

## Appendix A

### EDUCATION AUTHORITY

#### DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL NO 738

#### ALL CHILDREN'S CONTROLLED INTEGRATED PRIMARY SCHOOL

Notice is hereby given that a Proposal under Article 14 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 has been submitted by the Education Authority to the effect that:

**A statutory nursery unit will be established at All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School to provide 26 part-time nursery places with effect from 1 September 2026, or as soon as possible thereafter.**

A copy of the Proposal and Case for Change may be inspected at the offices of the Education Authority located at Grahamsbridge Road, Dundonald, BT16 1HS, between the hours of 9.00 am and 4.30 pm and [www.eani.org.uk/school-management/area-planning](http://www.eani.org.uk/school-management/area-planning).

Any objections or support to this Proposal should be lodged with the Area Planning Policy Team, Department of Education, Rathgael House, Balloo Road, Bangor, Co Down, BT19 7PR or emailed to [dps@education-ni.gov.uk](mailto:dps@education-ni.gov.uk) within two months of the date of publication of this notice. Any letters of objection or support may be published on the Department of Education's website, with appropriate redactions, if they are included in full in the submission on which the outcome of the proposal is decided.

The Department of Education and the Education Authority operate a regime of openness under the Freedom of Information Act. Letters of objection and information supplied to the Department of Education and the Education Authority may be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, if requested. (A fee may be charged for supplying this information).

**Richard Pengelly**  
**Chief Executive**

**Area Planning  
Case for Change**

All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School

Development Proposal No 738

Establishment of a Nursery Unit

Case for Change: Supporting Information - Summary/Overview

Area Planning District	Belfast
Development Proposal Number	738
Proposer	Education Authority
School(s) Name	All Children's Integrated Primary School
School(s) Reference	405-6541
Sector	Primary
Management	Controlled Integrated
Development Proposal Publication Date	Week commencing 9 September 2024
Proposal	A statutory nursery unit will be established at All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School to provide 26 part-time nursery places with effect from 1 September 2026, or as soon as possible thereafter

Case for Change: Statutory Consultation

*Note: It may be necessary for documentary evidence to be provided to show that the statutory procedures have been followed. It is essential that relevant parties retain this information.*

The following is to be completed by the Proposer and signed off by them.

EDUCATION AUTHORITY COMMENTARY ON PRE-PUBLICATION STATUTORY CONSULTATION

Proposer

Provide detail of consultation with the Board of Governors, teachers and parents of the affected school(s) – dates of meetings/letters. Good practice suggests all staff (including non-teaching) should be consulted as well as pupils.

Summary and assessment of views received – how were these taken into account before publication of the DP

In accordance with Article 14 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 the Education Authority undertook pre-publication consultation from 17 April 2024 to 12 June 2024. Staff, governors and parents/guardians were notified of the launch of the pre-publication consultation with the publication of the consultation document on the Education Authority’s website on 17 April 2024. Affected schools and pre-school settings (27) were notified of the pre-publication consultation on the proposal:

Pre-school provision at All Children’s Integrated Primary School through the establishment of 26 part-time nursery places with effect from 1 September 2026, or as soon as possible thereafter.

A pre-publication consultation document and response form were available on the Education Authority’s website for the period 17 April 2024 – 12 June 2024.

The Education Authority received a total of 86 responses. The information below provides a summary of overall responses and emerging themes of responses received.


Respondent	Agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Total
Governors – All Children’s IPS	3			3
Governors – Local Schools	6	1		7
Parents/Guardians – All Children’s IPS	37			37
Parents and Guardians – Local Schools	8			8
Staff/Principal – All Children’s IPS	15			15
Staff – Local Schools	2	1		3
Principals – Local Schools	1	1		3
Political Representatives	3	1		4
Other/Parent of Past Pupil	1			1
Affected Schools		4		4
Education/sectoral Support Group	1			1
Controlled Sector Support Council	1			1
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>8</b>		<b>86</b>




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

Support the proposal – summary comments


- Parents do not have an option for Integrated nursery provision in the Newcastle area.
- All Children’s IPS parents have to travel for nursery provision which is increasing their travel time at the start and end of each day.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reception numbers are capped which has an impact on first preferences for All Children’s IPS.</li> <li>• Other schools in the area have an unfair advantage as they have nursery provision already established.</li> <li>• Will have a positive impact and encourage inclusion of all religious groups.</li> <li>• Support integrated education from an early pre-school age.</li> <li>• Increase parental choice within the local area.</li> <li>• Ensures a pathway provision from 3 – 19 Integrated provisions within the Newcastle area.</li> <li>• Increase positive learning outcomes.</li> <li>• Lack of equity with the distribution of nursery provision in Newcastle.</li> </ul> <p>Do not support the proposal – summary comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is currently over provision of nursery places within the Newcastle area.</li> <li>• Will displace existing provision and put existing pre-school provisions under pressure</li> <li>• Year on year underage children are admitted to the local pre-school settings in the Newcastle area. This indicates that there are sufficient pre-school places in the area.</li> <li>• Some children in the area get two years of pre-school education due to the number of surplus spaces.</li> <li>• All pre-school provisions are non-denominational.</li> <li>• To provide pre-school provision in one sector over another sector would be discriminatory.</li> <li>• Capital investment in a proposal within an area where there are surplus places seems a waste of government funds.</li> <li>• The population within the area is dropping as per NISRA projections. The projected decrease in birth rates has the potential to adversely affect enrolments across all pre-school providers and primary providers within the area, which would also be affected by this proposal and should be noted.</li> </ul> <p>Section 75</p> <p>37 responses commented on Section 75. These comments and all responses have been taken into account when assessing the equality impact of the proposal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A nursery unit would have extremely positive benefits to the local community bringing together those from different cultures, religions, political backgrounds and disabilities. An all-inclusive nursery school for everyone, strengthening the commitment to integrated and inclusive education in Newcastle and the surrounding area.</li> <li>• Increasing the capacity of early years provision in the Newcastle area, paired with additional choices of different educational pathways strengthens the diversity of our society.</li> <li>• It is unfair that the political opinion that promotes that some school classes and the children who attend them should be prioritised over others. All children should have equal and fair access to education, to pre-school education and in times of immensely challenging budgets, EA should not be wasting money building schools which have no demonstrated need to satisfy one political opinion over another.</li> </ul>				
Confirmation by the Proposer	<p>I confirm that the Board of Governors, Staff and Parents of pupils of All Children’s Integrated Primary School were consulted on 17 April 2024 to 12 June 2024 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> <table border="1" data-bbox="472 1944 1331 2033"> <tr> <td data-bbox="472 1944 703 1989">Name:</td> <td data-bbox="703 1944 1331 1989">Cynthia Currie</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="472 1989 703 2033">Office Held:</td> <td data-bbox="703 1989 1331 2033">Interim Director of Education</td> </tr> </table>	Name:	Cynthia Currie	Office Held:	Interim Director of Education
Name:	Cynthia Currie				
Office Held:	Interim Director of Education				

	Signed:	
	Date:	3 September 2024
Associated Proposals	N/A	

Case for Change: Statutory Consultation									
EDUCATION AUTHORITY COMMENTARY ON PRE-PUBLICATION STATUTORY CONSULTATION									
<i>The following is to be completed and signed off by the EA.</i>									
The Education Authority (EA)	<p>I confirm that the schools which the Education Authority consider might be impacted by this proposal were consulted on 17 April 2024 with a return date of 12 June 2024.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Name:</td> <td>Cynthia Currie</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Office Held:</td> <td>Interim Director of Education</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Signed:</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Date:</td> <td>3 September 2024</td> </tr> </table>	Name:	Cynthia Currie	Office Held:	Interim Director of Education	Signed:		Date:	3 September 2024
Name:	Cynthia Currie								
Office Held:	Interim Director of Education								
Signed:									
Date:	3 September 2024								
<p>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.</p> <p>Summary of views received (number of responses, recurring themes, petitions, community support or opposition).</p> <p>Responses/Assurances in respect of issues raised during consultation.</p> <p>Dates of EA meetings eg Strategic Planning and Policy Committee/ Board etc</p> <p><u>Details of issues raised by members of EA Board</u></p>	<p>In accordance with Article 14 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986, a copy of the proposal was sent on 17 April 2024, to schools which, in the opinion of the Education Authority, might be affected by the proposal. A total of 27 schools and pre-school settings 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 12 June 2024.</p> <p>Four responses were received from affected schools, and one from the Controlled Schools' Support Council (CSSC).</p> <p>Do not support the proposal – summary comments</p> <p>All four affected schools/pre-school providers – Newcastle PS, St Mary's PS, Newcastle, Castlewellan Community Playgroup and Newcastle Pre-school Playgroup.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Newcastle PS's nursery unit already has unfilled places for target aged children.</li> <li>It is anticipated the establishment of nursery provision at All Children's IPS will negatively impact admissions to Primary 1 places at Newcastle PS.</li> <li>Perception that the sustainability of All Children's IPS will be to the detriment of Newcastle PS.</li> <li>Newcastle PS's nursery unit is already naturally integrated and non-denominational.</li> </ul>								

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If Newcastle PS is forced to drop to one nursery session there will be a detrimental impact on financial resourcing.</li> <li>• Concern that a possible capital cost of a new building to accommodate proposed nursery class at All Children’s IPS, when there are available places within the local area.</li> <li>• Awarding another primary school this level of provision will take away from the provision that St Mary's PS and Nursery Unit currently has.</li> <li>• Will result in a loss of potential jobs - both teaching and classroom assistant as there is not the number of children, as detailed in local birth rates to support another nursery provision.</li> <li>• There is already enough competition in the area and feel this unit will diminish our numbers going forward.</li> <li>• The community and voluntary sector are already struggling.</li> <li>• In seeking an increase in funded PEAG places for our pre-school for a number of years and have been told there are sufficient places already in the area and additional places are not needed.</li> </ul> <p>Support the proposal – summary comments</p> <p>The Controlled Schools’ Support Council supports the proposal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Note the current level of pre-school education in the area, which is in excess of demand, and the impact additional provision may have.</li> <li>• Acknowledges the historical interest in reception provision at All Children’s IPS, which is presented to evidence parental demand.</li> <li>• Notes that the closest integrated nursery provision to All Children’s IPS is 16 miles from the school.</li> <li>• Whilst supportive of the establishment of a nursery unit, CSSC urges the Education Authority to consider a solution which will not threaten the sustainability of other pre-school providers.</li> <li>• The Executive’s commitment to standardisation of pre-school session times provides an opportunity for the Education Authority to ensure equitable access to 22.5 hours pre-school education for all children in the Newcastle area.</li> </ul> <p>This development proposal was discussed by the Education Authority’s Strategic Planning and Policy Committee at its meeting on 3 September 2024.</p>				
<p><b>EDUCATION AUTHORITY COMMENTS</b></p> <p>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?</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="225 1899 651 2011"> <tr> <td>Name:</td> <td>Cynthia Currie</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Office Held:</td> <td>Interim Director of Education</td> </tr> </table>	Name:	Cynthia Currie	Office Held:	Interim Director of Education	<p>The Education Authority, as the proposer, supports Development Proposal 738 for the establishment nursery provision at All Children’s Integrated Primary School through a 26 part-time nursery unit with effect from 1 September 2026, or as soon as possible thereafter.</p> <p>In keeping with established procedure, the Education Authority has requested Pre-school Education Group’s (PEG) assessment of the proposal.</p> <p>The proposal to establish pre-school provision at All Children’s Integrated Primary School was circulated to PEG members for comment by 8 August 2024. PEG considered the proposal from the</p>
Name:	Cynthia Currie				
Office Held:	Interim Director of Education				

Signed:	
Date:	3 September 2024

Education Authority for All Children’s Integrated Primary School for comment in line with guidance provided by DE regarding pre-school education and the statutory duty to encourage, facilitate and support Integrated and Irish medium education as follows:

*‘PEG considered the DP regarding All Children’s Controlled Integrated Primary School for comment in accordance with the EA’s duty outlined in the Integrated Education Act (NI) 2022, to encourage, facilitate and support integrated education.*

*In this context, PEG supports the DP based on demonstrated parental demand as evidenced by application trends for the school for Reception Applications and intake over several years, which would suggest 26 part-time nursery places would be sustainable.*

*However, PEG would have concerns regarding the potential impact of this additional provision, including potential displacement, of the following existing voluntary/private funded pre-school providers in the area:*

*Newcastle Pre-school Playgroup  
Castlewellan Community Playgroup.’*

The Education Authority notes the comments from PEG in support of the proposal and the potential negative impact on pre-school providers in the area. The Education Authority also notes the concerns raised by a number of schools in the area regarding the potential negative impact on their respective provisions should the proposal be approved. The Education Authority acknowledges the potential impact of the proposal, particularly on Newcastle Primary School for which it is also the managing authority. However, the Education Authority considers the proposal in light of the timescale for implementation of the proposal as well as the Minister of Education’s letter of 13 June 2024 outlining the standardisation of pre-school which will positively impact/change pre-school provision in all areas.

The Minister stated: *‘the development of an Executive Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Strategy, including the standardisation of pre-school education programme (PSEP) sessions, remains one of my top priorities’.* In addition, the letter states that: *‘It is my intention that the current position, where sufficient funded pre-school education places are made available in all areas to accommodate every target aged child whose parents want a place for them, will be retained at every stage of the process. I appreciate that many settings will be keen to transition to the standardised session length as quickly as possible, however, this will require careful planning and implementation over a period of time and so I ask for your patience in this regard. Now that I have secured initial resources to enable work to begin, the Department and the Education Authority will work quickly to establish teams to plan and progress this as a priority. Settings need not take any action at this stage as officials will make contact with those impacted as planning for standardisation progresses’.*

In consideration of the above, and the Case for Change, the Education Authority is proposing to publish Development Proposal 738 the week beginning 9 September 2024.

EDUCATION AUTHORITY  
 PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION PROGRAMME 2024-25  
 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH PRE-SCHOOL PROVISION AT ALL CHILDREN'S  
 CONTROLLED INTEGRATED PRIMARY SCHOOL TO PROVIDE 26 ADDITIONAL PART-TIME  
 NURSERY PLACES WITH EFFECT FROM 1 SEPTEMBER 2026, OR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE  
 THEREAFTER

PEG Comments – PEG via E-Mail August 2024

School	All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School
Address	The Walled Garden, King Street, Newcastle, Co. Down, BT33 0HD
Does PEG support the proposal?	<p>PEG considered the DP regarding All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School for comment in accordance with the EA's duty outlined in the Integrated Education Act (NI) 2022, to encourage, facilitate and support integrated education.</p> <p>In this context, PEG supports the DP based on demonstrated parental demand as evidenced by application trends for the school for Reception Applications and intake over several years, which would suggest 26 part-time nursery places would be sustainable.</p> <p>However, PEG would have concerns regarding the potential impact of this additional provision, including potential displacement, of the following existing voluntary/private funded pre-school providers in the area:</p> <p>Newcastle Pre0school Playgroup          Castlewellan Community Playgroup</p>
What is the potential impact if the proposal is/ is not approved? (alternatives for meeting demand/ potential for over provision)	Statistics for preschool settings within a 5-mile radius of All Children's CIPS have been reviewed (see below). For the 2024-25 preschool year a total of 193 funded places are available with 184 first preference applications received for September 2024, at the close of stage 1 of the admissions procedure (Feb 2024). The figures would suggest sufficient provision already exists to cater for demand.
What is the PEG assessment of need for pre-school provision for the area? Is this need currently met?	While there are sufficient alternative pre-school places in the area there are no integrated places in the area;
How many 1 <sup>st</sup> preference applications were received by the setting? (usually 2 years figures but this depends on the timing of the development proposal)	Data within the consultation document indicates: 2019/20 18 Reception applications received. 2020/21 26 Reception applications received. 2021/22 11 Reception applications received. 2022/23 21 Reception applications received. 2023/24 10 Reception applications received at Feb 2023
Are there current or anticipated pressures in placing pre-school children in the area?	There are sufficient alternative pre-school places in the area however no integrated nursery provision exists within the area.
Have children been unplaced at the end of the process in previous years?	Generally, there would be a low number of target age children unplaced by September each year
Has demand been increasing over time, but the number of places has not? Is the level of need or provision changing significantly? E.g. new housing development, provider leaving PSEP	Yes, data within the consultation document suggests demand for integrated pre-school provision has been increasing over time with no supply available. There are no housing development proposals in the locality that PSEP are aware of.
Can existing voluntary/private providers expand to help meet demand? Is there potential for new providers to come on to the programme?	Yes, existing voluntary/private providers have capacity to expand their PANs to meet demand.

What is the potential impact on existing good quality provision (displacement)?	There is an unmet need for integrated pre-school provision in the area, however, creating integrated pre-school provision has the potential to negatively impact applications to existing voluntary/private sector providers.
If there are other development proposals in the area, how might they impact? (e.g. if proposal A were to be approved, would B still be required?)	None that PEG is aware of.
Other comments	None

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Before arriving at the final recommendation on nursery provision at All Children’s Controlled Integrated Primary School, the Education Authority sought the views of those most directly involved at a local level. The Education Authority engaged in consultation with the Board of Governors, parents and staff of All Children’s Controlled Integrated Primary School, and other interested parties in the local community from 17 April 2024 – 12 June 2024.

### 1.1 Vision

The aim of the Education Authority is to facilitate the development of a network of viable and sustainable schools that can deliver the Northern Ireland curriculum effectively and provide access to a range of education provision that is appropriate to the needs of children and young people, so that every pupil can realise their potential and contribute to a caring, inclusive and progressive society.

In striving to realise this aspiration, the Education Authority aims to ensure that every pupil has:

- access to a broad and balanced curriculum with opportunities to realise his or her potential;
- an education in which the learning outcomes are appropriate to their needs;
- access to quality teaching delivered in a caring and supportive environment; and
- education delivered in modern, well-resourced facilities, suitable for the demands of education in the twenty-first century.

### 1.2 Education Authority Position

On 29 June 2022, the Education Authority published the Strategic Area Plan 2022-27: Planning for Sustainable Provision followed by the publication of Operational Plan 1: 2022-24 for Primary, Special and Post Primary Schools (including Specialist Provision in Mainstream Schools). Within the Operational Plan the following action was detailed for All Children’s Controlled Integrated Primary School:

All Children’s Controlled Integrated PS  The Walled Garden 34 King Street Newcastle BT33 0DH	Background / Engagement	
	The Education Authority is proposing the establishment of a new part time nursery unit at the All Children’s Controlled Integrated PS. The school currently has an approved admission number of 29 and approved enrolment number of 203. At September 2021, the school had an enrolment of 207 pupils. The school does not currently have nursery provision.	
	Statutory Duty / Ministerial Priority	Key Theme(s)
	Statutory Duty – Integrated Education	Increase parity of access for all to appropriate pathways

At the meeting of the Education Authority’s Strategic Planning and Policy Committee on 3 September 2024, it was agreed to publish Development Proposal 738 that:

A statutory nursery unit will be established at All Children’s Controlled Integrated Primary School to provide 26 part-time nursery places with effect from 1 September 2026, or as soon as possible thereafter.

### 1.3 Nature of the Education Authority’s Recommendation

Article 14 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 describes the process regarding making a significant change to a school. This process requires the publication of a development proposal.

Therefore, as part of the pre-publication consultation on the development proposal, the Education Authority sought comments on the proposed establishment of a nursery unit at All Children’s Controlled Integrated Primary School from the Board of Governors, teaching staff, non-teaching staff and parents of children attending the school, as well as from other schools that may be affected by the proposal.

The Education Authority has met with the Board of Governors and Principal to discuss all options and based on available information the Education Authority is taking forward the development proposal for the establishment of a nursery unit at All Children’s Controlled Integrated Primary School.

The pre-publication consultation process and a summary of comments and emerging themes is included in pages 3 – 9 of this Case for Change

## 2.0 BACKGROUND

All Children’s Controlled Integrated Primary School is a Controlled Integrated primary school which opened in September 1986 with an initial enrolment of 62 pupils. In 1991 the school was vested into the education estate as a controlled integrated primary school under the direct administration of the former South Eastern Education and Library Board.

All Children’s Controlled Integrated Primary School is a sustainable school with the Year 1 admissions showing that the school is a seven class base school. The school has an approved admission number of 29 pupils and an approved enrolment number of 203 pupils. Table 1 details the historic and current enrolment figures.

	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Total (Years 1-7)
2015/16	7	23	30	29	28	33	32	41	216
2016/17	6	31	20	30	29	30	33	31	203
2017/18	9	28	29	20	31	30	32	33	203
2018/19	6	31	29	29	21	32	30	33	205
2019/20	10	31	30	29	31	23	32	31	207
2020/21	6	30	31	30	29	31	23	32	206
2021/22	4	34	30	30	30	29	31	23	207
2022/23	4	30	33	29	29	31	30	31	213
2023/24	4	21	30	33	31	29	31	31	206

All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School received 20 first preference applications for September 2024.

## 2.1 Pre-School Provision – All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School

All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School is the only primary school provider within Newcastle town not to have pre-school provision. The school operates as a 7 classroom school (single form entry) and the enrolment numbers, as detailed in Table 1, identify that the Year 1 intake for the school would support the provision of a 26 pupil nursery unit.

The Education Authority is aware of the current pre-school provision within the Newcastle area and the impact which additional pre-school places may have on the area. However, where there is parental demand, the Department of Education has clarified the position in terms of meeting its statutory duties towards integrated education and pre-school provision:

*"It is important the Education Authority and the PEG support the Department in fulfilling its statutory duty by striving to meet demonstrated parental demand in an area for pre-school education at grant-maintained and controlled integrated primary schools, as well as parental demand for Irish-medium pre-school education".*

The Integrated Education Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 places a duty on the Education Authority to encourage, facilitate and support the development of integrated education. This proposal aligns with this duty.

Based on this direction from the Department it is incumbent on the Education Authority to investigate the potential for establishing pre-school provision within integrated primary settings and in this instance within All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School.

## 2.2 Current Pre-School Provision in the Newcastle Area

Map 1 below shows the pupil distribution of pupils enrolled at All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School in 2022/23. The map also shows the location of all primary provision in the immediate area along with the pre-school provision.



All Children’s Controlled Integrated Primary School attracts most of its pupils from the Donard and Murlough wards with smaller numbers spread across the other ward areas. Table 2 provides details of the current pre-school providers within this catchment area:

Table 2: Current Pre-School Providers in the Immediate Area						
School/Pre-School Name	Full Time (FT) or Part Time (PT)	Pre-School Funded Places 2024	Nursery Unit Places	Target Age 1st Preference Applications (2024/25)	Total Places Accepted (2024/25)	
					Target Age	Underage
Naiscoil Bheanna Boirche, Nursery Unit	FT	0	26	29	25	0
Castlewellan Community Play Group	PT	22	0	12	22	0
Newcastle Pre-School Play Group	PT	15	0	14	13	0
Newcastle PS, Nursery Unit	PT	0	52	26	29	23
St Mary's PS, Nursery Unit	PT	0	52	50	50	#
St Malachy's PS (Castlewellan), Nursery Unit	FT	0	26	43	26	0
Total		37	156	183	165	25
Totals		193			190	

While the figures show above show that 193 places are currently available 190 places have been filled, one place remaining within the Irish Medium provision and two places in a Play Group setting. It should be noted that 165 places have been taken up by pre-school aged children with the remaining 25 places filled with children in their penultimate pre-school year.

In addition to the above, Table 3 below details the primary schools within the area which operate a reception class and the numbers enrolled in the 2023/24 school year.

Table 3: Reception Classes – Schools in the Newcastle Area	
School Name	Number of Reception Pupils 2023/24
St Joseph's Primary School, Carnacaville	7
St Patrick's Primary School, Castlewellan	0
St Mary's Primary School, Aughlisnafin	7
Annsborough Controlled Integrated Primary School	2
All Children’s Controlled Integrated Primary School	4

Table 4 below details the number of applications for the reception class at All Children’s Controlled Integrated Primary School. The data clearly shows a strong history of parents seeking pre-school places at the school.

Table 4: All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School - Reception Application History		
Year	Number of Reception Applications Received	Number of Reception Applications Accepted*
2016/17	16	6
2017/18	15	9
2018/19	16	6
2019/20	18	10
2020/21	26	6
2021/22	11	4
2022/23	21	4
2023/24	10	4
2024/25	22	9

\*The school has limited accommodation therefore it is restricted in the number of reception applications which it can accept. The number in Table 4 above shows a parental demand for integrated pre-school provision.

Table 5 below shows that the births within the catchment of All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School will have a slight upturn for the September 2025 pre-school year.

Table 5: Births in the Area								
Ward	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Annalong	52	59	59	50	60	54	61	68
Castlewellan	86	71	66	67	59	57	68	64
Donard	21	45	43	28	32	25	26	25
Dundrum	67	65	60	40	49	45	50	54
Murlough	63	52	53	49	59	50	55	49
Tollymore	68	53	51	49	53	46	48	53
Total	357	345	332	283	312	277	308	313
Pre-School Admission	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Year 1 Admission	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2025/26

The following should be noted:

- The main providers of pre-school places over the area are nursery units attached to primary schools.
- The number of births in the area is generally reflected in the number of year 1 places filled in the schools, for example in 2022/23 there were 270 year 1 places filled and there were 312 children that required a place that year.
- The number of penultimate pupils (children not of pre-school age) being accommodated within Newcastle Primary School's nursery unit.
- The first preference applications are below the available places in several settings.

Table 6 shows the breakdown of pre-school provision available across the area.

Table 6: Pre-School Provision in the Newcastle Area						
School	Year	Places Available	First Preference Applications		Total Accepted (all preferences)	
			Target Age	Underage	Target	Underage
Naiscoil Bheanna Boirche PS Nursery Unit	2020/21	26 (f/t)	26	2	25	0
Naiscoil Bheanna Boirche PS Nursery Unit	2021/22	26 (f/t)	18	5	19	3
Naiscoil Bheanna Boirche PS Nursery Unit	2022/23	26 (f/t)	28	5	26	0
Naiscoil Bheanna Boirche PS Nursery Unit	2023/24	26 (f/t)	20	10	21	4
Castlewellan Community Play Group	2020/21	22 (p/t)	15		21	
Castlewellan Community Play Group	2021/22	22 (p/t)	14		21	
Castlewellan Community Play Group	2022/23	22 (p/t)	10		19	
Castlewellan Community Play Group	2023/24	22 (p/t)	16		22	
Newcastle Pre-School Play Group	2020/21	18 (p/t)	23		18	
Newcastle Pre-School Play Group	2021/22	18 (p/t)	24		18	
Newcastle Pre-School Play Group	2022/23	18 (p/t)	19		17	
Newcastle Pre-School Play Group	2023/24	15 (p/t)	23		15	
Newcastle PS Nursery Unit	2020/21	54 (p/t)	33	22	41	7
Newcastle PS Nursery Unit	2021/22	55 (p/t)	28	27	29	23
Newcastle PS Nursery Unit	2022/23	56 (p/t)	42	9	39	9
Newcastle PS Nursery Unit	2023/24	56 (p/t)	26	9	29	21
St Malachy's PS Nursery Unit	2020/21	28 (f/t)	47	6	26	0
St Malachy's PS Nursery Unit	2021/22	29 (f/t)	40	5	26	0
St Malachy's PS Nursery Unit	2022/23	30 (f/t)	40	3	26	0
St Malachy's PS Nursery Unit	2023/24	30 (f/t)	37	2	26	0
St Mary's PS Nursery Unit	2020/21	54 (p/t)	53	12	52	0
St Mary's PS Nursery Unit	2021/22	55 (p/t)	35	12	35	18
St Mary's PS Nursery Unit	2022/23	56 (p/t)	52	15	50	0
St Mary's PS Nursery Unit	2023/24	56 (p/t)	52	2	52	2

All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School attracts its Year 1 intake from the following sources:

Table 7: Feeder Pre-Schools to All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School				
Pre-School	2020	2021	2022	2023
A Pre-school Not Listed or Paying for a place				1
All Children's Controlled Integrated PS (Newcastle)			1	1
Annalong PS NU (Newry) FT	1			
Annsborough Controlled Integrated PS (Castlewellan)	1			1
Castlewellan Community PG PT	1	1	1	
Cumran PS (Downpatrick)	1			
Dundrum Cross Community PG PT			1	
Home			1	1
Kilkeel NS PT	1			
Kilkeel PG PT			1	1
Leitrim Community PG (Castlewellan) PT	1			
Lower Mourne Pre-School PG (Annalong) PT			2	
Naiscoil Bheanna Boirche PS NU (Castlewellan) PT	1		1	
Newcastle Pre-School PG PT	6	10	8	6
Newcastle PS NU PT	3	4	6	6
None				3
None Listed/Allocated	2	9	4	1
Not allocated				2
Rathfriland Pre-School PG PT			1	
St Joseph's PS (Carnacaville)			1	1
St Malachys PS NU (Kilcoo) PT	2			
St Mary's PS NU (Newcastle) PT	2	3	1	2
St Patrick's PS (Castlewellan)		1		
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>26</b>

The data presented in table 7 above would suggest that the establishment of a nursery unit at All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School will impact on Newcastle Primary School and Newcastle Pre-School Playgroup. This is based on the number of children that transfer from the two providers to Year 1 at All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School.

Table 8 below shows the location of alternative integrated provision in the wider area which has pre-school provision available. The data clearly shows parents in the Newcastle area have no immediate access to integrated pre-school provision as the nearest Integrated nursery provision is over 16 miles away from All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School.

Table 8: Alternative Pre-School Settings Associated with Integrated Providers		
Alternative Integrated School	Distance from All Children’s Controlled Integrated PS (miles)	Places Available
Cedar IPS	16.2	26 places
Killyleagh IPS	19.8	26 places

### 2.3 Integrated Education Act (Northern Ireland) 2022

All Children’s Controlled Integrated Primary School’s culture, as an integrated school, embodies the ethos of Integrated Education and the four core principles of Integrated Education represent the cornerstones of the integrated ethos. The integrated school demonstrates its distinctiveness and vision through a commitment to these principles:

- Equality
- Faith and Values
- Parental Involvement
- Social Responsibility.

In accordance with the Integrated Education Act (Northern Ireland) 2022, specifically on points:

2.3.1 *those of different cultures and religious beliefs and of none, including reasonable numbers of both Protestant and Roman Catholic children or young persons*

The school provides a learning environment in which children from Catholic and Protestant faiths, children from other faiths, cultures and communities learn together on a daily basis in the one school. Table 8 provides details of the religious breakdown of the school which is reflective of the area the school serves.

Table 9: All Children’s Controlled Integrated Primary School - Religious Profile			
Year	% Protestant	% Catholic	% Other Christian / non-Christian / no religion / unknown
2017/18	17	50	33
2018/19	13	50	36
2019/20	13	43	43
2020/21	13	46	41
2021/22	13	45	43
2022/23	16	45	39
2023/24*	16	43	41

\*School Sourced

The data presented in Table 10 is based on the Super Data Zones from which All Children’s Controlled Integrated Primary School attracts the majority of its pupils – it is similar to the area covered by the Ward areas mentioned in Table 11, below. The community breakdown by wards is sourced from the 2021 Census. NISRA has developed two new statistical output geographies to support the dissemination of Census 2021 statistics, namely Data Zones and Super Data Zones.

Table 10: Community Breakdown of Area - Census 2021 Super Data Zone Label			
Census 2021 Super Data Zone Label	Religion	Count	Percentage of Overall total
Slieve Crooob - G/H/J	Catholic	4,937	17.95%
	Protestant and Other Christian (including Christian related)	1,054	3.83%
	Other religions	41	0.15%
	No religion/religion not stated	894	3.25%
The Mournes - A/B/C/D/E/F/G/H/J	Catholic	12,038	43.76%
	Protestant and Other Christian (including Christian related)	5,706	20.74%
	Other religions	97	0.35%
	No religion/religion not stated	2,739	9.96%
Overall Total		27,506	100%

Overall, 61.71% the population identified as Catholic, 24.57% as Protestant and Other Christian faiths, 0.5% as Other religions and 13.21% as No religion/religion not stated.

### 2.3.2 those who are experiencing socio-economic deprivation and those who are not

Table shows the ranks of the six ward areas for each of 7 distinct types (or domains) of deprivation, which have been combined to produce an overall multiple deprivation measure (MDM) rank of the areas – 1 is the most deprived through to 462 the least deprived (there are 462 wards in Northern Ireland).

Table 11: All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School Ward Areas - Northern Ireland Multiple Measure (2017)								
Ward	Multiple Deprivation Measure Rank	Income Domain	Employment Domain	Health Deprivation and Disability	Education, Skills and Training	Access to Services	Living Environment	Crime and Disorder
Murlough	87	104	66	88	129	261	343	55
Annalong	109	32	217	213	186	114	134	228
Castlewellan	132	111	148	132	150	171	110	180
Dundrum	156	71	178	201	221	133	293	199
Donard	201	245	125	182	324	280	165	35
Tollymore	249	230	266	292	307	76	45	260

The wards from which All Children's Controlled Primary School sits show a ranking towards the lower to middle part of the NIMDM.

The number of pupils at All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School which receive free school meals, see table 12, is relatively constant over the years. Given the MDM ranking of the wards that the school attracts most of its pupils from the free school meals uptake is in keeping with the profile of the area, i.e., an area where the wards fall into the low to mid-range of the MDM. The data shows that the school caters for pupils from various socio-economic backgrounds.

**Table 12: All Children’s Controlled Integrated Primary School – Statistics**

Year	Free School Meals	SEN Stage 5/ Stage 3	SEN Stage 1 - 4 / 1-2	SEN All Stages	% Newcomer Pupils
2017/18	28%	6	26	32	* %
2018/19	26%	7	18	25	* %
2019/20	21%	7	27	34	* %
2020/21	24%	10	20	30	* %
2021/22	22%	11	13	24	3%
2022/23	20%	13	16	29	4%
2023/24	19%	12	21	33	4%

\*supressed data

The number of newcomer pupils at All Children’s Controlled Integrated Primary School is reflective of the area.

### 2.3.3 those of different abilities

All Children’s Controlled Integrated Primary School is open to all pupils ‘Harmony Through Understanding’. The School’s mission statement is: *‘All Children’s Integrated Primary School strives to promote high self-esteem, a love of life-long learning and responsible citizenship within our school community where everyone is valued’.*

All Children’s Controlled Integrated Primary School provides for the needs of all children.

Table 13 below shows the range in standardised scores achieved by pupils in each GL assessment conducted in May 2022. The wide range in results is also evidenced in other assessments including Salford Reading. This provides clear evidence that the school caters for children across all nine stanine bands, within the majority of year groups.

**Table 13: Range of Standardised Scores Achieved by pupils in All Children’s Controlled Integrated Primary School - May 2022**

Data from May 2022 Assessments	Progress Test English (standardised scores: range)	Progress Test Maths (standardised scores: range)
Primary 3	70-127	69-127
Primary 4	77-134	73-117
Primary 5	69-141	73-141
Primary 6	72-141	72-132
Primary 7	70-132	83-137

All Children’s Controlled Integrated Primary School caters for pupils with all abilities with pupils transitioning from Year 7 to Year 8. These pupils transfer to schools across many different types – selective, non-selective, controlled, integrated and Catholic maintained. Most pupils transfer to non-selective post primary schools with Shimna College (Integrated College) being the main recipient, the College is adjacent to All Children’s Controlled Integrated Primary School. On

occasion pupils would also transfer to one of the local grammar schools - Down High School, or Assumption Grammar School.

Table 14: All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School Year 7 to Year 8 Destination										
Leavers Destination	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Non-Selective (%)	83%	81%	85%	85%	91%	90%	90%	81%	100%	90%
Selective (%)	17%	19%	15%	15%	9%	10%	10%	19%	0%	10%

### 3.0 SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT

The main focus of the Area Planning process is embedded in 'Schools for the Future: A Policy for Sustainable Schools (Sustainable Schools Policy) first published in 2009 and applies to primary and post-primary schools. The policy outlines the criteria that school managing authorities should consider when making decisions affecting the best use of resources in order to deliver an excellent education to children and young people. The policy sets out 6 sustainability criteria, and associated indicators, which are identified as the key references for assessing existing and future education provision to ensure it adequately meets the needs of pupils.

#### 3.1 Quality of Education

The most recent Education and Training Inspection was undertaken in January 2018 but was subject to action short of strike. A previous Education and Training Inspection undertaken in September 2011 stated that:

*'The quality of the children's achievements and standards is good.*

- In English and mathematics most of the children attain good standards. The school has appropriately identified the need to make more effective use of data in order to identify where they can improve further the quality of the learning and teaching for the children who are under-performing so that all of the children can attain standards in line with their full potential.*
- The children identified with special educational needs make good progress in line with their ability and reach the standards of which they are capable.*

*The provision for learning is good.*

- The children are highly motivated and well-behaved. They work well independently, cooperate fully in paired or group activities and respond articulately in whole-class discussion.*
- The quality of the teaching ranged from satisfactory to very good. Most of the lessons observed were good or very good. In the majority of lessons teachers used a wide range of strategies, including effective questioning, to challenge the children to think creatively and explain their reasoning. The classroom assistants engaged actively with the children and provided appropriate learning support. 1*
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is very good and is characterised by an ethos of mutual respect throughout the school. The excellent behaviour of the children is promoted through the effective use of positive behaviour strategies, including peer mediation.*
- The school has very good arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements adhere to the child protection guidance issued by the Department of Education (DE).*
- The provision for special educational needs (SEN) is good. The children's needs are identified early and additional support for literacy is provided. The school has prioritised the formal provision of numeracy support in the SEN action plan; the inspection endorses*

*this course of action. There are good processes for consulting the parents, children and teachers about the writing and updating of the individual education plans.*

- *The school gives very good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity. The healthy break and healthy lunchbox initiatives are well established and a wide range of opportunities for physical activity is available to all classes.'*

### 3.2 Stable Enrolment Trends

All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School has an approved admission number of 29 pupils and a current enrolment of 203 pupils. The school operates as a 7 classroom school. Table 1 above details the enrolment statistics for the school which is a sustainable school.

### 3.3 Sound Financial Position

All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School does not currently operate within its in-year budget. At 31 March 2023 the school has a deficit of **-£2,282**. The school's three year financial plan shows that the school is projected to have a closing deficit of **-£75,698** by March 2025.

Table 15: Financial Position – All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School	
Year	Surplus/Deficit
2018/19	<b>-£28,908</b>
2019/20	<b>-£26,654</b>
2020/21	<b>-£16,286</b>
2021/22	<b>-£5,627</b>
2022/23	<b>-£2,282</b>

### 3.4 Strong Leadership and Management

The most recent Education and Training Inspection report was subject to action short of strike and was unable to evaluate the leadership and management at the school.

The school undertook a parental survey June 2022 in which 44% of parents submitted a response – of those that responded 95.6% felt that the school was led and managed well by staff and Governors.

### 3.5 Accessibility

The school is located within the town of Newcastle with the pupils accommodated in relatively new accommodation. The site itself is restricted with limited potential for growth.

### 3.6 Strong Links with the Community

All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School attracts most of its school population from the town of Newcastle and the immediate surrounding countryside. It is well supported by the parents at the school and is currently in a Shared Education Signature Project with St Mary's Primary School since 2015. Shared Education lessons delivered to date have tended to focus on developing scientific skills in the outdoors, making use of the mountains, forests and coastline given the geographical context of the locality. Shared Education is fully incorporated into the School Development Plans and continues to be embedded with teaching staff availing of the Teacher Professional Learning modules as applicable. Examples of shared connections

with the local community (prior to the Covid-19 pandemic) have included: establishing links with the Forestry Commission, Tollymore Outdoor Centre (with the school visiting the centre over 10 times each year), CRIS (Community Relation in Schools) and Sentinus. Parents are invited to share in an annual Celebratory Event. Year 4 and Year 5 children from both schools took part in cultural identity themed assemblies in nearby Shimna Integrated College, exploring Remembrance Sunday and St Patrick's Day (with all year groups from the school attending these). Regular school newsletters are distributed to inform parents of Shared Education lessons and trips and local press are invited to promote shared events.

Staff from All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School meet with staff from the other four local primary schools to discuss leadership issues (through a joint principals' group) and recently through the formation of a SENCo cluster group.

The school is involved with a range of local charities, other educational establishments and businesses including the RNLI, Tens Foundation Charity, NI Children's Hospice at Daisy Lodge, SERC, libraries, Mourne Heritage Trust, Field Studies Ireland, Newcastle Community Cinema, Hope4Life and Barnardos as well as a number of the local care homes.

Results from a school survey completed by 70 parents or 44% of parents in June 2022 showed 80.6 % felt that the links between the local community and the school are good.

#### **4.0 AREA PLANNING IMPACT**

The proposal aligns with the key themes of Area Planning. The Area Plan for Northern Ireland aims to ensure that all pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum that meets their needs in sustainable schools within a diverse system of education. It sets out the key priorities and objectives in providing access to a network of sustainable schools for the Education Authority, Council for Catholic Maintained Schools and other sectoral bodies in the light of Department of Education policy, in particular the need to raise standards and close the attainment gap through a network of sustainable schools. The focus of the plan is on the best educational interests of children and young people.

Since 2011, statutory planning authorities and school managing authorities have been engaged in implementing the objectives of the Sustainable Schools Policy through Area Planning. The first four objectives are:

- 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; and
- 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.

The Strategic Area Plan 2022-27: Planning for Sustainable Provision and Operational Plan 1 2022-24 for Primary, Special and Post-Primary Schools (including Specialist Provision in Mainstream Schools), identified All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School under the statutory duty/ministerial priority for Integrated Education.

As a result, the Education Authority engaged with the Board of Governors of All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School on the proposal for an additional part-time 26 pupil nursery unit. In the consideration of the proposal, the Education Authority considered other integrated primary school providers.

The proposal to provide integrated pre-school places for the area is likely to have an impact on other providers in the area given the current over provision presently in the Newcastle area. An assessment of provision and potential impact has been detailed in section 2.1 above. However, the Education Authority has a role to assist the Department of Education in its duty to encourage, facilitate and support integrated education where there is demonstrated parental demand. The addition of a nursery unit will support integrated education in the area and ensure the future sustainability of All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School.

## **5.0 RATIONALE FOR PROPOSAL**

While there are sufficient pre-school places in the area there is no integrated provision. Approval of this proposal would be supportive of the duty outlined in Article 64 of the Education and Reform Order (1989) and the Integrated Education Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 for the Education Authority to encourage, facilitate and support integrated education.

The inclusion of a 26 part-time nursery unit into All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School will allow all parents in the area that want to avail of integrated education the opportunity to do so.

Approval for nursery provision at All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School would support the school to become an even stronger, sustainable integrated school which, in turn, would support the community in building good relations going forward. There is strong evidence of good community balance as shown in table 5.

A nursery unit would support families in being able to avail of an integrated education for their children from the age of 3 at All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School. This would also enable the school to match its Year 1 provision with a pre-school provision and allow a clear pathway into integrated primary provision for those families in the area who have indicated a preference for integrated education. Between 2019 and 2023, 20 families who had initially applied for places in the All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School reception class but were rejected because there were not enough places available, then found places with other local pre-school providers and did not re-apply for Year 1 places the following year.

The proposal would contribute to the Programme for Government (PfG) Outcome 12 as it targets education in an economically and educationally deprived DEA.

The (NI) Executive's Child Poverty Strategy includes the following goal:

*'Early Years (0-4) – Our goal is to ensure that every child should have the chance to develop their full potential in infancy regardless of social background. The importance of Early Years' experience in helping shape positive, social, psychological and educational development is well recognised in research. Maximising provision and support, therefore for children in their early years is an investment which will help lay a solid foundation for their future.'*

Approval of the nursery unit provision would be supportive of this strategy.

## **6.0 EDUCATIONAL IMPACT**

The aim of Area Planning is to ensure that all primary and post-primary pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum that meets their educational needs in a school that is educationally and financially viable and sustainable.

Area Planning contributes to school improvement through evaluating the best use of resources within the system to ensure that available provision can meet the needs of all pupils.

The addition of a part-time nursery unit at All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School will have a positive impact on those parents seeking integrated education.

## **7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

The proposal is for the establishment of pre-school provision at All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School to provide 26 part-time nursery places with effect from 1 September 2026, or as soon as possible thereafter.

*Finance* The recurrent costs associated with the nursery unit will be covered through LMS funding.

*Staffing* Additional teaching and non-teaching staff, approximately £80,000, would be required with a recruitment process undertaken by the Board of Governors. The cost of staff would be covered through LMS funding.

*Transport* Transport is not applicable to pre-school provision.

*Accommodation* Accommodation will be required for the nursery unit. An area has been identified within the school grounds which would be suitable with an estimated cost of additional accommodation approximately £500,000.

## 8.0 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (IF THE PROPOSAL IS APPROVED)

The Education Authority must be mindful of setting an effective date which is achievable and does not set unreasonable expectations for the proposed establishment of the part time provision. As additional accommodation will be required for the new nursery provision, time has been built into the implementation date to provide for the securing of funding, design, planning and delivery. An indicative date, subject to approvals, is September 2026, or as soon as possible thereafter.

The proposal is being brought forward under Article 14 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986. The implementation date for the proposal is for 1 September 2026, or as soon as possible thereafter. The timetable, pending approval from the Education Committee, for the consultation process is:

Development Proposal Timeline	
<p>Proposal:</p> <p>A statutory nursery unit will be established at All Children’s Controlled Integrated Primary School to provide 26 part-time nursery places with effect from 1 September 2026 or as soon as possible thereafter.</p>	Proposed Timeline
<p>Consultation with Governors, Staff, Parents – Questionnaire (8 weeks)</p> <p>Consultation Responses to be forwarded to the Education Authority</p> <p>Responses will be considered and a Case for Change document compiled before submission to the Education Authority’s Strategic Planning and Policy Committee. A deputation may request to attend the Strategic Planning and Policy Committee or the Board meeting in accordance with the Education Authority’s Standing Orders.</p>	17 April 2024 – 12 June 2024
<p>Consultation with other affected schools - (8 weeks)</p> <p>Consultation Responses to be forwarded to the Education Authority</p> <p>Responses will be considered and a Case for Change document compiled before submission to the Education Authority’s Strategic Planning and Policy Committee</p>	17 April 2024 – 12 June 2024
<p>Strategic Planning and Policy Committee to seek Approval to Publish</p> <p>Case for Change to be taken to the 3 September 2024 Education Authority’s Strategic Planning and Policy Committee for consideration</p> <p>If approved to publish, a Development Proposal will be published in the local newspapers which begins the start of a two month statutory objection period</p>	3 September 2024
<p>Statutory Objection Period (2 months)</p> <p>Objections/comments to be forwarded to the Department of Education</p>	September 2024 – November 2024
<p>Await Ministerial/Department of Education Decision</p>	February 2025
<p>Implementation</p> <p>If approved, the Development Proposal will take effect from 1 September 2026, or as soon as possible thereafter</p>	

## Appendix C

### DP 738 All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School

#### Statutory Objection Period Responses

##### Letters in Support of the Proposal

1.	Resident	I wish to log my support for the establishment of a part-time nursery at All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary Sch.
2.	Local Resident	<p>I am a local family and outreach worker in Newcastle, as well as an aunt to 5 children in the local community. My two eldest nephews both attended Shimna Integrated College and my eldest niece attends All Children's primary school.</p> <p>Integrated education is of particular importance to my family, my in laws and myself as we have a number of mixed marriages. I feel that integrated education is important in our community to reduce hate crime, discrimination. Northern Ireland in general has a significant history of these issues between local people, when you add immigration into the mix, this can have a devastating effect all involved and the wider community. At present in the town there are 2 pre-schools, one linked to a "Protestant" ethos school and a "Catholic Maintained" school . This means that parents from mixed marriages have to make a decision on where to send their children, this would be remedied by the introduction of an integrated pre-school.</p> <p>Northern Ireland has come a long way from the past but still has a journey to go, this is evident in the number of mixed marriage couples, the number of asylum seekers and migrants who are looking to start a fresh due to issues in the countries they were born. People who have no religious belief also have a right to be educated within the confines of what they believe and the two pre-schools currently available have Christian ethos as part of curriculum.</p> <p>An Integrated Pre-school brings the community together, offers opportunities for people from different backgrounds to mix and learn about each other without the preconceptions of difference, this leads to unity and equality being something that is normal and not learnt over time.</p> <p>I personally and professionally believe that the introduction of an integrated pre-school only brings advantages for our town and the local community.</p>
3.	Interested Party	I wish to have my support noted for the establishment of a statutory Nursery Unit at All Children's Integrated Primary





**Appendix D**  
**Controlled Schools' Support Council**  
2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Main Building  
Stranmillis University College  
Belfast, BT9 5DY  
T: 028 9531 3030  
E [info@csscni.org.uk](mailto:info@csscni.org.uk)

24 October 2024

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Re: Development Proposal 738 All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School**

The Controlled Schools' Support Council (CSSC) notes that the Education Authority has published Development Proposal 738 which proposes the establishment of a part-time nursery unit at All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School with effect from 1 September 2026, or as soon as possible thereafter. CSSC welcomes the opportunity to respond and has consulted with controlled schools in the area.

CSSC notes the requirement for the Department of Education to consider the implications of the Integrated Education Act (NI) 2022 (IE Act) in its assessment of Development Proposals and to consult with relevant bodies in accordance with Section 3. CSSC acknowledges its responsibility as an advisory body as defined in Section 3 of the IE Act and welcomes the opportunity to provide commentary in this context.

The following submission represents Council's response to the statutory consultation process and comments in respect of consultation in accordance with provisions in Section 3 of the IE Act. CSSC notes the assurance that points made in responding during the objection period will form part of the assessment of relevant evidence that is brought to the decision maker.

CSSC notes from the Education Authority's commentary to its pre-publication consultation regarding DP 738 that there is an awareness of the current level of pre-school education in the area, which exceeds demand. The Education Authority has also considered the impact which additional provision may have on existing provision. Nonetheless, the Education Authority in expressing its support for the proposal references the duty placed on the Department of Education and the Education Authority to encourage, facilitate and support the development of integrated education (IE Act). It highlights that the Education Authority must support the Department in fulfilling its statutory duty by striving to meet demonstrated parental demand in an area for pre-school education at grant-maintained and controlled integrated primary schools. CSSC acknowledges the historical interest in

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Reception provision at All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School, which is presented to evidence parental demand. It is noted that the closest integrated nursery provision to All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School is 16 miles from the school.

Whilst supportive of the establishment of a nursery unit, which will potentially ensure the long-term sustainability of All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School, CSSC is also conscious of the sustainability of other controlled pre-school providers in the area and the potential for displacement and negative impact on these providers due to this proposal.

CSSC is conscious of the Ministerial Statement (13 June 2024) on Early Learning and Childcare measures which confirmed the Executive's commitment to the process of transitioning all funded pre-school education places to 22.5 hours per week.

In its response to the Education Authority's pre-publication consultation, CSSC affirmed its support for a proposal that would deliver an area solution. Council requested that the proposal to establish additional pre-school provision in Newcastle be considered in the context of an area solution which would address all the issues highlighted in the consultation document: the statutory duty in respect of Integrated Education, inequity of existing provision, overprovision of pre-school education places, underage children in preschool education classes and small Reception classes within All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School.

CSSC would seek assurances that if approved, the implementation plan to establish a nursery unit at All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School would include existing pre-school providers in the area. This will ensure that displacement is avoided as an unintended consequence and will also assist in reducing the number of underage children in the system.

The Executive commitment to standardising pre-school session times provides an opportunity to ensure equitable access to 22.5 hours pre-school education for all children in the Newcastle area. CSSC supports Development Proposal 738 taking into account the statutory duty to encourage, facilitate and support the development of Integrated Education whilst being mindful of other relevant statutory duties such as those in relation to the efficient use of public resources.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Baker', with a large, sweeping flourish underneath.

Mr Mark Baker  
Chief Executive

## Appendix E

26th November 2024

Area Planning Policy Team (East Region)  
Rathgael House  
43 Balloo Road  
Rathgael  
BANGOR  
Co Down  
BT19 7PR



### **DP 738 - All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School**

It is NICIE's view that the Department of Education should approve the request for the establishment of a Part time Nursery Unit at All children's IPS. The approval would support parity of pre-school provision in the Newcastle area, enabling more parents who seek Integrated Education from pre-school onwards, the opportunity to access It.

Approval for this request will enable the school to move out of the cyclical nature of enrolment they find themselves in due to the rules around Reception classes. Not only has this caused issues for the school regarding sustainability of a steady pre-school and primary 1 intake, it has also led to financial pressures on the school. The establishment of a Nursery Unit will not encroach on the enrolment of P1 as currently happens with the Reception class. This will support parents who wish to access Integrated Primary Education to have a better opportunity to do so and will help the DE to fulfil its statutory duties in relation to Integrated Education.

All Children's IPS has campaigned the authorities for quite some time to develop a Nursery Unit in the school. It would be important that the DE approves it to enable a parity of access and choice across school types.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sean Pettis', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

**Sean Pettis**

**Chief Executive Officer**

**NI Council for Integrated Education (NICIE)**

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## Integrated Education Fund DP 738 Input

The Integrated Education Fund (IEF) appreciates being consulted in relation to the Development Proposal 738 for All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School. The IEF supports this Development Proposal for a 26 place part-time nursery by September 2026. This proposal will assist meeting the demand for Integrated provision in the Newcastle area and help the Department fulfil its requirements of the Integrated Education Act 2022

The IEF is making this one submission covering objection period and Section 3 comments.

Kind regards, Paul

Paul Caskey OBE  
Chief Executive

**Integrated Education Fund**  
Forestview  
Purdy's Lane  
Belfast  
BT8 7AR



## Appendix G

### ETI Development Proposal Commentary Paper

DP 738

**Date of last ETI report:** January 2018 (involving action short of strike). The previous inspection was February 2011.

**Web link:** [Primary Inspection \(Involving Action Short of Strike\) - All Children's Integrated Primary School, Newcastle, County Down 405-6541 \(etini.gov.uk\)](https://www.etini.gov.uk/primary-inspection-involving-action-short-of-strike-all-childrens-integrated-primary-school-newcastle-county-down-405-6541)

**Date<sup>1</sup>:** 2 October 2024

1. Update on relevant/contextual information since the last published inspection report.

- The previous principal and two long-standing middle managers retired in August 2024. A new principal and permanent member of staff were appointed in September 2024.
- The school is in a Shared Education partnership with St Mary's Primary School and Nursery Unit and Newcastle Primary School and Nursery Unit.

2. Knowledge of **any contextual information on the quality of education** in the wider local area.

- There is no recent contextual information on the quality of education in the wider local area due to an extended period of industrial action.

3. Potential benefits/concerns associated with the claims of **educational** benefits for pupils made in the Case for Change.

- Currently, parents do not have an option for Integrated nursery provision in the Newcastle area. The closest integrated nursery provision to All Children's Integrated Primary School is 16 miles from the school.
- All Children's Integrated Primary School has an established reception provision. These children are taught in a composite class with year 1 children.
- All pre-school provisions are non-denominational.
- There is currently over provision of nursery places within the Newcastle area: Newcastle Primary School's nursery unit has unfilled places for target aged children; St Mary's Primary School's nursery unit has two underage children enrolled; and Newcastle Pre-School Playgroup has one unfilled place.

4. Any concerns about the **implementation date or phasing of implementation** should this be applicable (i.e. curricular, EF, accommodation, LSCs, etc).

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<sup>1</sup> This commentary paper is based on the information and evidence available to ETI on this date. Please check the ETI website [www.etini.gov.uk](https://www.etini.gov.uk) for any new inspection reports that may have published after this date.

5. The **SSP Criteria** indicators requiring ETI input (if known and/or for which information is available).

Sustainable Schools Criterion	Indicator	Meets criterion		
		Yes	No (reason(s))	Information not available
Quality Educational Experience	1.1 Attainment levels of pupils, Key Stage tests pending development of new indicators for Primary Schools, GCSE results for Post-Primary Schools.			There is no recent information due to industrial action.
	1.2 In primary, a single classroom contains no more than <u>two</u> year-groups in a composite class; for example, years 1 and 2.	✓		
	1.3 A <u>minimum</u> of four teachers at a primary school. This recognises both the needs of pupils and the demands on teachers.	✓		
	1.4 The ability of the school to cater for children with Special Educational Needs.	✓		
	1.5 The ability at post-primary level to be able to provide suitable access to the entitlement framework including, where appropriate, linkages with other schools, the FE sector or other providers.			
	1.6 The standards and the quality of learning and teaching at the school.			N/A
	1.7 The range of curricular and extra-curricular activities available for children including career guidance, physical education, music, art, drama and science.	✓		
	1.8 The quality of the <u>physical</u> environment for learning and teaching i.e. the condition, energy and water efficiency and suitability of the buildings.	✓		
	1.9 The quality of, and arrangements for, pastoral care including the active promotion of the principles of social justice in all areas of the formal and informal curriculum.			There is no recent information due to industrial action.
Strong Leadership and	4.1 Governors' views on the school based on quantitative and qualitative evidence.			There is no recent information

Management by Boards of Governors and Principals				due to industrial action.
	4.8 There is a school development plan in place and progress is being made to achieve the plan's aims and objectives.			There is no recent information due to industrial action.
	4.9 Pupil behaviour, expulsions, suspensions and non-attendance as well as positive behaviours such as involvement in school management (e.g. buddying and mentoring schemes).			There is no recent information due to industrial action.
<b>Strong links with the Community</b>	6.1 Degree and quality of parental involvement (schools will be asked to provide evidence on this).			There is no recent information due to industrial action.
	6.3 Contribution of the school to the community (schools will be asked to provide evidence on this).			There is no recent information due to industrial action.
	6.4 Presence of other features of provision, e.g. nursery or specialist unit.	✓	Reception provision	

## 6. Summary of impact of the proposal

<p>Potential impact on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Castlewellan Community Playgroup and Newcastle Pre-School Playgroup which both have had unfilled places in the last four years; Castlewellan Playgroup has a reduction in places available.</li> <li>• reception provision in Annsborough Integrated Primary School in particular, and three other primary schools within a 10 mile radius (St Joseph's PS, Carnacaville, St Patrick's PS, Burrenreagh, St Mary's PS, Aughlisnafin).</li> <li>• current nursery provision in Newcastle Primary School and Nursery Unit and St Mary's Primary School and Nursery Unit both of which have enrolled underage children in the last four years due to unfilled places. The figures provided would indicate there would be significant impact to Newcastle Primary School and Nursery Unit which is the only controlled nursery provision in the area.</li> </ul>
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### DE Policy Team Inputs

#### Finance Return to APPT

Please see Financial Monitoring Teams' comments on **DP 738**:

Proposal: To establish a new 26 place Part-time Nursery Unit at the school

#### **405-6541 All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School**

The school's provisional Surplus position as of 31 March 2024 is £2,421.

The school's Deficit in the previous year, up to 31 March 2023 was **-£2,282**.

The school received a total Common Funding Formula budget of £786,188 in the **2024-25 financial year** for **210<sup>1</sup>** FTE pupils, which generates a per capita of £3,744.

The average for all primary schools is £3,938.

The total Free School Meals Entitlement for the school is **40<sup>2</sup>** pupils, which represents **19.05%** of the total FTE, which places the school in **Band 1** for funding purposes.

The school received £23,323 for Small Schools Support funding, which represents **45.00%** of the maximum funding for this factor, within the Nursery & Primary funding stream.

The school also received £7,389 in respect of Primary Principals' Release Time.

All schools receive a delegated budget for the financial year based on verified enrolments as at the October Census prior to the financial year.

Any new provision (including new Nursery units) opening during the year are a pressure for the Department's "New Schools & Units" fund.

A new 26 P/T Nursery Unit is likely to create a funding need of **around £38k** – based on past costs for such units opening during the financial year – for the period from Opening to the end of that financial year. Full year costs to the *Aggregated Schools Budget* \* are likely to be c. £65k (for new provision, not previously funded).

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<sup>2</sup> The school's funding allocation is based on the previous year's census data (e.g. the October 2023 census data was used to determine the 2024-25 CFF allocation). The census data on the Schools+ database relates to an academic year, as opposed to the financial year. In addition, differences between funded pupils and total pupils within the census count may occur for a number of reasons, including, but not limited to, zero rated pupils, some reception pupils, and over age pupils (paragraph 7 of Annex B to the Common Funding Scheme refers).

Details of the school's budget allocation from the Common Funding Formula, for the last 3 years, is as follows:

<b>Factor</b>	<b>2024-25</b> £	<b>2023-24</b> £	<b>2022-23</b> £
Pupil AWPU	639,374	562,924	537,074
TSN – Social Deprivation	24,544	26,385	28,226
TSN – Additional Social Deprivation	1,167	1,212	1,238
Premises Area	10,449	10,449	10,449
Premises FTE	18,223	18,658	18,025
Small Schools Support	23,323	21,509	23,079
Primary Principals Release Time	7,389	6,814	7,307
Foundation Stage	26,368	30,574	30,924
Teachers Salary Protection	22,665	20,094	16,998
Newcomer Pupils	11,276	9,608	8,249
Children Looked After	1,410	1,201	1,178
<b>Total School Funding</b>	<b>786,188</b>	<b>709,428</b>	<b>682,747</b>
Pupil FTE (no.)	210	217	211
Per Capita	£3,744	£3,269	£3,236

## **EWD INPUT TO APPSECT DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL**

<b>TITLE &amp; Proposal</b>	DP 738 – All Children's Controlled Integrated PS, Newcastle – Establish a nursery unit with 26 part-time nursery places with effect from 1 September 2026 or as soon as possible thereafter.
<b>Ref Number:</b>	DP 738 – School Reference Number 405-6541

## **EWD INPUT**

**NIL RETURN** – No issues/concerns have been identified, from a policy perspective, in respect of this development proposal for teaching and non-teaching staff as highlighted in the Resource Implications (Section 7) of the Case for Change (CfC). The establishment of a new Nursery unit has no impact on the policies which fall within EWD area of responsibility.

## SECRET ASSESSMENT OF DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

DP 738 - All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School 405-6541 – Establishment of a Nursery Unit

### STAGE 1

Proposer - Education Authority

Proposal - A statutory nursery unit will be established at All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School to provide 26 part-time nursery places with effect from 1 September 2026, or as soon as possible thereafter

Current Position - All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School is currently involved in a Mainstreaming Shared Education partnership with St Mary's Primary School, Newcastle.

List of neighbouring <phase> schools provided by Area Planning

School		Programme	Membership
Ref No	Name		
4056541	All Children's Integrated Primary School	Mainstreaming	St Mary's PS
4011698	Newcastle Primary School	Mainstreaming	St Joseph's PS, Tyrella
4036635	St Mary's Primary School	Mainstreaming	All Children's IPS
4031663	St Joseph's Primary School	Steps into Sharing	-
4031671	St Patrick's Primary School	Steps into Sharing	-
4046648	Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche	Mainstreaming	Annsborough Integrated School
4036454	St Malachy's Primary School	-	-
4036133	Sacred Heart Primary School	-	-

4053009	Annsborough Integrated Primary School	-	-
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Four of these schools are engaged in Mainstreaming Shared Education and two of these schools have shown an interest in Shared Education through the Steps into Sharing Programme.

**SECRET CONSIDERATION**

*The Case for Change*

The proposer, Education Authority, has acknowledged that All Children’s Controlled Integrated Primary School has been involved in a Shared Education partnership with St Mary’s Primary School, Newcastle since 2015.

The proposer has commented that the Shared Education lessons delivered to date have tended to focus on developing scientific skills in the outdoors, making use of the mountains, forests and coastline given the geographical context of the locality. Shared Education is fully incorporated into the School Development Plans and continues to be embedded with teaching staff availing of the Teacher Professional Learning modules as applicable

It has been noted that regular school newsletters are distributed to inform parents of Shared Education lessons and trips and local press are invited to promote shared events.

**SECRET ASSESSMENT**

The EA has acknowledged that SE is fully incorporated into the Primary School’s Development Plans and continues to be embedded with teaching staff availing of the Teacher Professional Learning modules which would suggest a positive impact to Shared Education partnerships in the area including the already established partnership with St Mary’s Primary School

I agree with the above assessment and approve the assessment to be forwarded to Area Planning.

**TRANSPORT AND FOOD IN SCHOOLS INPUT TO DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL (DP)**

**DP Title & Number: DP 738- A statutory nursery unit will be established at All Children’s Controlled Integrated Primary School to provide 26 part-time nursery places with effect from 1 September 2026, or as soon as possible thereafter.**

**Transport and Food in Schools Input:**

Transport not applicable to pre school provision and nil return from Food in Schools Team.

**Inclusion Directorate Input to Development Proposal (DP) Submission**

**DP 738- A statutory nursery unit will be established at All Children’s Controlled Integrated Primary School to provide 26 part-time nursery places with effect from 1 September 2026, or as soon as possible thereafter.**

**Special Education – Early Years & Pupil Support (SEY&PST) Team Input**

It is noted in the Case for Change (CfC) that All Children’s Controlled Integrated Primary School (IPS) is considered a sustainable school. The Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice<sup>3</sup> focuses on a continuum of need and a continuum of provision, which may be made in a variety of forms. Children with SEN require the greatest possible access to a broad and balanced education, including the Northern Ireland Curriculum and equitable access to same.

The CfC is largely silent on SEN issues, save to reference the objectives in the Sustainable Schools Policy (SSP) that pertain to SEN and to reference an historic school inspection report from 2011.

Therefore, based on the lack of available information relating to SEN learners, SEY&PST would not neither welcome nor oppose this DP, subject to the needs of pupils with SEN being appropriately managed and mindful of the changing pupil population profile.

Nil Return from Special Education & Review Team (SERT) and Special Education & Inclusion Policy Team (SEIPT).

**IID Input – Development Proposal 738 – All Children’s IPS 405-6541**

A statutory nursery unit will be established at All Children’s Controlled Integrated Primary School to provide 26 part-time nursery places with effect from 1 September 2026, or as soon as possible thereafter.

**Background**

The CfC outlines that the school’s accommodation is limited which restricts the number of reception applications it can accept. Table 4 of the CfC demonstrates that the number of reception applications has exceeded the number of accepted applications consistently since 2016/17. The CfC therefore proposes that statutory nursery provision with adequate nursery accommodation will help to satisfy demand in the area for integrated nursery places.

**Estate Operations Team Comment**

The CfC notes that although the school’s existing accommodation is relatively new, its site is restricted which limits growth potential. The CfC does however suggest that an area has been identified within the school grounds that would be suitable for accommodating a new nursery unit. The potential locations on the site will be subject to topographical surveys and a feasibility study which will seek to identify a preferred location.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/special-educational-needs-code-practice>

The CfC estimates the cost of a new unit to be approximately £500k. EOT would agree that this figure is largely accurate but is subject to unknown variables and inflation. Costs can vary significantly due to the complexity of some sites and the capital investment required could exceed this figure. An accurate representation of costs will only be obtained following the feasibility study, business case and ultimately through the tender process.

The CfC takes into consideration lead in times for design, planning and delivery and proposes an indicative date of September 2026 (or as soon as possible thereafter). While the typical timeframe for the delivery of a new modular unit is 18-24 months, this is subject to planning approvals, capital availability and any other unforeseen variables. EOT could not guarantee that appropriate accommodation will be in place by September 2026 if the Development Proposal was approved.

**Irish Medium and Integrated Education Team (IMIE) Comments on DP 738- A statutory nursery unit will be established at All Children’s Controlled Integrated Primary School to provide 26 part-time nursery places with effect from 1 September 2026, or as soon as possible thereafter.**

Under Article 66(2) and Article 88 of the 1989 Order the scheme of management for a grant maintained or controlled integrated school requires the Board of Governors to use its best endeavours, in exercising its functions, to ensure that the management, control and ethos of the school are such as are likely to ensure the provision of integrated education.

Under the Integrated Education Act (NI) 2022 the meaning of integrated education is the education together, in an integrated school, those of different cultures and religious beliefs and of none, including reasonable numbers of both Protestant and Roman Catholic children or young persons; those experiencing socio-economic deprivation and those not; and those of different abilities.

An integrated school is a school which intentionally supports, protects and advances an ethos of diversity, respect and understanding between those of different cultures and religious beliefs and of none, between those of different socio -economic backgrounds and between those of different abilities.

The IMIE team’s remit is to consider whether the proposer has provided enough information and evidence within the case for change that if the development proposal is approved the school is likely to meet the section one definition within 2022 Act.

The IMIE team would highlight the following information and evidence contained within the case for change under the three areas identified within the 2022 Act.

- (a) Likely to intentionally support, protect and advance an ethos of diversity, respect and understanding between those of different cultures and religious beliefs and of none, including reasonable numbers of both Protestant and Roman Catholic children or young persons.**

Contained within the Case for Change

- A nursery unit would have extremely positive benefits to the local community bringing together those from different cultures, religions, political backgrounds and disabilities.
- An all-inclusive nursery school for everyone, strengthening the commitment to integrated and inclusive education in Newcastle and the surrounding area.
- The school provides a learning environment in which children from Catholic and Protestant faiths, children from other faiths, cultures and communities learn together on a daily basis in the one school.

**(b) Likely to intentionally support, protect and advance an ethos of diversity, respect and understanding between those who are experiencing socio-economic deprivation and those who are not; and**

Contained within the Case for Change

- Given the MDM ranking of the wards that the school attracts most of its pupils from the free school meals uptake is in keeping with the profile of the area, i.e., an area where the wards fall into the low to mid-range of the MDM.
- The data shows that the school caters for pupils from various socio-economic backgrounds.

**(c) Likely to intentionally support, protect and advance an ethos of diversity, respect and understanding between those of different abilities.**

Contained within the Case for Change

- All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School is open to all pupils.
- All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School provides for the needs of all children.
- Clear evidence that the school caters for children across all nine stanine bands, within the majority of year groups.
- Pupils transfer to schools across many different types – selective, non-selective, controlled, integrated and Catholic maintained.

Other key evidence contained within the case for change that demonstrates the school's commitment to support, protect and advance an ethos of diversity, respect and understanding:

- All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School's culture, as an integrated school, embodies the ethos of Integrated Education
- The Controlled Schools' Support Council supports the proposal.
- The Education Authority, as the proposer, supports Development Proposal.
- The EA Pre-school Education Group (PEG) supports the DP.

All Children's Controlled Integrated Primary School meets the section one definition within 2022 Act. It is the IMIE team view is that the case for change has provided sufficient information and evidence to indicate that if a development proposal to establish a statutory nursery unit is approved then the school is likely to ensure the provision of integrated education within the newly established nursery unit as defined by the 2022 Act.

## **INPUT FROM EARLY YEARS TEAM**

**DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL NO 738 – IT IS PROPOSED THAT A STATUTORY NURSERY UNIT WILL BE ESTABLISHED AT ALL CHILDREN’S CONTROLLED INTEGRATED PRIMARY SCHOOL TO PROVIDE 26 PART-TIME NURSERY PLACES WITH EFFECT FROM 1 SEPTEMBER 2026, OR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE THEREAFTER.**

### **1. Introduction**

At the request of the Board of Governors of All Children’s Controlled Integrated Primary School, the Education Authority (EA) published Development Proposal Number 738, proposing that a statutory nursery unit will be established at the school to provide 26 part-time nursery places with effect from 1 September 2026, or as soon as possible thereafter.

### **2. Background**

All Children’s Controlled IPS is situated in Newcastle, Co Down and opened in 1986 with an initial enrolment of 62 pupils. It has a current approved enrolment and admissions number of 203 and 29 respectively. The school does not currently provide any nursery provision. It does, however, provide Reception provision and in the 2024/25 academic year it received 22 Reception applications (Table 4 CfC page 17). Nine of these applications were accepted with the CfC stating that the accommodation available means the school is restricted in the number of Reception applications it can accept. It further adds that the numbers of applications received shows a parental demand for integrated pre-school provision.

The Case for Change (page 13) states that All Children’s Controlled IPS is a sustainable school with the Year 1 admissions showing that it is a seven class-base school. The CfC further adds that the school is the only primary school within Newcastle town not to have pre-school provision, adding that the enrolment numbers identify that the Year 1 intake for the school would support the provision of a 26 pupil nursery unit. There are, in fact four other primary schools within the five mile radius without statutory pre-school provision attached.

The rationale for the proposal as set out in the CfC (page 26) sets out that while there are sufficient pre-school places in the area, there is no integrated pre-school

provision. It adds that approval of this proposal would be supportive of the duty outlined in Article 64 of the Education and Reform Order (1989) and the Integrated Education Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 for the Education Authority to encourage, facilitate and support integrated education.

The CfC further states that the inclusion of a 26 part-time nursery unit into All Children’s Controlled Integrated Primary School will allow all parents in the area that want to avail of integrated education the opportunity to do so, adding that this would also enable the school to match its Year One provision with a pre-school provision and allow a clear pathway into integrated primary provision for those families who have indicated a preference for integrated education (page 26).

The CfC adds that approval for nursery provision at All Children’s Controlled Integrated Primary School would support the school to become a stronger, more sustainable integrated school which, in turn, would support the community in building good relations going forward.

**Relevant policy areas**

The main policies relevant to this proposal are:

<p>The aim of the Pre-school Education Programme is to provide a funded pre-school education place for every target age child whose family want it.</p>	<p>The CfC focuses on a parental demand for pre-school places with an integrated management type, rather than unmet demand for pre-school education provision generally.</p> <p>The EA has advised that sufficient provision exists to meet current demand for pre-school places in the area.</p> <p>This is considered in more detail below.</p>
<p>Learning to Learn – A Framework for Early Years Education and Learning</p>	<p>Published on 7 October 2013, among its key actions is a moratorium on any new or additional full-time provision or conversion from part-time to full-time (defined as over 4.5 hours) in advance of a review of the current levels of full-time provision, existing research and the needs of children being served by it. The potential impact of plans for pre-school standardisation will be considered separately.</p>

Encourage, facilitate and support the development of integrated education	Under Article 64 of the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989 (integrated education) as amended by the Integrated Education (Northern Ireland) Act 2022, the Department of Education (DE) has a statutory duty to ‘encourage, facilitate and support the development of integrated education, that is to say the education together at school of Protestant and Roman Catholic pupils. This duty is considered in more detail below. A similar duty is applied to the Education Authority under section 2 of the Education Act (NI) 2014 (as amended).
Displacement of good quality pre-school education provision already in existence	It is the Department’s practice, where possible, not to displace good quality pre-school education provision already in existence with pre-school education provision in an alternative setting. As this DP is for pre-school provision at a controlled integrated primary school, it is considered in the context of DE’s relevant statutory duties. The potential impact of this proposal on existing provision is considered in more detail below.
Ensuring the best use of public resources	In discharging its duties, the Department must seek to avoid unreasonable public expenditure and to make the best use of the resources available to it. In light of this, it aims to fill available pre-school education provision as far as possible with target age children, avoiding over provision and the resulting enrolment of children under pre-school target age (penultimate age children) in statutory settings. This is considered in more detail below.
Reception provision	A key action under the Learning to Learning framework is the removal of reception provision. All Children’s Controlled IPS does have reception provision. This is considered in more detail below.
Standardisation	In September 2022, the then-Minister for Education announced her intention to standardise the funded pre-school education session length to 4.5 hours per day (22.5 hours per week for 38 weeks of the academic year) to all target aged pupils as part of the proposed Executive’s Early Learning and Childcare Strategy. Implementation of a standardised session length will be on a phased basis and subject to Executive agreement and funding.

### **3. Level of need for pre-school provision**

In determining the need for pre-school education provision, the Department generally assumes a level of provision at 95% of target age children, predicated on the application rate for pre-school education places, which is c.93%, however the level of

provision within local areas may be higher or lower, based on historic patterns of demand and assessment of ongoing need.

### **Level of Provision – two mile radius of All Children’s Controlled IPS.**

Table 1

Year	Statutory places	Non-statutory places	Reception places	Total pre-school provision	P1 places	Level of pre-school provision (%age of P1 places)	Underage children in statutory places
2021/22	104	18	4	126	105	116.2%	39
2022/23	104	15	4	119	76	156.6%	18
2023/24	104	15	4	119	87	136.8%	18
2024/25	104	13	9	117	89	131.5%	25
Proposed	130	13	0	143	89	160.6%	-

Source: School Census and provisional EA data

The level of provision within the two-mile radius has been significantly higher than the planning figure of 95% in each of the last four years ranging from 116.2% to 156.6%. In addition, large numbers of penultimate age children have also accessed funded pre-school education places in the area in each year, suggesting that current levels of provision are in excess of demand. Should the proposal be approved, the level of pre-school provision in the immediate area would increase further to approximately 160.6%.

### **Level of Provision – five mile radius of All Children’s Controlled IPS.**

Table 2

Year	Statutory places	Non-statutory places	Reception places	Total pre-school provision	P1 places	Level of pre-school provision (%age of P1 places)	Underage children in statutory places
2021/22	156	39	15	195	231	84.4%	46
2022/23	156	35	15	191	185	103.2%	18
2023/24	156	36	13	192	200	96.0%	18
2024/25	156	35	23	191	180	106.1%	25
Proposed	182	35	23	217	180	120.5%	-

Source: School Census and provisional EA data

The level of provision within the five-mile radius has fluctuated over the last four years ranging from 84.4% to 106.1%. However, this is in the main due to fluctuations in the Primary One cohort rather than the number of funded pre-school places available which has remained fairly constant over these years. Similar to the two-mile radius, large numbers of penultimate age children have also accessed

funded pre-school education places in the wider area in each of the last four years, which is an indicator of over provision in an area.

Should the proposal be approved, the level of pre-school provision in the two-mile and five-mile radii would increase to 160.6% and 120.5% respectively. This equates to approximately 58 and 46 funded pre-school places respectively above what would be necessary to achieve the planning figure based on the 2024/25 Primary One figures.

It is clear from this data that sufficient pre-school provision is available in both the immediate and wider area to meet current demand and any increase in the level of provision could result in the displacement of existing good quality pre-school provision in the area.

#### **4. Integrated Education**

Under Article 64 of the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989, the Department has a statutory duty to 'encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education'. The Integrated Education Act (NI) 2022 has extended this to also include a duty to 'support' integrated education, including aiming to meet demand for integrated education within the context of area planning and the overall sustainability of the school estate (including examining evidence of expected future demand). These duties must be considered alongside other legislative duties, including the duty under Article 44 of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986 (the Department and boards shall have regard to the general principle that, so far as is compatible with the provision of efficient instruction and training and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure, pupils shall be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents).

All funded pre-school education settings, regardless of location and management type, are accessible to children from all backgrounds and are subject to the same inspection standards. All pre-school education settings follow the same curricular guidance, the broad framework of which ensures equality of opportunity, pointing to staff acknowledging and respecting the culture, beliefs, and lifestyles of the families of all children. However, it is acknowledged that parents state preferences for pre-

school education provision taking into account a wide range of factors, and in some cases, parents may have a preference for pre-school education in schools with a particular management type, including an integrated management type, and this is taken into account in the Early Years Team (EYT) advice.

### ***Integrated Education in the area***

There is no other pre-school education provision with an integrated management type within a five-mile radius of All Children's Controlled IPS. The closest integrated statutory pre-school education provider is Cedar IPS, which is over 14 miles away. This school has a statutory nursery unit that provides 26 part-time pre-school education places and in 2024/25 received 24 first preference applications.

DP 674 was published in January 2022 which sought to establish a new statutory nursery unit at Drumlins IPS, Ballynahinch to provide 26 part-time nursery places. This proposal was approved by the then Permanent Secretary in June 2023. The new statutory nursery unit at Drumlins IPS is due to open in September 2025. Drumlins IPS is approximately 13.9 miles from All Children's Controlled IPS and the proposed new nursery unit is due to open at the school in September 2025. The proposed unit for Drumlins IPS has also been included in the Department's pre-school standardisation programme and has been approved by the Minister to transition to full-time when it opens in September 2025.

If DP 738 is approved, it is not expected that this would have any impact on provision at either Cedar IPS or the planned new provision at Drumlins IPS.

The CfC sets out that there is no integrated pre-school provision in the Newcastle area and states that approval of this proposal would be supportive of the duty outlined in Article 64 of the Education and Reform Order (1989) and the Integrated Education Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 for the Education Authority to encourage, facilitate and support integrated education (page 26). The CfC adds that this would allow all parents in the area that want to avail of integrated education the opportunity to do so and would support the school to become an even stronger, sustainable integrated school, which in turn would support the community in building good relations going forward (page 26).

It would appear from the application data for Reception places at All Children's Controlled IPS, as set out in Table 4 in the CfC (page 17), that there is evidence of demand for pre-school provision of an integrated management type in the area with an average of 18 Reception applications received in each of the last five years (22 applications in the current 2024/25 year). It is possible therefore that a new statutory nursery unit at the school may be sustainable in the long term.

## **5. RECENT CHANGES IN PROVISION**

There have been no significant changes to pre-school education provision in this area in recent years.

## **6. TEMPORARY FLEXIBILITY**

There have been no Temporary Flexibility requests approved for any setting within the five mile radius of All Children's Controlled IPS in any of the last four years.

## **7. RECEPTION PROVISION**

All Children's Controlled IPS provides Reception places and in 204/25 accepted nine reception children. Three other pre-school settings within the five-mile radius also provide Reception places who between them accepted 14 reception children in 2024/25.

While the CfC does not explicitly state that the Reception provision at All Children's Controlled IPS would cease should DP 738 be approved, it is assumed that this would be necessary and a condition of approval. Given the further increase to the level of provision in the area if approved, it is also possible that applications to the reception provision at the other three settings may be reduced should approval be granted.

## **8. IMPACT ON VOLUNTARY AND PRIVATE SECTOR PROVIDERS**

The PSEP is a partnership between statutory and voluntary/private pre-school education providers and both sectors are equally valued for their contribution to the education of pre-school children. Both sectors adhere to the same curricular guidelines and are inspected to the same educational standards. In considering DPs for statutory provision, careful consideration is given to the impact of any new

provision on existing good quality voluntary/private providers in PSEP. In addition to considering the potential for over provision and duplication, this also considers the potential for a proposal to destabilise provision in an area and considers the preferences of parents who have chosen pre-school provision of other management types in the area.

There are currently sufficient funded pre-school places in the Newcastle area to accommodate every child whose parents want a place for them. If approved, the proposed additional 26 part-time statutory pre-school education places would increase the levels of provision within the two mile and five-mile radii to 160.6% and 120.5% respectively, and the level of over provision would be some 58 and 46 places respectively above what is required to achieve the planning figure of 95%.

There is a very strong likelihood therefore that the proposed additional provision, if approved, could have a detrimental impact on other existing pre-school settings in the area.

Concerns regarding potential displacement if the proposal were approved were also raised by other settings in the area that responded to the pre-consultation (CfC page 6). The EA PEG also highlighted concerns regarding the potential impact, including displacement, the proposal could have on existing non-statutory provision in the area.

It is recognised, however, that the school already caters for a number of target aged pupils via reception provision. Assuming that this provision would cease if the DP were approved, this could mitigate the impact on other settings (albeit to a limited extent), as between four and ten target aged children have attended the school's reception provision in each of the last five years (CfC page 13).

## **9. ENSURING THE BEST USE OF PUBLIC RESOURCES**

In discharging its duties, the Department must seek to avoid unreasonable public expenditure and to make the best use of the resources available to it, with Article 44 of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986 stating that the Department and

boards shall have regard to the general principle that, so far as is compatible with the provision of efficient instruction and training and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure, pupils shall be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents). In light of this, the Department aims to maximise the available pre-school places for target age children, avoiding over provision and the resulting enrolment of children younger than 3 years and 2 months (underage children) in statutory settings.

It is clear from Tables 1 and 2 above that significant numbers of penultimate age children have been accessing funded pre-school education places within the two and five mile radii in each of the last four years. This is a strong indicator that sufficient pre-school provision already exists to meet current demand and any increase to this will likely lead to an increase in the numbers of penultimate children accessing funded pre-school provision in the area.

## **10. CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

The CfC advises that a total of 86 responses were received to a pre-consultation exercise between April and June 2024 (page 3). These were received from Governors; staff; and parents of All Children's Controlled IPS and other local schools in the area who may be affected by the proposal. Response were also received from political representatives and some sectoral bodies.

The comments received were a mix of support for and against the proposal. A summary of these can be found on pages 4 - 7 of the CfC.

The CfC also states that the EA PEG supports the proposal in accordance with the duty outlined in the Integrated Education Act (NI) 2022 to encourage, facilitate and support integrated education and in the context that based on demonstrated parental demand evidenced by application trends for the school for Reception applications and intakes over several years, which would suggest that 26 part-time nursery places would be sustainable (page 8).

However, the EA PEG has highlighted concerns regarding the potential impact of this additional provision, including potential displacement, of the following existing

voluntary/private funded pre-school providers in the area, namely Newcastle Pre-School Playgroup and Castlewellan Community Playgroup.

## **11. STANDARDISATION**

The Minister for Education announced in May 2024 his intention to standardise all pre-school sessions over time to deliver 4.5 hours per day. To date 106 pre-school settings have been approved by the Minister to transition to the standardised full-time session length from September 2025. It will, however, take a number of years for all pre-schools to transition to the standardised session length. The speed of transition will largely be dependent on the resources available from the Executive at each stage, as well as the circumstances of individual pre-school settings.

It is reasonable, however, to consider the potential impact of pre-school standardisation on this Development Proposal. Should DP 738 be approved to establish new statutory nursery provision at All Children's Controlled IPS, that provision would be considered in due course in respect of plans for the standardisation of the pre-school session length. Therefore if approval is granted to new part-time nursery provision at All Children's Controlled IPS, in line with the aim of the pre-school standardisation programme, the transition of the setting to full-time provision in the near future should be taken into account. As with all newly approved pre-school provision, if this DP is approved the EA will take the pre-school provision into account within its planning immediately.

## **12. CONCLUSION**

The evidence appears to suggest that there is a level of demand for education of an integrated management type in the Newcastle area and that this is likely to extend to a level of demand for pre-school education of an integrated management type which is not currently being met through the existing reception provision at the school. In line with the relevant statutory duties, it is likely to be reasonable that pre-school provision of an integrated management type should be made available in the area to address this demand.

There is, however, insufficient evidence of the need for additional pre-school education provision overall in the area at this time. The current level of pre-school provision in

the area is above the planning figure in both the two mile radius (131.5%) and the five mile radius (106.1%) and would increase further if the proposal were approved. In addition, during the 2024/25 pre-school admissions process all children who applied for a funded pre-school place and remained with the process to the end received an offer of a funded place, with EA data showing that fewer first preference applications were received within the five mile radius than there were places available (174 / 193). This is further evidenced by the fact that significant numbers of penultimate age children also accessed a funded pre-school education place in the 2024/25 academic year.

If approved, the proposal would increase the levels of provision to 160.6% and 120.5% respectively, which would equate to 58 and 46 more pre-school places than the planning figure within each radius and consequently could result in displacement of existing good quality pre-school education provision and/or lead to an increase in the number of underage children attending statutory pre-school education in the area. While it is assumed that approval of the DP would require cessation of reception at the school, the very limited numbers attending the reception provision as set out in the CfC suggest that this would do little to mitigate the impact on other settings.

Having carefully considered all of the information, evidence, views for and against this proposal, EYT consider that on balance, particularly in light of the statutory duties contained within the Integrated Education Act, the proposal to provide pre-school provision of an integrated management type in the area is likely to be reasonable, but that provision of additional places of any management type at this time may, and is even likely to, have a detrimental impact on wider pre-school education provision.

The team notes that, at the time of writing, the pre-school admissions process for the academic year 2025/26 is in progress.