

**Case for Change
In respect of Carrickfergus College and Downshire School
September 2016**

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PREFACE: The Case for Change

Paragraph 4.1 of ‘Guidance on the Publication of a Development Proposal’ [Department of Education Circular 2016/ ,] emphasises that:

Each school is an integral part of the network of schools which makes up the education system which caters for the needs and aspirations of all children and young people in an area. Any significant change to an existing school or the establishment of a new school must therefore be considered in the wider context of the network of schools and must be in line with the overall pattern of provision outlined in the area plan.

In defining what constitutes ‘a significant change’ in a post primary school, a number of attributes are identified, two of which are relevant to the proposal set out in this document:

- 4.9 i. To increase or decrease the total approved enrolment of a grant-aided post primary school*
- ii To add or remove a key stage of education (Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4 or Post-16) at a post-primary school, hence changing the age profile of the pupils attending the school*

Paragraph 5 of circular 2016/ clarifies the proposer’s responsibilities in making ‘*The Case for Change*’. (In this instance the proposer is the Education Authority, in its role as the Managing Authority of the Controlled School.)

- 5.1 It is a matter for the proposer to make the case for change for any development proposal being presented to the Minister for consideration. The proposer should provide sufficient evidence to support the case for change to enable those affected by the proposal to understand the educational and other merits of the change proposed. The Department should be fully furnished with all pertinent background and supporting information relating to the development proposal. Such information must be robust and verifiable.*
- 5.2 Any proposal must demonstrate its contribution to the overall education provision in the area as described in the area plan. Provision of high quality education must be the central tenet of all proposals. Proposers should draw on Departmental policy documents to when developing the case for change. It is not sufficient simply to quote the policy; the case for change should clearly demonstrate how the proposal will aid delivery of the relevant Departmental policies and priorities.*

- 5.3 *Consideration should be given to the realistic financial implications of a proposal and these should also be detailed in the case for change. Potential options for delivering the proposed change should be considered prior to the publication of the DP as the DP process does not provide for consideration of options or which option is best value for money. This is particularly important when there is a need for capital expenditure.*
- 5.4 *A detailed implementation plan must also be included. This should outline the key activities and milestones for successful implementation of the proposal should it be approved. This will inform the chosen implementation date and will be a key consideration for the Minister when deciding on the proposal.*


Section 1: Overview

Board Area	Education Authority
D.P. number	512
Proposer	Education Authority Contact Mr Gavin Boyd, Chief Executive Tel: 028 25662385
School Name	Carrickfergus College
School Ref. No.	3210091
Type	Post Primary
Management	Controlled Secondary
D.P.publication date	28 February 2017 and 2 March 2017
Proposal	Carrickfergus College will discontinue facilitating the establishment of a new single non-selective controlled School (1250 pupils) which will initially be on a split site.

Board Area	Education Authority
D.P. number	513
Proposer	Education Authority Contact Mr Gavin Boyd, Chief Executive Tel: 028 25662385
School Name	Downshire School
School Ref. No.	3210232
Type	Post Primary
Management	Controlled Secondary
D.P.publication date	28 February 2017 and 2 March 2017
Proposal	Downshire School will discontinue facilitating the establishment of a new single non-selective controlled School (1250 pupils) which will initially be on a split site.

Board Area	Education Authority
D.P. number	514
Proposer	Education Authority Contact Mr Gavin Boyd, Chief Executive Tel: 028 25662385
School Name	Carrickfergus / Downshire – New co-educational, non-selective controlled post-primary
School Ref. No.	
Type	Post Primary
Management	Controlled Secondary
D.P.publication date	28 March 2017 and 30 March 2017
Proposal	The establishment of a new co-educational, non-selective controlled post-primary school in Carrickfergus for pupils aged 11-18, with an approved admissions number of 210 and an approved enrolment number of 1,250, with effect from 1 September 2018 or as soon as possible thereafter. (This proposal should be read in conjunction with Development Proposal Nos 512 and 513)

Statutory Consultation

By the proposer	<p>I confirm that the pre-publication consultation with the Governors, staff, parents and others schools took place over a 4 week period between 3 January 2017 and 31 January 2017.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>SIGNED:</p> <p>DATE: 28 February 2017</p>
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Section 2: Background

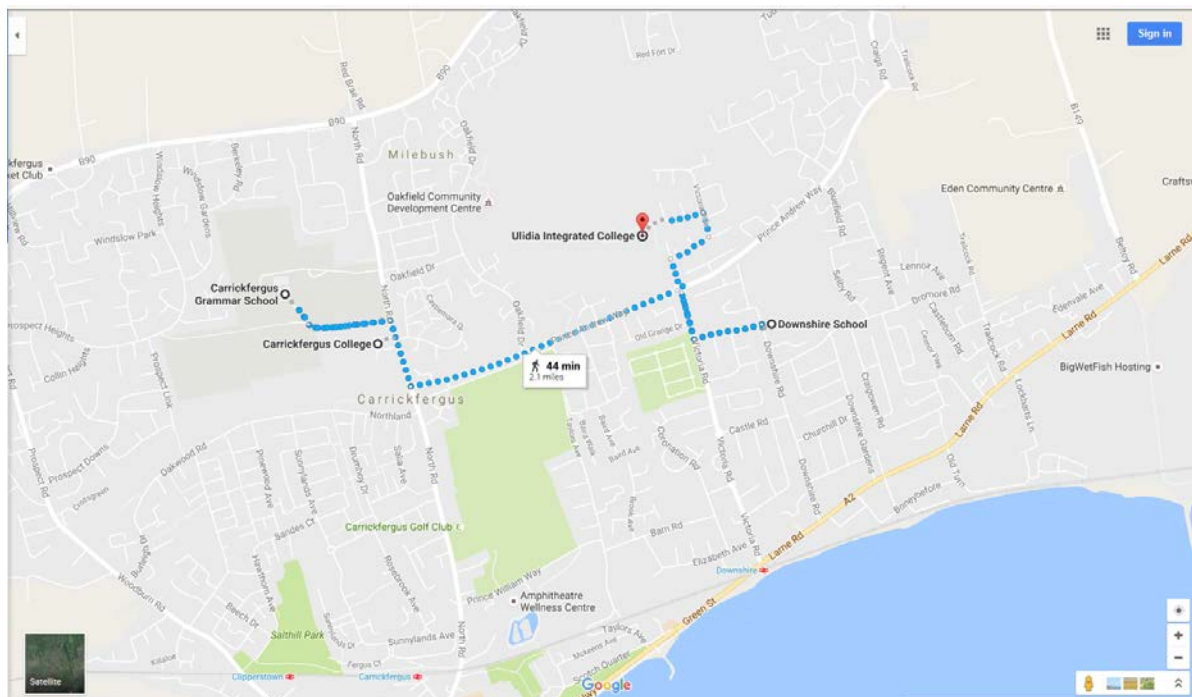
2.1 Introduction

Carrickfergus is an historical town situated 12 miles from Belfast. The former Carrickfergus Borough Council area consists of Greenisland, Carrickfergus town and Whitehead. The Borough is 32 square miles with a population just over 40,000 people.

Post-primary education in the Carrickfergus area is delivered in four schools namely:

- Carrickfergus Controlled Grammar School
- Carrickfergus Controlled College
- Downshire Controlled Community School
- Ulidia Integrated College.

The diagram below is a map showing the location of these schools in the Mid and East Antrim Council area



Carrickfergus College is a non-selective controlled secondary school which was first opened in 1960 and is located on the North Road about one mile north from the centre of Carrickfergus. The earliest buildings remaining on the site date from 1959 and include the single storey Entrance / Administration wing, Multi-Purpose Hall, School Meals Accommodation, the Gymnasium and Changing facilities, the three storey classroom block, two storey Home Economics (refurbished in 2012) and Art block. The school was expanded in the 1976 with the construction of the part three storey classroom wing to the south of the school accommodating General Classrooms, Science Laboratories, History and Geography classrooms and the Library. In 1979 the single storey Technology and Design suite and

single storey Music Department were added. Two further single storey Science Laboratories were built adjoining the existing Science Department, and there are nine ICT suites. The school has also formerly been a specialist school for Business and Enterprise.

Downshire Community School is a co-educational, 11-18 secondary situated on Downshire Road in Carrickfergus. Downshire is a Specialist School in Business Studies and Enterprise with Sport and was first opened as a designated community school in September 1977.

The school includes twenty general classrooms occupied by the English, Drama, Media Studies, Mathematics, Business Studies, Social Studies, French, Special Educational Needs and Religious Education Departments. Two Computer Suites, two Music Rooms with separate sound-proofed Practice Rooms, a Business Studies room with Computer network facility, six Science rooms, Animal House and Art Block with Dark Room, Technology and Design block consisting of three multi-material manufacturing rooms, one systems/multi manufacturing room, one systems design room and three planning areas.

Two Home Economics rooms, a careers area, Library, Lecture Theatre with Drama area, a cafeteria, a sports block with Sports Hall, Minor Games Area, Social Area, Coffee Bar, Committee Room, Changing and Shower rooms. Externally there are extensive playing fields with three all-weather pitches and two grass pitches and a Garden area. The largest block of the school building has three floors. Facing east the third floor classrooms include panoramic views across Belfast Lough, and the County Down coastline. The Art and Technology corridors circle an enclosed garden; the garden is an extensive plot of trees and a large rockery. The garden is also home to the schools pet club and garden club.

Table 1 shows the distance from each of the schools named above to the site shared by Carrickfergus Grammar School and Carrickfergus College.

Table 1: distance to shared site at Carrickfergus Grammar and Carrickfergus College:

Carrickfergus Grammar School to	Distance in miles
Carrickfergus College	0
Downshire School	1.28
Ulidia Integrated College	1.26

Table 2 shows a summary of the accommodation at Carrickfergus College and Downshire School:

Table 2: Accommodation at Carrickfergus College and Downshire School:

Accommodation	Carrickfergus College	Downshire School
General Classrooms	18 permanent classrooms, a Media Studies room and 3 resource rooms	13 permanent classrooms, a Media Studies room and 3 Learning Support rooms

Case for Change – Carrickfergus College and Downshire School

Geography and History classrooms	3 Geography and 3 History rooms with an additional Geo/His room located on a different floor	5 Social Studies rooms with stores
Music	2 classrooms, 3 practice rooms, a store and 1 room for the HoD	2 Music rooms (1 tiered), 1 Drama room, 3 Practice rooms and 4 stores
Physical Education	A gymnasium, a Fitness Suite (converted general classroom) and a multi-purpose hall	A multipurpose Hall with waiting area and a multi-purpose hall (Assembly Hall)
Changing Facilities	Separate changing accommodation for girls and boys, staff changing and offices for male and female	Separate changing accommodation for girls and boys, staff changing and offices for male and female
Information technology	9 IT classrooms but no resource base	2 IT classrooms and a resource base
Business Information Systems	1 Business Information Room	1 Business room and 3 temp classrooms
Library	1 Library	1 Library with study area and store.
Sixth Form Common Room	A refurbished space which doubles as a study area plus 1 mobile	2 study rooms for sixth form and a common room
Career Guidance	A careers suite and 2 interview rooms	A careers suite with 2 offices
Home Economics	3 classrooms but in need of major refurbishment	3 classrooms with storage facilities and an office
Art and Design	2 teaching spaces, a Kiln Room, a Ceramics Annex and a Dark Room	3 teaching spaces, a Kiln room, Pottery room and a dark room
Technology	3 Manufacturing Rooms with adjacent stores, 2 System/Design rooms, 2 Planning rooms and 1 HoD room	3 manufacturing rooms with adjacent stores, 1 systems room and 2 planning areas
Science	6 Science Labs and 4 preparation rooms	6 Science labs, 4 prep rooms and a greenhouse
Staff Room	A staff room with small kitchen area and a study room	2 staffrooms (1 with small kitchen and a study area)
Administrative Department	An office for the Principal, 2 VPs, a secretary's office, a general office, a reprographic	An office for the principal, 1 VP, a general office with reception area, a

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	room and 4 small offices 1 of which is a medical inspection room	reprographic room, 2 interview rooms and a medical inspection room
Cloakrooms and Toilets	No cloakroom facilities, 5 sets of girls toilets and 5 sets of boys toilets Separate toilets for staff	No Clockroom area, 5 set of girls' toilets and 5 sets of boys' toilets. Separate staff toilets, a disabled toilet and wet room
Temporary Accommodation	1 temporary room not used for teaching. A well-being centre in foyer of the school. A mobile equipped for Hair and Beauty	4 temporary rooms
School Meals	2 dining rooms and 1 kitchen	2 dining halls and 1 kitchen
Hard Play area	1 hard play area	1 hard play area
Playing Pitches and Courts	4 enclosed tennis courts, 1 enclosed five-a-side football pitch, 2 open netball courts, 2 football pitches, 6 all-weather hockey pitches, 3 rugby pitches, 1 400m running track, a 100m all-weather running track and a cricket square (all shared with neighbouring Grammar school)	1 football pitch, a prunty football pitch, 2 netball courts, a rugby pitch and 3 all-weather hockey pitches. A former tennis court area has been converted into a junior playground with outdoor exercise facility
Youth Club		1 purpose-built facility

2.2 Maintenance work for Carrickfergus College

In 2012/13 the College had the following maintenance work carried out:

- Disability Access (including prof fees) £213,381
- Home Economics Refurbishment (including prof fees) £72,462
- Demolition of an area (including prof fees) £2,934

In 2013/14 the College had the following maintenance work carried out:

- Further H.Ec refurbishment (including prof fees) £12,443
- External work (including pro fees) £17,033
- Energy Efficiency (including prof fees) £32,228
- Security Fencing (prof fees) £317

In 2014/15 the College had no minor works carried out.

In 2015/16 the College had the following maintenance work carried out:

• Top Cover flashing	£3,543
• Servicing lifts	£2,100
• UPVC Sheet flooring	£6,731
• Aluminium to classrooms	£3,500
• Clean, disinfect CWST	£3,828
• UPVC Sheet Flooring, boys changing	£3,271
• Burst pipe	£2,260
• Fire alarm panel	£4,743

2.3 Maintenance work for Downshire School

In 2012/13 the school had the following maintenance work carried out:

• Disability Access (prof fees)	£14,556
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In 2013/14 the school had the following maintenance work carried out:

• Disability Access (including further prof fees)	£175,482
• Photo Voltaic	£14,000
• Re-roofing	£165,000

In 2014/15 the School had no minor works carried out.

In 2015/16 the School had the following maintenance work carried out:

• Fire and emergency	£1,500	
• Bitmous macaddan to front carpark	£48,266	
• UPVC Frames in assembly hall		£9,500
• Suspended ceiling lights	£18,466	
• Re-roofing sports hall, cafeteria, assembly hall	£	
• Rear car park resurfaced	£	
• Replace assembly hall lights	£6,680	
• Asbestos removal	£9,976	

2.4 The Sustainable Schools criteria - Carrickfergus College

2.4.1 Stable Enrolment trends

The enrolment of the school for 2015/16 academic year is shown in the statistical information presented in Section 5. It is noted that 684 students were attending Carrickfergus College in 2015 which was 216 pupils short of the agreed enrolment number of 900 pupils i.e. operating at 76% of capacity. The section goes on to point out that overall pupil numbers have been falling since the 2009/10 academic year but the intake over the last two years has been increasing. The year 8 intake increased from 106 pupils in September 2013 to 127 students in September 2014, 137 by Sept 2015 and 147 in September 2016.

2.4.2 Quality Educational Experience

The following indicators based on the Public Service Agreement targets 2011/12 is used as a measure of attainment levels for non-selective post-primary schools:

- Schools with less than 40% of pupils achieving 5 A*-C GCSE grades in three out of the last four years; and
- Schools with less than 25% of pupils achieving 5 A*-C GCSE grades including English and mathematics in the last two years.

The table below shows the performance of the College from 2009/10 academic year to 2014/15:

Table 3: Academic performance of Carrickfergus College:

	NI Average 5+ GCSE A*-C	5+ GCSE A*-C	NI Average 5+ GCSE including En and Ma	5+ GCSE A*-C including En and Ma	NI Average for 3+ A-levels A*-C	3+ A-levels A*-C	NI Average 2+ A-levels A*-E	2+A-levels A*-E
2009/10	59.1%	41.6%	34.9%	24.8%	43.0%	63.2%	94.7%	97.4%
2010/11	60.1%	71.6%	36.4%	29.1%	44.2%	47.6%	95.1%	97.6%
2011/12	63.9%	66.4%	36.2%	32.0%	44.9%	38.9%	95.9%	96.3%
2012/13	67.2%	68.2%	37.7%	25.6%	45.4%	45.5%	95.7%	100%
2013/14	70.6%	67.8%	44%	34.5%	47.7%	32.1%	95.4%	92.9%
2014/15	72%	65.3%	46.8%	34.7%	47.8%	43.9%	95.8%	100%

2.4.3 Sound Financial Position

The financial figures for the College are given below:

Table 4: Delegated budgets for Carrickfergus College:

	Available delegated resources £	Surplus/Deficit £	Surplus/Deficit %
2009/10	3,342,950	55,295	1.65%
2010/11	3,266,985	132,925	4.07%
2011/12	3,100,430	155,772	5.02%
2012/13	2,961,591	153,045	5.17%
2013/14	2,866,092	62,878	2.19%

2014/15	2,792,040	-22,882	-0.82%
2015/16	2,827,547	-143,420	-5.07%

The following table shows the projected financial plan for the next three years (Figures supplied by LMS Unit, Ballymena):

Table 5: Projected financial plan for Carrickfergus College:

Financial year	Anticipated enrolment	Estimated surplus/deficit	Percentage surplus/deficit
2016/17	684	-274,229	(10.11%)
2017/18	746	-165,040	(5.86%)
2018/19	759	-27,843	(0.93%)

All schools are facing more financial challenges, based on significant budget reductions in more recent years.

2.4.4 Leadership

In an inspection carried out in May 2013, ETI said:

‘The senior leadership team, including the principal and governors, provide effective and collective strategic leadership and direction based on a sound knowledge of, and pupil-centred vision for, the school.’ (4.1 p 5)

2.4.5 Accessibility

Good opportunities presently exist for the students to fully access the curriculum within the school and through the collaboration arrangements within the local area learning community.

2.4.6 Community Links

The college have developed good links with all aspects of the local community and work closely with local primary schools to ensure that the well-being of children transferring at age eleven is considered.

2.5 The Sustainable Schools criteria -Downshire School

2.5.1 Stable Enrolment trends

In section 5 Statistical Information, Table 17 shows the enrolment of the school for 2015/16 academic year. It is noted that 542 students were attending Downshire School in 2015 which was 258 pupils short of the agreed enrolment number of 800 pupils i.e. operating at 68% of capacity. In 2010/11 academic year the school had 800 pupils on its rolls but since that date the numbers have fallen by 32%. The enrolment of year 8 pupils in September 2013 was 72 compared with the figure of 151 in September 2010. A slight improvement in enrolment for September 2014 was achieved i.e. 83 pupils, and a further reduction to 75 admissions in 2015/16. However, Year 8 admissions have increased again to 82 for September 2016. At present Downshire has a Post 16 enrolment of 66 students for the academic year 2015/16 which is below the recommended figure of 100. As the projected figures for Downshire School drop it may be become increasingly difficult to sustain a Post 16 provision in the

school. If that were to occur then the overall pupil population may well fall below 500 students.

2.5.2 Quality Educational Experience

The indicators quoted earlier based on the Public Service Agreement targets 2011/12 are repeated below:

- Schools with less than 40% of pupils achieving 5 A*-C GCSE grades in three out of the last four years; and
- Schools with less than 25% of pupils achieving 5 A*-C GCSE grades including English and mathematics in the last two years.

The following table shows the attainment of the pupils at Downshire over a six year period:

Table 6: Academic performance of Downshire School:

	NI Average 5+ GCSE A*-C	5+ GCSE A*-C	NI Average 5+ GCSE A*-C including En and Ma	5+ GCSE A*-C including En and Ma	NI Average for 3+ A-levels A*-C	3+ A-levels A*-C	NI Average 2+ A-levels A*-E	2+A-levels A*-E
2009/10	59.1%	41.7%	34.9%	24.3%	43.0%	34.3%	94.7%	100%
2010/11	60.1%	40.5%	36.4%	29.4%	44.2%	42.4%	95.1%	100%
2011/12	63.9%	43.4%	36.2%	27.9%	44.9%	50%	95.9%	100%
2012/13	67.2%	51.9%	37.7%	33.1%	45.4%	34.5%	95.7%	96.6%
2013/14	70.6%	54.8%	44%	31.5%	47.7%	42.9%	95.4%	100%
2014/15	72%	40.6%	46.8%	32.2%	47.7%	39.3%	95.8%	94.7%

At present the school has exceeded the targets outlined above. Nevertheless, as pupil numbers fall it is possible that the school may experience difficulty in sustaining these results. In addition providing the full range of option choices at Key stage 4 may become a challenge. As pupil numbers fall so do the number of teachers available to the school which will have a further negative impact on the quality of educational provision.

2.5.3 Sound Financial Position

The financial figures for Downshire School are given below:

Table 7: Delegated budgets for Downshire School:

	Available delegated resources £	Surplus/Deficit £	Surplus/Deficit %
2009/10	3,176,855	-50,124	-1.58%
2010/11	3,256,764	-5,513	-0.17%

2011/12	3,236,968	73,786	2.28%
2012/13	3,195,382	116,549	3.65%
2013/14	2,973,364	154,710	5.20%
2014/15	2,872,831	145,382	5.06%
2015/16	2,782,483	94,229	3.39%

The projected three year budget plan is outlined below (figures provided by LMS Unit, Ballymena):

Table 8: Projected financial plan for Downshire School:

Financial year	Anticipated enrolment	Estimated surplus/deficit	Percentage surplus/deficit
2016/17	542	-164,968	(6.98%)
2017/18	500	-455029	(23.47%)
2018/19	467	-856430	(55.99%)

If the pupil population numbers continue to contract then the financial problems that the school will face are likely to increase. School would need to explore options to reduce the deficit if it remained at this level. In addition, the ability of the school to finance the full curriculum and the choices recommended at KS4 may also be called into question.

All schools are facing more financial challenges, based on significant budget reductions in more recent years.

2.5.4 Leadership

The school was last inspected in April 2009 and at that stage ETI said:

‘The quality of leadership provided by the principal is good. The management teams have a strong sense of collegial responsibility.’ (3 p3)

2.5.5 Accessibility

Good opportunities presently exist for the students to fully access the curriculum within the school and through the collaboration arrangements within the local area learning community. Reference has already been made to the challenges which may arise if the fall in pupil numbers is not arrested.

2.5.6 Community Links

Downshire School has been a community school since its inception. As a result the school is well used by members of the local community and is a positive resource for those in the area, serving as a venue for a variety of evening classes, sports tournaments and concerts. It has a thriving Youth Club running 4 nights a week for all the local children. Downshire School welcomes numerous visitors into the school to support the curriculum and pupils go out into the community on trips, work experience, attend council run events and engage with primary

schools in a variety of programmes. The P7/Year 8 induction programme is extensive and creates a smooth transition for primary children into post-primary education.

2.6 Area Planning Context

In February 2013 the former North-Eastern Education and Library Board produced their document entitled “Putting Pupils First: Shaping our Future” in response to the Education Minister, John O’Dowd MLA statement to the Assembly on 26 September 2011. That statement highlighted the need to move forward with the implementation of the Department of Education’s Sustainable Schools Policy and the process of strategic planning on an area basis. Within the former NEELB Area Plan the following proposals for the Carrickfergus area were proposed:

- Carrickfergus Grammar School should continue as an 11-19 school of approximately 880 pupils;
- Carrickfergus College and Downshire School should work towards becoming a single controlled school by 2017/18 of approximately 1,430 pupils; and
- Ulidia College should continue as an 11-19 school of 660 pupils. (par7.7 p75)

The former NEELB Area Plan estimated that the Carrickfergus Council area surplus capacity in 2025 is projected to be similar to the figure in 2011. Ulidia have had a Development Proposal approved to increase the enrolment number from 500 to 620 managed by an increase in the admission number from 80 to 100 with effect from 1 September 2015 or as soon as possible thereafter. The table below shows the capacity of all four post-primary schools and the enrolment figure for 2015/16:

Table 9: Enrolments for schools in Carrickfergus town 2015/16:

	Approved Enrolment Number	Enrolment for 2015/16
Carrickfergus Grammar School	800	806
Carrickfergus College	900	684
Downshire School	800	542
Ulidia Integrated College	500*	581
Total	3,000	2,613

*Ulidia enrolment will increase to 620

At present 31% of the children of transfer age attending Carrickfergus post-primary schools in 2013/14 are enrolled in the grammar school; 47% attend either of the two controlled non-selective schools and 22% attend the integrated school.

In 2011, 99 children from the main feeder primary schools out of 450 (22%) transferred to schools outside the borough and the former NEELB area. In September 2014, 89 children from the main feeder primary schools out of a total of 397 (22.4%) selected schools outside the Carrickfergus area.

In September 2015, 82 (20%) children from the main feeder primary schools out of a total of 410 selected schools outside of the Carrick area.

Section 3: Rationale for Change

The Department of Education have developed a broad and challenging vision for education articulated in a number of documents including the Policy for Sustainable Schools as follows:

To ensure that every learner achieves his or her full potential at each stage of Development. (p 4)

In pursuit of this vision the objectives of this proposal is to ensure that every pupil has:

- Access to a broad and balanced curriculum with opportunities to realise his or her potential;
- Education in which the learning outcomes are appropriate to his or her needs;
- Access to quality teaching delivered in a caring and supportive environment;
- Opportunities to experience the benefits of collaboration with other schools; and
- Education delivered in well-resources facilities, suitable for the twenty-first century.

The desired outcomes of the proposal, if approved, are:

- Improved learning experiences and opportunities for pupils;
- A greater mix of pupils and increased opportunities for personal and social development;
- Improved provision for children with SEN through access to specialist support; and
- More effective use of financial and other resources.

These objectives and outcomes are in line with the Department of Education’s Sustainable Schools Policy, ‘Schools for the Future: A Policy for Sustainable Schools’ and the Terms of Reference for Area Planning.

Whilst this paper focuses mainly on the two non-selective controlled schools, Carrickfergus College and Downshire School it considers options in the wider context of the Carrickfergus area to ensure that the proposal contributes to the most appropriate area solution. It should be noted that Ulidia have had a Development Proposal approved to increase the enrolment number from 500 to 620 managed by an increase in the admission number from 80 to 100 with effect from 1 September 2015 or as soon as possible thereafter. This may impact on Carrick College and/or Downshire School. Table 10 below shows the intake of pupils into Year 8 for Ulidia Integrated College from the different sectors during the past six years.

Table 10: Year 8 intake from primary schools within each sector for Ulidia Integrated College 2011-2016:

Type of School	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Controlled	42	44	44	44	53	52
Maintained	12	11	11	22	16	15
Integrated	25	23	25	21	28	32
others	1	1	1	2	3	0
Total	80	79	81	89	100	99

In each of the above years the percentage intake to Ulidia IC of pupils from P7 classes within the controlled sector to Ulidia Integrated College is close to 50%.

Live Births for Carrickfergus District Council Area

Carrickfergus Local Government District												
Live Births by Ward 2006-2015												
Ward Name	Live Births 2005	Live Births 2006	Live Births 2007	Live Births 2008	Live Births 2009	Live Births 2010	Live Births 2011	Live Births 2012	Live Births 2013	Live Births 2014	10 year average	% Change
Blackhead	27	20	22	28	19	27	25	13	23	20	22	18.52%
Bluefield	45	50	52	33	31	26	24	31	30	20	34	24.44%
Boneybefore	12	17	12	15	13	14	8	12	7	16	13	8.33%
Burleigh Heights	31	30	39	32	24	31	18	21	16	18	26	-16.13%
Clipperstown	36	37	27	39	39	38	37	46	29	32	36	0.00%
Eden	83	83	63	68	69	53	60	47	43	57	63	-24.10%
Gortalee	18	21	21	18	17	22	17	19	19	25	20	11.11%
Greenisland	28	19	32	26	30	37	37	25	31	34	30	7.14%
Killycrot	28	24	26	31	35	34	32	34	26	40	31	10.71%
Knockagh	25	32	29	41	22	26	26	22	18	19	26	4.00%
Love Lane	24	26	23	14	21	22	18	15	17	21	20	-16.66%
Milebush	16	19	16	13	18	18	26	19	20	12	18	12.50%
Northlands	26	29	27	35	12	25	28	40	25	27	27	3.84%
Sunnylands	15	7	10	17	10	22	21	16	17	17	15	0.00%
Victoria Carrick	18	21	31	36	21	30	26	33	24	31	27	50.00%
Whitehead	18	15	17	26	19	19	15	19	16	19	18	0.00%
Woodburn	29	21	25	26	24	34	20	24	30	25	26	-10.34%
Total	479	471	472	498	424	478	438	436	391	433	452	-9.60%

The table above provides details of the live births from 2005 to 2014 in the Carrickfergus Wards. An overall decline of 9.6% has occurred during the ten year period. In addition, the number of pupils who leave Carrickfergus town to attend schools in other areas e.g. Belfast remains close to 22%. Carrickfergus Grammar School and Ulidia Integrated College have continued to exceed their approved enrolment number and as a consequence any fall in pupils seeking to access education in Carrickfergus has been confined to the non-selective controlled sector.

Section 4: Educational Impact

Strong, sustainable schools providing quality education and access to the full Curriculum is central to the achievement of the educational vision.

Schools for the Future:

A Policy for Sustainable Schools (par 1.9 p 5)

The curricular menu for all schools has to comply with the essential criteria of the Northern Ireland Revised Curriculum, including the Entitlement Framework. With regard to Key Stage 3, the Northern Ireland Education Order 2007 stipulates that the following nine areas of learning must be accessed by every pupil: Religious Education, Language and Literacy, Mathematics and Numeracy, The Arts, Environment and Society, Science and Technology, Learning for Life and Work, Physical Education and Modern Languages. The same order determines that for pupils in Key Stage 4 statutory curriculum requirements are significantly reduced to allow more choice and flexibility. In Key Stage 4 pupils must be provided with opportunities to develop the cross curricular skills (communication, using mathematics and using ICT); to develop the other skills, defined as problem solving, self-management and working with others; to acquire learning for life and work; to participate in physical education; and to study religious education, based on the core syllabus specified by DE. The Entitlement Framework is the post 14 curriculum which puts the needs of pupils first. It aims to provide access for pupils to a broad and balanced curriculum to enable them to reach their full potential no matter which school they attend or where they live. It will guarantee all pupils access to a minimum number of courses at Key Stage 4 and post-16, of which at least one third must be general and one third applied. The Department of Education has set a figure of a minimum of 100 students to provide a meaningful post 16 curriculum.

It has set a phased timetable to help schools meet the requirements of the Entitlement Framework as shown in Table 11.

Table 11: Department of Education – Requirements for the Entitlement Framework:

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Key Stage 4	18 courses	21 courses	24 courses
Post 16	21 courses	24 courses	27 courses

In the town of Carrickfergus the four post-primary schools has formed the Carrickfergus Learning Community to help deliver a choice of course at Post 16. At present there is no collaboration at Key Stage 4.

Carrickfergus College has the following Courses on offer to its pupils for 2014/15 at Key Stage 4 and Post 16:

Table 12: Courses on offer for 2014/15 at KS4 and Post-16 in Carrickfergus College:

Course Type	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	Year 14
Applied	12	14	16	16
General	10	9	8	10
Total	22	23	24	26

Table 12a : Courses on offer for 2015/16 at KS4 and Post-16 in Carrickfergus College:

Course Type	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	Year 14
Applied	12	14	16	16
General	10	9	8	10
Total	22	23	24	26

All Year 11 and 12 courses are delivered in the school by staff of Carrickfergus College. In Year 13 nine of the courses are delivered in collaboration with other schools in the Carrickfergus Learning Community and in Year 14 eight courses are delivered in collaboration with other members of the Area Learning Community. Carrickfergus College has forty-eight pupils enrolled in Year 13 and sixty-two students in Year 14 in 2014. In 2015 there were 100 pupils across year groups 13-14.

Downshire School and its courses for 2014/2015 and 2015/2016 are shown in Table 13 and Table 13a below:

Table 13: Courses on offer for 2014/15 at KS4 and Post-16 in Downshire School:

Course Type	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	Year 14
Applied	18	18	17	18
General	10	10	7	9
Total	28	28	24	27

Table 13a: Courses on offer for 2015/16 at KS4 and Post-16 in Downshire School:

Course Type	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	Year 14
Applied	18	19	18	19
General	10	10	9	9
Total	28	29	27	28

All Year 11 and Year 12 courses were delivered in school by staff of Downshire School. In year 13 and 14 eleven of the courses are in collaboration with the Area Learning Community. In this academic year (2014) Downshire School had thirty-eight pupils in Year 13 and thirty-nine students in year 14. In 2015 there were 66 pupils across year groups 13 and 14.

An analysis of Post 16 provision in other non-selective schools in the area has revealed that smaller schools (less than 600 pupils) are expensive in timetabled time and in cost even when schools operate within an active ALC. The average timetable time devoted to small post 16 provision can account for 24% of the allocated periods for in some cases only 8% of the total pupil population. In schools over 600 pupils it is possible to reach a viable figure for post 16 provision at an acceptable cost but still relatively expensive.

For schools over 1,000 pupils the average timetable time devoted to post 16 provision can account for 21% of the allocated periods but this time 14% of the pupil population.

In Carrickfergus College 19% of the pupil population of 653 pupils in 2013/14 were studying at Post 16 whereas 12% of the students at Downshire were involved in post 16 study.

Smaller schools at Key stage 3 can spend as little as £2,820 per pupil on course delivery. This can at least double for small schools that try to provide a post 16 course. Smaller schools may spend up to £4,115 per pupil at KS4.

On the other hand schools over 1,000 pupils can spend up to £3,239 per pupil at KS3, £4,291 at KS 4 and £6,141 at Post 16.

If Carrickfergus College and Downshire School should work towards becoming a single controlled school by 2017/18 then there are a number of anticipated educational impacts that this proposal should achieve. These are:

- Pupils will have access to the full range of curriculum subjects and to the curriculum entitlement at key stage 4, in line with the requirements of the Northern Ireland Curriculum.
- It is likely that a higher percentage of students may be encouraged to remain at the school for post-16 study as a result of increased subject choice.
- The pupils are likely to benefit from the expertise of a greater number of curriculum specialist teachers which should contribute to the raising of standards of teaching and learning.
- The opportunity to participate in a wider range of extra-curricular activities should increase.
- Pupils with additional and special needs are likely to benefit from the support given by a large special needs department.
- The improvement and upgrading of facilities will create a better quality teaching environment.
- There would be greater opportunities in a large school to ensure that pupils receive ‘added value’ experiences

Section 5: Statistical Information

5.1 School Enrolments

In the Carrickfergus District Council Area for the academic year 2015/16 there was students accommodated in the four post-primary schools. Summary data is given below in Table 14:

Table 14: Summary data of students in post-primary education in Carrickfergus District Council Area:

Management Type	School	Total Current Enrolments	Total Approved Enrolment	Spare Places	% of Approved Enrolment
Controlled	Carrickfergus College	684	900	216	24%
Controlled	Carrickfergus Grammar	806	800	-4	-0.75%
Controlled	Downshire School	542	800	258	32.2%
Grant Maintained Integrated	Ulidia Integrated College	581	500 ¹	-71	-16.2%

5.2 Carrickfergus College

In 2015/16 684 students were on the roll of the College. This figure is 216 pupils short of the capacity of 900 students; i.e. the school is operating at 76% of its capacity. Table 15 below shows the break-down of these figures in each year group:

Table 15: Pupil population at Carrickfergus College by year group 2015/16:

	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	Year 14	Total Enrolment	Percentage of capacity
Total	139	128	103	117	97	60	40	684	76%

Table 16 shows the enrolment of the school for the past 5 years. However since 2009 (Enrolment 746) there has been an 8% decrease in the pupil population.

Table 16: Overall pupil numbers in Carrickfergus College during past five years:

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Pupil no	685	671	653	670	684
Percent capacity	76.1%	74.6%	72.6%	74.4%	76%

¹ Approved enrolment increased to 620

5.3 Downshire School

In 2015/16, 542 students attended the school. Downshire has a capacity for 800 pupils which results in 258 spare places; i.e. 32% of the capacity. Table 17 below shows the break-down of these figures:

Table 17: Pupil population at Downshire School by year group 2015/16:

	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	Year 14	Total Enrolment	Percentage of capacity
Total	76	84	78	113	125	34	32	542	68%

Table 18 shows enrolments for the past five years. However, since 2009 (enrolment 796) there has been a 32% decrease in pupil population.

Table 18: Overall pupil numbers in Downshire School during past five years:

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Pupil No	782	725	670	630	542
Percent capacity	97.8	90.6	83.8	79	68

For a complete picture of all the schools in Carrickfergus the enrolment figures for 2015/16 of Carrickfergus Grammar School and Ulidia Integrated College are shown in Tables 19 and 20 respectively:

Table 19: Enrolment of Carrickfergus Grammar School, 2015/16 by year group:

Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	Year 14	Total Enrolment	Total Approved Enrolment	Percentage of capacity
119	117	120	120	122	120	88	806	800	100%

Table 20: Enrolment of Ulidia Integrated College, 2015/16 by year group:

Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	Year 14	Total Enrolment	Total Approved Enrolment	Percentage of capacity
109	102	91	84	93	52	50	581	500	100%

5.4 Main Feeder Primary School and placement of pupils into Downshire and Carrick College

Table 21

Name of School	2013 Placement		2013 Placement in other schools	Total number of pupils overall 2013	2014 Placement		2014 Placement in other schools	Total number of pupils overall 2014	2015 Placement		2015 Placement in other schools	Total number of pupils overall 2015
	DS	CC			DS	CC			DS	CC		
Ballycarry PS									3		2	5
Carrickfergus Central PS	1	3	12	16	4	3	4	11	2	4	7	13
Carrickfergus Model PS	9	8	36	53	5	18	33	56	3	12	43	58
Eden PS	11		17	28	8		18	26	8	2	21	31
Greenisland PS	6		44	50	7		49	56	4	2	49	55
Oakfield PS	6	15	19	40	4	20	20	44	5	16	18	39
Silverstream PS		11	6	17		2	4	6	2	6	3	11
Sunnylands PS		3	7	10	1	7	3	11		11	10	21
Victoria PS	9	9	35	53	20	10	39	69	12	12	28	52
Whitehead PS	3	5	44	52	6	13	28	47	5	11	28	44
Woodburn PS		12	11	23		15	14	29	4	20	7	31
Woodlawn PS	8	18	8	34	12	16	14	42	12	32	6	50
Grand Total	53	84	239	376	67	104	226	397	60	128	222	410
% of pupils attending DS & CC	14%	22%			17%	26%			15%	31%		

The table shows the main feeder primary schools and the placement of the pupils into Year 8 to Carrickfergus College and Downshire School from 2013-2015.

In 2015 the main feeder primary schools provided 128 pupils to Carrickfergus College, which is 93% of the overall intake. This is an increase from 84 pupils in 2013 and 104 pupils in 2014.

In 2015 the main feeder primary schools provided 60 pupils to Downshire School which is 80% of the overall intake. This is a reduction from 67 in 2014 and an increase from 53 in 2013.

Tables 22 and 23 show the pupil population of the grammar and the integrated schools over the past five years.

Table 22: Enrolment of Carrickfergus Grammar School during past five years:

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Pupil No	816	814	800	799	806
Percent capacity	100	100	100	100	100

Table 23: Enrolment of Ulidia Integrated College during past five years:

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Pupil No	552	576	571	568	581
Percent capacity	100	100	100	100	100

As can be seen from these tables the local grammar school and the integrated school always fill to their capacity.

5.5 Future trends in Enrolment

5.5.1 Carrickfergus College

In September 2015, Carrickfergus College enrolled 137 pupils into year 8. This has increased to 147 in September 2016. This was a significant increase in the intake since September 2011. Table 24 shows the enrolment trends in the past five years:

Table 24: Enrolment into year 8 in Carrickfergus College over the past six years:

	Sept 2011	Sept 2012	Sept 2013	Sept 2014	Sept 2015	Sept 2016
Enrolment into Year 8	90	119	106	127	137	147

5.5.2 Downshire School

In September 2015, Downshire School enrolled 76 pupils into year 8 and this increased to 84 in September 2016. Table 26 shows the enrolment trends in the past six years:

Table 25: Enrolment into year 8 in Downshire School over the past six years:

	Sept 2011	Sept 2012	Sept 2013	Sept 2014	Sept 2015	Sept 2016
Enrolment	130	104	72	83	76	84

5.6 Future Projections for P7 Feeder Primary Schools

In table 26 the future projections for the P7 school population in each of the main feeder primary schools that generally send children to Carrickfergus College and Downshire School are shown below:

Table 26: projected P7 population of the main feeder primary schools to both non-selective controlled post-primary schools:

	June 2017	June 2018	June 2019	June 2020	June 2021	June 2022
Ballycarry PS					13	18
Carrickfergus Central PS	12	13	10	14	5	12
Carrickfergus Model PS	59	58	57	56	60	60
Eden PS	30	30	30	31	30	30
Greenisland PS	59	60	60	56	50	60
Oakfield PS	49	38	43	33	42	41
Silverstream PS	15	19	12	17	19	14
Sunnylands PS	24	17	20	12	30	31
Victoria PS	71	61	64	62	41	62
Whitehead PS	59	50	58	53	55	62
Woodburn PS	26	28	25	28	30	30
Woodlawn PS	46	31	47	48	21	37
Total	450	405	426	410	396	457

Based on 2015 enrolments, approximately 30% of pupils transferring to post primary go to Carrickfergus College, i.e. 128/410 in 2015 and a projected number of 135 in 2017.

If this pattern continued enrolment from the feeder primary schools is depicted in table 27 below.

Table 27: Projected figures enrolling in Carrickfergus College from their main feeder primary schools over the next six years:

Sept 2017	Sept 2018	Sept 2019	Sept 2020	Sept 2021	Sept 2022
135	121	127	123	118	137

From previous calculations these schools accounted for approximately 90% of the schools' Year 8 intake. Making that adjustment then the approximate Year 8 enrolment may be as calculated in Table 28:

Table 28: Projected figures enrolling into year 8 at Carrickfergus College:

Sept 2017	Sept 2018	Sept 2019	Sept 2020	Sept 2021	Sept 2022
150	134	141	137	131	152

Using these projected figures then the pupil population of Carrickfergus College over the next few years may be as shown in Table 29 below. These figures are based on the projected overall school population enrolled at Key Stages 3 and 4 to include 15% retention at Post 16.

Table 29: projected overall enrolment numbers for Carrickfergus College:

	Sept 2017	Sept 2018	Sept 2019	Sept 2020	Sept 2021	Sept 2022
Projected Enrolment	667	698	711	709	690	708

Based on 2015 enrolments, approximately 15% of pupils transferring to post primary school go to Downshire, i.e. 60/410 and a projected 68 pupils in 2017. If this pattern continued, projected enrolment from the feeder primary school is depicted in Table 30 below.

Table 30: Projected figures enrolling in Downshire School from the main feeder primary schools over next six years:

Sept 2017	Sept 2018	Sept 2019	Sept 2020	2021	2022
68	61	64	61	59	69

From previous calculations these main feeder primary schools accounted for approximately 79% of the schools' Year 8 intake. Making that adjustment then the approximate enrolment into Year 8 may be as calculated in Table 30:

Table 31: Projected figures enrolling into year 8 at Downshire School

Sept 2017	Sept 2018	Sept 2019	Sept 2020	Sept 2021	Sept 2022
86	77	81	77	75	87

Using these projected figures then the pupil population of Downshire School over the next few years may be as shown in Table 32 below. These figures are based on the overall projected school population enrolled at Key Stages 3 and 4 to include 12% retention at post 16.

Table 32: projected overall enrolment numbers for Downshire School:

	Sept 2017	Sept 2018	Sept 2019	Sept 2020	Sept 2021	Sept 2022
Projected Enrolment	454	453	450	451	439	457

Table 33 shows the pupil population of both schools and the projected figures up to September 2022/23:

Table 33: Actual and Possible projected enrolments of Carrickfergus College and Downshire School up to 2022/23:

	2012/ 13	2013 /14	2014/ 15	2015/ 16	2016/ 17	2017 /18	2018/ 19	2019/ 20	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23
Carrick College	671	653	670	684	732	667	698	711	709	690	708
Downshire School	725	670	630	542	511	454	453	450	451	439	457
Grand Totals	1396	1323	1300	1226	1243	1121	1151	1161	1160	1129	1165

If both schools continue to compete with each other for a declining number of pupils, then one or other of the schools is likely to suffer in the long term.

5.7 Educational Achievements

5.7.1 Carrickfergus College

Table 34 below shows the educational achievements of Carrickfergus College over a six year period:

Table 34: Educational achievements of Carrickfergus College 2009-2015:

	NI Average 5+ GCSE A*-C	5+ GCSE A*-C	NI Average 5+ GCSE A*-C including En and Ma	5+ GCSE A*-C including En and Ma	NI Average for 3+ A-levels A*-C	3+ A-levels A*-C	NI Average 2+ A-levels A*-E	2+A-levels A*-E
2009/10	59.1%	41.6%	34.9%	24.8%	43.0%	63.2%	94.7%	97.4%
2010/11	60.1%	71.6%	36.4%	29.1%	44.2%	47.6%	95.1%	97.6%
2011/12	63.9%	66.4%	36.2%	32.0%	44.9%	38.9%	95.9%	96.3%
2012/13	67.2%	68.2%	37.7%	25.6%	45.4%	45.5%	95.7%	100%
2013/14	70.6%	67.8%	44%	34.5%	47.7%	32.1%	95.4%	92.9%
2014/15	72%	65.3%	46.8%	34.7%	47.8%	43.9%	95.8%	100%

As can be seen above in 2012/13 the NI average for 5+ GCSE A*-C was 67.2% and when English and Mathematics was included the average figure for non-selective schools in NI fell to 37.7%. In Year 14 the average percentage of young people achieving 3+ A-levels A*-C was 45.5% and when we look at the overall average performance through-out the province of

2+ A-levels at A*-E the figure rises to 95.7%. As can be seen from these figures Carrickfergus College in 2012/13 achieved 68.2% in the 5+ GCSE A*-C category which is just slightly above the NI average. GCSE attainments continued to fall in 2013/14 and 2014/15.

On the other hand, when English and Mathematics are included the figure for the College is 12 percentage points below the NI average for non-selective schools in 2012/13. At A-level in 2012/13 the Carrickfergus College figure for 3+ A-level A*-C was 45.5% the same as the NI average for non-grammar schools. In 2012/13 100% of young people in the College managed to achieve a grade in two or more A-levels or the equivalent at A*-E. Whilst there was a sharp fall in A-level attainments in 2013/14, there was an increase in 2014/15.

5.7.2 Downshire School

Table 35 below shows the educational achievements of Downshire over the same six year period:

Table 35: Educational achievements of Downshire School 2009-2015:

	NI Average 5+ GCSE A*-C	5+ GCSE A*-C	NI Average 5+ GCSE A*-C including En and Ma	5+ GCSE A*-C including En and Ma	NI Average for 3+ A-levels A*-C	3+ A-levels A*-C	NI Average 2+ A-levels A*-E	2+A-levels A*-E
2009/10	59.1%	41.7%	34.9%	24.3%	43.0%	34.3%	94.7%	100%
2010/11	60.1%	40.5%	36.4%	29.4%	44.2%	42.4%	95.1%	100%
2011/12	63.9%	43.4%	36.2%	27.9%	44.9%	50%	95.9%	100%
2012/13	67.2%	51.9%	37.7%	33.1%	45.4%	34.5%	95.7%	96.6%
2013/14	70.6%	54.8%	44%	31.5%	47.7%	42.9%	95.4%	100%
2014/15	72%	40.6%	46.8%	32.2%	47.8%	39.3%	95.8%	94.7%

As can be seen from these figures Downshire School in 2012/13 achieved 51.9% in the 5+ GCSE A*-C category which is below the NI average for non-selective schools by 15%. This continued to decline in 2013/14, with a further 14% fall in 2014/15 and 31% below the NI Average.

On the other hand, when English and Mathematics are included the figure for Downshire the school is 4% below the NI average for non-selective schools in 2012/13 and this decline continued in 2012/13, 2013/14 and 2014/15. At A-level the Downshire figure for 3+ A-level A*-C was 34.5% compared with the NI average of 45.4%. Although A-level attainments increased by 8.4% in 2013/14 there was a 3.6% reduction in 2014/15.

Section 6: Options

In the former NEELB review of Post-primary Education in the Carrickfergus area one of the key emerging issues from the consultation indicated support for moving to a single controlled non-selective school combining Carrickfergus College and Downshire School. In this section the options available to create a strategic area plan are considered.

The options outlined will be measured against the criteria identified in the Department’s ‘Sustainable Schools’ document.

6.1 Option 1: No change – or resize both schools to 650

6.1.1 Factor 1 - Sustainable Enrolment

Section 5 Statistical Information presented the statistics regarding the present enrolment of the two schools under consideration. It is noted that both schools fail to meet their approved enrolment number and a steady decline in the pupil population has occurred during the past few years. The future enrolment trends using statistics from the feeder primary schools has reinforced the view that both schools will continue to experience challenge in sustaining numbers in the next few years and overall there will continue to be a fall in pupil numbers. Table 39 below shows the overall pupil population of both schools:

Table 36: Overall pupil population including projections of Carrickfergus College and Downshire School 2012-2023:

	2012/ 13	2013 /14	2014/ 15	2015/ 16	2016/ 17	2017 /18	2018/ 19	2019/ 20	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23
Carrick College	671	653	670	684	732	667	698	711	709	690	708
Downshir e School	725	670	630	542	511	454	453	450	451	439	457
Grand Totals	1396	1323	1300	1226	1243	1121	1151	1161	1160	1129	1165

As can be seen from the table enrolment numbers at Carrickfergus College are likely to increase over the next number of years if the increase in 2014/15 is sustained and the school intake continues at 30% from the main feeder primary schools. On the other hand it is projected that enrolment for Downshire School will fall. Both schools will remain significantly below their approved enrolment number.

It should be noted that the number of students enrolled in Post 16 study in Downshire School falls below the Department of Education guideline of 100 students for a viable sixth form.

6.1.2 Factor 2 – Quality of the Educational experience

Carrickfergus College has undergone an inspection in May 2013. ETI said in their report:-
‘The quality of provision for learning is good.’ In the conclusion of the report they added:

The senior leadership show a strong commitment to the Entitlement Framework by making effective use of staff expertise within the school and through collaboration with the local post-primary schools in the Carrick Learning Community. The school provides the pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum which is relevant to their needs and is appropriate for their ability levels and career aspirations. It will be important, as the school continues to develop and expand its curriculum offer, to review the arrangements for accessing and quality assuring suitable provision through the Colleges of Further Education and other providers. (par 3.3 p 5)

Downshire School was last inspected in April 2009 and ETI concluded in the summary of main findings:-

The strengths of the school include:

- *The exemplary behaviour of most of the pupils who display a clear sense of pride in their school community;*
- *The good working relationships between the teachers and the pupils and the commitment of the staff and the governors to the care and welfare of the pupils;*
- *The quality of the teaching which was good or better in the majority of the lessons observed;*
- *The good standards achieved by the pupils in most subjects at GCSE level;*
- *The commitment and dedication of the Principal to the life and work of the school and the support she provides for the staff and the pupils; and*
- *The sound links with other education providers, and agencies in the local and wider community, to enhance the provision for the pupils. (par 5.1, p4)*

The areas for improvement include the need:

- *To review roles and responsibilities at all levels in order to manage change and effect whole-school improvement; and*
- *For more rigorous monitoring and evaluation to strengthen the school’s strategic planning and development. (par 5.2, p 5)*

If the enrolment figures above were to become a reality then it is likely that the future of Post 16 provision in Downshire School may not be viable. At present no provision for collaborative courses at KS4 take place.

6.1.3 Factor 3 – Financial position

Downshire School has less than the recommended 100 pupils for a viable Post 16. This being the case it is highly likely that providing courses for these pupils will be very expensive. As a result the opportunities to provide economical courses at KS3 and 4 may be impacted by the proportion of the school budget spent at KS5.

The fall in pupil population in Downshire and Carrickfergus College will lead to further financial challenges and the significant financial challenges for both schools is a matter of concern.

Should both schools resize to 650, Downshire is likely to manage within its existing staffing complement (36 teachers) whereas Carrick College may have an oversupply of teachers (41.6 teachers). Whilst a generic budget for 650 pupils would allow a school to operate with an anticipated small deficit (-1.09%), see Appendix 1. This would not take account of the deficits that both schools would carry over. (3 year plan projected deficits are as follows: Carrick College, £-27843 and Dowshire, £-856,430)

6.1.4 Factor 4 – Governance and Management

Once again the latest inspection reports indicate that ETI recognises the efforts of the senior leadership team in its work to sustain high levels of governance and leadership.

6.1.5 Factor 5 – Accessibility, links with other school and the impact on other schools

Both schools have developed good links with the Carrickfergus Learning Community and the students benefit from strong collaboration between all four schools. Travel time for all students within the Carrickfergus area is good and no child needs to travel more than the recommended 45 minutes to access a school. It should be noted that Carrickfergus Grammar School and Ulidia Integrated College exceed the approved enrolment figure.

6.1.6 Factor 6 – Links with the community

The schools are well developed within their own community and have good relationships with the town. Relationships with parents is good in both schools. Downshire School when first opened was designated as a ‘Community School’ and has an active programme after school hours.

6.1.7 Benefits of this Option

- At present the schools are providing a good standard of education for the pupils;
- The achievements of the students are good;
- Leadership in both schools is good;

- Sound links have been developed within the ALC; and
- Community support is present.
- Provide sustainability for both schools in the short-medium term.

6.1.8 *Risks of this Option*

- Given the decreasing demographic levels in Mid and East Antrim the future enrolment of one or both of the schools will continue to decrease and is likely to fall below DE sustainability levels;
- As a result of this fall in student numbers the ability of both schools to deliver the Entitlement Framework may be more challenging, potentially at Post-16.
- The financial security of both schools is under pressure and in particular if one or both schools continue to contract then the budget of these schools will become a significant challenge.

6.2 **Option 2: Carrickfergus College and Downshire School will discontinue facilitating the establishment of a new single non-selective controlled school, (1250 pupils) which will initially be on a split site.**

6.2.1 *Factor 1 - Sustainable Enrolment*

Statistics presented elsewhere has shown the enrolment of the two schools under consideration. The total enrolment of Carrickfergus College in the academic year 2015/16 was 684 students and the enrolment for Downshire School for the same year was 542. This would give a total pupil population of 1,226 for the amalgamated school. The breakdown by Key stages is shown in table 37:

Table 37: Pupil population in each key stage for Carrickfergus College and Downshire School 2015/16 academic year:

	Ks 3 and 4	Post 16
Carrickfergus College	584	100
Downshire School	476	66
Total	1060	166

Other tables projecting the future population of the schools show that the overall numbers likely to transfer to controlled non-selective schools will see a pupil population of under just under 1250 pupils in the future.

6.2.2 Factor 2 – Quality of the Educational experience

In a school of this size (approximately 1250 students) then there should be no difficulty in ensuring the availability of teachers with sufficient experience and qualifications to allow the school to provide effective teaching and assessment in all areas of the curriculum. There should be a good distribution of specialist staff to cover a wide range of subjects within the NI curriculum. Departmental teams should be functional - it is unlikely to have one teacher department which can be an issue in small schools. Additionally, in small schools some teachers teach in two and sometimes more departments making demands on their time for departmental meetings excessive. Recruitment and the retention of staff should be good. Opportunities for professional development of staff will be good.

Pupils will benefit from a wide range of choices at Key stage 4 and Post 16. Potential to introduce collaborative courses at KS4 should increase particularly if a number of post-primary schools shared the same campus. Pupils would also benefit from a full and varied programme of extra-curricular activities. A strong pastoral care provision staffed by specialists should be possible.

6.2.3 Factor 3 – Financial position

As school size reduces, funding calculated on a per pupil basis rises sharply. A school of this size is unlikely to suffer from the variations from year to year in the school budget. Stability for staff may also increase and the threat of redundancies will be receding. More flexibility will be available to ensure that the needs of the pupils are fully met. With a larger post 16 pupil population the school should be able to deliver a full range of courses in a more cost effective manner.

According to a projected 3 year plan for a school with 1250 pupils, it is estimated that 74 staff will be required. It is also anticipated that a school of this size would have a small surplus (+0.60%), see Appendix 2.

6.2.4 Factor 4 – Governance and Management

The leadership of both schools is good. It is anticipated that in a larger school opportunities for staff to participate in leadership responsibilities will increase. A bigger school also gives openings for succession planning at various leadership levels within the school. In a larger school the prospects for ‘sharing best practice’ also increases.

6.2.5 Factor 5 – Accessibility, links with other school and the impact on other schools

A new non-selective controlled school will increase the opportunities for enhancing the present active ALC. Department of Education advice suggests that up to 80% of courses offered at Post-16 should be provided by the home school. In a school of 1,250 students it is more likely that this target will be met. It should be possible to develop more structure to the

14-19 curriculum. To provide a greater range of pathways for young people within a single school.

6.2.6 *Factor 6 – Links with the community*

The single school should give them greater opportunities to engage with the community.

6.2.7 *Benefits of this Option*

- The school will be fully sustainable under the DE policy. A non-selective school of 1,250 pupils will give confidence to the leadership of the school and stability for years to come;
- The curricular provision for the young people will be improved by providing more sustainable courses delivered by subject specialists;
- The pastoral dimension of the school can be increased and the well-being of young people improved;
- Confidence within the teaching staff will be improved as job security increases;
- The school will operate within the financial guidelines and be more cost effective at all key stages;
- Facilities will be improved. More purpose built classrooms can be made available and resources to meet the needs of young people can be increased;
- Opportunities to further improve the quality of school leadership will be enhanced;
- The school is more likely to be able to deliver 80% of the post-16 curriculum from within its own resources;
- The 14-19 curriculum should create opportunities to increase the pathways available to the students; and
- Further opportunities to build strong Community support and participation levels should be enhanced.

6.2.8 *Risks of this option*

- Establishing a shared culture and ethos after the closure of two schools; and
- Introducing a successful pastoral care system for a larger pupil population.
- Increased enrolment in Ulidia Integrated College may affect pupil enrolment numbers.
- A split site until a new build would be secured as currently neither site can accommodate 1250 pupils.

Section 7: Resource Implications

7.1 Present School Finances

7.1.1 Carrickfergus College

Table 38 now examines the budgets for the College during the past five years:

Table 38: Delegated budget for Carrickfergus College 2009-2014:

	Available delegated resources £	Surplus/Deficit £	Surplus/Deficit %
2009/10	3,342,950	55,295	1.65%
2010/11	3,266,985	132,925	4.07%
2011/12	3,100,430	155,772	5.02%
2012/13	2,961,591	153,045	5.17%
2013/14	2,866,092	62,878	2.19%
2014/15	2,792,040	-22,882	-0.82%
2015/16	2,753,256	-143,420	-5.07%

Table 39 gives a brief outline of the projected financial plan:

Table 39: Three year projected budget plan for Carrickfergus College 2016-2019:

Financial year	Anticipated enrolment	Estimated surplus/deficit	Percentage surplus/deficit
2016/17	684	-274,229	(10.11%)
2017/18	746	-165,040	(5.86%)
2018/19	759	-27,843	(0.93%)

The projected 3 year plan presents significant challenges.

7.1.2 Downshire School

Table 40 below now shows the budgets for Downshire School during the past five years:

Table 40: Delegated budget for Downshire School 2009-2014:

	Available delegated resources £	Surplus/Deficit £	Surplus/Deficit %
2009/10	3,176,855	-50,124	-1.58%
2010/11	3,256,764	-5,513	-0.17%
2011/12	3,236,968	73,786	2.28%
2012/13	3,195,382	116,549	3.65%
2013/14	2,973,364	154,710	5.20%
2014/15	2,872,831	145,382	5.06%
2015/16	2,547,329	94,229	3.39%

Table 41 is a brief summary of the revised budget plan for the school:

Table 41: Three year projected budget plan for Downshire School 2016-2019:

Financial year	Anticipated enrolment	Estimated surplus/deficit	Percentage surplus/deficit
2016/17	542	-164,968	(6.98%)
2017/18	500	-455029	(23.47%)
2018/19	467	-856430	(55.99%)

The projected 3 year plan presents very significant challenges.

Section 8: Statutory Consultation

At the November 2016 meeting of the Education Authority’s Education Committee it was agreed to initiate consultation with the Board of Governors, staff and parents of Carrickfergus College and Downshire School, and with the Trustees and Managers of other schools likely to be affected by the proposal.

The consultation ran from 21 November 2016 to 23 January 2017 in total. 72 responses were received during the consultation phase, of which 59/72 (82%) agreed with the proposal; 10/12 responses which disagreed with the proposal were from parents.

The positive comments focused on the benefits for pupils from the continuity of provision and greater subject choice. It should be noted that both sets of governors and principals are supportive of the proposal. The Controlled Schools Support Council has also made a positive response to the proposal. The negative responses relate to the need for a split site and travel concerns.

All concerned are of the view that given area planning should inform infrastructure this proposal should be at the forefront and be part of the capital programme for a new build and a new controlled post primary school for Carrickfergus.

Consultation Response Summary

	Agree	Disagree	Unknown	TOTAL
Governors	4			4
Parents	9	10	1	20
Teaching Staff	32			32
Non-Teaching Staff	8			8
Pupils	2	1		3
Other	4	1		5
TOTAL	59	12	1	72

Screening

As part of the review of educational provision in Carrickfergus, the proposal was screened out and there were deemed to be no negative equality impacts pertaining to section 75 groups. The review of post primary provision in Carrickfergus has been undertaken to ensure that pupils have access to education in a sustainable school with a stable teaching complement of specialist and experienced staff.

The Education Authority will work with parents and the school to mitigate any factors which they consider to disadvantage the pupils in the area e.g. in securing admission to a suitable school; the provision of transport in accordance with current policies; and induction and transition support for pupils who may find the change of school a challenging experience.

The Education Authority will provide advice, support and assistance to staff as part of the process and part of the EA’s responsibility and duty of care to all staff. This will be

facilitated in accordance with the school Reorganisation Agreement in the JNC Collective Agreement.

Parents, staff, governors and pupils have all been active participants in the consultation carried out by the Education Authority.

Section 9: Implementation Plan

Development Proposal Timetable: Carrickfergus College/Downshire School

Stage 1

Options appraisal with Boards of Governors – September/October 2016
Approval to begin formal pre-publication consultation – November 2016
Pre-Publication Consultation with Boards of Governors – November 2016
Pre-Publication Consultation with school staff – November 2016
Pre-Publication Consultation with parents – November 2016
Pre-Publication Consultation with other affected schools: December 2016 to January 2017

[EA will provide a consultation response document for this process.]

EA finalises *Case for Change* document: including comments received from consultation, and EA response to consultation issues.

Approval to publish the Development Proposal sought from Education Authority Education Committee meeting in March 2017.

Publication of the Development Proposal in the local press, one week after approval given, in March 2017.

EA submits completed *Case for Change* document to DE Area Planning Policy Team.

EA writes to affected schools detailing likely impact of the approved proposal.

This concludes the EA Consultation Process.

Stage 2

Once the Development Proposal is published the DE **two month Statutory Period for Objections** begins: April 2017 to May 2017.

Area Planning Policy Team compiles its business case, including consideration of objections received: APPT submit its business case to the Minister with a recommendation to approve or reject. (This is a 4-6 week period).

The minister considers the proposal on the basis of the business case forwarded by Area Planning Policy Team and announces his/her decision – summer 2017.

If approved – implementation of Development Proposal from 1 September 2018.

Section 10: Summary

The report ‘The Schools for the Future: A Policy for Sustainable Schools’ examined the issue of the viability of schools, as a central consideration for area planning. It raised the importance of having schools that are viable in both educational and financial terms. It made two specific recommendations on these aspects, as follows:-

The policy for sustainable schools should ensure that all schools are sustainable in terms of the quality of the educational experience of children, enrolment trends, financial position, school leadership and management, accessibility, and the strength of their links to the community.

The sustainable schools policy should ensure that regardless of the financial position of a school or the services it provides, it is not considered viable if the quality and breadth of the education it provides is less than satisfactory. (par 1.2, p 2)

Education is central to our future. The education and development of young people, and the continuing learning of the adult population, represents one of the most significant investments in developing the individual, society and the economy. There is a broad and challenging vision for everyone involved in the delivery of education:

To ensure that every learner achieves his or her full potential at each stage of development. (par 1.7 p 4)

Strong, sustainable schools providing quality education and access to the full curriculum are central to the achievement of the educational vision.

This paper has examined the former NEELB proposal of:

Carrickfergus College and Downshire School should work towards becoming a single controlled school by 2017/18 of approximately 1,430 pupils.

It has looked closely at future enrolment trends and examined two options against the criteria outlined in the Department of Education report ‘The Schools for the Future: A Policy for Sustainable Schools’.

It is recommended that the Education Authority would consider establishing a single controlled school. This would ensure the continuation for a high quality sustainable and viable 11-19 educational provision in the town of Carrickfergus and would allow for further collaboration with the other post-primary schools in the Area Learning Community. The new school would operate on a split-site between Downshire School and Carrickfergus College until capital funding was secured to create a new single building establishment.

Appendix 1 **Budget Model for a school of 650 pupils I.E if Downshire and Carrick College resized to accommodate 650 pupils in each school.**

Appendix 2 **Budget Model for an Amalgamation of Carrickfergus College and Downshire School (1250 pupils)**

SCHOOL FINANCIAL PLAN						
CARRICKFERGUS/DOWNSHIRE	Financial Year 1		Financial Year 2		Financial Year 3	
	October 20??	October 20??	October 20??	October 20??	October 20??	October 20??
Enrolment FTE	650	650	650	650	650	650
Teaching Complement FTE	77.00	38.00	38.00	38.00	38.00	38.00
Pupil/Teacher Ratio	8.44	17.11	17.11	17.11	17.11	17.11
	Estimated Expenditure £	Comments	Estimated Expenditure £	Comments	Estimated Expenditure £	Comments
Teaching Staff	2,019,297		2,039,490		2,059,885	
Auxiliary Staff	167,150		160,338		161,941	
Ancillary Staff	49,843		50,341		50,845	
Fuel	95,000		95,000		95,000	
Other Premises Costs	24,000		24,000		24,000	
Maintenance of Buildings	15,000		15,000		15,000	
Maintenance of Grounds	11,000		11,000		11,000	
Furniture/Fittings	12,000		12,000		12,000	
Books, Tools & Materials	70,000		70,000		70,000	
Exam Fees	70,000		70,000		70,000	
Supplies & Services	161,400		161,400		161,400	
Transport & Moveable Plant	25,500		25,500		25,500	
Establishment Expenses	21,500		21,500		21,500	
Capital	0		0		0	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	2,741,690		2,755,569		2,778,071	
less income	0					
PROPOSED EXPENDITURE	2,741,690		2,755,569		2,778,071	
BUDGET SUMMARY						
Total Delegated Budget Share*	2,748,464		2,748,464		2,748,464	
Estimated Savings/Deficit from Previous Year	0		6,774		(331)	
Total Budget	2,748,464		2,755,238		2,748,133	
less PROPOSED EXPENDITURE	2,741,690		2,755,569		2,778,071	
ANTICIPATED SURPLUS/DEFICIT	6,774		(331)		(29,938)	
% SURPLUS/DEFICIT	0.25%		(0.01%)		(1.09%)	

SCHOOL FINANCIAL PLAN						
CARRICKFERGUS/DOWNSHIRE	Financial Year 1		Financial Year 2		Financial Year 3	
	October 20??	October 20??	October 20??	October 20??	October 20??	October 20??
Enrolment FTE	1,250	1,250	1,250	1,250	1,250	1,250
Teaching Complement FTE	74.00	74.00	74.00	74.00	74.00	74.00
Pupil/Teacher Ratio	16.89	16.89	16.89	16.89	16.89	16.89
	Estimated Expenditure £	Comments	Estimated Expenditure £	Comments	Estimated Expenditure £	Comments
Teaching Staff	3,936,080		3,975,440		4,015,194	
Auxiliary Staff	334,300		337,675		353,219	
Ancillary Staff	99,686		100,683		101,690	
Fuel	131,000		131,000		131,000	
Other Premises Costs	33,000		33,000		33,000	
Maintenance of Buildings	15,000		15,000		15,000	
Maintenance of Grounds	15,000		15,000		15,000	
Furniture/Fittings	12,000		12,000		12,000	
Books, Tools & Materials	135,000		135,000		135,000	
Exam Fees	130,000		130,000		130,000	
Supplies & Services	256,400		256,400		256,400	
Transport & Moveable Plant	38,000		38,000		38,000	
Establishment Expenses	21,500		21,500		21,500	
Capital	0		0		0	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	5,156,966		5,200,698		5,257,003	
less income	0					
PROPOSED EXPENDITURE	5,156,966		5,200,698		5,257,003	
BUDGET SUMMARY						
Total Delegated Budget Share*	5,215,514		5,215,514		5,215,514	
Estimated Savings/Deficit from Previous Year	0		58,548		73,364	
Total Budget	5,215,514		5,274,062		5,288,878	
less PROPOSED EXPENDITURE	5,156,966		5,200,698		5,257,003	
ANTICIPATED SURPLUS/DEFICIT	58,548		73,364		31,875	
% SURPLUS/DEFICIT	1.12%		1.39%		0.60%	

Carrickfergus area response comments

Principals

Agree

There must be an immediate decision to allocate capital funding for a new build. Both schools should be placed on one site in modular accommodation immediately they come together in September 2018. My preference would be that that site is on the North Road where Carrickfergus College is currently situated.

Parents

Agree

- Support Split Campus but Travel concerns – 1
- Better to have a more up-to-date modern school but not support the school being split – 3
- Take consideration that amalgamation with strained budgets does not come with benefits – 1
- Amalgamation better option in long term, would like junior site at Downshire and senior school should be nearer Grammar School – 1

Disagree

- Class Sizes and Streaming of Classes – 2
- Decline in Educational Standards - 2
- Totally disagree with the proposal. Carrickfergus College is by far the better school - 1
- Attended open nights and amalgamation wasn't mentioned. The EA led me to believe that when I completed the Post Primary Transfer form that I actually had a choice, decision is solely based on financial grounds not taking into account the human aspect of a right to an education. EA won't pay transport costs. Split site will create a chaotic environment. Carrickfergus College and Downshire are both financially viable and no reason to build a new school. Your forecasts and projections are unsubstantiated and Ministers make rash uneducated decisions which affect the future of our country.
- Addressing the impact of current enrolment pattern; Provision in Ulidia Integrated College growing; Duplication of provision in the non-selective sector; Restricted sites - Alternatives should be sought to maximise the total estate resource of schools in Carrickfergus – 1
- High transport costs - 1
- Disruption to families with more than one pupil – 1
- Downshire has been a brilliant school serving this area since 1977; son started in September 2016 and is happy. School provides a lovely, homely friendly atmosphere.

Unknown

- Children are due to commence secondary school in September 2017 - How will the 2 sites work and where will new one be and when will it be ready? - 1

Non-teaching staff

Agree

- New Principal for new school – 1
- The amalgamation may result in those who choose a non-sectarian school to move outside Carrickfergus. One existing school is located within a very strongly sectarian location. As Downshire School serves the community consideration should be given to how this will affect the surrounding non-pupil population.
- Need immediate allocation of Capital Funding for new Build - 2

Teaching staff

Agree

- Agree but concerns over split site – 14
- Travel between sites will be a concern for staff- 1
- Concerns over time frame for new build - 4
- Best option for pupils, parents & staff - 2
- Will allow access to more GCSE & A Level subject choices - time to unite and provide a quality education for years to come - 3
- Security of jobs. Welfare of staff.
- Whilst I would much prefer the 2 schools to remain separate entities with their own identity and ethos, thereby providing a wider choice for parents and pupils in the controlled non-selective sector locally; I appreciate that with diminishing pupil numbers, deteriorating budgets and subsequent staff losses, it is the sensible solution for the town
- Viable option due to falling numbers of students in area.

Governors

Agree

- Need fit for purpose accommodation
- Within context of Area Based Plan proposed that Carrickfergus GS increase enrolment to 880
- Entry into School Enhancement Programme is a priority
- Must provide an acceptable standard of Shared on-site facilities for both schools
- In the light of the Area Plan CGS intends to increase its admissions number to Year 8 to achieve the higher enrolment number. The school is consistently oversubscribed;
- The school will require a substantial increase to its delegated budget and Full-time Equivalent staffing levels to service and resource appropriately the needs of learners;
- The school's October 2016 ETI inspection report demonstrates clearly that this school has the capacity to address all of the above matters given the commensurate financial and developmental resources.
- No comments – 1

Pupils

Agree

- Good for the school, but difficult for parent & pupils

Other

Agree

- Given the reduced numbers of pupils in the Carrickfergus area and the declining numbers in Downshire School this would seem to be the most sensible option as it offers pupils a wide range of opportunities that cannot be offered in a small school. However, there was never any need to reach this stage for either school.
- Governors agree with proposal – need to be put in place by September 2018 on one site at Carrickfergus College. This would make integration easier for staff and pupils. Modular accommodation needs to be provided to allow pupils to be educated on one site. Benefit are numerous – improve standards of exams reduce travel. Splitting schools over 2 sites may prove costly before new school is built and funding needs to be made available immediately following any decision.
- The Controlled Schools’ Support Council has consulted with Carrickfergus College and Downshire School and is supportive of the Education Authority’s proposal that Carrickfergus College and Downshire School will discontinue facilitating the establishment of a new single non-selective controlled school (1250 pupils). In noting that the new school will initially be on a split site the CSSC would strongly recommend that priority is given to capital and infrastructural investment to reduce the timeframe for the school operating on a split site. The CSSC acknowledges the positive manner demonstrated by these schools in embracing change in the best interests of securing high quality sustainable education for children and young people in the area.
- No Comments – 1

Disagree

- Process has not been properly assessed by EA – Impact on area & full cost analysis. New Build needs to be at forefront. Impact on parents and year 8. Major paramilitary influences in Carrick therefore parents send children to Downshire. Original Area Plan has been diluted. Grammar are lowering intake standards and taking better pupils from Secondary Schools – impact on results. Integrated have been allowed to recruit outside religion split and because of funding this impacts on other selective schools. After a short split site - a new build is only option.
- Children are due to commence secondary school in September 2017 - How will the 2 sites work and where will new one be and when will it be ready? - 1

