

COPY OF DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Cover Note

DP No.	DP 447	
School	Cygnet House - preparatory department of Glenlola Collegiate, Bangor (461-0097)	
Proposal	Proposal to discontinue education at Cygnet House from 31 August 2016 or as soon as possible thereafter.	
Minister's Decision	Approved	
Date of Decision	5th May 2016	
Minister's Comments	n/a	
Additional Notes	n/a	
Information Redacted	Some information and personal data may have been removed in line with the principles of the Freedom of Information and Data Protection Act.	
	Key	Details
	■	redaction
	*	refers to less than five cases where data is considered sensitive
	#	means figure has been suppressed to prevent disclosure of sensitive information under rules of disclosure

**From: Lorraine Finlay
Area Planning Policy Team**

Date: 25 March 2016

**To: JOHN O'DOWD MLA
Minister for Education**

Copy distribution below

**DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL NO. 447 TO DISCONTINUE EDUCATION AT
CYGNET HOUSE A PREPARATORY DEPARTMENT OF GLENLOLA
COLLEGIATE BANGOR**

Issue: The Education Authority (EA) proposal to discontinue education at Cygnet House , a preparatory department of Glenlola Collegiate, Bangor from 31 August 2016 or as soon as possible thereafter.

Timescale: Routine

Financial/Resource Implications: Anticipated Teaching Redundancy costs of [REDACTED]

FOI Implications This submission is likely to be fully disclosable.

Statutory Duties Implications: N/A

Presentational/Contentious Issues: It is likely that there will be local media interest in your decision. A draft Press Release will be provided for your approval following your decision.
(To be agreed with the Communications Team)

Recommendation: It is recommended that you:

- (i) Approve DP No 447 to discontinue education at Cygnet House, a preparatory department of Glenlola Collegiate, with effect from 31 August 2016; and
- (ii) Agree that this submission (with any appropriate redactions) can be published on

the Department's website once the Education Authority and the school have been informed of your decision and a press release issued.

LOCATION MAP

Map1

Cygnets House (Glenlola Prep) Bangor



- Key
- Cygnets House (Glenlola Prep)
 - Controlled Primary
 - Controlled Integrated
 - Catholic Maintained



INTRODUCTION

1. On 17 December 2015 the Education Authority (EA) published Development Proposal (DP) No. 447 to discontinue education at Cygnet House, a preparatory department of Glenlola Collegiate, Bangor with effect from 31 August 2016, or as soon as possible thereafter. The proposal, as published, is set out in full in **Appendix A**.

2. The statutory two-month objection period for this proposal ended on 17 February 2016.

BACKGROUND

Cygnet House Preparatory School

3. Cygnet House is a co-educational, interdenominational preparatory department attached to Glenlola Collegiate, a controlled girl's grammar school located in Bangor, Co Down.

4. When Glenlola Collegiate opened in its new school building in May 2003 the preparatory department was allocated separate accommodation within the main building of the school.

5. Traditionally Cygnet House only enrolled girls however, following the closure of Connor House, the preparatory department of Bangor Grammar School on 31 August 2011 the former South Eastern Education and Library Board published a development proposal in April 2012, for Cygnet House to become co-educational from 31 August 2012. This proposal was approved by you in April 2012.

6. In 2014/15 there were 65 pupils enrolled in Cygnet House, 10 boys and 55 girls. Three percent (3%) of these pupils were entitled to Free School Meals. Current enrolment figures for 2015/16 show an enrolment of only nine pupils in the preparatory department, all in Year 7.

7. Cygnet House was inspected by the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) in February 2015. The assessment of the quality of education provided in the preparatory department was 'satisfactory'.

Area Profile

8. On the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2010 the Bangor Castle area is placed 545 out of 890 (1 being most deprived and 890 being least deprived).

9. The 2014 published primary area plan for the former South Eastern Education and Library Board area (now the EA) highlights the Needs Model projections to 2025

in the former North Down Borough Council area. The Model indicates growth in the area until 2018 followed by a downward trend with fewer places required in 2025.

10. Controlled primary school provision in the Bangor area has been restructured by the EA following your approval of four development proposals in June 2014 and December 2014 to reduce the enrolments at Clandeboye and Kilcooley Primary Schools, and to increase provision at Rathmore and Towerview Primary Schools respectively. The snapshot at **Table 1** below provides details of primary school provision within the Bangor area.

Table 1: Snapshot of Cygnet House and Alternative Primary Provision in (i) the Bangor Area; and (ii) alternative preparatory Departments

Ref No	School	Distance from Glenlola Prep	Approved Enrolment (2015/16)	2013/14 Enrolment	2014/15 Enrolment	2015/16 Enrol*	2015/16 Unfilled places**	Approved Admission Nos	2015/16 Total First Preference Applications	Variance (over/under subscribed at First Pref)	2015/16 Actual Admission	ETI reports assessment/ publication date
461-0097	Glenlola Collegiate Preparatory, Bangor	-	-	67	65	9	-	-	-	-	-	2015 Satisfactory
461-0063	Regent House Preparatory, Newtownards	6.0	-	113	97	105	-	-	-	-	7	2013 Very good
462-0044	Sullivan Upper Preparatory, Hollywood	9.3	-	180	191	187	-	-	-	-	25	2012 Very good
Total			-	360	353	301	-	-	-	-	32	
401-1650	Ballyholme	2.4	630	625	627	631	13	90	102	12 (o)	90	2010 Very good
401-6430	Ballymagee	1.8	406	403	407	406	6	58	68	10 (o)	58	2011 Outstanding
401-3023	Bloomfield	0.9	408	370	382	395	39	58	65	7 (o)	58	2015 Good
401-1670	Clandeboye	2.0	406	211	250	282	127	58	39	19 (u)	55	2012 Very good
401-1645	Crawfordsburn	4.1	221	216	220	209	20	30	31	1 (o)	30	2014 Good
401-3045	Grange Park	1.7	402	402	406	409	-	57	68	11 (o)	60	2012 Good
401-6002	Kilcooley	2.2	205	139	145	153	55	29	20	9 (u)	21	2012 Good
401-6192	Kilmaine	2.0	610	615	613	622	4	87	98	11 (o)	90	2015 Very good
401-6067	Rathmore	2.9	560	543	560	586	-	87	85	2 (u)	87	2014 Very good
401-6111	Towerview	2.4	334	353	346	358	3	58	62	4 (o)	59	2012 Very good
Total			4182	3877	3956	4051	267	612	638		608	

Cumulative Total			4182	4237	4309	4352	267	612	638		640	
405-1680	Bangor Central	0.6	618	604	602	602	22	87	85	2 (u)	88	2011 Very good
Total			618	604	602	602	22	87	85		88	
Cumulative Total			4800	4841	4911	4954	289	699	723		728	
403-6146	St Comgall's	1.4	290	298	297	299	-	41	50	9 (o)	43	2014 Outstanding
403-6148	St Malachy's	1.9	437	317	346	355	88	60	48	12 (12)	55	2013 Good
Total			727	615	643	654	88	101	98		98	
Grand Total			5527	5456	5554	5608	377	800	821		826	

Special Circumstances

Preparatory School

23. Preparatory Schools are a separate category of primary school which receive only partial funding from the Department of Education. The Common Funding Scheme provides for preparatory departments to receive £546 per pupil for the 2015/16 financial year. In comparison, primary school pupils receive £2,183 per pupil. The Board of Governors of a preparatory school is not restricted in the fees they can charge parents to make up the remaining balance of funding required to make the school self-supporting.

Impact of decision to publish DP for closure

13. When parents became aware at the beginning of the Autumn Term 2015 of the intention to publish a DP to close Cygnet House many immediately removed their children from the Preparatory Department and secured places in other primary schools. This has resulted in only nine Year 7 pupils currently enrolled at Cygnet House. All of these pupils will move on to post-primary education from September 2016 with no pupils being enrolled in September 2016.

14. Therefore, alternate primary school provision for existing pupils is not an issue and as can be seen from the snapshot at Table 1 there are sufficient primary school places within the area to meet the future needs primary school pupils.

CASE FOR CHANGE

15. The key points highlighted in the EA case for change (attached in full at Appendix B) are as follows:

- The decline is having a detrimental impact on its finances and the ability of the school to meet the curricular needs of pupils.
- The EA investigated three options to establish the most appropriate course of action:-
 - (i) Retain Cygnet House.
 - (ii) Merge Cygnet House with a neighbouring primary school.
 - (iii) Close Cygnet House.

Issues taken into consideration when accessing options:-

- The preparatory department's enrolment has been declining and it will remain below the sustainable schools' threshold. Given the likely low enrolment for the foreseeable future the long term viability of the school has to be questioned.

- Cygnet House is a preparatory department and there are no neighbouring providers of a similar type to amalgamate with. It is uncertain how a merger with a controlled or maintained primary in the area could be undertaken.
- There are only nine pupils presently enrolled at the preparatory department, all are in Year 7 and will be transferring at the end of this academic year. All other pupils have already relocated to other primary providers.
- No pupils will be impacted by the closure of Cygnet House as there will be no pupils enrolled.
- The closure of the preparatory department is in line with the primary area plan and the Sustainable Schools Policy.

CONSULTATION

Pre-publication Consultation

17. The EA has confirmed that it undertook formal consultation with the BoG, staff and parents of Cygnet House about the proposal on the 28th October 2015. The EA has also confirmed that it consulted with the BoG and Trustees of other schools likely to be affected by it. No issues were raised via the statutory pre-publication process.

2-month objection period

18. The Department received no correspondence relating to the proposal within this period.

EA Comments

19. The EA has confirmed that it supports the proposal to discontinue education at Cygnet House from 31 August 2016. Their comments are included in Appendix B.

DE SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT

20. The Department's Sustainable Schools Policy sets (SSP) sets out six criteria which have quantitative and qualitative indicators which provide the framework for consideration of a school's longer-term sustainability. The primary objective of this policy is to ensure that all children and young people get a high quality education in schools that are educationally and financially viable in the longer term. An assessment of Cygnet House against the criteria is outlined below:

(i) Quality Educational Experience

21. An ETI Inspection of Cygnet House in February 2015 assessed the quality of education provided in the preparatory department as 'satisfactory'. The report states that the strengths outweigh the areas for improvement. The inspection identified areas for improvements in standards, learning and teaching and leadership and management which needed to be addressed if the needs of all the children were to be met.

22. Two main areas of improvement were identified as the need to:

- *Review the procedures for the identification of, and support for, children with special educational needs, and ensure there are sufficient opportunities for the teachers, parents and the children to be more involved in the review process: and*
- *Develop a more rigorous approach to school improvement planning that takes account of the department's available data to effect improvements in the learning and teaching.*

24. The inspection report states that there is a wide range of enriching extra-curricular activities and the pastoral care of the children is given a high priority.

25. In relation to the Learning Environment, the school building was completed in 2003 and the preparatory school pupils have access to the main school's facilities for ICT, Sports' Hall, Drama Theatre, Computer Suite and the Main Hall.

26. The Cygnet House teaching staff in 2014/15 consisted of 6 teachers and had three composite classes:

- a P1-2 class;
- a P2-3 class; and
- a P4-5 class.

The EA has confirmed that in 2015/16 there are 3 teachers currently employed by at Cygnet House (one full time and 2 part-time). In 2015/16, Cygnet House has only one class consisting of nine pupils in Year 7. The ETI reported that one full-time teacher is involved in the teaching of this class, and other staff members have been re-deployed within Glenlola Collegiate during this school year.

(ii) Stable Enrolment Trends

27. The SSP enrolment thresholds are the *minimum* thresholds for viable and sustainable schools and apply to all sectors. The SSP states that a rural (outside Belfast and Derry City Council areas) primary school should have a minimum enrolment of 105 pupils. The historical enrolment and admission numbers at Cygnet House are set out in Tables 1 and 2 below:

Table 1: Historical Enrolments at Cygnet House

2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
54	62	67	65	9

Table 2: Historical Intakes at Cygnet House

2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
6	12	12	6	0

28. Enrolments at Cygnet House have been consistently below the threshold identified in the SSP, and at present only nine pupils are enrolled in the preparatory department, each of whom will transfer to post-primary education in September 2016. The enrolment indicates that the Preparatory Department is not sustainable.

(iii) Sound Financial Position

29. Current accounting arrangements do not allow Preparatory School expenditure to be disaggregated from that of its parent Post-Primary. It is to be noted that Common Funding Formulae (CFF) funding for the mainstream post-primary cannot be used to subsidise the Preparatory Department of the school.

30. In terms of funding through the Common Funding Scheme, preparatory department pupils receive £546 per pupil for the 2015/16 financial year. In comparison, primary school pupils receive £2,183 per pupil. The Board of Governors of a preparatory school is not restricted in the fees they can charge parents to make up the remaining balance of funding required to make the school self-supporting.

(iv) Strong Leadership and Management

31. The Leadership and Management of the school was assessed by the ETI in February 2015. The quality of Leadership and Management was found to be 'satisfactory', with the Inspection Team commenting that:

“the recently appointed head of department is highly committed to the well-being of the children and staff, and to the ongoing improvement of provision within the department. In her relatively short time in post, she has identified a number of key areas to be improved and is developing a culture of self-evaluation which the inspection team endorses”.

32. The Inspection Team state that the parents, staff and school community can have confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated.

(v) Accessibility

33. The main criteria for pupils attending Cygnet House is the ability of a parent to pay the fee levied by the school. In regard to primary provision in the immediate

area, there are eight primary schools (five controlled, two maintained, and one integrated) within two miles of the school.

34. The case for change confirms that there are currently only nine pupils attending Cygnet House, all of which are in P7. All pupils will be transferring to post-primary education in September 2016. However, if in the future parents wish to avail of preparatory provision this is currently available at Regent House, Newtownards and Sullivan Upper, Holywood should it be required.

(vi) Strong Links with the Community

35. The preparatory department believes that close co-operation between teaching staff and parents is important to ensure every child reaches his/her full potential. Parents are kept fully informed of school events, holiday dates and changes in the timetable of the school day. During the year meetings are arranged to give parents an opportunity to meet informally with their son's/daughter's class teacher to discuss progress, but the staff welcome contact from parents as and whenever necessary.

Sustainability Summary

36. The quality of education and leadership provided by Cygnet House was satisfactory when inspected by the ETI in February 2015. The enrolment is significantly below the required minimum threshold set out in the Sustainable Schools Policy, and by September 2015 it is noted that most parents had removed their children from the preparatory department. Of those remaining, all are in year 7 and will be transferring to post-primary education in September 2016. The closure of Cygnet House will not impact negatively on any pupil's education.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Resource Implications

35. There will be no capital costs associated with the proposal. The case for change anticipates teaching redundancy costs in the region of [REDACTED]. However further confirmation from the EA highlighted that the figure in the case for change did not take account of the "double" enhancement and that the total redundancy cost for the 3 teachers amounts to [REDACTED].

CONCLUSION

Taking account of the evidence on enrolment, the lack of any objection and the support of both the EA and the ETI, it would be reasonable to conclude that the proposal as published should be supported.

RECOMMENDATION

36. It is therefore recommended that you:

- (ii) Approve DP No 447 to discontinue education at Cygnet House, a preparatory department of Glenlola Collegiate, with effect from 31 August 2016; and
- (iii) Agree that this submission (with any appropriate redactions) can be published on the Department's website once the school and the Education Authority have been informed of your decision and a press release issued.

39. Attached for your consideration are the following:-

Appendix A: Published Development Proposal No 447

Appendix B: Cygnet House Case for Change

Appendix C: Education and Training Inspectorate Comments



LORRAINE FINLAY

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Cc (by e-mail)

Paul Sweeney

Fiona Hepper

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John Smith

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Jacqui Durkin

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Press Office

APPT

Development Proposal

EDUCATION AUTHORITY

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL No 447

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:

The Education Authority proposes to discontinue education at Cygnet House, a preparatory department of Glenlola Collegiate, with effect from 31 August 2016 or as soon as possible thereafter.

A copy of the Proposal may be inspected at offices of the Education Authority, South Eastern Region located at Grahamsbridge Road, Dundonald, Belfast, BT16 2HS between the hours of 9.00 am and 4.30 pm.

Any objections 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@deni.gov.uk within two months of the date of publication of this notice.

NOTE: 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 to 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).

Gavin Boyd
Chief Executive

Case for Change



Appendix B

CASE FOR CHANGE – Supporting Information

SUMMARY / OVERVIEW

AUTHORITY AREA	South Eastern
DP NUMBER	DP447
PROPOSER	Education Authority, South Eastern Region Contact: Stephen Martin 02890 566346 Stephen.Martin2@eani.org.uk
SCHOOL(S) NAME	Cygnets House Preparatory Department of Glenlola College CASTLE PARK ROAD BANGOR BT20 4TH
SCHOOL REFERENCE	4810097
TYPE	Primary
MANAGEMENT	Controlled
DP PUBLICATION DATE	w/ c 14 December 2015
PROPOSAL	The Education proposes to discontinue education at Cygnets House, a preparatory department of Glenlola Collegiate, with effect from 31 August 2016 or as soon as possible thereafter.

STATUTORY CONSULTATION

BY THE PROPOSER	I confirm that the school(s) Board of Governors, Staff and Parents of Pupils were consulted on 28 October 2015. SIGNED:  DATE: 14/11/15
BY THE AUTHORITY	I confirm that the schools which the Board consider might be impacted by this proposal were consulted on 28/10/15 SIGNED:  DATE: 14/11/15



BACKGROUND

Cygnets House is a co-educational, interdenominational preparatory department attached to Glenlola Collegiate, a controlled grammar school based in Bangor.

Following the consultation on the removal of public funding from preparatory departments and the subsequent decision to remove a significant proportion of funding with effect from 1 September 2010, a significant reduction in the number of pupils was anticipated.

This anticipated decline in the enrolment of the preparatory department has occurred on a gradual basis. There are 9 primary aged pupils enrolled at the school for 2015/2016 – all these pupils are in Year 7.

Given the dramatic decline in Cygnets House's enrolment over recent months the long term viability of this primary provider is in question. The decline in the enrolment is having a detrimental impact on its finances and the ability of the school to meet the curricular needs of the pupils.

RATIONALE FOR PROPOSAL

The following options have been investigated to establish the most appropriate course of action:

Option 1 – Retain Cygnets House

Option 2 – Merge Cygnets House with a neighbouring primary school.

Option 3 – Close Cygnets House

Issues to take into consideration when assessing options:

- The preparatory's enrolment has been declining and it will remain well below the sustainable schools threshold. Given the likely low enrolment for the foreseeable future the long term viability of the school, both in terms of meeting the curricular needs of the pupils and the financing of the partly privately funded provider, has to be questioned.
- Cygnets House is a preparatory department and there are no neighbouring providers of a similar type to amalgamate with. It is uncertain how a merger with a controlled or maintained primary in the area could be undertaken.

After consultation with the Board of Governors, staff and parents of Cygnets House the Education Authority believes that the most appropriate course of action is the discontinuance of education at the preparatory department. The effective date of the closure, if approved, is 31 August 2016.

Closing the school by 31 August 2016 will have no direct impact on pupils at the preparatory department as there will no pupils attending.

Area Planning Impact

Within the last iteration of the Primary Area Plan the following proposal was detailed:

Schools in Subset	Proposal	Rationale
Glenlola Prep	The Managing Authority will keep the school under review on an annual basis within the context of the DE Sustainable Schools Policy. (enrolment below 100)	A number of issues in the school and the local area have been identified and need to be addressed. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• School's enrolment for 2013/2014, 67 pupils, is below the minimum enrolment threshold detailed in the Sustainable Schools Policy• Pattern of decreasing enrolment with 28 pupils in P1-P3 as opposed to 31 in P5-P7.

The Authority officers have been monitoring the situation at the preparatory department and the continued decline in the enrolment has left it in a position where it is neither financially or educationally sustainable.

There are only 9 pupils presently enrolment at the preparatory department, all are in Year 7 and will be transferring at the end of this academic year. There are no other pupils presently enrolled at the provider – all other pupils have already relocated to other primary providers.

The closure of the preparatory department is in line with the Primary Area Plan and the Sustainable Schools Policy.

EDUCATIONAL IMPACT

At present there are only 9 primary aged pupils at the preparatory department, all are in Year 7 and will be transferring to post primary education for September 2016.

No pupils will be impacted by the closure of Cygnet House as there will be no pupils enrolled.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

The following details the enrolment history of Cygnet House preparatory department:

Year	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Total
2014/15	6	10	10	7	10	9	13	65
2013/14	12	11	5	8	9	13	9	67
2012/13	12	15	9	8	10	9	9	62
2011/12	6	10	2	7	9	11	9	54
2010/11	15	10	11	13	11	9	14	83
2009/10	11	11	15	9	11	14	9	80

Cygnet House has 9 pupils enrolled for 2015/2016 – this figure has not been verified by the Department of Education.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (IF THE PROPOSAL IS APPROVED)

Should the Education Authority move forward with the closure of the preparatory department the effective date would be the 31st August 2016 or as soon possible thereafter.

No new pupils will be admitted to the preparatory department for September 2016.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Transport – current Year 7 pupils will be transferring to a post primary for September 2016 and will apply for transport assistance through the normal procedures. No other pupils are enrolled at the school therefore no additional costs will be incurred.

Staffing – the anticipated teaching redundancy costs associated with the closure is £35,000.

Alternatives to redundancy would be explored.

STATUTORY CONSULTATION


Consultation with the Board of Governors, staff and parents took place on the 28 October 2015.

Pre-publication consultation has been completed and a report on the consultation attached.

No issues were raised.

BOARD COMMENTS

See attached letter

SIGNED: 
POSITION: Development officer
DATE: 1/10/15

Report on Preliminary Consultation

1. Request for Development Proposal

The Education Authority proposes to discontinue education at Cygnet House, a preparatory department of Glenlola Collegiate, with effect from 31 August 2015 or as soon as possible thereafter.

2. Consultation with schools affected by the proposal

In accordance with Article 14 of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986 a copy of the proposal was sent, on 28 October 2015, to schools which might be affected by the proposal. Comments were invited from the Boards of Governors and Trustees, staff and parents of pupils to be returned to the Board by 20 November 2015.

A total of 27 schools were forwarded the draft proposal for their comments along with Section 75 consultees.

3. Responses

There was one response to this proposal.

Bangor Central Nursery School

Bangor Central Nursery School made no comment.

4. Action

The proposal will be published in the Belfast Telegraph week commencing 21 December 2015.

December 2015

Area Planning Policy Team
Department of Education
Rathgael House
43 Balloo Road
Bangor
BT19 7PR

Dear Sir,

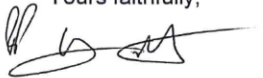
○ **Development Proposal 447** – The Education Authority proposes to discontinue education at Cygnet House, a preparatory department of Glenlola Collegiate, with effect from 31 August 2016 or as soon as possible thereafter.

I refer to the above development proposal which was published in the week beginning 14th December 2015.

The enrolment of Cygnet House supports the Authority's view that the school should discontinue education from 31 August 2016 or as soon as possible thereafter.

It is hoped that the Minister will give careful consideration to the above issues and approve DP 447.

Yours faithfully,



○ **Roger Sayers**
Assistant Senior Education Officer
Head of Property, Planning & PPP

THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING INSPECTORATE RESPONSE TO A DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL (DP)

EDUCATIONAL PROVISION

The Preparatory Department was inspected in February 2015.

The overall quality of the provision was satisfactory, at the time of the inspection, February 2015.

The inspection identified areas for improvement in standards, learning and teaching, and leadership and management for the follow-up inspection activity.

ETI KNOWLEDGE

At the time of the inspection, February 2015, there were 65 children in the Preparatory Department.

At the time of the first interim follow-up visit, 25 September 2015, the number attending the Preparatory Department had decreased to nine children in year 7. Only one full-time teacher was involved in teaching the year 7 children and the other staff members had been re-deployed in the grammar school. The ETI was informed of the school's intention to close the Preparatory Department in June 2016.

RATIONALE

As District Inspector for the Preparatory Department, Cygnet House, I support the closure for the following reasons:

- By September 2015, most of the parents had removed their children from the Preparatory Department.
- All of the children who left the Preparatory Department have secured places in other schools in the wider North Down area.

- The nine children remaining in the school are in year 7 and they will be transferring to post- primary education in September 2016.
- The closure of the Preparatory Department will not impact negatively on any child's education.

MATTERS ARISING OR FURTHER QUERIES BY ETI

None

ANY OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

None

ETI RECOMMENDATION

Having read the documentation provided, ETI recommends that the Preparatory Department, Cygnet House, should close in June, 2016.