for confusion in relation to some of the terminology that relates to Learning Support classes as is stated in the Draft Framework for Specialist Provision in schools.

6.1.2 The terminology used throughout this Case for Change makes reference to LSC but it is recognised that this this will change to Specialist Provision (Learning) and Specialist Provision (Autism) for ASD moving forward.

### **6.2 EXISTING SEN ENROLMENTS AND PROVISION**

6.2.1 The Development Proposal for the closure of BIC will also close the Learning Support Centre for Statemented SEN (identified as having moderate learning difficulties (MLD)), pupils. The LSC is an integral part of BIC and is currently located on the BIC site.

6.2.2 The LSC at BIC comprises of three MLD Units for pupils who have been identified as having MLD. At present there are 27 pupils who are in one of the three units at KS3.

6.2.3 The MLD Units support pupils to reach their full potential, many of whom exceed academic targets at GCSE. As an all-ability school, the curriculum, teaching approaches, the inclusive environment and the very effective pastoral support enables pupils with SEN to thrive.

6.2.4 BIC also has a significant level of SEN Stage 5 pupils in who are not in one of the MLD units. In 2019 - 2020 there were 115 pupils with identified SEN and of that number 56 pupils had a SEN Stage 5 Statement which is 25% of the school population. There were also 50.6% of the school population on Stage 1-5. Refer to Table 2.5.1(b).

**Table 6.2.4** below shows the number of SEN pupils currently attending BIC including the 27 pupils in the LSC.

**Table 6.2.4 2019 - 2020 SEN Figures For BIC**

YEAR GROUP	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
YEAR 8	1	10	9	1	7
YEAR 9	9	14	0	0	17
YEAR 10	3	5	0	0	6
YEAR 11	4	10	2	0	7
YEAR 12	0	8	1	0	12
<b>TOTAL</b>	17	47	12	1	49
<b>% of current BIC students on the SEN Register at 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020 is 55.3%</b>					

6.2.5 Currently pupils who attend the LSC until completion of KS3 (or Year 10), move into ‘mainstream’ provision within the school. There are two pathways available for students to follow through mainstream provision of subject choices of GCSE subjects or a tailored programme for up to 12 students in a ‘Vocational Programme’ with a broad range of subjects offered, all to GCSE equivalence level. This has proved very successful with students gaining excellent results in Year 12. This was recognised in a recent ETi inspection in September 2019. Below are some comments relating to quality of provision for SEN students; *“spoke positively about the opportunities that pupils from the unit and mainstream have to learn together”* and *“Over the past three years those students who require additional support with aspects of their learning have attained well at GCSE (including equivalences)”*

6.2.6 BIC also has the highest percentage of total enrolment of students with SEN of the 15 mainstream schools in the catchment area of the school. The total percentage of pupils with SEN has been well above 50% of all students for the past 4 years, higher than the Northern Ireland average for all school phases of 22.8%. (DE Bulletin 2/2019). The total percentage of pupils with SEN at Stage 1-5 in Blackwater IC in 2018/19 was 60.8%, higher than the Northern Ireland average for all school phases of 22.8%. (DE Bulletin 2/2019). The total percentage of pupils with SEN at Stage 5 in Blackwater IC in 2018/19 was 27%, again higher than every other school in the area with the exception of Knockevin Special School (Refer to Table 6.2.6 below)

6.2.7 It is evident from the above, that the need for future SEN provision in the ‘Mid Down’ area is substantial. This need is also recognised within the Education Authority published Providing Pathways Strategic Area Plan for School Provision 2017-2020 with Annual Action Plans for Primary, Post-Primary and Special Schools, April 2017 – March 2018, April 2018 – March 2019 and April 2019–March 2021

**Table 6.2.6 SEN Pupil Numbers Enrolled At Local Post Primary Schools**

School	Number Of Pupils SEN At Stage 5	% of Total Enrolment With SEN At Stage 5	Number Of Pupils At Stage 1 - 4 SEN	Total Number Of Pupils With SEN	Total Enrolment	Total Percentage SEN Stages 1-5 / Total Enrolments
Breda Academy	35	4.70%	202	237	738	32.10%
High School Ballynahinch	46	23.80%	64	110	193	57%
St Colman's HS	39	6.70%	160	199	458	43.40%
Assumption GS	6	0.70%	176	182	835	21.80%
St Colmcille's HS	19	7.50%	89	108	252	42.90%
De La Salle HS	40	11.80%	125	165	388	42.50%
Down HS	15	1.60%	47	62	913	6.80%
St Patrick's GS	21	2.90%	76	97	701	13.80%
Nendrum College	23	5.50%	156	179	421	42.50%
Saintfield HS	41	10.50%	85	126	381	33.10%
Lagan College	86	6.30%	337	423	1362	31.10%
Blackwater IC	53	27.00%	65	118	194	60.80%
Shimna IC	41	6.50%	146	187	633	29.50%
St Mary's HS	19	4.50%	72	91	419	21.70%
Knockevin SS	118	83.60%	23	141	141	100%

6.2.8 When moving the LSC to a new location with MDIC, travel distance for SEN pupils will need to be taken into consideration. Table 6.1.8 below shows students in BIC who are currently in the Learning Support Centre (LSC) or have passed through (now in Years 11 and 12), their locations (postcode) they currently travel from, distance they currently travel and distance to the center of Saintfield. \*Saintfield, without prejudice, has been used in this analysis for a 'location' of MDIC as it is deemed the 'center' of Mid-Down.

6.2.9 As the table shows approximately 41% of pupils currently travel in excess of 10 miles from home to BIC in Downpatrick. Based on the same cohort of pupils, approximately 46% of pupils would travel in excess of 10 miles from home to the center of Saintfield.

6.2.10 From the table, it can be seen that there will be approximately 56% pupils potentially travelling further from home to the center of Saintfield and approximately 44% pupils potentially travelling less.

6.2.11 The overall additional distance travelled is approximately 34miles; this equates to less than one mile per pupil.

**Table 6.2.8 Postcodes of LSC students at BIC and Travel Distance to BIC and Centre of Saintfield\***

Year Group	Postcode	LSC Provision	Distance to BIC Downpatrick	Distance to Centre of Saintfield	Difference
8	BT30	Y	0.8	10.6	9.8
8	BT30	Y	2.3	12	9.7
8	BT30	Y	9.7	19.4	9.7
8	BT30	Y	2.4	12.2	9.8
8	BT30	Y	6.1	15.3	9.2
8	BT24	Y	13.4	2.9	-10.5
9	BT30	Y	0.9	10.6	9.7
9	BT30	Y	1.4	11.2	9.8
9	BT30	Y	0.7	11	10.3
9	BT30	Y	0.7	10.5	9.8
9	BT30	Y	6.2	8.5	2.3
9	BT23	Y	14.2	3.7	-10.5
9	BT23	Y	18.3	8.1	-10.2
9	BT23	Y	16.9	6.5	-10.4
9	BT30	Y	6.2	9.5	3.3
9	BT27	Y	14.7	4.2	-10.5
9	BT23	Y	14.2	3.7	-10.5
9	BT30	Y	2	11.7	9.7
10	BT30	Y	0.9	10.6	9.7
10	BT24	Y	10.5	0.2	-10.3
10	BT8	Y	19.4	8.9	-10.5
10	BT23	Y	14	3.5	-10.5
10	BT24	Y	9.7	5.7	-4
10	BT24	Y	11.3	0.9	-10.4
11	BT30	Y	1.3	11	9.7
11	BT30	Y	7.2	17	9.8
11	BT30	Y	1.9	12.2	10.3
11	BT23	Y	17.6	8.4	-9.2
11	BT24	Y	10.9	6.3	-4.6
11	BT31	Y	12.4	18.6	6.2
11	BT30	Y	0.3	10.2	9.9
12	BT23	Y	14.8	8.7	-6.1
12	BT23	Y	10.4	3.6	-6.8
12	BT30	Y	9.4	3.4	-6
12	BT24	Y	10.4	0.2	-10.2
12	BT30	Y	5.8	9.6	3.8
12	BT30	Y	6.5	8.8	2.3
12	BT30	Y	1.9	12.2	10.3
12	BT30	Y	4.5	14.3	9.8

-Last letters and numbers of postcode has been removed

## **6.3 Future Provision**

6.3.1 One of the key aims of this Proposal is to provide a similar level of provision within MDIC as there currently is in BIC and to also offer increased ASD specific provision.

6.3.2 BIC staff have a wealth of experience and knowledge in providing a quality educational experience for young people with SEN. This is evidenced from annual parental feedback surveys, ETI comments, performance data and pupil voice affirming the very strong provision and support for pupils with additional learning needs at BIC. This puts BIC in a unique position going forward by providing highly experienced staff to transfer over to the new MDIC, keeping continuity of high quality provision with the least disruption to the SEN pupils.

6.3.3 In order to establish the requirements of new provision, representatives from NICIE and the Principal of BIC met senior staff from Children and Young People Services (CYPS) in order to understand the nature of proposed new provision for post-primary SEN pupils in both January 2020 and January 2021. The proposed new models of provision were discussed to ensure the proposal met the guidelines and format of required SEN provision for the area and was compliant with the draft framework for specialist provision in mainstream schools.

6.3.4 This Proposal is there for specialist provision in MDIC to cater for young people in Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 year groups for whom the Education Authority maintains a Statement of Special Educational Needs. This will be the first provision of this kind in the area and will complement the wider model of inclusion through specialist provision across the Education Authority. The provision is to include for Autism Specific Class at post-primary phase to form part of the continuum of support for the young people assessed as requiring specialist provision at Key Stage 3.

6.3.5 It is envisaged that this future provision at MDIC will meet the requirements of the EA's vision 'to create a regionally accessible continuum of provision for pupils with special educational needs' to include for 'specialist provision attached to mainstream school' in order 'to support the outcomes of our children and young people'.

6.3.6 It is also envisaged that this future provision at MDIC will meet the need for provision for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) as outlined within "The Prevalence of Autism (including Asperger's Syndrome) in School Age Children in Northern Ireland 2019" was published in May 2019 by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS).

6.3.7 The new SEN provision at MDIC will also address key issues emerging from analysis of current local provision as identified in the 'Providing Pathways' - Strategic Area Plan for School Provision 2017-2020 (pages 73-75), we will develop proposals to:

*'establish additional learning support and autism specific provision within primary and post-primary schools (present in both the Newry, Mourne and Down and Lisburn and Castlereagh Local Government District areas).*

6.3.8 This proposal will allow pupils with special educational needs the opportunity to access their education in a mainstream setting in their local area. The mainstream provision will provide a modified learning environment suited to the pupil's learning profiles.

6.3.9 This proposal will allow pupils with SEN the opportunity to access their education in a specialist setting in their local area. The specialist provision will provide a modified learning environment with an enhanced PTR suited to the pupils' learning profiles. The pupils, where appropriate, will also benefit from experiencing some inclusion within mainstream classes, and the opportunity to experience social interaction and leisure activities alongside their peers.

6.3.10 The proposal will meet the increasing demand for specialist SEN provision in the area through moving current provision from an existing and established school thereby maximizing the human resource investment in an effective and efficient manner. The steering group of MDIC are very happy to work alongside CYPS and EA in looking at future trends for provision and meeting the needs of learners where specialist provision is required and if necessary increasing the provision requested in this case for change.

6.3.11 It is also recognised that through the draft framework for special provision that the EA is working with DE to take forward a pilot which allows more agile planning and delivery in relation to the type and number of specialist provisions required in mainstream schools throughout NI without the need for a Development Proposal but with robust detail required for this process.

## **SECTION 7: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

### **7.1 Background**

7.1.1 The proposal is being brought forward under Article 14 of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986 It is envisaged that the new MDIC will open in September 2023 or as soon as possible thereafter.

7.1.2 The submission of this Development Proposal is timed to allow for a realistic period of planning and development for temporary accommodation if approved. The opening of the MDIC in September 2023 would also allow an appropriate timeline for the BIC staff and pupils to prepare for the move.

7.1.3 Post decision (if Proposal is approval), the Implementation Plan will be led by the Principal of BIC in conjunction for an interim Board of Governors for MDIC. Their function will be to map the critical path to ensure all resources are in place to provide a high quality educational experience from commencement of the College.

7.1.4 All parties will work closely with the DE Schools and Infrastructure department in order to establish a permanent site and accommodation for the new MDIC

7.1.5 The new MDIC should be located in an appropriate catchment area in order to cater for both the rising demand of students expressing a desire for post primary integrated education, as demonstrated by the oversubscription of Y8 enrolments at Lagan College and garner parental confidence in order to increase rates of transfer for local primary schools.

7.1.6 It is envisaged that, after demonstrating sufficient evidence of sustainability and having meet the criteria as set down by the DE in the Sustainable Schools Policy, that the new MDIC would, as soon as possible thereafter, embark on the DE capital build programme ultimately providing a new build sustainable building which will enhance the teaching and learning environment that the pupils, staff and wider community would deserve.

7.1.7 The Steering Group considered various 'Day One Models' as part of an implementation plan. Each Model was discussed with challenges and opportunities for each explored. The Steering Group finally agreed to two possible Models (the 'Preferred Model') that the group felt best balanced the overarching and most of important requirement of the educational experience for the pupil and the need for financial prudence in relation to the public money.

## 7.2 Implementation Plan

DATE	ACTION
September 2019 - March 2020	Consultation meetings with Stakeholders - Governors, Staff, Pupils, Parents of Blackwater Integrated College,
3 April 2020 20 April 2020 - 18 May 2020	Submission to Education Authority (EA) - <b>Postponed due to COVID-19 Pandemic</b> Consultation with affected schools (4) weeks
18 Sept 2020	Revised to 18th Sept 2020
September 2020	Publication of the Proposal by the EA followed by a two month statutory consultation objection period - <b>Postponed due to COVID-19 Pandemic</b>
December 2020	New Estimated Timeline
December 2020	Development Proposal submitted to the Minister of the Department of Education (DE) for a decision - <b>Postponed due to COVID-19 Pandemic</b>
February 2021	New Estimated Timeline
Summer 2021 - September 2023	If the Development Proposal is approved, an interim Board of Governors (BoG) for the new College will be formed.  The Interim BoG will work with the DE in order to establish a new site and accommodation (including SEN accommodation) for the new College  The Interim board will agree a new name for the new College, logo and uniform.  The Principal of the new College shall be appointed. They will also be a member BoG and will lead on all management, curricular and pastoral requirements of the new College  The Interim BoG will develop an Admissions Criteria for the new College.  Transport matters for the new College will be addressed.  The Interim Board will continue to 'market' the new College over the following to maximise enrolments.  All staff (including the Principal) at Blackwater Integrated College will remain employees of BIC until 31st August 2023 at which point they will transfer over to the new College under TUPE.
31st August 2023	Closure of Blackwater Integrated College
1st September 2023	Opening of new College on a split site basis. Strategies will be implemented to minimise the impact on pupils from BIC  Discussions on 2024 accommodation requirements to commence.

### 7.3 The Models For Day One

7.3.1 It is anticipated that from the current pupil profile for BIC and the EOIs, that on Day One (September 2023), there will be 310 pupils attending MDIC. This number allows for 20 pupils in sixth form.

7.3.2 **Table 7.3.2** below, shows the anticipated enrolments of the new MDIC over a seven year period. The figures in red show the students transferring across from BIC and this is complemented in each year with the anticipated intakes of 60 in year 1, 80 in year 2 and 100 in year 3 and how this the work through the 7 year cycle. The building of numbers in Integrated 6th form is also tracked above as the increases in enrolment grow over the 7 years. This is a conservative estimate and MDIC would expect to exceed the intake of 60 and 80 in years 1 and 2 and therefore reach the target figure of 600 sooner.

**Table 7.3.2 Anticipated Enrolments (2023 – 2029)**

<b>MDIC ANTICIPATED ENROLMENTS OVER 7 YEARS</b>							
<b>Year Of College/ School Year</b>	<b>Y1 (2023)</b>	<b>Y2 (2024)</b>	<b>Y3</b>	<b>Y4</b>	<b>Y5</b>	<b>Y6</b>	<b>Y7</b>
Year 8	60	80	100	100	100	100	100
Year 9	60	60	80	100	100	100	100
Year 10	60	60	60	80	100	100	100
Year 11	70	60	60	60	80	100	100
Year 12	40	70	60	60	60	80	100
Year 13	20	30	40	50	50	50	50
Year 14	0	20	30	40	50	50	50
<b>TOTAL ANTICIPATED ENROLMENTS</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>430</b>	<b>490</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>580</b>	<b>600</b>

\*RED indicates current number of pupils enrolled at BIC in that year group

7.3.3 Both the BoG of BIC and the Steering Group reviewed several ‘Models’ for Day One of MDIC in terms of accommodation requirements, financial implications and most importantly the quality of the educational experience for the pupils.

7.3.4 In total six models were considered for the phased growth of MDIC. The models varied in the speed of transfer away from the BIC site and on to the new MDIC site. The fastest model being closure of BIC after one year of the new school being opened and the slowest, four years following the opening. Another factor was considered was whether 6<sup>th</sup> form provision is first opened on the new MDIC site or on the current BIC site.

7.3.5 As can be seen from the options below, the 6th form provision at MDIC is proposed to meet the needs of 100 students. The 6th form will, it is estimated, take a maximum of 5 years to achieve this size as it will require time for development and growth.

### 7.3.6 Model 1

Located At New MDIC Site

Project Year	By School Year Group						
Yr. 1	Yr.8					13	
Yr. 2	Yr.8	9				13	14
Yr. 3	Yr.8	9	10			13	14
Yr. 4	Yr.8	9	10	11		13	14
Yr. 5	Yr.8	9	10	11	12	13	14

Located at Current BIC Site

Project Year	By School Year Group						
Yr. 1		9	10	11	12		
Yr. 2			10	11	12		
Yr. 3				11	12		
Yr. 4					12		

**Opportunities:** The model requires minimal capital investment in the new site. Year 12 pupils can transfer to Year 13 in Y1.

**Challenges:** Having Year 8 and Year 13 only on the new site will create difficulties with staffing and timetabling. The split site would incur significant recurrent costs over a long period of time. The model would also require immediate capital investment for 6<sup>th</sup> form on new site. This model could have a substantial detrimental impact due to perceived legacy issues, on the long-term sustainability of new College. The split site arrangement is difficult for staff, provision of curriculum and building a cohesive new school. Transfer complete in 4 years.

### 7.3.5 Model 2

Located At New MDIC Site

Project Year	By School Year Group						
Yr. 1	Yr. 8						
Yr. 2	Yr. 8	9					
Yr. 3	Yr. 8	9	10				
Yr. 4	Yr. 8	9	10	11			
Yr. 5	Yr. 8	9	10	11	12	13	14

Located at Current BIC Site

Project Year	By School Year Group					
Yr. 1	9	10	11	12	13	
Yr. 2		10	11	12	13	14
Yr. 3			11	12	13	14
Yr. 4				12	13	14

**Opportunities:** The model requires minimal capital investment at the new site. The model makes good use of existing assets and accommodation at the BIC site. There is the least 'disruption' for the existing pupils. Year 12 pupils can transfer to Year 13 in Y1.

**Challenges:** Having Year 8 only on the new site (one third of KS3) will cause problems with staffing and timetabling. Additional costs associated with a split site are maximised. This model could have a substantial detrimental impact due to perceived legacy issues, on the long-term sustainability of new College. Keeping 6<sup>th</sup> form provision on the Blackwater IC may not be as attractive to students transferring from other 11-16 schools in the area. The split site arrangement is difficult for staff, provision of curriculum and building a cohesive new school. Transfer complete in 4 years.

### 7.3.5 Model 3

Located At New MDIC Site

Project Year	By School Year Group						
Yr. 1	Yr. 8	9					
Yr. 2	Yr. 8	9	10				
Yr. 3	Yr. 8	9	10	11	12		
Yr. 4	Yr. 8	9	10	11	12	13	
Yr. 5	Yr. 8	9	10	11	12	13	14

Located at Current BIC Site

Project Year	By School Year Group						
Yr. 1			10	11	12		
Yr. 2				11	12		

**Opportunities:** The model requires relatively minor capital investment in at the new site. The model makes good use of existing assets and accommodation at the BIC site. There is little ‘disruption’ for the existing pupils. Additional costs associated with a split site are minimised. Transfer complete in 2 years

**Challenges:** Having Year 8 and 9 only on the new site will cause problems with staffing and timetabling (two thirds of KS3). This model could have a detrimental impact due to perceived legacy issues, on the long-term sustainability of the new College. No provision of 6<sup>th</sup> form education for current BIC pupils until Year 4. This would be damaging to the level of support for the Proposal. The split site arrangement is difficult for staff, provision of curriculum and building a cohesive new school.

### 7.3.6 Model 4

Located At New MDIC Site

Project Year	By School Year Group						
Yr. 1	Yr. 8	9					
Yr. 2	Yr. 8	9	10				
Yr. 3	Yr. 8	9	10	11	12		
Yr. 4	Yr. 8	9	10	11	12	13	14

Located at Current BIC Site

Project Year	By School Year Group						
Yr. 1			10	11	12	13	
Yr. 2				11	12	13	14
Yr. 3						13	14

**Opportunities:** The model requires relatively minor capital investment in at the new site. The model makes good use of existing assets and accommodation at the BIC site. Additional costs associated with a split site are longer. Year 12 pupils can transfer to Year 13 in Y1.

**Challenges:** Having Year 8 and 9 only on the new site will cause problems with staffing and timetabling (two thirds of KS3). This model could have a detrimental impact due to

perceived legacy issues, on the long-term sustainability of the new College The split site arrangement is difficult for staff, provision of curriculum and building a cohesive new school. Transfer complete in 3 years.

### 7.3.7 Model 5

Located At New MDIC Site

Project Year	By School Year Group						
Yr. 1	Yr. 8	9	10			13	
Yr. 2	Yr. 8	9	10	11	12	13	14

Located at Current BIC Site

Project Year	By School Year Group						
Yr. 1				11	12		

**Opportunities:** The model presents a good solution for staffing and curriculum provision over a split site. KS3 would all be one the one site. Year 12 pupils can transfer to Year 13 in Y1. The new College, well established on the new site, would send a positive message out to the greater community and help ensure future success as perceived legacy issues would be minimal. Additional costs associated with a split site are minimised in terms of number of years the split site applies. Transfer complete in 1 year.

**Challenges:** The model would require the highest level of capital investment for the first year on site. Timetabling KS3 and 6<sup>th</sup> form on the same site would cause additional issues. The split site arrangement is difficult for staff, provision of curriculum and building a cohesive new school.

### 7.3.8 Model 6

Located At New MDIC Site

Project Year	By School Year Group						
Yr. 1	Yr. 8	9	10				
Yr. 2	Yr. 8	9	10	11	12	13	14

Located at Current BIC Site

Project Year	By School Year Group						
Yr. 1				11	12	13	

**Opportunities:** The model presents the optimum solution for staffing and curriculum provision possible over a split site. KS3 would all be one the one site. The model makes good use of existing provision for KS4 and 6<sup>th</sup> form on the BIC site. The new College, well established on the new site, would send a positive message out to the greater community and help ensure future success as perceived legacy issues would be minimal. Additional costs associated with a split site are minimised in terms of number of years the split site applies (1 year). Transfer complete in Transfer complete in 1 year.

**Challenges:** The model would require significant capital investment for the first and second years. The split site arrangement will be difficult for staff, provision of curriculum and building a cohesive new school.

## 7.4 Preferred Option

7.4.1 From consideration of the six Model's Opportunities and Challenges relating to Day 1, and with the overarching desire to put the quality of the pupil's educational experience at the centre of our decision, the Steering Group and the BoG of BIC concurred that the 'Preferred' Model is Model 6. Model 5 is also considered an possible option.

7.4.2 Further information and Resource Implications (Section 9) are based on the implementation of Model 6 by way of example.

## 7.5 SEN Accommodation Provision

7.5.1 It would be anticipated that the SEN accommodation would be provided for in line with the Department's requirements for the same.

## **SECTION 8: RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

### **8.1 Staffing**

8.1.1 There is a willingness and acceptance from all parties that ALL the current staff at BIC are eligible to transfer over to MDIC under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations (TUPE).

8.1.2 BIC currently operates with staffing levels as follows: a principal, one vice principal (VP), three senior teachers, two SENCOs and 11 full time equivalent teachers. There are also 15 teaching assistants (SEN), three (LSC), one bursar, one buildings supervisor, one IT Technician and one secretary.

8.1.3 MDIC will require a management structure that will meet the needs of in the interim transition period which will cover a split site, and which will take into account the needs of Sixth Form provision and additional pupil numbers as outlined within the 'Preferred Model' in Section 8. It is anticipated that the management structure will incorporate new roles including a Head of Sixth Form, a second VP and roles to build teaching and learning capacity across the whole school.

8.1.4 There will be the need for a further two teachers in Y1 (over and above current staffing levels at BIC) to facilitate the split site. This has been taken into consideration within the financial forecast. Refer to Tables 9.2.3.

8.1.5 BIC currently has three LSCs that are funded directly by EA and this equates to an additional three teaching staff and three teaching assistants

8.1.6 Following discussions with Children & Young People's Services (CYPS) and in line with proposed new LSC provision, it is anticipated that the current provision will alter slightly in nature in its move to MDIC. It is further anticipated that all staff currently associated with LSC provision will also move under the TUPE Regulations. Additional teaching assistant staff will be required for the new proposed Junior and Senior LSCs.

8.1.7 All current BIC teaching assistants in mainstream provision are attached to Stage 5 statemented pupils and are funded directly by EA based on the requirements of the pupil's statement. There is an awareness that these posts will continue if and when students transfer across from BIC to MDIC.

## 8.3 Finance

8.3.1 BIC has demonstrated it will use its resources to good effect operating within DE guidelines on financial management in relation to Grant maintained Integrated Schools. This is referenced in the Section 3(1)

8.3.2 As an existing college, BIC is currently in receipt of grant aided funding. It is envisaged that the recurrent funding level for the new College for the first year will be similar to that already received by BIC.

8.3.3 The Steering Group has prepared Estimated Budget Allocations and Estimated Expenditure' profiles for the first three years based on the 'Preferred Model'. Refer to **Tables 8.3.3** below.

The following assumptions have been made:

The approximate accommodation requirements (m<sup>2</sup>) is derived from the completed Accommodation Schedules for Years 1,2 and 3. Refer to **Table 8.3.3** below. The increase in staffing requirements included within the expenditure are for an additional 2 teachers in Year 1, a further 3.5 teachers in Year 2 and a further 1.5 teachers in Year 3.

- The pupil numbers are based on the numbers of current BOC pupils as well as anticipated growth evidenced by the expressions of interest.
- Expenditure costs relating to premises (example power / heat / maintenance) and other operating costs (exam fees / stationary / insurance / accounting etc) are based on current BIC expenditure for the same with uplifted costs for growth and inflation.
- The proposed expenditure profiles do not include any costs associated with SEN within the LSC provision.

8.3.4 The Steering Group are mindful that the funding is based retrospectively on the census from the previous year and this will not be possible in the setting up of a new school. It is assumed that the funding for Year 1 (September 2023) will be based on the numbers enrolled in MDIC on 1st September 2023. This funding will need to be available from September 2023 to allow the school to operate.

Tables 8.3.3

<b>MDIC - ESTIMATED BUDGET ALLOCATION 2023/2024</b>					
<b>(A)</b>	<b>AGE WEIGHTED PUPIL UNITS</b>	<b>AWPU Cash Value</b>		<b>2,172.21</b>	
	<b>Pupil Year</b>	<b>Pupil Numbers</b>	<b>Weightings</b>	<b>AWPU Totals</b>	<b>Fund Allocated</b>
	Year 8	60	1.68	100.8	£ 218,958.77
	Year 9	60	1.68	100.8	£ 218,958.77
	Year 10	60	1.68	100.8	£ 218,958.77
	Year 11	70	1.68	117.6	£ 255,451.90
	Year 12	40	1.68	67.2	£ 145,972.51
	Year 13	20	2.18	43.6	£ 94,708.36
	Year 14	0	2.18	0	£ -
	<b>Total PUPIL AWPU FUNDING (A)</b>				<b>£ 1,153,009.07</b>
<b>(B)</b>	<b>OTHER FUNDING</b>	<b>Number of Units</b>	<b>Funding Per Unit</b>		
(i)	Premises (1)	3469	8.62		£ 29,902.78
	Premises (2)	1300	8.62		£ 11,206.00
	Pupil Related	310	170.43		£ 52,833.30
(ii)	TSN				
	Social Deprivation	103	379.18		£ 39,055.54
	Additional Funding	103	209		£ 21,527.00
	Educational Need	30	1037.99		£ 31,139.70
(iii)	Small Schools Support				£ 105,341.70
(iv)	Teacher's Salary Protection*				£ 7,500.00
(v)	Administration Costs	210	120		£ 39,200.00
(vi)	Landlord Maintenance	4769	13		£ 61,997.00
(vii)	Looked After/Service Personnel/Traveller Community	15	1086.1		£ 16,291.50
(viii)	Special Units		3000		£ -
(ix)	Allowance for Split Site Costs*				£ 20,000.00
	<b>Total OTHER FUNDING (B)</b>				<b>£ 435,994.52</b>
	<b>ESTIMATED TOTAL FUNDING ALLOCATION (A+B)</b>				<b>£ 1,589,003.59</b>
	<b>TOTAL Funding September 2023 - End March 2024</b>				<b>£ 926,918.76</b>
	<b>NOTES:</b>				
	Recurrent income is based on estimated number of pupils for each year group				
	*Assumptions made based on current BIC information				
	No funding allocation has been made for SEN (Stage 5) or the BIC SEN Unit				
	No allowances have been made for inflationary increases in the AWPU Cash Value				

## MDIC - ESTIMATED BUDGET ALLOCATION 2024/2025

MDIC - ESTIMATED BUDGET ALLOCATION 2024/2025					
	(A) AGE WEIGHTED PUPIL UNITS	AWPU Cash Value		2,172.21	
	Pupil Year	Pupil Numbers	Weightings	AWPU Totals	Fund Allocated
	Year 8	80	1.68	134.4	£ 291,945.02
	Year 9	60	1.68	100.8	£ 218,958.77
	Year 10	60	1.68	100.8	£ 218,958.77
	Year 11	60	1.68	100.8	£ 218,958.77
	Year 12	70	1.68	117.6	£ 255,451.90
	Year 13	40	2.18	87.2	£ 189,416.71
	Year 14	20	2.18	43.6	£ 94,708.36
	<b>Total PUPIL AWPU FUNDING (A)</b>				<b>£ 1,488,398.29</b>
	<b>(B) OTHER FUNDING</b>	Number of Units	Funding Per Unit		
(i)	Premises (1)	0	8.7		£ -
	Premises (2)	2000	8.7		£ 17,400.00
	Pupil Related	390	170.43		£ 66,467.70
(ii)	TSN				
	Social Deprivation	103	379.18		£ 39,055.54
	Additional Funding	103	209		£ 21,527.00
	Educational Need	30	1037.99		£ 31,139.70
(iii)	Small Schools Support				£ 70,227.30
(iv)	Teacher's Salary Protection				£ 8,000.00
(v)	Administration Costs	290	120		£ 48,800.00
(vi)	Landlord Maintenance	2000	13		£ 26,000.00
(vii)	Looked After/Service Personnel/Traveller Community	20	1086.1		£ 21,722.00
(viii)	Special Units		3000		£ -
	<b>Total OTHER FUNDING (B)</b>				<b>£ 350,339.24</b>
	<b>ESTIMATED TOTAL FUNDING ALLOCATION (A+B)</b>				<b>£ 1,838,737.53</b>
	<b>NOTES:</b>				
	Recurrent income is based on estimated number of pupils for each year group				
	*Assumptions made based on current BIC information				
	No funding allocation has been made for SEN (Stage 5) or the BIC SEN Unit				
	No allowances have been made for inflationary increases in the AWPU Cash Value				

## MDIC - ESTIMATED BUDGET ALLOCATION 2025/2026

MDIC - ESTIMATED BUDGET ALLOCATION 2025/2026					
<b>(A)</b>	<b>AGE WEIGHTED PUPIL UNITS</b>	<b>AWPU Cash Value</b>		<b>2,172.21</b>	
	<b>Pupil Year</b>	<b>Pupil Numbers</b>	<b>Weightings</b>	<b>AWPU Totals</b>	<b>Fund Allocated</b>
	Year 8	100	1.68	168	£ 364,931.28
	Year 9	80	1.68	134.4	£ 291,945.02
	Year 10	60	1.68	100.8	£ 218,958.77
	Year 11	60	1.68	100.8	£ 218,958.77
	Year 12	60	1.68	100.8	£ 218,958.77
	Year 13	40	2.18	87.2	£ 189,416.71
	Year 14	40	2.18	87.2	£ 189,416.71
	<b>Total PUPIL AWPU FUNDING (A)</b>				<b>£ 1,692,586.03</b>
<b>(B)</b>	<b>OTHER FUNDING</b>	<b>Number of Units</b>	<b>Funding Per Unit</b>		
(i)	Premises (1)	0	8.7		£ -
	Premises (2)	2300	8.7		£ 20,010.00
	Pupil Related	440	170.43		£ 74,989.20
(ii)	TSN				
	Social Deprivation	103	380		£ 39,140.00
	Additional Funding	103	209		£ 21,527.00
	Educational Need	30	1040		£ 31,200.00
(iii)	Small Schools Support				£ 52,670.10
(iv)	Teacher's Salary Protection				£ 8,300.00
(v)	Administration Costs	340	120		£ 54,800.00
(vi)	Landlord Maintenance	2300	13		£ 29,900.00
(vii)	Looked After/Service Personnel/Traveller Community	25	1086.1		£ 27,152.50
(viii)	Special Units		3000		£ -
	<b>Total OTHER FUNDING (B)</b>				<b>£ 359,688.80</b>
	<b>ESTIMATED TOTAL FUNDING ALLOCATION (A+B)</b>				<b>£ 2,052,274.83</b>
	<b>NOTES:</b>				
	Recurrent income is based on estimated number of pupils for each year group				
	*Assumptions made based on current BIC information				
	No funding allocation has been made for SEN (Stage 5) or the BIC SEN Unit				
	No allowances have been made for inflationary increases in the AWPU Cash Value				

YEAR OF PROJECTED EXPENDITURE	2023/2024*	2024/2025	2025/2026
Full time equivalent enrolment	310	390	430
<b>EXPENDITURE SUMMARY</b>			
<b>Staff Costs</b>			
Staff Costs -Teaching	£ 581,000.00	£ 1,235,400.00	£ 1,340,000.00
Staff Costs - Other (Admin, Caretaker, Tech)	£ 81,666.67	£ 169,350.00	£ 174,430.50
<b>Operating Costs</b>			
Premises	£ 139,095.83	£ 110,000.00	£ 138,000.00
Other	£ 113,925.00	£ 273,000.00	£ 330,000.00
Split site costs	£ 20,000.00		
<b>Total proposed expenditure</b>	£ 935,687.50	£ 1,787,750.00	£ 1,982,430.50
Budget Summary			
Common Funding Formula Estimated Budget	£ 926,918.76	£ 1,838,737.53	£ 2,052,274.83
Surplus/(Deficit)	-£ 8,768.74	£ 50,987.53	£ 69,844.33
<b>NOTES:</b>			
* 7 Months			
Premises costs are based on estimated areas within Budget Allocation and current costs for BIC premises plus year on inflationary increase.			
Other costs are based on a cost per pupil as per current BIC costs plus uplift and year on inflationary increase.			

## 8.4 Accommodation and Capital Expenditure

8.4.1 A Schedule of Accommodation have been prepared based on the 'Preferred Model'. Refer to **Table 8.4.1**, Section 7 (7.3.8)

The schedule makes the following assumptions:

- The required number of standard classrooms, science classrooms etc on the new site is based on the envisaged enrolments for Years 1,2 and 3.
- Years 1, 2 and 3 are based on the 'Preferred Model (Model 6)'

**Table 8.4.1 Accommodation Schedule**

Classrooms	Current Provision at BIC	Additional Requirement for New Site (MDIC) and Time Frame		
		Y1	Y2	Y3
<b>Subject Area</b>				
Science	3	1	2	4
Technology & Design	2	1	1	2
Home Economics	1	1	1	2
Art and Design	1		1	2
Music	1		1	1
Business Information				1
Geography	1		1	1
History	1		1	1
PE				
General Classrooms	7	6	10	12
Media Studies				
Drama Classroom				
Learning Support	3	2	3	3
IT	2	1	1	2
Library	1			1
Multi-purpose Hall	1	1	1	1
Career Suite				1
Dance/lecture/Drama Room				
Sixth Form Study				
Counselling Room			1	1

Toilet Facilities	Current Provision at BIC	Additional Requirement		
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Pupil toilets (cubicles)	8	12	30	35
Pupil toilets (urinals) included	1	0	0	0
Staff toilets	5	2	4	4

8.4.2 The Steering Group are very aware of the potential significant capital costs in purchasing a new site and the initial establishment of new temporary and latterly permanent school accommodation on a new site; Table 8.4.2. The group are willing to work with DE to mitigate as much capital cost as possible in order to achieve value for money whilst also providing appropriate accommodation for the pupils of the new MDIC site.

The group are aware that the temporary accommodation could take many forms including modular and refurbishment of existing buildings and the use of current school estate or a shared facility if suitable for pupils coming from both sides of the community.

**Table 8.4.2 Estimated Costs for Year 1 MDIC New Site Requirements, Based On Number of Pupils and Accommodation Schedule (Table 8.4.1)**

<b>YEAR 1 - CONSTRUCTION COST ESTIMATE</b> <b>(for approximately 180 pupils plus SEN Unit pupils)</b>		
	<b>ELEMENT</b>	<b>Total Cost of Element</b>
	Construction Costs	
1	Substructure	£ 40,800.00
	One double science and HE modular unit (say 170m2)	
	Four double classroom units (140m2 each)	
	One double Learning Support unit (say 140m2)	
	One hall type facility with WCS (say 100m2)	
	One administration/staff type facility (say 50m2)	
	(total modular area 1020m2)	
2	Prefabricated buildings and units (see breakdown above)	£ 652,800.00
3	Services	£ 351,900.00
4	External Works	£ 275,250.00
	<b>SUB-TOTAL: BUILDING WORKS</b>	<b>£ 1,320,750.00</b>
5	Project/Design team Fees say 12%	£ 158,490.00
6	Utility Charges (allowance)	£ 45,000.00
7	Abnormals (allowance)	£ 146,000.00
8	Risks (allowance at 10%)	£ 167,024.00
	<b>ESTIMATED COST</b>	<b>£ 1,837,264.00</b>
NOTES:		
Value Added Tax (VAT) is excluded from the cost estimates.		
The cost of the land purchase is excluded		
The above costs are based on a 3500m2 hypothetical brown field site with access to some services		
The above costs are based on new modular units. Refurbished units will result in lower costs		

8.4.3 The table above (8.4.2), costs are based on typical classroom sizes for subject areas based on the DENI Handbook, but do not account for ancillary space, for example preparatory areas associated with HE and science rooms etc. as per the Handbook. Estimate costs also include for the LSU, which may be funded differently than the remaining costs.

## **8.5 Transport**

8.5.1 When analysing the average distance pupils travel to attend BIC, it is notable that most of the pupils (63%) are currently entitled to a free bus pass.

8.5.2 In general, 78.4% of pupils travel less than 10 miles whilst the remaining 21.6% travel more than 10 miles to access integrated education. Most of the pupils travelling over 10 miles to school are coming from the north of the catchment: Comber, Ballygowan, Moneyreagh and areas of South and East Belfast.

8.5.3 Map 3.8.1 demonstrates the size of the catchment area of BIC and provides an indication of the alternative schools that children, who travel to the College, could potentially attend.

8.5.4 The Steering Group are mindful of the costs relating to transportation when the school is cited in a rural location. It would be our desire that this number should not rise however in order to achieve this it would be advisable that the College be located closer to an urbanised area (for example Saintfield / Carryduff / Crossgar etc).

## APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Details Of Consultation

Appendix 2 Policy Context

## **Appendix 1**

### **Details of the Consultations that were conducted are as follows:**

#### **Board of Governors:**

Area Planning has been a regular agenda item with the Board of Governors since the publication of Providing Pathways – Strategic Area Plans for Schools 2017-2020. Lorna McAlpine, NICIE, met with the Board of Governors in October 2017 regarding possible solutions for Blackwater IC due to the limited facilities at the College and the restrictions this imposed. Further meetings took place with members of the Board, Principal and NICIE representatives and a decision was made by the Board of Governors to work with NICIE and a local Steering Group to develop a case for change for a new Integrated College in the Mid Down area of which Blackwater IC would form a component part. Two members of the Board of Governors at Blackwater IC joined the Steering Group as representatives of the College.

Pre-consultation was discussed at the Board meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2020 and there was unanimous support for the case for change incorporating Blackwater IC as a part of a new Integrated College in the Mid Down area.

#### **Parents:**

In November 2018 a letter was sent to all parents explaining that Blackwater IC was working with NICIE to increase provision in the Mid Down area. They were invited to a meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2018 in Cedar IPS regarding the formation of a Steering Group to work alongside Blackwater IC and NICIE to further this aim. Following the formation of a Steering Group that included parents from Blackwater IC as part of the pre consultation phase a letter was sent to parents on the 8<sup>th</sup> January 2020. This broadly outlined the case for change and parents were invited along to an information evening on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2020. Expressions of interest for the new College were also distributed to parents and a very high number of responses were received indicating a high level of support for the proposal.

Due to the ongoing pandemic, and the resulting delay in the submission of the Development Proposal, further consultation was carried out with Blackwater IC new Y8 parents on the 28<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

#### **Staff:**

The Principal met with all teaching and non-teaching staff to advise them of the proposal. Regular meetings have ensured that they have been kept up to date with progress. Staff were also invited to the Steering Group meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2018 and two members of Blackwater IC staff were represented in this group. Staff have been very supportive of

the plans behind the case for change since the onset and this was reinforced at a staff meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2020 as part of the pre consultation phase with unanimous support.

Due to the ongoing pandemic, and the resulting delay in the submission of the Development Proposal, further consultation was carried out with Blackwater IC staff on the 27<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

### **Pupils:**

Consultation has been carried out in a range of ways to explain the proposal. Form tutors spoke with their classes about letters that were sent home on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2020. There was also a full school assembly on 21<sup>st</sup> January further outlining the case for change and the different elements that would affect students, particularly those in Years 8-10 who would be most affected, and SEN pupils. Junior Leaders and Prefects were also consulted to provide a student voice on specific queries and where they could have input into plans moving forward. There was widespread support for the plans specifically for the possibility of Post 16 provision being in place and not having to leave their current cohort. There was also a willingness to work with any new Board of Governors and decision makers to give a student perspective on any future plans when the proposal was approved. A very high percentage of pupils, with parental approval, also returned expression of interest forms to indicate support for the development of a new 11-18 Post Primary Integrated College in the mid-Down area.

Due to the ongoing pandemic, and the resulting delay in the submission of the Development Proposal, further consultation was carried out with Blackwater IC new Y8 pupils on the 28<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

### **Public Consultation and Community Engagement**

Following consultation with the Board of Governors at Blackwater IC and NICIE it was decided to hold a Public Meeting on 29 November 2018 in Cedar IPS, followed by meetings in Drumblins IPS (28 Feb 2019) and Millennium IPS (21 Mar 2019) to gather interest in the formation of a Steering Group to explore the opportunity of increasing Integrated provision in the Mid Down area.

These meetings were well supported and a Parents' Steering Group was formed. The group is made up of parents and governors from Blackwater IC, Millennium, Cedar, Killyleagh Integrated Primary Schools and from parents from other schools in the area.

Steering Group members attended many public events where they collected Expression of Interest forms from parents.

## Appendix 2

### POLICY CONTEXT

This section provides detail on all relevant policies and how they relate to the proposal.

i. Sustainable School Policy. The Sustainable School Policy<sup>15</sup> states the following:

*‘For new post-primary schools, the minimum intake to qualify initially for recurrent funding will be 50 but, to retain recurrent funding, this would be expected to increase to 80 in the second year and then 100 in the third year in anticipation that a minimum enrolment of 500 for Years 8-12 would be achieved.’*

This Proposal aims to meet and exceed these criteria.

- ii. Education order. This Proposal supports the Department of Education’s statutory duty to encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education. This is outlined under Article 64 of the Education Reform (NI) Order: ‘to encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education, the education together at a school of Protestant and Catholic pupils’. Similarly, within the Belfast Agreement: ‘An essential aspect of the reconciliation process is the promotion of a culture of tolerance at every level of society and includes initiatives to facilitate and encourage integrated education and mixed housing.’
- iii. Education Authority - “Providing Pathways” and Area Plan. On 28 April 2017, the Education Authority (EA), on behalf of the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS), Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta (CnaG), Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE), the Governing Bodies Association (GBA), the Controlled Schools’ Support Council (CSSC) and the Catholic Schools Trustees’ Service (CSTS) published ‘**Providing Pathways – A Strategic Area Plan for School Provision 2017-2020**’ (the Area Plan), with an accompanying Area Plan Annual Action Plan. The Area Plan identified a set of key themes, which were unanimously agreed as the key drivers for the future planning of school provision, namely:

- Securing parity of access for all to appropriate pathways
- Enhancing choice for all children and young people
- Promoting co-operation, collaboration and sharing across all sectors
- Maximising the use of resources
- Informing strategic infrastructure planning.

The strategic themes and priorities for action identified in the Area Plan, set within the context of the Department of Education’s Sustainable Schools’ Policy, are intended to be

---

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/a-policy-for-sustainable-schools.pdf>

the determinants of any proposals for change to school provision moving forward; and this remains true for the Action Plan for 2019-21.

- iv. NICIE admissions criteria guidance. NICIE recommend that schools use the Statement of Principles ratio of 40:40:20 in their admissions criteria as this gives a message of equality regarding the two major traditions and generates a balance. This guidance is followed in this Proposal.
- v. UNCRC<sup>16</sup>. The UN Convention of the Rights of the Child is adhered to in this Proposal.
- vi. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998<sup>17</sup>. This legislation is adhered to in this Proposal.
- vii. Rural Needs Act. The Guide to the Rural Needs Act NI <sup>18</sup> states that ‘The Review of the Statistical Classification and Delineation of Settlements, NISRA, March 2015, expanded the classification to include a service provision element by categorising rural areas based on their drive time from a town centre of a settlement with a population of 10,000 or more (a large service centre). Using this approach, areas have been classified as being either “within” or “outside” of 20-minute or 30-minute drive times of their nearest town centre.
- viii. New Decade New Approach January 2020. This document promises to deliver ‘a fair and compassionate society that supports working families and the most vulnerable. The Executive will develop and implement an Anti-poverty Strategy.’ It also highlights as one of its priorities the need to ‘help build a shared and integrated society, the Executive will support educating children and young people of different backgrounds together in the classroom’. Integrated education has a key role to play in delivering this outcome and this Proposal is aligned with this.
- ix. Anti poverty strategy / Social inclusion strategy. The Government's Anti-Poverty and Social Inclusion Strategy for Northern Ireland<sup>19</sup> was published in November 2006 by the then Secretary of State and aims to tackle the issues of poverty and social exclusion by

---

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.savethechildren.org.uk/what-we-do/childrens-rights/united-nations-convention-of-the-rights-of-the-child>

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/47/section/75>

<sup>18</sup>

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/daera/17.18.249%20Guide%20to%20Rural%20Needs%20Act%20NI%20final%20v2.PDF>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/lifetime-opportunities-governments-anti-poverty-and-social-inclusion-strategy-northern-ireland>

targeting efforts and available resources on people, groups and areas in greatest social need. This Proposal upholds the aims of this Strategy.

Lifetime Opportunities Strategy / Targeting Social Needs Strategy. The Lifetime Opportunities strategy was developed in response to a commitment by the 2002 Executive to review the New Targeting Social Need (New TSN) policy, which led in turn to evaluation, analysis and extensive consultation. The strategy builds on the progress made under New TSN, sets out the challenges facing government and in particular stresses the need to prioritise the issue of child poverty. This Proposal upholds the aims of this Strategy