

COPY OF DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Cover Note

DP No.	587	
School(s)	Tír na nÓg Primary School Ballyclare	
Proposal	Tír na nÓg Primary School will discontinue with effect from 31 January 2020, or as soon as possible thereafter.	
Permanent Secretary's Decision	Approved	
Date of Decision	5 November 2019	
Permanent Secretary's Comments	The proposal is to discontinue the school. Such proposals are often very difficult. This case is different. In light of the circumstances of the school in terms of enrolment and admissions numbers described so starkly in your submission there is no alternative to closure of the school.	
Additional notes		
Information redacted		
	Key	Details
	[redacted]	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

HPRM Ref: ED1/19/180842

From: ADRIAN MURPHY
Area Planning Policy and Shared Education Campuses Team

Date: 5 November 2019

To: Derek Baker
Permanent Secretary

Copy distribution below

Development Proposal (DP) 587 Tír na nÓg Primary School, Ballyclare

Issue:	To make a decision on DP 587: <i>“Tír na nÓg Primary School will discontinue with effect from 31 August 2020, or as soon as possible thereafter.”</i>
Timescale:	URGENT - there are currently no pupils enrolled at Tír na nÓg Primary School (PS).
Financial / Resource Implications:	<u>Capital:</u> None. <u>Resource:</u> Redundancy costs apply. Teaching staff costs have been calculated at approximately £49,000 and non-teaching staff costs at just over £15,000. Both will be met from the funding available for Voluntary Exit Schemes provided by the Department of Finance.
FOI Implications:	The content of this submission is likely to be fully disclosable.
Statutory Duty Implications:	The Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 places a duty on Government Departments to have due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising policies, strategies and plans and when designing and delivering public services.
Presentational Issues:	It is likely that there will be local media interest in your decision. Should any queries arise the

	Press Office can refer to this submission and liaise with officials.
Recommendation:	<p>It is recommended that you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Approve the amended DP 587: Tír na nÓg Primary School, will discontinue with effect from 31 January 2020, or as soon as possible thereafter. (ii) Agree that this submission (with appropriate redactions) can be made available on the Department's website once the Proposer, the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS), and the Education Authority (EA) have been notified.

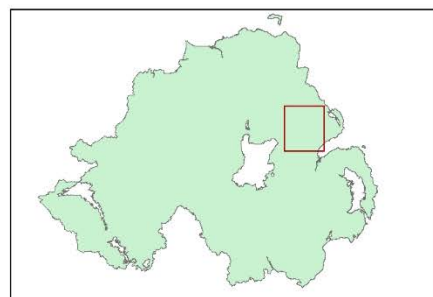
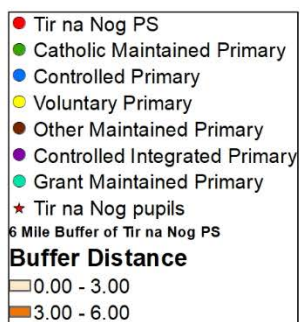
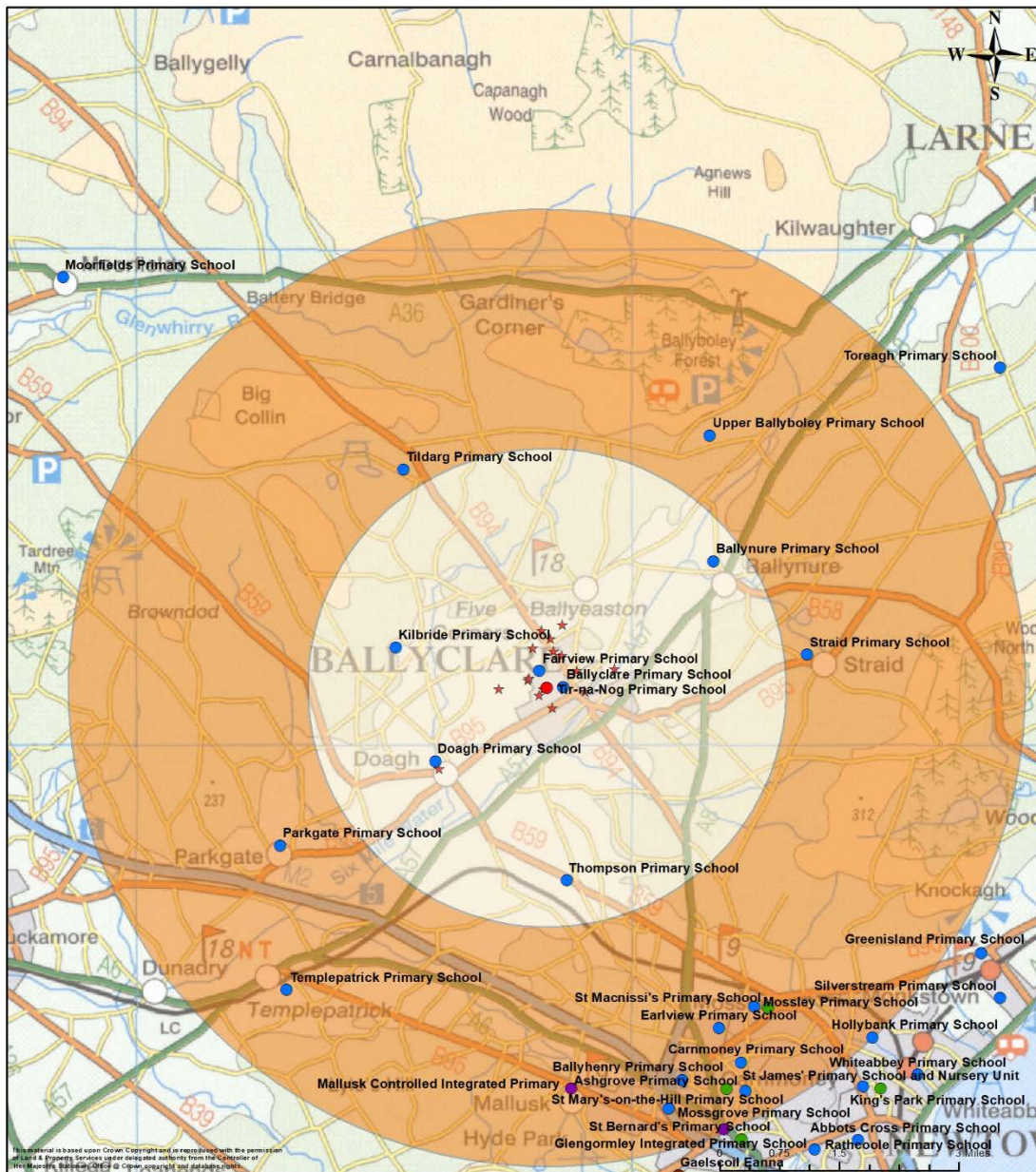
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Appendices

- Appendix A: Copy of Development Proposal 587**
- Appendix B: Case for Change**
- Appendix C: ETI Comments**
- Appendix D: DE (Policy Team) Comments**

Tír na nÓg (303-3304) - Pupil Locations



INTRODUCTION

1. On 3 September 2019 the Education Authority (EA), at the request of the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS), published Development Proposal (DP) 587 proposing to discontinue Tír na nÓg Primary School (PS) with effect from 31 August 2020, or as soon as possible thereafter.

2. The statutory two-month objection period ended on 4 November 2019. A copy of the published DP and the supporting Case for Change are attached at **Appendices A and B** respectively.

BACKGROUND

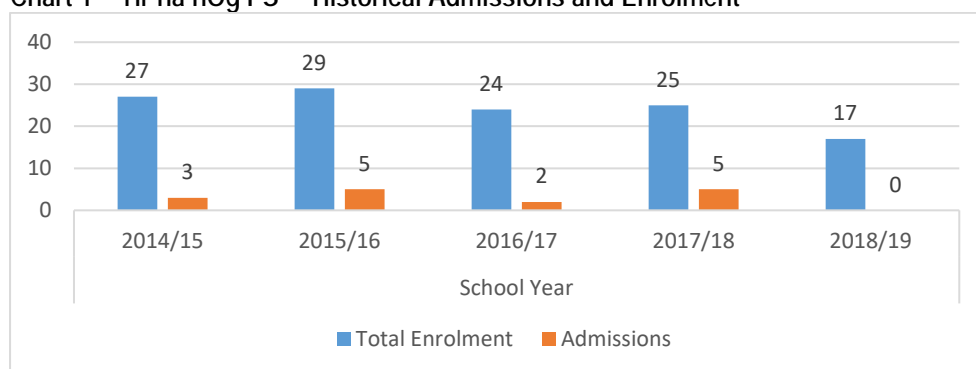
3. Tír na nÓg PS is a co-educational Maintained PS situated on the Doagh Road, 0.3 miles from the centre of Ballyclare (see Map 1). The present Tír na nÓg PS was officially opened in 1973 and replaced a school that had been built in 1886. In 2018/19 almost all pupils enrolled lived within a two mile radius of the school.

Admissions and Enrolment

4. The approved admissions and enrolment numbers for Tír na nÓg PS are 11 and 77 respectively. In 2018/19 the school's total enrolment was 17 with no pupils admitted to Year 1. Within the 2018/19 enrolment six pupils identified as Protestant, seven as Roman Catholic and four as other. There were 61 available places that children could apply for through the competitive admissions process.

5. Chart 1 illustrates the pattern of admissions and enrolment at Tír na nÓg PS. The school's enrolment has been falling since 2015/16. The number of pupils admitted year on year has been consistently below the approved admissions number of 11 and the school's overall enrolment is significantly below the Sustainable Schools Policy (SSP) minimum recommended enrolment of 105 for a sustainable rural primary school. In 2018/19 five pupils (29.4%) at Tír na nÓg PS were entitled to free school meals.

Chart 1 – Tír na nÓg PS – Historical Admissions and Enrolment



6. Tír na nÓg PS received no applications for admissions for 2019/20. CCMS confirmed on 4th September 2019 that there were no pupils enrolled at the school.

Area Context

7. On the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2017 the Ballyclare South 1 Super Output Area (SOA), in which Tír na nÓg PS is situated, is placed 324 out of 890 (1 being most deprived and 890 least deprived).

Providing Pathways” Strategic Area Plan for School Provision 2017-2020

8. The Strategic Area Plan 2017 – 2020 identifies a number of key emerging issues from analysis of current provision in the Antrim and Newtownabbey Local Government District (LGD) area. Issues relevant to Tír na nÓg PS are as follows:

- Ensure that school places are located as required;
- Address school provision where sustainability is an issue; and
- Reconfigure primary provision to reduce the number of available places in schools.

9. The Area Plan states that the population within the age range of 0-15 years in the Antrim and Newtownabbey LGD will decrease marginally by 0.1% by 2024.

10. Tír na nÓg PS first appeared in the EA’s Annual Action Plan April 2018-March 2019 in which it states that the key issue is to ‘address school provision where sustainability is an issue’. The Action Plan notes - “Managing authority to consult on options for future provision at Tír na nÓg PS by March 2019”. The action was carried forward to the April 2019 – March 2021 Plan.

11. The Case for Change reports that CCMS considered the following planning options for Tír na nÓg PS:-

- **Maintain the Status Quo** – This option would see no change to the current provision. It was not considered a feasible option as there would be continued pressure on staff to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum, to mixed aged classes, in conjunction with an increasing budget deficit, leading to increasing pressure on available resources. To do nothing is not a viable option.
- **Shared Education** – Shared Education is a process which allows pupils from different sectors to be educated in classes together, it does not in itself address the sustainability issues in small two teacher schools. Tír na nÓg PS does not currently participate in any Shared Education programmes.
- **Federation** – This is where two or more schools are managed by one Principal with the Board of Governors drawn from the current membership of existing Boards. Any federation must be meet the sustainability criteria of 105 pupils. CCMS state that would be difficult to see how a federation could address the long sustainability issues.
- **Amalgamation** – Amalgamation is where two or more schools, from the same sector, come together to create a sustainable school. CCMS is of the view that there is no suitable school in the area for Tír na nÓg PS to amalgamate with, therefore that is not a viable option.

- **Closure of Tír na nÓg PS** – If Tír na nÓg PS was to close and the pupils transfer to alternative schools the implications are as follows:
 - small town school removed from community and parental first preference not realised;
 - longer travelling distance for pupils;
 - greater opportunities for pupils to be taught in their own peer groups;
 - greater opportunities to interact in sports, leisure and cultural activities;
 - increased opportunities for specialist teaching and for professional development of staff;
 - pupils enrolled in a sustainable school; and
 - greater long term security for staff.

12. Having given due consideration to all of the feedback received, CCMS Education Provision Committee approved the proposal to proceed with a DP for the closure of Tír na nÓg PS with effect from August 2020, or as soon as possible thereafter.

Alternative Provision

Catholic Maintained Provision

13. A snapshot of provision in the area, detailing the admission and enrolment data and the latest Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) inspection assessment at each school, is provided at **Table 1**. It shows that there are no alternative maintained schools within a three mile radius.

14. Within a six mile radius there are two alternative maintained schools. St MacNissi's PS, Newtownabbey, has an approved enrolment of 210 and approved admissions of 30 and in 2018/19 the school has 28 available places. The latest inspection in October 2017 was impacted by the action short of strike however the previous report in 2011 stated that the provision was 'very good'.

15. St Mary's on the Hill, Glengormley, has an approved enrolment of 430 and approved admissions of 60 and in 2018/19 the school had 56 available places. The ETI report in September 2016 stated that the school had a high level of capacity for sustained improvement.

Controlled Provision

16. There are six Controlled primary schools within a three mile radius of Tír na nÓg PS providing a total of 1718 approved places. In 2018/19 there were 117 available places. All but one of the schools, Doagh PS, meet the minimum enrolment threshold under the SSP of 105 pupils in rural schools. All of the schools have been assessed as 'Good' or 'Very Good' by the ETI.

Integrated Provision

17. There is one Integrated school within a six mile radius, Mallusk Controlled Integrated School (CIPS), has an approved enrolment of 132 and it currently has 75 available places. The school does not currently meet the SSP minimum enrolment threshold, however, the Transformation to Integrated status was approved in 2015 and enrolments are rising.

Table 1 Snapshot of Provision – Tír na nÓg Primary School

DE Ref No	School & Postcode	Distance from School - in miles (Google maps - by car)	Approved Enrolment Number 2018/19	16/17 Actual Enrolment*	17/18 Actual Enrolment*	18/19 Actual Enrolment*	18/19 Supernumerary	2018/19 Available places	Approved Admissions Number 2018/19	2018/19 Actual Admissions No.*	2019/20 Total 1st Pref. Applications @9/5/19	Variance (over/under subscribed at 1st Pref)	ETI Inspection Reports - Overall Assessment
CATHOLIC MAINTAINED - 6 MILE RADIUS													
303-3304	Tír na Nog PS, Ballyclare BT39 9BG	-	77	24	25	##	*	61	11	0	0	U - 11	February 2015 - Good April 2018 - ASOS
303-6139	St Macnissi's PS, Newtownabbey, BT36 6UE	5.8	210	201	193	187	5	28	30	25	30	-	April 2011 - Very Good October 2017 - ASOS
303-6046	St Mary's on the Hill PS, Glengormley BT36 6JU	6.5	430	378	382	379	5	56	60	39	60	-	September 2016 - High level of capacity for sustained improvement
Sub-total			717	603	600	583	11	145	101	64	90		
CONTROLLED - 3 MILE RADIUS													
301-0631	Ballyclare PS, BT39 9BG	0.2	572	523	542	555	15	32	82	87	74	U - 8	February 2015 - Very Good April 2018 - ASOS
301-6414	Fairview PS, BT39 9HS	0.8	525	531	513	518	9	16	75	73	64	U - 11	March 2013 - Very Good
301-0754	Doagh PS, BT39 0QL	1.9	138	87	89	##	*	49	20	11	16	U - 4	December 2013 - Very Good
301-0802	Ballynure PS, BT39 9UE	3.1	154	139	150	###	*	0	22	22	23	O - 1	November 2017 - High level of capacity for sustained improvement
301-0779	The Thompson PS, BT39 9RX	3.4	194	183	185	187	0	7	28	27	24	U - 4	May 2011 - Good January 2017 - Monitoring Insp

301-0828	Kilbride Central PS, BT39 0SQ	3.7	135	140	137	###	*	13	19	13	19	-	January 2010 - Good April 2017 - ASOS
Sub-total			1718	1603	1616	1636	35	117	246	233	220		
OTHER MAINTAINED													
None													
INTEGRATED - 6 MILE RADIUS													
305-6708	Mallusk Controlled IPS, BT36 4QE	6.4	132	21	32	##	*	75	19	18	19	-	March 2017 - Capacity to identify & bring about improvement
GRAND TOTALS			2567	2227	2248	2277	47	337	366	315	329		

* The actual enrolment and admissions numbers include statemented pupils, however, exclude reception pupils.

The 1st pref applications do not include reception or statemented pupils. Info. re 1st Pref applications provided by the EA - 12.3.2019

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

18. Rural proofing has been a requirement for all Government Departments in Northern Ireland since 2002 and has been an integral part of the policy development process. In 2016 the commitment to rural proofing was strengthened with the introduction of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016. The Act places a duty on Government Departments to have due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising policies, strategies and plans and when designing and delivering public services. It came into operation for Government Departments and District Councils on 1 June 2017 and to public authorities from 1 June 2018. Tír na nÓg PS is located just outside the centre of Ballyclare and is defined as rural in accordance with “*Schools for the Future- The Sustainable Schools Policy (SSP)*”.

CASE FOR CHANGE

19. The Case for Change sets out CCMS’s rationale for the proposed closure of Tír na nÓg PS on the basis that it does not meet the sustainability criteria as set out in the SSP:-

Quality educational experience

The last ETI report was in April 2018 but due to impact of the ‘*action short of strike*’ being taken by teachers, the ETI was unable to provide assurance of the quality of education and safeguarding being provided for the children.

The previous inspection was carried out in February 2015 and the ETI found that the quality of education provided was ‘Good’. The school had important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. One area for improvement identified was “*to ensure a rigorous approach to planning, monitoring and the evaluation of learning in order to raise further the children’s attainments*”.

For a quality educational experience the SSP recommends ‘*No more than two composite year groups in a single classroom at primary school level*’. Tír na nÓg PS operates three composite year groups in a single classroom.

Another criterion is that there should be a minimum of four teachers which recognises both the needs of pupils and the demands on teachers. At November 2018 Tír na nÓg PS had 2.8 teachers.

Stable enrolment trends

Tír na nÓg PS has experienced a low enrolment in each of the last 5 years. The current enrolment is 16 pupils, with no pupils enrolled in Year 1, in the 2018/19 school year. The school’s enrolment falls well below the SSP criteria for a rural school of 105 pupils. It has been confirmed by CCMS that there are no pupils enrolled at Tír na nÓg PS at September 2019.

Sound financial position

Tír na nÓg PS anticipates an increasing financial deficit. At the end of the 2020/21 financial year, the deficit is anticipated to be -£105,469.

The school's financial plan for 2018 - 2021 is based on projected enrolment numbers of 22 pupils that is significantly higher than the current enrolment of 17 and as such an increase in the projected financial deficit might be expected.

Strong leadership and management by Boards of Governors and Principal

The Board of Governors of Tír na nÓg PS benefits from a wide range of skills. There have been a number of changes in the arrangements for the school's headship over recent years.

Accessibility

Tír na nÓg PS is accessible for those who send their children there. A 2013 survey indicated that a significant majority of the school's pupils lived within a two mile radius of the school. There are also accessible schools nearby.

Strong links with the community

The Case for Change states that the school is developing links with its local community. Tír na nÓg PS does not participate in any Shared Education programmes.

The proposal to close Tír na nÓg PS, recognises that continuing with the status quo will perpetuate the challenges experienced by the school. It is unable to meet a number of the sustainability criteria, particularly in regard to the quality of the educational experience (due to falling enrolment), enrolment and finance.

20. The Case for Change is reproduced in full at **Appendix B**.

STATUTORY DP PROCESSES

CCMS Consultation

21. CCMS has confirmed that three stakeholder consultation meetings were conducted with staff, governors and parents on 6 December 2018. A written consultation was also conducted from 6 December 2018 until 25 January 2019.

22. A total of 19 responses were received and the key issues identified in the written submissions to the consultation and at the meetings include:

- the unique location of the school;
- the benefits of a small school and small classes;
- pastoral care in the school;
- the negative effects of protracted uncertainty regarding the schools future on pupils, parents and the community;
- the negative impact on the predominately female workforce;
- opportunities for federation/integration/jointly managed schools were raised; and
- the loss of Catholic education in the local parish and community.

23. The responses were given due consideration at the CCMS Education Provision Committee meeting on 6 February 2019. It was determined by CCMS that the proposal was appropriate taking into account all of the responses received.

Education Authority (EA) Consultation

24. The EA has confirmed that, in accordance with Article 14 of the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986, it has fulfilled its statutory obligations in relation to consultation with other schools which, in its opinion, are likely to be affected by the DP. Proof of publication has been received by the Department. A total of 17 local schools were contacted and the EA received one response from a local school. The comments from the response stated:

The governors noted that:-

- They were disappointed that this will leave Ballyclare without provision for the maintained sector.
- They would like to seek clarification around how the EA are planning to ensure there is a balanced provision of education for both the Maintained and the Controlled sectors within the area.

Two-Month Statutory Objection Period

25. The EA published DP 587 on 3rd September 2019. The statutory two-month objection period ended on 4th November 2019. During the objection period the Department of Education received no responses in support or objection to the proposal.

Education Authority (EA) View

26. The EA supports the CCMS in taking forward the proposal to close Tír na nÓg PS with effect from 31 August 2020, or as soon as possible thereafter. EA comments are reproduced alongside the Case for Change at **Appendix B**.

Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) Comments

27. The ETI confirmed that the last published inspection report (April 2018) was affected by the school's participation in industrial action. They also raised the following points for consideration:-

- *that there are multiple year groups within two composite classes;*
- *there has been a significant turnover of staff in the past five years which impacts negatively on sustaining improvements; and*
- *the small and declining numbers of children enrolled and the small number of staff provide challenges in delivering fully the statutory Northern Ireland Curriculum.*

SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT

28. The Department's SSP sets out six criteria supported by 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. The following is an assessment of Tír na nÓg PS against the six criteria of the SSP.

CRITERION 1: Quality Education Experience

29. ETI carried out a sustaining improvement inspection of Tír na nÓg PS in April 2018 however, owing to the impact of the action short of strike being taken by the teachers, the ETI was unable to assure parents/carers and the wider community of the quality of education being provided.

30. The ETI did state that based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection the arrangements for safeguarding children were unsatisfactory. Area for urgent improvement included:

- Updating policies to reflect current school personnel and practices;
- Aligning the policies to reflect current guidance from the Department of Education and best practice;
- Reviewing emergency exit arrangements in the nursery and classroom 1;
- Ensuring that relevant governors attend training in safeguarding.

31. A follow-up visit was carried out by the District Inspector on 6 June 2018 and on the basis of evidence available the revised arrangements now broadly reflect the guidance issued by the Department. The school had received support from the Child Protection Support Service and a Health and Safety Officer from the EA.

32. The previous ETI report in February 2015 concluded that the quality of education provided by the school was good. The school had important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. One area for improvement was identified :-

- To ensure a rigorous approach to planning, monitoring and the evaluation of learning and teaching in order to raise further the children's attainments.

Teaching Staff

33. The SSP recommends a minimum of four teachers at primary school level and no more than two composite year groups in a single classroom. This recognises both the needs of pupils and the demands on teachers. In 2018/19 Tír na nÓg PS had 2.90 full-time equivalent teachers. The Case for Change states that the school operates three composite year groups at Reception / Key Stage 1 in one room and three composite year groups at Key Stage 2 in another room (see **Table 2**).

Table 2: Composite Classes at Tír na nÓg PS 2018/19

Room Details	Pupils at 2018/19
Classroom 1 Reception / KS1	Reception (0) ; P1 (0); P2 (4); P3 (2); P4 (4)
Classroom 2 KS2	P5 (4); P6 (1); P7 (1)

CRITERION 2: Stable Enrolment Trends

34. Tír na nÓg PS has an approved enrolment number of 77. **Table 3** sets out the school's total enrolment for the last five years. It shows that historically the school has been undersubscribed and has been below 30 pupils since 2010/11. Enrolments have been consistently below the approved enrolment of 77 and are substantially below the recommended minimum enrolment of 105 for a sustainable rural school as set out in the SSP.

Table 3 – Tír na nÓg PS – Historical Enrolments

Approved Enrolment	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
77	27	29	24	25	17

35. Tír na nÓg PS has an approved admissions number of 11. **Table 4** sets out the school's P1 intakes from 2014/15 to 2018/19. It shows that actual admissions have been consistently below the school's approved admissions number. In 2018/19 no pupils were admitted to Year 1.

Table 4 - Tír na nÓg PS P1 intakes

Approved Admissions	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
11	3	5	2	5	0

36. For the 2019/20 academic year Tír na nÓg PS received no first preference or other applications and at the end of the admissions process in June 2019 no pupils had been accepted at the school. There have been no pupils enrolled at the school from 2nd September 2019.

CRITERION 3: Financial Position

37. At 31 March 2019 the **provisional deficit position** for Tír na nÓg PS is -£33,622 and at 31 March 2018 the school had a surplus of £526.

38. The school received a total delegated budget of £124,153 in the 2019-20 financial year for **17** Full Time Equivalent (FTE) pupils, which generates a per capita of £7,303. The average for all primary schools is £3,104.

39. The total Free School Meals Entitlement for the school is 5¹ pupils, which represents 29.41% of the total FTE, which places the school in Band 1 for funding purposes.

40. Tír na nÓg PS received £45,120 for Small Schools Support funding, which represents 100.00% of the maximum funding for this factor, within the Nursery & Primary funding stream. The school also received £16,420 in respect of Primary Principals' Release Time.

41. Where a school closes in-year, typically the Funding Authority transfers funding to the receiving school(s) for pupils (typically core AWPUP funding and additional needs, FSME, etc.) for the 7/12ths remaining in the financial year, from the closed school's budget.

CRITERION 4: Strong Leadership and Management by Boards of Governors and Principal

42. The ETI Inspection Report of February 2015 assessed the quality of leadership and management at Tír na nÓg PS as 'good'. The report stated that *"Notwithstanding the early stage of development of the newly formed staff team, the acting principal and teacher work collaboratively and effectively to lead competently and strategically in their various areas of responsibility. There is very good communication, on-going professional discussion, and effective collegiality amongst all the staff within the school."*

43. The report also noted *"It will be important that the employing authority, school governors and the staff plan for and manage issues related to the sustainability of the school provision and the school budget, in order to address the current and future needs of the children and the staff."*

44. During the sustaining improvement inspection in April 2018 the ETI noted that since the last inspection there had been a number of changes in the arrangements for the school headship. Due to action short of strike the ETI was unable to provide assurance on the quality of education and safeguarding being provided for the children.

CRITERION 5: Accessibility

45. **Map 1** shows that almost all the pupils come from the surrounding rural area within a two mile radius of the school. There are no alternative Catholic Maintained schools within a three mile radius. The nearest Catholic Maintained Schools are St Macnissi's PS, Newtownabbey (5.8 miles) and St Mary's on the Hill PS, Glengormley (6.5 miles).

46. All former pupils of Tír na nÓg PS have relocated to alternative schools.

¹ The school's funding allocation is based on the previous year's census data (e.g. the October 2018 census data was used to determine the 2019-20 CFF allocation). The census data on the Schools+ database relates to an academic year, as opposed to the financial year.

CRITERION 6: Strong Links with the Community

47. The ETI Inspection Report of April 2011 states that the recently established parent teacher association is at an early stage of development. The school has well established effective links with the local community, including a day for grand-parents to visit the school and joint sporting activities with local schools. Tír na nÓg PS does not participate in any Shared Education programmes.

Sustainability Summary

48. The quality of education at Tír na nÓg PS was assessed as 'good' by the ETI in February 2015 however, the school has failed to meet a number of the indicators in the Quality Educational Experience criterion of the SSP. Tír na nÓg PS has two composite classes with more than two year groups in a single classroom and less than the recommended four teachers in a primary school.

49. The school's historical enrolment numbers have also been significantly below the recommended minimum enrolment of 105 for a sustainable rural school under SSP and have declined dramatically from 29 pupils in 2015/16 to only 17 pupils in 2018/19. However, all pupils have now relocated to alternative primary schools.

50. Tír na nÓg PS is predicted to be in a financial deficit position from March 2019 and the school predicts the deficit will continue to increase in their three year financial plan submitted to the EA. The leadership and management at Tír na nÓg PS had been assessed as good in 2015 however there have been changes in the arrangements for school headship since the last ETI report.

51. In summary, Tír na nÓg PS does not meet all of the Sustainable Schools' criteria and with the recent transfer of the remaining pupils to alternative schools, the school is not sustainable.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Staffing

52. CCMS and the EA will, as appropriate, provide advice, support and assistance to staff as part of the process and as part of their responsibility and duty of care to staff. This will be facilitated in accordance with the school Reorganisation Agreement in the Joint Negotiating Council (JNC) Collective Agreement.

53. CCMS has confirmed that there is now only one member of teaching staff and that redundancy costs in relation to teaching staff have been calculated at around £49,000. In relation to non-teaching staff, the EA has confirmed that there are three posts and redundancy costs are estimated to be £15,135.

54. The CCMS and the EA will ensure that any potential impact on terms and conditions of teaching and non-teaching staff are managed in accordance with the relevant redundancy or re-organisation policies.

55. Redundancy costs will be under the Voluntary Exit Scheme allocation of funding from the Department of Finance, so long as the exits take place on or before 31 March 2020.

Transport

56. The Case for Change advises that there may be an increased school transport cost for pupils who live beyond two miles from their nearest suitable school, however, now that all pupils have relocated this is no longer an issue.

ASSESSMENT OF SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

57. The Rural Development Council's (RDC) Striking the Balance report highlights the importance of rural proofing so that regard is given to the impact of a particular policy on rural populations (in comparison to those living in urban areas) and to help identify adjustments which might be made to reflect rural needs and ensure that services are accessible to rural communities on a fair basis. A central concern is the quality of education provided to pupils.

58. The SSP policy was assessed against the RDC rural proofing checklist (Striking the Balance, Annex 1) and no adverse impact was identified. The SSP recognises the needs of rural communities and this is reflected in the lower enrolment threshold for rural primary schools, the accessibility criterion which provides guidance on home to school travel times and the criterion strong links with the community also recognises the central place a school has for many communities (rural and urban).

59. The Government's commitment to rural proofing was strengthened with the introduction of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 ("The Act"). The Act requires public authorities to have 'due regard' to consciously consider the needs of people in rural areas when developing policies, strategies and plans and when designing and delivering public services. It defines 'rural needs' as "the social and economic needs of rural areas".

CONCLUSION

60. The Department's vision is to ensure that every learner fulfils his or her full potential at each stage of development. All Departmental policies and processes, including Area Planning, contribute to the delivery of that vision and all have, as a central tenant, the educational well-being of children and young people.

61. The SSP, implemented through Area Planning, is clear that the core issue for a school's sustainability must be the continuing provision of a high quality education

for the children. Generally, it is acknowledged that as numbers in a school decline, the challenges it must overcome in order to provide a high quality education rise.

62. The SSP states that ideally a primary school should have at least seven classrooms (one for each year group), no more than two composite year groups in a single classroom and a minimum of four teachers. In 2018/19 Tír na nÓg PS had two composite classes – one with four year groups and one with three.

63. Inspection evidence shows that within a composite class of two year groups, it is possible for all children to be catered for effectively and make good progress. There is no evidence from school inspections to suggest that children taught in composite classes of two year groups are disadvantaged in any way.

64. However, additional factors need to be considered when the composite class spans more than two year groups. Under these circumstances ensuring adequate progression in learning and planning to meet, and meeting, the individual needs of children across a wider ability range and stage of development can be more challenging for the teacher. There are also issues relating to opportunities for the children to develop socially and emotionally with children of a similar age, gender and stage of development.

65. In 2018/19 Tír na nÓg PS had a total enrolment of 17 pupils but on September 2019 CCMS confirmed that there were no pupils enrolled at the school.

66. The closure of any school is a difficult matter, however, the evidence supporting DP 587 is compelling, not least the fact that all former Tír na nÓg PS pupils have now transferred to alternative primary schools leaving no pupils enrolled at the school.

67. As there are no remaining pupils it is recommended that the closure is approved from 31 January 2020.

RECOMMENDATION

68. Based on the evidence detailed above, it is recommended that you:

- (i) Approve DP 587 as amended that:

Tír na nÓg PS will discontinue with effect from 31 January 2020, or as soon as possible thereafter.

- (ii) Agree that this submission (with appropriate redactions) can be made available on the Department's website once the school (through the Proposer, CCMS) and the Education Authority have been notified; and

69. The following appendices are attached for your consideration:

Appendix A: Copy of Development Proposal 587
Appendix B: Case for Change
Appendix C: ETI Comments
Appendix D: DE (Policy Team) Comments

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Adrian Murphy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "M" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

ADRIAN MURPHY

Ext: 68113

Email: Adrian.murphy@education-ni.gov.uk

cc: (by email)

Fiona Hepper

Lianne Patterson

Noelle Buick

John Smith

Janis Scallon

Lorraine Finlay

Eamonn Broderick

Bill Stevenson

APPT Correspondence

Press Office

EDUCATION AUTHORITY

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL NO 587

TÍR NA NÓG PRIMARY SCHOOL

Notice is hereby given that a Proposal under Article 14 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 has been submitted to the Education Authority by the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools on behalf of the Trustees of Tír na nÓg Primary School to the effect that:

Tír na nÓg Primary School will discontinue with effect from 31 August 2020, 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, 17 Lough Road, Antrim, BT41 4DH between the hours of 9.00 am and 5.00 pm and www.eani.org.uk (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 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).

Sara Long
Chief Executive



CCMS

**Council for Catholic
Maintained Schools**

Closure of:

Tír na nÓg Primary School – 303-3304

The Case for Change

February 2019

CASE FOR CHANGE – Supporting Information

SUMMARY / OVERVIEW


EA AREA	Mid And East Antrim
DP NUMBER	DP 587
PROPOSER	CCMS
SCHOOL(S) NAME	Tír na nÓg Primary School
SCHOOL REFERENCE	303-3304
TYPE	Primary School
MANAGEMENT	Catholic Maintained
DP PUBLICATION DATE	Week commencing 17 June 2019
PROPOSAL	Tír na nÓg Primary School will discontinue with effect from 31 August 2020, or as soon as possible thereafter.

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 the 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 BOGs, 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	I confirm that Board of Governors, Staff and parents/guardians were consulted from 6 December 2018 - 25 January 2019. The responses were given due consideration at CCMS Education Provision Committee meeting on 6 February 2019. It was determined by CCMS the proposal was appropriate, taking into account all responses received. A copy of the consultation summary is contained in Appendix E.
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these taken into account before the publication of the DP?	
Confirmation by the Proposer	<p>I confirm that the school's Board of Governors, staff and parents/guardians were consulted 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> <p>NAME: Edel Teague OFFICE HELD: Area Planning Programme Manager</p> <p>SIGNED:  DATE: 1/3/2019</p>


ASSOCIATED PROPOSALS

DP XXX Published DD/MM/YY	None
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The following is to be completed and Signed off by the EA.

EDUCATION AUTHORITY COMMENTARY ON PRE-PUBLICATION STATUTORY CONSULTATION

THE EDUCATION AUTHORITY	<p>I confirm that the schools which EA consider might be impacted by this proposal were consulted on 19 March 2019.</p> <p>NAME: Kim Scott</p> <p>OFFICE HELD: Acting Director of Education</p> <p>SIGNED:  DATE: 13 June 2019</p>
<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>In accordance with Article 14 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986, a copy of the proposal was sent on 19 March 2019, to schools which, in the opinion of the Authority, might be affected by the proposal. A total of 17 local schools which might be affected by the proposal were forwarded correspondence. Comments were invited from the Boards of</p>

Responses/Assurances in respect of issues raised during consultation.	Governors and Trustees, to be returned to the Education Authority by 16 April 2019.
Dates of EA meetings e.g. Education Committee/Board, etc. <u>Details of issues raised by members of EA Board</u>	<p>The Education Authority received one response from a local school.</p> <p>The emerging themes/comments from the response received included:</p> <p>The governors noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They were disappointed that this will leave Ballyclare without provision for the maintained sector. • They would like to seek clarification around how the EA are planning to ensure there is a balanced provision of education for both the Maintained and the Controlled sectors within the area. <p>This development proposal was discussed by the EA's Education Committee at its meeting on 13 June 2019.</p>
<p>EDUCATION AUTHORITY COMMENTS In the context of planning on an area basis – what is the EA's view of the proposal, taking into account any pre-publication consultation? Does the EA support the proposal?</p> <p>NAME: Kim Scott</p> <p>OFFICE HELD: Acting Director of Education</p> <p>SIGNED: </p> <p>DATE: 13 June 2019</p>	<p>The Education Authority supports the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools in taking forward Development Proposal No 587 to discontinue education at Tír na nÓg Primary School with effect from 31 August 2020, or as soon as possible thereafter.</p>

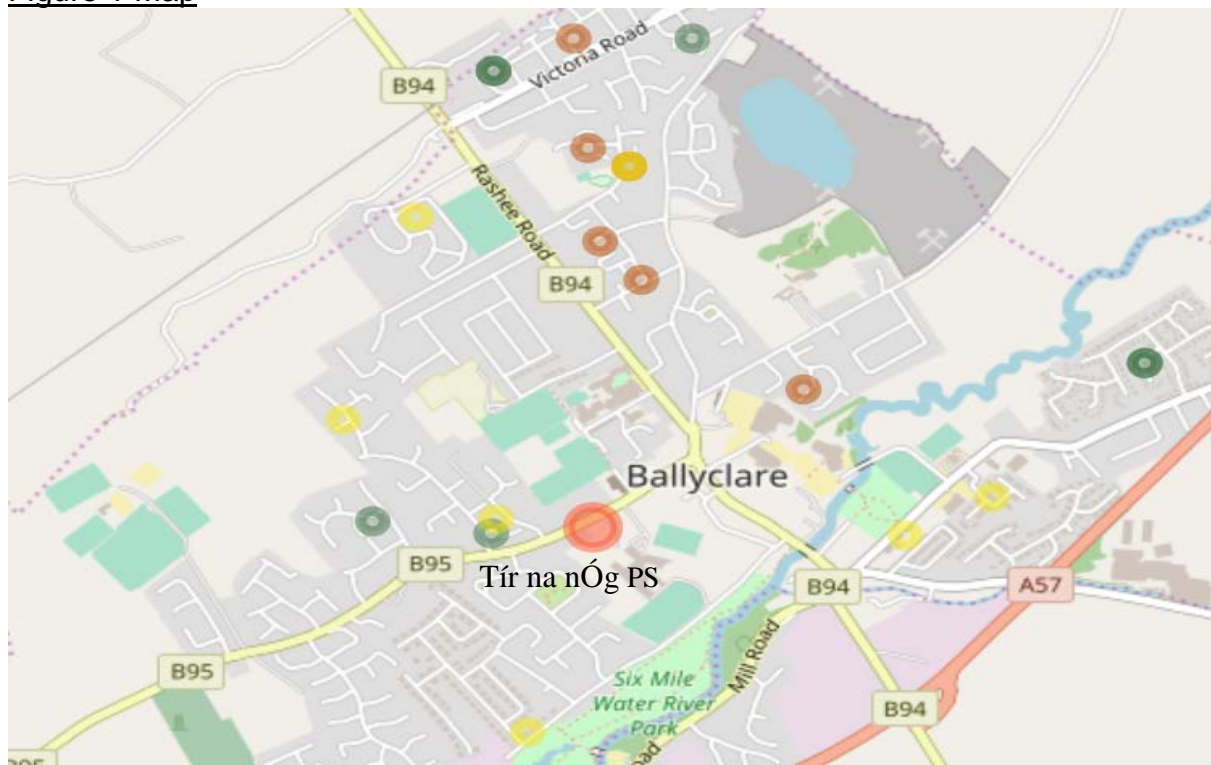
1. BACKGROUND

Tír na nÓg Primary School (PS) is a co-educational maintained primary school situated on the Doagh Road, approximately 0.3 miles from the centre of Ballyclare. Its catchment area extends throughout the town and surrounding area. The present Tír na nÓg PS was officially opened in 1973 and replaced a school that had been built in 1886. The school has had ongoing refurbishment with a toilet refurbishment in 2015/16.

The school is situated in the Ballyclare North_1 SOA (Super Output Area) which has a multiple deprivation measure of 489 and an education, skills and training deprivation measure of 346. The rank for the proportion of pupils attending Special schools or attending primary schools with Special Educational Needs Stages 3-5 is 349. In total there are 890 SOAs in Northern Ireland where 1 is the most deprived score and 890 the least deprived.

A survey conducted in 2013 indicated that approximately 63% of the children who attended the school lived within one mile of the school and 84% of the school's pupils lived within a two mile radius the school. The map below, Figure 1, indicates the location of the school and the pupil distribution (2017/18) within the area.

Figure 1 Map



The SOA rank for employment deprivation is 324 and 7 pupils (28%) in the school are entitled to free school meals (DE Census 17/18). On the most recent available census (DE 17/18) it was recorded that 1 pupil had a statement of special educational needs (SEN) (stage 5). Seven pupils were identified as being on SEN stages 1 to 4.

The school is constructed on a site of 0.55 hectares/1.36 acres. As per the schedule of accommodation (Appendix B), there are 3 classrooms. The Minor Works Report is contained in Appendix C.

“Schools for the Future: A Policy for Sustainable Schools” (Sustainable Schools Policy or SSP), which was published in 2009, underpins all work carried out through the area planning process. The aim of area planning is to facilitate the development of a network of viable and sustainable schools that can deliver the NI Curriculum effectively, and provide access to a range of education provision that is appropriate to the needs of pupils. CCMS is committed to excellence in the delivery of education so that every pupil can realise their potential and contribute to a caring, inclusive and progressive society.

In striving to realise this aspiration, the area planning process 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 delivery of education in the twenty-first century.

On 28 April 2017 the Education Authority (with CCMS) published *Providing Pathways Strategic Area Plan for School Provision 2017-2020 which included the Annual Action Plan for Primary, Post-Primary and Special Schools, April 2017–March 2018*. When reviewing the requirements for the Action Plan 2018/2019, in line with the Sustainable Schools Policy (SSP), it was agreed to include Tír na nÓg PS in the Annual Action Plan:

Table 1: Extract from Annual Action Plan 2018/19

<u>Primary School</u>	<u>Key Issue</u>	<u>Action</u>
Tír na nÓg 64-66 Doagh Road Ballyclare BT39 9BG	Address school provision where sustainability is an issue	Managing authority to consult on options for future provision of Tír na nÓg PS by March 2019

At the August 2018 meeting of CCMS’ Education Provision Committee, it was agreed to initiate consultation to examine future provision at the school.

CCMS has met with the School’s Board of Governors and principal to discuss options for the schools future and based on available information CCMS is taking forward a development proposal for the discontinuance of Tír na nÓg PS.

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

As part of the pre-publication consultation on the development proposal CCMS sought feedback including any objections and/or other comments on the proposed discontinuance of Tír na nÓg PS from the Board of Governors, teaching staff, non-teaching staff and parents/guardians of children attending the school on the 6th December 2018. See Consultation Summary Appendix E.

2 SUPPORTING STATISTICS TO EXPLAIN/HIGHLIGHT THE EVIDENCE OF NEED FOR CHANGE

2.1 Historic Enrolments

Over the past number of years Tír na nÓg PS has experienced a downturn in enrolment numbers. The enrolment in the school has fluctuated over the last 10 years with no pupils entering Year 1 for 2018/19. The school currently has an enrolment of 16 pupils with the largest year groups being Years 2, 4 & 5 with 4 pupils each. There is no indication this number will increase, and no evidence it can reach 105 pupils as required by the Department of Education's (DE's) Sustainable Schools Policy, 2009.

Table 2: Enrolment Statistics *

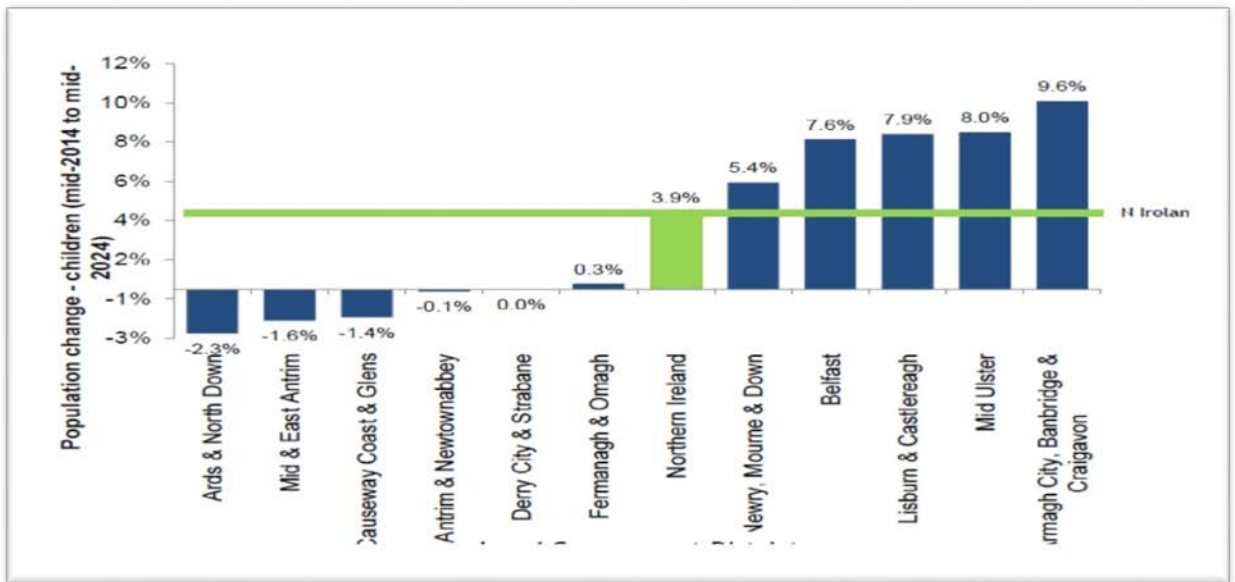
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Total (P1-P7)
2007/08	5	3	6	5	2	7	3	31
2008/09	6	5	3	6	5	3	7	35
2009/10	5	6	5	3	6	5	3	33
2010/11	3	4	5	5	2	6	3	28
2011/12	4	4	4	4	5	1	6	28
2012/13	2	4	4	4	4	3	2	23
2013/14	3	2	4	5	4	4	3	25
2014/15	3	4	1	4	6	4	5	27
2015/16	5	3	4	1	5	6	5	29
2016/17	2	5	4	3	1	4	5	24
2017/18	5	2	5	4	3	1	5	25
2018/19	0	4	2	4	4	1	1	16

*The enrolment figure includes supernumerary pupils (whom are pupils with a statement of Special Educational Needs)

2.2 Population Change 0-15 Year Olds

Over the period 2014-2024, the population of Northern Ireland is projected to increase by 5.3% (98,200 people), reaching 1,938,700 by 2024. Whilst the number of children in Northern Ireland (0-15 year olds) is projected to grow by 3.9% throughout the decade 2014-2024, the Antrim & Newtownabbey Local Government District (LGD) shows a marginal decrease (-0.1%), as detailed in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Population Change 0-15 Year Olds



Source: www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics

Table 3 shows the birth rates for the Ballyclare District Electoral Area (DEA) over the 10 years 2006-2015. The average annual birth-rate, averaged over the 5 years from 2011, is 109 live births per annum. Table 3 shows that there has not been a significant increase in births for the Ballyclare DEA over a 10 year period.

Table 3

Statistics: Ballyclare District Electoral Area – Annual Live Birth											
Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2011- 2015 5 Year average
Live Births	92	97	117	111	114	119	114	96	106	109	108.8

Source: www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics

2.3 Quality Of Accommodation

The condition of Tír na nÓg PS is 1000th out of a total of 1182 schools. The suitability of the school is rated as 1030th out of 1180 schools.

Minor improvements to the school included the provision of worktops, shelving, additional power points and enhanced security facilities. A scheme to enhance the school's energy efficiency was carried out in 2014/15 and a toilet refurbishment scheme was carried out in 2015/16.

There remains a number of minor works outstanding including works relating to a Fire Risk Assessment and enhancing school signage.

3 SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT

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

3.1 SSP1: Quality Educational Experience

3.1.1 Composite Classrooms and number of teachers

Tír na nÓg PS has less than 3 classroom teachers (2.8 in November 2018). The school operates three composite year groups at Foundation Stage/Key Stage 1 in one classroom, and three composite year groups at Key Stage 2 in another classroom. Table 4 below displays this information.

Table 4 Composite classes

Number of pupils 2018/2019 – 16	
Classroom 1 Foundation Stage/Key Stage 1	Reception
	Primary 1
	Primary 2 (4 pupils)
	Primary 3 (2 pupils)
	Primary 4 (4 pupils)
Classroom 2 - Key Stage 2	Primary 5 (4 pupils)
	Primary 6 (1 pupil)

	Primary 7 (1 pupil)
--	---------------------

Source: Tír na nÓg Primary School

The Sustainable Schools Policy indicates the following criteria for a sustainable school (Annex A p47): *‘No more than two composite year groups in a single classroom at primary school level. A minimum of four teachers at a primary school. This recognises both the needs of pupils and the demands on teachers.’*

Neither of the above two indicators for the criterion of quality educational experience are met by Tír na nÓg PS, Ballyclare.

3.1.2 The standards and the quality of learning and teaching at the school.

An ETI inspection report, published in February 2015, assessed Tír na nÓg PS as follows.

Table 5: Overall findings of the inspection

Overall Performance Level	Good
Achievements and Standards	Good
Provision	Good
Leadership and Management	Good

The 2015 ETI (p4) report indicated:

- In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the school is good. The school has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified an area for improvement which the school has demonstrated the capacity to address. The area for improvement is to ensure a rigorous approach to planning, monitoring and the evaluation of learning and teaching in order to raise further the children’s attainments.*

An ETI report (p1) of a Sustaining Improvement Inspection of Tír na nÓg Primary School conducted in April 2018 noted:

- The school development plan prioritises developments in numeracy including: the review of the mathematics scheme; using mathematical assessments to inform planning; and, developing the children’s skills in mental mathematics. The numeracy development plan outlines various actions focussing on mental*

mathematics, however, the plan lacks a wide range of data to inform the priorities and to set clear targets for reviewing progress.

Prior to the 2018 inspection, the school informed the ETI that a majority of the teachers would not be co-operating with the inspectors and it was noted in the 2015 ETI report that:

- *The ETI was unable to evaluate fully the quality of learning and teaching within the classrooms (p1), and*
- *Owing to the impact of the action short of strike being taken by the teachers, the ETI is unable to assure parents/carers, the wider school community and stakeholders of the quality of education and safeguarding being provided for the children (p2).*

The 2015 ETI report (p 4) also indicated:

- *It will be important that the employing authority, school governors and the staff plan for, and manage, issues related to the sustainability of the school provision and school budget, in order to address the current and future needs of the children and the staff.*

Within the Sustainable Schools Policy, the section Educational Experience for Children contains the following comments (p20): *‘Teachers in small schools face problems of having less scope for professional interaction and mutual support. The school is unlikely to provide a wide programme of extra-curricular activities and will have a smaller range of teacher specialisms e.g. music. The smaller numbers of children in each year group limit the opportunities for working alongside peers, social interaction and challenge, and participation in extra-curricular activities including team-based experiences.’*

The ETI Chief Inspector’s Report 2014-2016 comments (p11): *‘When the composite class spans more than two year groups, ensuring adequate progression in learning and planning to meet individual needs across a wider range of abilities and stages of development can be more challenging for the teacher. It may also limit opportunities for the children to develop socially and emotionally with those of a similar age and stage.’*

Tír na nÓg PS operates with more than two year groups in each of its two composite classes.

3.1.3 The quality of the physical environment for learning and teaching.

A number of minor works remain outstanding in regard to the school as noted in section 2.2.

3.1.4 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.

The 2015 ETI inspection (p3) noted:

- *The quality of the provision for pastoral care in the school is very good; the school environment is nurturing and inclusive with whole-school celebration of the children's achievements. The children benefit from the positive working relationships at all levels, the family and community ethos and the holistic support for each child. The children contribute to decision-making within the school, for example, for 'pupil of the month' and the choice of playground equipment. The children spoke of their enjoyment of school, their enthusiasm for learning and the opportunities for the extra-curricular activities, including the film club and sports.*
- *The school gives good attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity, including hockey, swimming and football, thereby encouraging the children to adopt healthy lifestyles.*

The 2018 ETI report noted:

- *Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding children are unsatisfactory (p1).*
- *The areas which must be improved urgently include:*
 - *updating the policies to reflect current school personnel and practices;*
 - *aligning the policies to reflect current guidance from the Department of Education and best practice;*
 - *reviewing the emergency exit arrangements in the nursery unit and classroom 1; and*
 - *ensuring that relevant governors attend training in safeguarding (p2).*
- *In discussion with a group of children from key stage 2, they reported that they feel safe in school and know what to do and who to talk to if they have concerns about their safety or well-being. However, owing to the action short of strike, the ETI was unable to evaluate fully the outworking of the arrangements for safeguarding in the school (p2).*

A follow-up inspection of the school was conducted in June 2018 to ensure that the safeguarding issues, evaluated as unsatisfactory in the inspection in April 2018, had been addressed. It was noted (p3):

- *On the basis of the evidence available, the revised arrangements now reflect broadly the guidance issued by the Department of Education; and*
- *Owing to the ongoing action short of strike, the ETI was unable to evaluate fully, the outworking of the arrangements for safeguarding children in the school.*

3.2 SSP2: Stable Enrolment Trends

3.2.1 The enrolment trends in the school in the past three years and projected demand in the area.

Table 2 demonstrates the enrolment figures remain consistently below the number of 105 contained within the Sustainable Schools Policy, from 35 in 2008/09 to 16 in 2018/19. It is not anticipated there will be a significant increase in demand in the short, medium or long term demand in the area to impact the enrolment numbers significantly.

3.3 SSP 3: Sound Financial Position

3.3.1 The school's annual finances indicate that it can live within its delegated budget.

All schools receive delegated budgets and have the authority to determine expenditure from these budgets. Guidance for Controlled and Maintained schools requires that they should not accumulate surpluses or deficits in excess of 5% of their delegated budget or £75,000, whichever is the lesser.

A copy of the Annual Area Profile 2018 for Tír na nÓg PS is attached at Appendix D. It offers some insight into the school's current financial position and enrolment history. Table 6 below provides information from the school's 3 year financial plan 2018-21. It is based on a school enrolment of 22 pupils in 2018/19, and projections of 23 pupils in 2019/20 and 22 pupils in 2020/21 (P1 – P7). The financial plan indicates an anticipated increasing financial deficit, with a projected deficit of -£105,469 in 2020/21.

Whilst the financial plan is based on an anticipated annual enrolment of around 22 pupils over the three year period, the actual enrolment in 2018/19 is only 16 pupils. Normally a reduction in pupil enrolment will lead to a reduction in the financial budget share available and, as such, a further increase in the projected financial deficit might be expected.

Table 6: Financial Position 2018-21

Financial Year	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Total Budget	£146,387	£112,015	£75,705
Total Expenditure	£172,878	£177,057	£181,174
Closing Balance	-£26,491	-£65,042	-£105,469
% Deficit	18.10%	58.07%	139.32%

Source School Financial Plan 18-21

The ETI Inspection report (2015) included the following comments (p4).

'It will be important that the employing authority, school governors and the staff plan for, and manage, issues related to the sustainability of the school provision and school budget, in order to address the current and future needs of the children and staff'.

Further details of the 3-year Financial Plan are included in Appendix D.

3.4 SSP 4: Strong Leadership and Management by Boards of Governors and Principal

3.4.1 ETI Inspection Report

The 2015 ETI report included the following observations (p4):

- *Notwithstanding the early stage of development of the newly formed staff team, the acting principal and teacher work collaboratively and effectively to lead competently and strategically in their various areas of responsibility. There is very good communication, ongoing professional discussion, and effective collegiality amongst all the staff within the school. The staff have completed a one-year plan identifying the school's priorities and incorporating the significant amount of development work being undertaken across the school. A key focus of the plan is raising the standards in literacy and numeracy, guided appropriately by the associated action plans and internal school data. The staff have introduced recently a detailed assessment, tracking and monitoring system to analyse the children's progress and attainments.*
- *Based on the evidence presented at the time of inspection, the ETI's evaluation is that there can be confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. There are aspects of governance to review, namely to ensure that there is a viable financial recovery plan for the school.*

3.4.2 Composition of Board of Governors – skills and experience of Board members and number of vacancies.

The Board of Governors benefits from a wide range of skills and includes representation from parents, teachers, Trustees, school principal and the Department of Education.

3.4.3 Management of staff attendance and absenteeism.

The 2015 ETI report (p1) included the following observations:

- *There are two composite classes with a teaching principal, a full-time teacher and a principal's release teacher for two days a week. There has been a sustained period of staff changes; an acting teaching principal on secondment from another school began work at Tír na nÓg in November 2014, and a full-time teacher was appointed in October 2014.*

The 2018 ETI report included the comment:

- *Since the last inspection, there have been a number of changes in the arrangements for the school's headship.*

3.4.4 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 information contained in the ETI Inspection Report on the issues noted above.

3.5 SSP5: Accessibility

3.5.1 Distance to another suitable primary school.

Table 7 – Distance from Tír na nÓg PS to nearby schools

Primary School	Distance (miles) from Tír na nÓg PS	Sector
St Macnissi's PS Newtownabbey	8.3 miles	Maintained
St Mary's on the Hill PS, Glengormley	6.7 miles	Maintained
St Bernard's PS, Glengormley	7.5 miles	Maintained
St James' PS, Newtownabbey	7.7 miles	Maintained
St Joseph's PS, Antrim (303-6050)	8.3 miles	Maintained
Tildarg Primary School	3.7 miles	Controlled
Ballyclare PS	0.2 miles	Controlled
Doagh PS	1.9 miles	Controlled
Fairview PS	0.8 miles	Controlled
Mallusk Integrated PS	7.4 miles	Controlled

Source: DE Census 17/18 & google maps

3.5.2 Capacity in nearest schools

Table 8: Capacity in nearest schools (2017/18)

	Enrolment	Approved Enrolment Number	Statemented pupils	Unfilled places
St Macnissi's PS Newtownabbey	193	210	4	17
St Mary's on the Hill PS, Glengormley	382	430	3	48
St Bernard's PS, Glengormley	596	595	15	-1
St James' PS, Newtownabbey	226	387	4	161
St Joseph's PS, Antrim	331	762	13	431

Tildarg Primary School	84	84	*	0
Ballyclare PS	542	572	15	30
Doagh PS	89	138	*	49
Fairview PS	513	525	9	12
Mallusk Integrated PS	32	132	*	100

* denotes fewer than 5 pupils

Source: DE website - <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/school-enrolments-school-level-data-201718>

The enrolment figure includes supernumerary pupils (whom are pupils with a statement of Special Educational Needs). When calculating the unfilled places, the Department of Education excludes supernumerary pupils from the calculation. As such adding the unfilled places to the enrolment may not match the approved enrolment number.

3.6 SSP 6: Strong Links with the community

3.6.1 Multi-functional use of buildings outside formal education, for example, for sport, voluntary and community use.

The 2015 ETI report (p4) included the following comments:

The recently established parent teacher association is at an early stage of development. The school has well-established links with the local community, including a day for grandparents to visit the school and joint sporting activities with local schools. The pupils of a local post-primary school coach the children in hockey, rugby and football.

4 AREA PLANNING IMPACT

4.1 Outline the Area Planning context and how this proposal will contribute to the delivery of education provision within the area. How does the proposal align with the current Area Plan, its key strategic themes and actions outlined in the Annual Action Plan?

The DE's Sustainable Schools Policy focuses on the longer-term viability of educational provision. Its primary objective is to ensure that all children get a first class education, in fit for purpose facilities. This is regardless of background or where they live, making best use of the resources available for education. This policy drives the area planning process to ensure there is a network of strong viable schools to meet the educational needs of pupils.

CCMS has a statutory duty to promote and co-ordinate, in consultation with the Trustees, the planning of Catholic maintained schools. Area planning is focused on the Sustainable Schools Policy. In October 2016, when Education Authority published *Providing Pathways - Strategic Area Plan for School provision 2017-2020*, the then Minister of Education, Peter Weir, MLA, stated:

'The Sustainable Schools Policy, which is implemented through the Area Planning process, focuses on providing children and young people with high quality education that meets their needs and enables them to achieve their full potential.....

The educational experience of our children and young people is greatly enhanced when they attend schools that are educationally and financially viable. The Sustainable Schools Policy is a framework for assessment of the sustainability of primary and post-primary schools. The six criteria and supporting indicators clearly illustrate what a sustainable educational experience should look like. Schools must: deliver a broad and balanced curriculum, offer extensive extracurricular activities, have high quality pastoral care systems and have the confidence of the communities they serve.

In primary schools pupils should be in a class with no more than two year groups but ideally they should be in single year group classes. They should be able to interact with peer groups and have the best chances to prepare for successful transition to post primary school. However there are still a significant number of schools that are struggling, for a wide range of reasons, to deliver the best for their pupils. This is particularly evident in the primary sector and, despite the best effort of teachers, it becomes harder to deliver a high quality education if pupils are taught in composite classes. We have too many small primary schools with more than two year groups in a single class.'.

CCMS, in taking forward the Annual Action Plan (2018-19) identified a key issue for Tír na nÓg PS to 'address school provision where sustainability is an issue' with the action 'Managing authority to consult on options for future provision of Tír na nÓg PS by March 2019'.

CCMS subsequently commenced a consultation on the future provision of the school between 6th December 2018 and 25th January 2019.

4.2 Specify links to other proposals. Provide detail on other DPs (including those in planning and not yet published) that could impact on education provision in the area, affecting consideration of this proposal and outline any reason for not bringing them forward together.

There are no other links with other proposals.

4.3 What other options/size were explored and why was this the most appropriate area solution?

The alternative options explored at the consultation stage are listed below.

4.3.1 Maintain the status quo by keeping Tír na nÓg PS open

The implications of maintaining the status quo are as follows (as presented at the pre-publication consultation in December 2018).

- Small town school is retained.
- Parental preference for a local school is maintained

- The school continues to face the following challenges of:
 - more than 2 year groups being taught together in a single classroom;
 - less than 4 teachers in the school;
 - providing the appropriate curriculum and extra-curricular activities;
 - creating opportunities for staff development;
 - low enrolments well below the Sustainable Schools Policy threshold of 105; and
 - ongoing serious financial pressure.

This option would result in no change to the current provision. It would provide continued pressure on staff to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum, to mixed aged classes in conjunction with an increasing budget deficit, leading to increasing pressure on available resources. In consideration of the Annual Action Plan, the low enrolment numbers, the school's financial position, and the Sustainable Schools Policy, to do nothing is not a sustainable option.

4.3.2 Shared Education

Shared Education is an education process that allows pupils from different sectors to be educated in classes together. It does not, in and of itself, address the sustainability issues identified in small 2 teacher schools as these are associated with low enrolments in individual schools.

Shared campus projects allow schools to share a campus whilst retaining their own individual identity. Guidance from DE (Options for Sharing and Integrating: A Short Guide for Schools, 2018) specifically notes that schools must be sustainable in order to participate in the Shared Campus Programme. The Ballyclare area currently has 7 schools, Tír na nÓg PS (maintained school) Ballyclare PS, Tildarg PS, Doagh PS, Thompson PS, Kilbride PS and Fairview PS (controlled schools). The schools are in close proximity. However, Tír na nÓg PS currently does not participate in any shared education programmes. Given the circumstances in which Tír na nÓg PS currently finds itself, it would be challenging to find a shared option that could improve the sustainability of Tír na nÓg PS.

4.3.3 Federation

A federation consists of 2 or more schools managed by one Principal with the governors drawn from the current membership of the existing Boards. Any federation must meet the sustainability criteria of 105 pupils. It is challenging to see how a federation could address the long term sustainability issues facing Tír na nÓg PS.

4.3.4 Amalgamation

Amalgamation is the process whereby 2 or more schools, from the same sector, come together to create a sustainable school. An amalgamation must be capable of delivering a school of at least 105 pupils, which will retain this number into the future.

Having considered this option, CCMS is of the view there is no suitable school in the area for Tír na nÓg PS to amalgamate with. Therefore, an amalgamation is not a viable option.

4.3.5 Closure of Tír na nÓg PS

If Tír na nÓg PS was to close and pupils were transferred to alternative schools the implications are as follows:

- small town school removed from the community and parental first preference not realised;
- longer travelling distance for pupils;
- greater opportunities for pupils to be taught in their own peer groups;
- greater opportunities to interact in sports, leisure and cultural activities;
- increased opportunities for specialist teaching and for professional development of staff;
- pupils enrolled in a sustainable school; and
- greater long term security for staff.

4.3.6 Conclusion

In considering the future of Tír na nÓg PS, all of the previous options considered would not provide sustainable provision for the school.

CCMS recognises the commitment of the governors and staff but current circumstances would not provide for a sustainable school. It is recognised despite the school's best efforts, an increasing financial deficit is projected.

The recommendation to close Tír na nÓg PS was presented at the consultation meeting on 6th December 2018. The purpose of the pre-publication consultation was to inform stakeholders of the challenges faced by the school. It was also to facilitate a meaningful discussion on CCMS's recommendation. It provided an opportunity for all stakeholders to present their views and contribute evidence to be considered as part of the process, including any alternative sustainable options. The summary of responses received on 6th December 2018, during consultation meetings, and through the consultation period, is recorded in Appendix E.

Having given due consideration to all feedback received, CCMS Education Provision Committee approved the proposal to proceed with a development proposal for the closure of Tír na nÓg PS with effect from August 2020, or as soon as possible thereafter.

4.4 What is the potential impact on other schools, what account has been taken of this?

It is not anticipated there will be any significant impact on other schools, given the low enrolment numbers in the school. If a development proposal is approved, a CCMS

Education Adviser will liaise with Tír na nÓg PS and schools to which the pupils will transfer and will assist the pastoral aspect of the move. The receiving schools will facilitate parental visits, to ensure parents will have the opportunity to familiarise themselves with alternative provision.

There will be meetings with SEN co-ordinators where appropriate to facilitate SEN pupil transfers. Administration of admissions documentation will be required, including the transfer of common transfer files.

4.5 In the case of pre-school provision the EA's Pre-school Education Group (PEG) are responsible for planning pre-school provision and overseeing the allocation of places to the non-statutory sector.

Noted.

5 RATIONALE FOR PROPOSAL

5.1 Explain the objectives of the proposal and the desired outcomes if approved – for example to reduce number of available places or to increase enrolment to meet demand. Detail how this aligns to Departmental policies and consideration given to Statutory Duties.

The Providing Pathways - Strategic Area Plan for School Provision 2017-2020 (Area Plan): *aims to ensure all pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum that meets their needs in sustainable schools within a diverse system of education (p6.)*

This proposal addresses sustainability issues, as determined by the Sustainable Schools Policy (SSP), at Tír na nÓg PS. The key sustainability criteria are addressed in section 3, and the following conclusions can be drawn from the assessments made.

Quality educational experience

The Quality Educational Experience SSP criterion has an indicator '*No more than two composite year groups in a single classroom at primary school level*'. Tír na nÓg PS operates three composite year groups in a single classroom.

Stable enrolment trends

Tír na nÓg PS has, as detailed in Table 2, experienced a low enrolment in the last 5 years. The current enrolment is 16 pupils, with no pupils enrolled in Year 1, in the 2018/19 school year. The school's enrolment falls well below the SSP criteria for a rural school of 105 pupils.

Sound financial position

Tír na nÓg PS anticipates an increasing financial deficit. At the end of the 2020/21 financial year, the deficit is anticipated to be -£105,469.

The school's financial plan for 2018 - 2021 is based on projected enrolment numbers (n=22) that are significantly higher than the current enrolment (n=16), and as such an increase in the projected financial deficit might be expected.

Strong leadership and management by Boards of Governors and Principal

The Board of Governors of Tír na nÓg PS benefits from a wide range of skills. There have been a number of changes in the arrangements for the school's headship over recent years

Accessibility

Tír na nÓg PS is accessible for those who send their children there. A 2013 survey indicated that a significant majority of school's pupils lived within a two mile radius of the school. There are also accessible schools nearby.

Strong links with the community

- The school is developing links with its local community.

The proposal to close Tír na nÓg PS, recognises that continuing with the status quo will perpetuate the challenges experienced by the school. It is unable to meet a number of the sustainability criteria, particularly in regard to the quality of the educational experience (due to falling enrolment), enrolment and finance.

5.2 Equality Duty

Equality screening of this proposal has been carried out. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998: A Guide for Public Authorities advises "*The first duty is the Equality of Opportunity duty, which requires public authorities in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between the nine equality categories of persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation; men and women generally; persons with a disability and persons without; and persons with dependants and persons without*" (p 7).

The evidence received to date suggests that there are no major impacts on the protected groups within Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. The final screening document will be published on CCMS' website, when the proposal reaches the public objection period. It will also be available, on request, from CCMS' office.

5.3 The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

Article 12 (1) of the UNCRC: *Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her views the right to express those views freely on all matters affecting the child,*

the views of the child given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.

CCMS had discussions with the principal of Tír na nÓg Primary School regarding the most age appropriate method of capturing pupil feedback. CCMS suggested feedback from the School Council or using comments from the most recent inspectorate visit. A number of pupils (n=4) participated in a discussion about their experience at Tír na nÓg PS and a summary of the comments made are presented in Appendix E.

5.4 Rural Needs Act 2016

Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 ('the Act') requires public authorities to have due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or reviewing a policy, strategy or plan and when designing or delivering a public service.

The areas from which Tír na nÓg PS attract pupils are, according to the Inter-Departmental Urban-Rural Definition Group (A Guide to the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 for Public Authorities (Revised) April 2018, p16), defined as rural. Therefore CCMS must take "due regard" to the Act.

A number of options were identified and this Case for Change considers the potential of each option for maintaining primary provision in the area. These include: shared education, federation, amalgamation and maintaining the status quo. Each of these options has been discounted as they do not provide sustainable education provision. The details for the rejection of these options are outlined in Sections 4.3.1 – 4.3.6.

The options above were presented, as part of the consultation with staff, the Board of Governors, parents and pupils of Tír na nÓg PS. This ensured information was received from the impacted stakeholders on all matters, including rural needs.

In determining whether to proceed with this proposal, due consideration was given to the balance between meeting the enrolment, educational and financial requirements of the Sustainable Schools Policy and removing provision. There is no evidence the enrolment, educational or financial aspects of the school can be satisfactorily addressed.

The proposal for the closure of Tír na nÓg PS would have a positive impact on primary education in the area. The reasons for this are detailed throughout the Case for Change. Alternative provision is located between 0.2 miles to 9 miles from Tír na nÓg PS. The provision of home-to-school transport will provide for the safe transportation of pupils from the area to their nearest school. This mitigates the impact of the closure of the school in a rural area.

The proposal ensures pupils would have equitable access to a broad and balanced curriculum, as is afforded to other primary pupils across Northern Ireland. The intention of this proposal is to advance the aspirations, aims and objectives of the Sustainable

Schools' Policy (SSP), *"It is important that children in rural communities have access to a quality education in cost effective provision"* (p27).

6 EDUCATIONAL IMPACT

6.1 What are the educational benefits of this proposal?

As a result of enrolling in a sustainable school, it is more likely that pupils will be taught in single year group classes. This will ensure that pupils are working alongside peers of a similar age and stage. In a sustainable school, it is more likely that pupils will benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities. There will also be opportunities to benefit from a wider range of teacher specialisms. The pupils and staff will also benefit from the security of being enrolled in a sustainable school.

6.2 Provision of high quality education should be the desired outcome of all proposals - outline how this proposal aims to achieve this outcome.

The schools within the area listed in tables 7 and 8 received Highly Effective/Very Good/Good ETI reports and can provide for the educational needs of the pupils. There is capacity in the local schools. The local schools include schools which have pupil numbers which meet the Sustainable Schools Policy of no more than two year groups in a classroom. The pupils would be taught in more age appropriate class sizes which would assist teachers in ensuring that there are appropriate levels of differentiation in teaching and learning. By being taught in a class with no more than two year groups, pupils may benefit from wider peer and social interaction. There can also be more opportunities for extra-curricular activities and participation in team events. It can allow better use of educational resources including the deployment of teaching and support staff. There would also be greater opportunities for the professional development of staff through interaction with peers and CPD opportunities such as 'Trusted Colleague Network'.

If Tír na nÓg PS was to cease provision, the pupils would be afforded the opportunity to enrol in sustainable schools thus ensuring the following:

- greater opportunities for pupils to be taught in their own peer groups;
- increased opportunities for specialist teaching and for professional development of staff; and
- pupils enrolled in a sustainable school with less financial pressures.

6.3 Outline how the proposal will benefit children and young people in the school(s) and in the area overall.

This proposal will benefit pupils as it will add to the longer-term viability of school provision. Its primary objective is to ensure that all children get a first class education in fit for purpose facilities, regardless of background or where they live and making best use of the resources available for education. This proposal will progress the development of a

network of strong viable schools to meet the educational needs of children and young people.

6.3 Provide details of how the specific requirements of pupils with SEN will be catered for under the new arrangements.

If this proposal is approved, CCMS, in liaison with the EA and the schools involved, will ensure the following steps are taken:

- continued support for SEN pupils following the closure;
- assistance for pupils, as required, in managing the change to a new setting;
- continued appropriate placement for pupils with a statement of special educational needs, and assistance for these pupils in managing the change to a new setting;
- early, and confidential, transfer of statements and individual education plans (IEP) to the new school;
- consideration, as necessary, of the facilities and equipment required to support pupils with SEN;
- consideration, as necessary, of Learning Support Centre provision where appropriate; and
- consideration, as necessary, of transport arrangements.

Current policy means that where a pupil lives beyond 2 miles of their nearest “suitable” school, they are entitled to transport assistance to any suitable school.

Special transport needs may arise if a pupil has a level of impaired mobility which necessitates the use of a wheelchair or a pupil has a medical condition/severe learning difficulty.

This is determined by the EA, who indicate which special transport arrangements must be made. Where pupils have special transport needs, officers of the EA, drawing upon medical and other advice as required, will assess the pupil’s transport needs and make appropriate arrangements.

7 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (IF THE PROPOSAL IS APPROVED)

Note: The timeline should be considered in advance of DP publication, this will impact on when the DP should be published to allow sufficient time from decision to implementation.

7.1 Outline all actions required to deliver the proposal if approved. Does the implementation date reflect this, is it deliverable? If phasing is being proposed explain why it is necessary?

- A CCMS Education Adviser would liaise with Tír na nÓg PS and schools where the pupils would transfer to, assisting the pastoral aspect of the move:

- Parents would have the opportunity to visit alternative schools:
- Meetings with SEN co-ordinators would be organised to facilitate the efficient and effective transfer of SEN pupils:
- Administration of admissions documentation would be organised:
- There would be sufficient time for the school to liaise with the EA regarding the transfer of their assets to other schools and secure storage of documents which need to be held.

7.2 Depending on type of proposal, this could include arrangements for pupils transferring to other school(s), maintaining continuity for examination classes, applications for additional accommodation and timeframe for delivery which takes account of time needed to secure all the necessary approvals to allow accommodation to be provided.

Pupils transferring to post-primary schools will participate in the same policies and procedures for transferring to a post-primary school, as per current policies and guidelines.

7.3 Details of any arrangements for Shared Education Partnerships and how they would be impacted should be included in this section.

Tír na nÓg PS does not participate in any Shared Education Partnerships.

7.4 Will there be composite classes or will they be removed, will the school operate a double entry?

This proposal means the pupils will have a greater opportunity to attend schools which do not have more than 2 year groups in one class.

7.5 How will the School/EA ensure that the education of the children is protected during / after the proposed change?

Measures will be put in place to protect the educational and pastoral needs of the pupils during the transfer to another school. Once the receiving schools know the particular nature of the pupils' needs, they can be proactive and prepare appropriately to offer the required support and care strategies to enable the pupils to make good progress.

The staff in the receiving schools will have expertise in catering for pupils with special needs and they will ensure that there is no diminution in the level of care currently in place. Individual education plans will set out the nature of support pupils require and the expertise to deal with pupils in this situation is already there. Individual education plans will transfer across to the new school with the pupils and will remain in place.

8 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Detail finance/resource implications (both capital and recurrent) of the proposal and approximate costs where available.

8.1 Is the proposal cost effective?

Finance – Budget position, impact on budget, cost of proposal.

This proposal is cost effective. The school projects that by March 2021, its deficit will rise to -£105,469 (Appendix D). The school's budget is based on its existing pupil numbers, additional needs and special circumstances.

This proposal is cost effective and will strengthen provision in the area as the schools will benefit from the additional pupils.

If approved, there will be savings made upon closure of Tír na nÓg PS. Savings would accrue from the following main sources:

- reduction of building maintenance costs; and
- removal of small school support funding.

8.2 Staffing – Additional teaching staff required, cost / redeployment, redundancy cost

The school's staff cohort is commensurate with the current and anticipated enrolment. Any redeployment/redundancy costs will be in line with current guidelines.

It is not possible to predict the number of redundancies or redeployments in advance of a decision in regard to the development proposal. Therefore, it is not possible to cost these accurately at this time. Employment/deployment opportunities for both teaching and non-teaching staff will be sought in alternative schools, in the event of the closure of the school.

8.3 Transport – Any additional cost

There will be an increased transport cost associated with any pupil who is currently less than 2 miles from Tír na nÓg PS and where they live beyond 2 miles from an alternative school.

8.4 Accommodation – brief description of current accommodation / site, any capital proposals or minor works applications. Immediate day one minimum capital requirements should the DP be approved, site suitability to support changes, estimated cost and timescales for delivery of changes. Note: Approval of a DP does not automatically attract additional funding or accommodation and that these issues will be dealt with separately by the Department.

It is not anticipated there will be any accommodation costs to facilitate the closure of Tír na nÓg PS.

8.6 Other issues requiring resources
N/A

APPENDIX A – Annual Area Profile 2018

Primary School Annual Area Profile 2018

DE Ref No	School Name	Status	Council Area
3033304	Tir-na-Nog Primary School	Catholic Maintained	ANTRIM AND NEWTOWNABBEY

Annual Census Information			
Year	Total pupils Y1-Y7	IMU	FSME %
2014/15	27	0	18.5
2015/16	29	0	27.6
2016/17	24	0	25.0%
2017/18	25	0	28.0%
Approved Reception-Year 7 enrolment number			77
Approved Reception-Year 7 admissions number			11
Year 1 Pupils 2017/18			5
First Preferences Applications 2017/18			7

Formal Intervention	
In formal intervention any period 1 April 2017-31 March 2018	

Budgets			
Year	Available Delegated Resources £	Surplus/Deficit £	Surplus/Deficit %
2014/15	150,794	-288	-0.19%
2015/16	156,373	15,917	10.18%
2016/17	169,447	23,842	14.07%

KEY TO SYMBOLS & TEXT USED IN DATA ABOVE	
Symbol/Text	Definition
*	Relates to fewer than 5 cases
#	Means that a figure greater than or equal to 5 had been treated to prevent disclosure of a small number elsewhere
-	School not open in the relevant academic year
n/a	No year 7 pupils

APPENDIX B – Schedule of Accommodation

Tir-na-nog Primary School: 303-3304

Ballyclare, Antrim

School Opened: 1973

Site: 5488sqm / 0.55 hectares / 1.36 acres

Grounds:

1 @ 3608sqm - Usable grass play areas 1 @ 315sqm - Hard surface play areas

1 @ 150sqm - Car Parking

Accommodation Breakdown:

Permanent Classrooms:

2 @ 47sqm

1 @ 63sqm – Infants

Other Accommodations:

1 @ 32sqm – Entrance hall

1 @ 3sqm – Store

2 @ 4sqm – Store

1 @ 17sqm – Quiet room

1 @ 12sqm – Staff room

1 @ 79sqm – Assembly/dining area

2 @ 3sqm – Cloaks

1 @ 10sqm – Boiler house

1 @ 1sqm – Caretaker's store

1 @ 50sqm – Kitchen

1 @ 10sqm – Tank room

Toilets:

1 @ 5sqm – Staff

1 @ 11sqm – Girls

1 @ 10sqm – Boys

1 @ 8sqm - Unisex

Male staff – 1 WC

Girls – 3 WC's

Boys – 3 urinals, 2 WC's

Pupils unisex – 2 WC's

Grounds:

1 @ 3608sqm - Usable grass play areas


1 @ 315sqm - Hard surface play areas

1 @ 150sqm - Car Parking

APPENDIX C – Minor Works

<i>Minor Work Details - Standard School Report</i>						
Ref No	303-3304	DIOCESE	Down & Connor	Enrolment	24	
School	Tír na nÓg Primary School	PARISH	Ballyclare	FORMULA/APPROVED	77	77
ELB	EA NER	EDUCATION ADVISER	Ms Alana Willis	SCHOOL TEL:	028 9332 328:	
Principal	Mr Anthony Morrin	TRUSTEE	Very Rev Joseph Rooney Adm			
Scheme	Year	Description	Status	Budget	To D	
13B	16-17	Fire Risk Assessment Works	Initial Stage - Submission of Application	£0.00	14/11/20	
			Annual Expenditure:	£0.00		
12B	15-16	Toilet Refurbishment	Tender Approved - Notification	£54,028.22	13/05/20	
			Annual Expenditure:	£54,028.22		
11B	14-15	Photovoltaic Panels - Schools Energy Efficiency Programme	Rejected - Works Rejected by DENI	£14,715.98		
10B	14-15	Schools Energy Efficiency Programme - Oil to Gas Conversion	Tender Approved - Notification	£12,000.00		
			Annual Expenditure:	£26,715.98		
09B	07-08	School Signage	Pending Approval - Approved in Principle	£0.00	18/05/20	
			Annual Expenditure:	£0.00		
Total Minor Works Expenditure:				£80,744.20		

APPENDIX D – Financial Plan

		Tir-na-nog Primary		C	21398
		Prior Year October 2017	Year 1 October 2018	Year 2 October 2019	Year 3 October 2020
Full Time Equivalent Enrolment (excluding Spec Unit pupils)	25	22	23	22	
Planned Teaching Complement (after amendment to Variables as below)	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.40	
Planned Pupil/Teacher Ratio	10.42	9.17	9.58	9.17	
Variables - Teaching Staff - To assist in budget forecasting		Year 1 Change in Staff <i>(Enter as Positive Fig.s)</i>	Year 2 Change in Staff <i>(Enter as Positive Fig.s)</i>	Year 3 Change in Staff <i>(Enter as Positive Fig.s)</i>	
Increase in Permanent Teachers					
Increase in Temporary Teachers					
Decrease in Permanent Teachers					
Decrease in Temporary Teachers					
PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS		Year 2		Year 3	
Cost of Living Pay Award Estimate		1%		1%	
Other Costs - estimated rate of inflation		2%		2%	
Expenditure Summary		YEAR 1 (2018-2019)	YEAR 2 (2019-2020)	YEAR 3 (2020-2021)	
Staff - Pay Teaching		£132,177	£135,813	£139,381	
Staff - Pay Non Teaching		£27,991	£28,270	£28,550	
Staff - Other Costs		£0	£0	£0	
Premises, Fixed Plant and Grounds		£4,830	£4,927	£5,025	
Operating Costs		£8,380	£8,548	£8,719	
Non Capital Purchases		£0	£0	£0	
Capital Expenditure		£0	£0	£0	
Stock Adjustment		£0	£0	£0	
Less Income <i>(enter as negative figure)</i>		-£500	-£500	-£500	
Estimated Savings <i>(enter as a negative figure)</i>					
Reduction in Teaching Staff (as per Variables)		£0	£0	£0	
Please specify		£0	£0	£0	
Please specify		£0	£0	£0	
Please specify		£0	£0	£0	
Estimated Additional expenditure <i>(enter as a positive figure)</i>					
Increase in Teaching Staff (as per Variables)		£0	£0	£0	
Please specify		£0	£0	£0	
Please specify		£0	£0	£0	
Please specify		£0	£0	£0	
TOTAL PROPOSED EXPENDITURE		£172,878	£177,057	£181,174	
CFF BUDGET SHARE PER CAPITA		£5,809	£6,296	£6,119	
Budget Summary Allocation					
Common Formula Funding (CFF)					
Budget Share		£145,231	£138,506	£140,747	
Other funding - <i>(Please specify)</i>		£0	£0	£0	
Other funding - <i>(Please specify)</i>		£0	£0	£0	
Other funding - <i>(Please specify)</i>		£0	£0	£0	
Other funding - <i>(Please specify)</i>		£0	£0	£0	
Total Delegated Budget		£145,231	£138,506	£140,747	
Carry-over from Previous Year		£1,156	(£26,491)	(£65,042)	
Total BUDGET		£146,387	£112,015	£75,705	
less PROPOSED EXPENDITURE		£172,878	£177,057	£181,174	
ANTICIPATED CARRY-OVER		(£26,491)	(£65,042)	(£105,469)	
% CARRY-OVER		(18.10%)	(58.07%)	(139.32%)	
In Year Movement		-£27,647	-£38,551	-£40,427	

APPENDIX E – Consultation Summary



CCMS
Council for Catholic
Maintained Schools

SCHOOL NAME: Tír na nÓg Primary School
SCHOOL REF: 303-3304

PROPOSAL:

To close Tír na nÓg Primary School on 31st August 2020 or as soon as possible thereafter.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION

DATE: JANUARY 2019

Summary of the responses to the consultation regarding the proposal to close Tír na nÓg Primary School on 31st August 2020 or as soon as possible thereafter.

This summary contains a resume of the key issues raised at the consultation meetings and through written comments subsequently received. The following table notes the key issues, who raised the issues and how they were addressed. Any issue requiring further action from the written responses or the meeting is noted.

Three consultation meetings were held as below.

The staff consultation was held on 06/12/18, 6 staff were in attendance.

The governors' consultation was held on 06/12/18, 5 governors were in attendance.

The parents' consultation was held on 06/12/18, 16 parents were in attendance.

The key issues identified in the written submissions to the consultation and at the meetings, include:

- the unique location of the school;
- the benefits of a small school and small classes;
- pastoral care in the school;
- the negative effects of protracted uncertainty regarding the school's future on pupils, parents and the community;
- the negative impact on a predominantly female workforce;
- opportunities for federation/integration/jointly managed schools were raised; and
- the loss of Catholic education in the local parish and community.

Insert “Yes” in the relevant part of the table below where the issue was addressed. Note actions required if an issue was not addressed fully at the meetings or by letter in response to specific queries raised in the consultation responses. (The figures appearing in red in the table indicate the number of times that the matter was raised in the written submissions.)

Issues	Staff	Govs	Parents	Pupils	Any action required
<i>Staffing matters</i>					
What are implications for staff?	YES				Teaching Staff School Reorganisation Agreement (TNC 2013/2) Employment Protection up to 2 years Re-Organisation Allowance up to 4 years Excess Travel up to 2 years Transferred Redundancy Voluntary Redundancy Support Staff - EA met with Support Staff to discuss
<i>Pupils issues</i>					
Will the closure date be 31 August 2020?	YES				BC advised the proposal, if approved means the school will close on 31 August 2020. It could only be brought forward if parents and BoG agreed to request an earlier closure. No action required.
How will the children be consulted?		YES			BC advised it would be carried out in a way and manner agreed with the Principal of the school. AW confirmed no child would be forced to take part in the consultation and parents, should they wish, could incorporate their child's comments on their response. No action required
Is there a risk parents will move after Christmas in response to this? – we would want to phase it.		YES			AW advised it depends on the parents involved and the BoG know their parents better than CCMS. AW confirmed it is not a done-deal and is only at pre-publication stage. It is important the parents do not think it is a done deal. No action required
Parents were concerned about the potential use of taxis for their children.			YES		BC re-assured parents that any service can be personalised to protect the needs of the pupils and that any taxi drivers used would be vetted. Post meeting note – EA will provide any transport

					assistance, as appropriate, for those who qualify. No further action required.
Concern was expressed about children with SEN in a larger group.			YES		AW reassured parents there are layers and mechanisms to support pupils in all schools. In addition, ETI Inspections demonstrate other schools provide very good and outstanding pastoral care. No further action required.
<i>Consultation Process</i>					
It was raised that a decision has already been made with a recommendation prior to consultation			YES		BC advised it is a recommendation, and that CCMS are not the decision makers. It was confirmed to parents the recommendation was based on all information received to date, and information they provide could alter the recommendation. No action required.
There was a query regarding the number required for a sustainable school. They were of the opinion school which did not meet the sustainability numbers should not be included in the discussion.			YES		AW advised there are a number of criteria used to look at the sustainability of a school, not just the numbers. E.g. 4 teachers means there would be no classes with over 2 year groups in one classroom. No action required.
Can the school be converted into an integrated school, as it is already mixed in terms of nationalities and faith?			YES		BC advised that any response can be made to the consultation. AW confirmed that any proposal will be listened to. BC advised that if any proposal for integrated education presented during the consultation was robust enough, CCMS can withdraw this consultation process and start a new process. No action required.
Who will make the final decision?	YES				BC advised it will either be the Permanent Secretary or Minister for Education. No action required.
What is the timescale and by what date will a decision be made?	YES	YES			BC advised it depends when process proceeds to DE. Sufficient time is required for CCMS to discuss the proposal. Objections raised may impact this. BC advised the preference is to have the DP with the Minister by September 2019. A decision may not be reached until March 2020. No action required.
Query raised regarding Section 75 and who it relates to.		YES			BC advised of the protected groups under Section 75. Action – Should this proceed to a DP, the Equality Screening to be published.
Will the school remain open until the proposed closure date if only one pupil is attending the school?		YES			BC confirmed this to be the case. No action required.

Queries were raised regarding the pupil consultation and how it would impact the pupils			YES		BC advised we are required to include the voice of the child. BC confirmed that should the school determine it is not appropriate to carry out consultation with the children at this stage, it can be delayed. Post Meeting Note – The principal received consent for a number of pupils to attend a meeting to discuss the school. The feedback from the pupils is recorded. No action required.
A query was raised about the potential for amalgamation and federation			YES		BC advised other school communities would need to be included in the proposals and the need to be sustainable. BC advised that by looking at potential partners neither solutions, as examined to date, present a viable option.
A query was raised about the potential closure of another school which did not meet the sustainability criteria of 105 pupils.			YES		BC advised CCMS would not be commenting on other schools. No action required.
It was suggested the only real option is a bigger school which was not under threat. One parent had a relation, who is a pupil in a larger school, whose needs were not being met.			YES		BC reminded everyone a wide range of options had been presented and to include all information and opinions in the consultation response. No action required.

Table of responses received in the written consultation.

	Parents/Carers:	Staff:	Governors:	Joint Respondents:	Other:	Totals:
'Yes' Responses:	1	1	2			4
'Yes' responses – but some concerns raised:			2			2
'No' Responses:	4	1	2	2		9
Neither yes/no responses:					4	4
Total number of responses received:	5	2	6	2		19

OTHER RESPONDENTS	Number of Respondents
Current Pupils	4
Past Pupils	
Parents of Past Pupils	
Grandparents of Pupils	
Former Staff/BoG Members	
Members of Community	
Political Representatives	
Blank Responses	
TOTALS:	

Key issues raised by the written responses not raised at meetings.

Issue	Raised by	Any action required
School faces significant and multiple difficulties in relation to the majority of Sustainable Schools Policy. Children are not receiving a full quality education experience.	Staff - 1	No action required.
Agreeing but not lightly – concern over the removal of the only Catholic provision in the town/parish area. Will never be re-established. Agreeing but a great loss to the Parish community.	Governor - 1	No action required.
School is great but recognise that there is not the numbers to be able to stay open. Will finish and transfer to a new school this year.	Parent - 1	No action required.
School could have a complete makeover – perception that it is a Catholic School only is keeping numbers down.	Parent - 3	The school is a Catholic Maintained school. There are suitable alternative schools in the area.
3000 new homes to be built in the area over four years. Where will the children from these go? More should be done to highlight the school as one that includes all faiths. Still very much perceived as a Catholic school.	Parent - 3 Governor - 1	The school has had low enrolments for a long period of time, and there is no evidence this will increase in the future. No action required.
School is well known and respected in the area. School set up to fail in last number of years – temporary leadership roles and multiple changes in staffing. Rumours have stopped parents enrolling children in the school.	Parent – 3 Governor - 2 Staff - 1	Enrolments at the school have remained low over a long period of time. No action required.
School provides a high quality of education which cannot be replicated in large classes. Composite classes allow children to work with others and have a positive impact on their learning.	Parent – 3 Governor - 2	The issues with composite classes with over two year groups in one classroom was detailed in the presentation. It is recognised that there is some parental support for small classes encompassing a range of year groups. This does not negate the number of sustainability challenges the school has. No action required.
Excellent after school programme in place.	Parent - 1	No action required.
As interest in school began to grow rumours about closure put parents off enrolling children.	Parent – 2	The school has had low enrolment over a number of years. No action required.

	Governor - 1	
If the school changed its name it would be more accessible to people from other communities.	Parent – 2 Governor - 1	Whilst the school is open to all communities and all faiths, and those with none, it is a Catholic Maintained school. No action required.
Many schools in Northern Ireland are in financial difficulty. Not a reasonable way of determining sustainability.	Parent – 2 Governor - 2	Financial sustainability is only one measure within the sustainability criteria. All matters regarding sustainability are contained in the presentation. This will also be covered in the Case for Change. No action required.
Families should have the choice of a range of types of schooling including small schools. Super schools are not the answer.	Parent – 2 Governor - 2	There is no suggestion, or promotion of “super schools” in the presentation or in this proposal. The aim is for sustainable schools. Small sustainable schools with 105 pupils enrolled are available. No action required.
Current school is accessible to all. Excellent site located to many of the amenities accessed by the pupils. Excellent car parking makes for safe school drop off.	Parent - 1	It is recognised this school is accessible for the pupils who choose to attend. No action required.
School has very strong links to the community which would be lost if closed.	Parent – 3 Governor - 3	The links with the community are noted. Unfortunately, the small numbers in the school, impacting on the educational and financial deficit, mean the sustainability of the school needs to be addressed. No action required.
School already works closely with other local schools.	Parent – 2 Governor - 2	Unfortunately, the work the school is doing with other local schools is not positively impacting the sustainability challenges it faces. No action required.
Integrated status would help to grow numbers.	Parent – 3 Governor - 2	There is no evidence of sufficient demand for integrated education in the area, or that there would be a sufficient number of pupils who are Catholic, to establish an integrated school. No action required.
Joint faith school would mean Catholic children and others could be educated together.	Parent – 1 Governor - 1	There is no evidence of sufficient demand for a joint faith school in the area, or that there would be a sufficient number of pupils who are Catholic, to establish a joint faith school. No action required.

Transfer status to a controlled school – encourage those who want a small school setting to come to the school.	Parent – 1 Governor - 1	There are a number of accessible controlled schools in the area. No action required.
Impact for Equality Consideration – removal of Catholic schooling in the area will have a negative impact on parish, church, sacramental preparation.	Parent – 2 Governor - 3	DE Census data 17/18 demonstrated there were seven pupils in the school who were recorded as Catholic. Should they move to an alternative Catholic Maintained school, sacramental preparation will take place there. Given the very low numbers of pupils who are recorded as being Catholic, the impact on the local parish is not anticipated to be significant. Should this proposal proceed, the school community can discuss with the parish on how to minimise the impact of this closure on the parish. No action required.
Evidence is there to refute assumptions that composite class education is poor.	Parent – 2 Governor - 2	This information is from the Sustainable Schools Policy and ETI. CCMS are operating within established policies and framework to deliver sustainable schools. No action required.
Smaller class sizes make it easier to teach even if multiple composites are present.	Parent – 2 Governor - 2	The issue of small classes was addressed in the presentation and will be covered further in the Case for Change. No action required.
Concern raised as to equality impact on workforce who are predominantly female.	Parent – 1 Governor - 1	It is recognised the majority of staff are female, as they are in most schools in Northern Ireland. Should the school proceed to close, their rights will be protected under the negotiated TNC agreements. No action required.
Concern for children with a disability being asked to travel in taxi to new school.	Parent - 1 Governor - 1	The EA are responsible for providing transport assistance to the nearest suitable school, where there is no suitable school within two miles from where a pupil lives. This will be covered in more detail in the Case for Change. No action required.
Potential option to develop a Federated school (possibly with Upper Ballyboley P.S.) should be explored.	Parent – 2 Governor - 2	When the enrolments of both schools are combined, they do not create the numbers required for a sustainable school. No action required.
Area Planning Team should meet with Integrate My School team to explore options and survey population for desire for a new Integrated School.	Parent – 2	The Area Planning structure facilitates all potential options for area solutions to be addressed, which includes discussions on options for integrated provision. There is no evidence of a need for this to be investigated further. In addition,

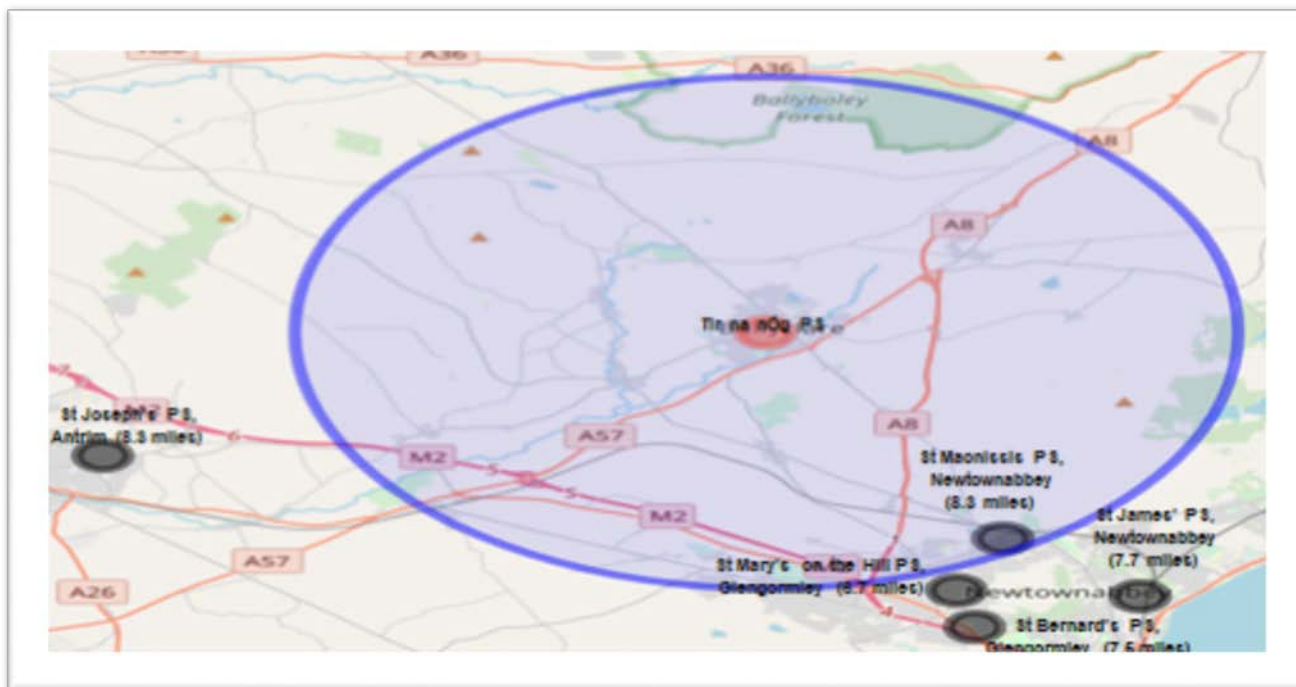
	Governor - 2	there is no evidence that there would be sufficient numbers of pupils who are Catholic to establish an integrated school. No action required.
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The following issues were raised by a number of pupils as a result of pupils who participated in a discussion about the school.

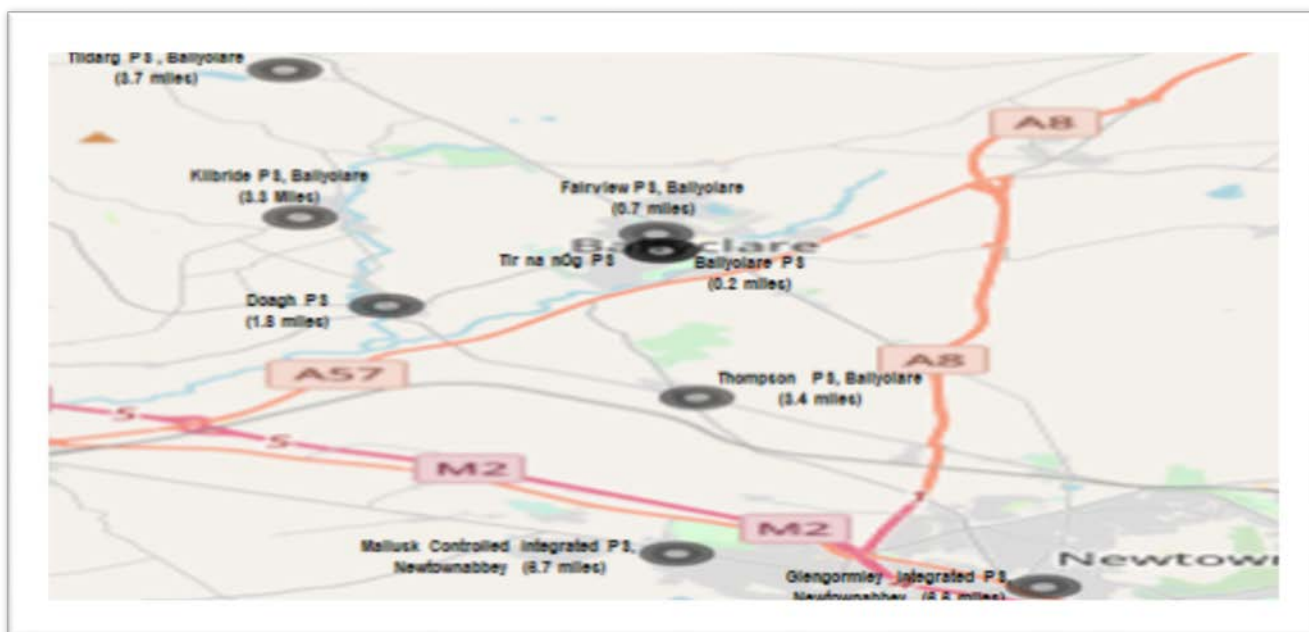
Issue	Any action required
The school is perfect and everyone is welcome. Everyone really looks after each other. Everyone in my family knows everyone in the school.	No action required.
The pupils mentioned that they enjoy their small school were 'everyone is their friend.'	No action required.
Everyone talks to me every day; they shout my name through the playground fence when I walks to school in the morning.	No action required.
It's ok to be different in our school, I used to get bullied in my old school but not here.	No action required.
It's super fun and the teachers really help me to learn. When I struggle I know the teacher will help me. Everyone gets time with the teachers with their personal targets.	No action required.
I like how we have lessons and after schools on what we enjoy. We had maths problems this week based on my favourite boy band. I like fashion and we had a fashion lesson as part of our 'Great Masters' class.	No action required.

APPENDIX F – Location of Neighbouring Schools

Alternative CCMS Provision



Other Alternative Provision





The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

APPENDIX C

THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING INSPECTORATE RESPONSE TO A DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL (DP 583)

PHASE	Primary
EA	Northern Region - Antrim and Newtownabbey area
DP REFERENCE NUMBER (S)	DP 587
PROPOSAL	Proposal to discontinue Tir-na-nOg PS, (303-0848) with effect from 31 August 2020 or as soon as possible thereafter.
DATE OF RECEIPT OF DP (DI)	3 Sept 2019
DATE OF RETURN OF DP (from DI to MI for QA)	29 Sept 2019
DATE OF RETURN to APPT Via ACI	
ACI DIRECTORATE TITLE	
NAME OF DE CONTACT AND DATE AS STATED ON EMAIL	Raymond Caldwell, Assistant Chief Inspector, ETI
Note about this response: (where relevant)	
DUE DATE	29 Sept 2019

ETI Development Proposal Commentary Paper

Date of last ETI report:

Tir-na-nOg Primary school, Ballyclare County Antrim (DE Ref 303-3304). Report of an inspection (Involving Action Short of Strike) in April 2018.

Web links: <https://www.etini.gov.uk/sites/etini.gov.uk/files/publications/%5Bcurrent-domain%3Amachine-name%5D/primary-inspection-tir-na-nog-primary-school-ballyclare-co-antrim.pdf>

https://www.etini.gov.uk/sites/etini.gov.uk/files/publications/asos-sustaining-improvement-inspection-t%C3%ADr-na-n%C3%B3g-primary-school-ballyclare-county-antrim-303-3304_0.pdf

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

No additional inspection information available since the published reports of 2015 and 2018.

The last published inspection report (April 2018) was affected by the school's participation industrial action.

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

The three closest maintained schools are located within a ten-mile radius of Tir-na-nOg Primary School's location in Ballyclare. All were evaluated as having capacity for sustained improvement at the time of their last inspections. The closest maintained schools are: St Macnissi's Primary school and St James' Primary School (both in Newtownabbey), St Mary's On the Hill Primary School and St Bernard's Primary school (both in Glengormley) and St Joseph's Primary School, Antrim.

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

Points for consideration:

- There are multiple year groups within two composite classes.
- There has been a significant turnover of staff in the past five years which impacts negatively on sustaining improvements and quality.
- The small and declining numbers of children enrolled and the small number of staff provide challenges in delivering fully the statutory Northern Ireland Curriculum.

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

Sufficient time, support and planning needs to be given to parents and the remaining children to ensure they make a smooth transition to their transferring school.

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 (include 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.			Last inspection April 2018 impacted by ASOS. Insufficient evidence available to make evaluations.
	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.		Two teacher school therefore there are more than two year-groups in the composite classes.	
	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.		Two full time equivalent teachers in 2017-2018 DE census return.	
	1.4 The ability of the school to cater for children with Special Educational Needs.			Last inspection April 2018 impacted by ASOS. Insufficient evidence available to make evaluations.
	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.	N/a	N/a	N/a
	1.6 The standards and the quality of learning and teaching at the school.			Last inspection April 2018 impacted by ASOS. Insufficient evidence available to make evaluations.
	1.7 The range of curricular and extra-curricular activities available for children including career guidance, physical education, music, art, drama and science.			Last inspection April 2018 impacted by ASOS. Insufficient evidence available to make evaluations.
	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.			Cannot comment on the impact of the school infra-structure influencing the quality of learning and teaching as the inspection was impacted by the teachers taking industrial Action. The school had minor works

				applications approved to upgrade the fire alarm system.
	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.			Last inspection April 2018 impacted by ASOS. Insufficient evidence available to make evaluations.
Strong Leadership and Management by Boards of Governors and Principals	4.1 Governors' views on the school based on quantitative and qualitative evidence.			Last inspection April 2018 impacted by ASOS. Insufficient evidence available to make evaluations.
	4.8 There is a school development plan in place and progress is being made to achieve the plan's aims and objectives.			Last inspection April 2018 impacted by ASOS. Insufficient evidence available to make evaluations.
	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).			Last inspection April 2018 impacted by ASOS. Insufficient evidence available to make evaluations.
Strong links with the Community	6.1 Degree and quality of parental involvement (schools will be asked to provide evidence on this).			Last inspection April 2018 impacted by ASOS. Insufficient evidence available to make evaluations.
	6.3 Contribution of the school to the community (schools will be asked to provide evidence on this).			Last inspection April 2018 impacted by ASOS. Insufficient evidence available to make evaluations/A
	6.4 Presence of other features of provision, e.g. nursery or specialist unit.			A voluntary playgroup with funded places from DE has been running in the school premises for several years.

6. Overall conclusion of impact of the proposal

The proposal may lead to a small increase in the numbers of children to similar sector primary schools in the local area and beyond. There are no children enrolled in Tir na Nog PS for the 2019/20 school year.

DE Policy Team Comments

Finance**303-3304 Tír-na-nÓg Primary**

The school's **Provisional Deficit** position as at 31 March 2019 is **-£33,622**.

The school's Surplus in the previous year, up to 31 March 2018 is £526.

The school received a total delegated budget of £124,153 in the 2019-20 financial year for **17*** FTE pupils, which generates a per capita of £7,303. The average for all primary schools is £3,104.

The total Free School Meals Entitlement for the school is **5²** pupils, which represents 29.41% of the total FTE, which places the school in Band 1 for funding purposes.

The school received £45,120 for Small Schools Support funding, which represents 100.00% of the maximum funding for this factor, within the Nursery & Primary funding stream.

The school also received £16,420 in respect of Primary Principals' Release Time.

² The school's funding allocation is based on the previous year's census data (e.g. the October 2018 census data was used to determine the 2019-20 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:

Factor	2019-20 £	2018-19 £	2017-18 £
Pupil AWPU	38,824	53,948	51,962
TSN – Social Deprivation	3,068	4,295	3,682
TSN – Additional Social Deprivation	141	184	154
Premises Area	3,929	3,929	3,929
Premises FTE	1,432	2,097	2,032
Primary Principals Release Time	16,420	16,420	16,420
Foundation Stage	12,000	12,000	12,000
Small Schools Support	45,120	45,183	45,190
Teachers Salary Protection	3,218	6,174	
Looked After Children		999	
Newcomer Children	4,995	5,012	1,031
IM – Curricular Support	7,033	5,954	5,215
Transitional Funding			831

Total School Funding	124,153	145,231	136,200
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Pupil FTE (no.)	17.00	25.00	24.00
Per Capita	£7,303	£5,809	£5,675

Special Educational Need

The case for change further states that if Tír na nÓg PS was to close and pupils were transferred to alternative schools the implications are as follows:

- small town school removed from the community and parental first preference not realised;
- longer travelling distance for pupils;
- greater opportunities for pupils to be taught in their own peer groups;
- greater opportunities to interact in sports, leisure and cultural activities;
- increased opportunities for specialist teaching and for professional development of staff;
- pupils enrolled in a sustainable school; and
- greater long term security for staff.

Attendance at a sustainable school underpins the fundamental principles of the special educational needs (SEN) Code of Practice, which focuses on the continuum of needs 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.

From a SEN policy perspective, therefore, SET would support this DP, subject to the steps stated in the case for change and outlined below being implemented.

If this proposal is approved, CCMS, in liaison with the EA and the schools involved, will ensure the following steps are taken:

- continued support for SEN pupils following the closure;
- assistance for pupils, as required, in managing the change to a new setting;
- continued appropriate placement for pupils with a statement of special educational needs, and assistance for these pupils in managing the change to a new setting;
- early, and confidential, transfer of statements and individual education plans (IEP) to the new school;
- consideration, as necessary, of the facilities and equipment required to support pupils with SEN;
- consideration, as necessary, of Learning Support Centre provision where appropriate; and
- consideration, as necessary, of transport arrangements.

Education Workforce Directorate

Assurances should be sought from the Education Authority that any potential impact on terms and conditions of teaching and non-teaching staff are managed in accordance with the following policies:-

- **TNC 2013/2** – School Re-organisation Agreement and DE Circular 2013/7 – School Re-organisation Allowances: a teacher who suffers a reduction in pay as a result of staff re-organisation or re-deployment may be eligible to apply for a school re-organisation allowance.
- **TNC 2010/1** – Procedure for Handling Teacher Redundancy: will apply where a teacher is considered, or wishes to be considered for redundancy;
- **TNC 2011/8** – Workload Agreement: should the Case for Change result in an increase to enrolment in a school, or surrounding schools, assurance should be provided regarding how potential impact on teacher workload, as a result of the increased class size, will be managed.
- **JNC 224** – Collective Agreement for School Reorganisations – Employment protection for Support Staff will apply where the Case for Change may impact on the terms and conditions of non-teaching staff.

School Admissions Team

Background

Tír na nÓg Primary School (PS) is a co-educational maintained primary school with approved admissions and enrolment numbers set at 11 for admissions (to a maximum of 13 provided the enrolment number would not thereby be exceeded) and 77 in enrolment. DP 587 proposes that the school should close from 31 August 2020 or as soon as possible thereafter.

Temporary Variation

If a school receives more applications than it has places available it can request a TV to its admissions and/or enrolment number from SAT. Tir na nóg has been undersubscribed for several years in both its admissions and enrolment numbers and therefore TVs have not been requested or required.