

# Draft Impact Assessment

This Impact Assessment is a draft and will be informed by, and updated through, the consultation stage with the outcomes of the consultation and feedback.

If you need this document in a different format or language, please contact Devon County Council's School Consultation team on 01392 382057 or via email: [schoolconsultations@devon.gov.uk](mailto:schoolconsultations@devon.gov.uk)

## Assessment of: Proposal to change the age range of Clyst Vale Community College from 11-18 to 11-16 through the phased closure of the Sixth Form

### 1. Description of proposal

The Trustees of Clyst Vale Academy Trust are consulting on a proposal to change the age range of Clyst Vale Community College from 11-18 to 11-16 through the phased closure of the sixth form. The proposal being consulted upon is as follows:

- Students currently in Year 12 and Year 13 will remain at Clyst Vale's Sixth Form to complete their studies.
- The last year group to be admitted into the Sixth Form would be in September 2024. Students admitted into the Sixth Form in September 2024 will complete their studies in the Sixth Form.
- The Sixth Form would close with effect from 31 August 2026.

There will be no change to the Published Admission Number (PAN) for the school which will remain at 180.

### 2. Background

This proposal will provide the financial stability needed to maintain and enhance our current 11 – 16 provision; allowing us to retain and expand the breadth of our curriculum provision at KS3 and KS4. It will enable us to keep class sizes at KS3 & KS4 at an optimum number and ensure we are able to deliver great teaching to these students. By doing so our students will make excellent progress, providing them with the qualifications that will enable them to take full advantage of the wide range of post-16 provision that already exists in the local area.

Our Sixth Form students have an excellent 16 – 18 experience; taught by experienced teachers with excellent subject knowledge in an environment where they are supported with excellent pastoral care and guidance. However, in recent years, with the expansion of Exeter College offering a broader range of qualifications, the number of students opting to attend Clyst Vale Sixth Form has fallen significantly. Currently we have 26 students in Year 12 and 34 in Year 13; with average class sizes of 5 students.

There are currently 16 A Level or Level 3 qualifications running in Year 12. In Year 13 there are 20 A level or

### 3. Aims and objectives, and reason for change or review

The post-16 landscape is changing at a national level. It has become increasingly difficult to offer either the broad or specialist curriculum that is available at other local schools or colleges. Over recent years this has been compounded by the introduction of T Levels and apprenticeships which provide attractive alternatives for students seeking a more vocational route to traditional A Levels. Clyst Vale does not have the infrastructure or resources to offer these types of vocational courses. Consequently, faced with increasing competition from other larger local colleges the number of students attending the sixth form has fallen. The consistently low numbers of students attending our Sixth Form is putting Clyst Vale's ability to deliver a sustainable post-16 offer under significant strain. As can be seen in the table below, the number of students opting to complete their post-16 studies at Clyst Vale has been in decline for some years.

Year	Number of Year 12 starters
Sept 2013	106
Sept 2014	107
Sept 2015	76
Sept 2016	40
Sept 2017	44
Sept 2018	35
Sept 2019	46
Sept 2020	29
Sept 2021	46
Sept 2022	35
Sept 2023	28

The current projection for Year 12 entering the Sixth Form in Sept 2024 is 35 students. 29 of these students are internal and 6 are external.

Retaining a post-16 provision at Clyst Vale Community College is not financially viable. There are insufficient students enrolling and there is no evidence base to suggest this will improve in the future. A declining student population and the necessity to offer a broad curriculum, allowing students to pursue their preferred subject combinations, further exacerbate this issue and has resulted in non-viable class sizes. In the 2023/24 academic year, we ran two courses—Design Technology and Environmental Science—with only one student each. This situation not only has significant financial implications but also hinders the student's educational experience, as larger classes allow for a wider range of teaching and learning strategies.

The Department for Education (DfE) guidance states that any new sixth form should provide at least 200 places and there should be sufficient demand for those places. It also states that the average class size for sixth form teaching groups should be at least 15 (*Department for Education 'Making significant changes to an academy' April 2024*). In both overall size and average class size, the current sixth form provision is significantly smaller than these DfE values, this will place a considerable burden on resources. We currently have 60 students on roll in Post-16, there are no subjects with a class size of 15 students in either year 12 or year 13 and we have an average class size in both year groups of 5 students.

Historically, the College has heavily subsidized the Sixth Form using funds from the 11-16 provision. However, due to the current challenging financial climate in education, this is no longer sustainable. Continuing to do so would significantly and negatively impact the educational offerings for our Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 students.

In the current academic year 2023/ 2024, the lack of students on roll in the Sixth Form, compared to what was initially projected led to a significant financial shortfall of 177k. With a slight increase in anticipated numbers for 2024/25 this shortfall is projected to be 157k.

Most students who choose to attend Clyst Vale Community College are those who have completed their secondary education at CVCC with only a minority being external applicants. Exit interviews with students demonstrate that a significant number of students choose to go to Exeter College or other specialist Post-16 providers such as Bicton College.

The following reasons are often cited for why students decide to pursue their Post-16 education elsewhere:

- Greater breadth of curriculum offer that allows them to take combinations of subjects not available at Clyst Vale
- A greater range of facilities and enrichment opportunities offered at other larger colleges
- Transport issues
- Students are 'ready to leave' and want to experience a change of environment
- Students enjoy the location and freedoms offered by other colleges.

## 4. Options explored (summary)

As part of undertaking due diligence the Trust has considered whether a partnership agreement with another school sixth form could have been a viable option. Practical considerations such as the geographical distance, which would pose logistical challenges such as timetabling, transport and staffing, meant this was not a viable option.

Over recent years various strategies have been deployed to improve viability of the sixth form. These have included:

- Improving efficiency in curriculum design to facilitate the simultaneous delivery of a course to Year 12 & 13.
- Broadening curriculum offer and running small classes to build the initial credibility of courses with a view to increasing class size in future.
- Strengthening community engagement to raise the profile of Post-16 and encourage more external applications.
- Developing the Post-16 offer to enhance its appeal, including more opportunities for enrichment, a strong pastoral programme & career guidance. Despite these efforts numbers have not increased.

## 5. People affected, diversity profile and analysis of needs

- Children and young people who attend CVCC and their families.  
As at the Spring 2024 School Census return to the Department for Education, there were 959 pupils on roll of Clyst Vale. A breakdown by Year Group is below.

Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Y14	Total
179	181	179	179	178	28	35	0	959

90.7% of pupils on roll (School Census Spring 2024) are white British ethnic origin, 8.6% ethnic minority (total of the ethnic minorities) and 0.7% not known/unclassified.

Of the 957 pupils on roll as at the Spring School Census 2024:

176 pupils (18.3%) are eligible for free school meals.

138 students have SEN support and 54 students have Education and Health Care Plans (EHCPs).

22 students have a language other than English identified as their first language.

- Children in feeder primary schools to CVCC:

The feeder primary schools to CVCC are: Broadclyst Primary, Westclyst Primary, Silverton C of E Primary, Stoke Canon C of E, Whimble Primary, Lady Seaward’s C of E Primary, Rockbeare C of E Primary, Clyst St Mary Primary, St Martin’s C of E Primary and Nursery Schools.

- Children living in the catchment area for CVCC:

The table below shows the number of children living in CVCC’s catchment area (NHS September 2023) by year of entry into Year 7.

Y7 in - academic year	2034/35	33/34	32/33	31/32	30/31	29/30	28/29	27/28	26/27	25/26	24/25
Year Group in Sep 2023	1YO	2YO	3YO	4YO	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Clyst Vale In Area Cohort	194	201	221	202	217	189	205	228	202	207	205

- Staff at CVCC

There are 133 individuals currently employed at Clyst Vale Community College. 70 of these are teaching staff and 63 are support staff.

- Other schools providing Sixth Form provision in the area and FE colleges

- The King’s School, Ottery St Mary
- Colyton Grammar School
- Sidmouth College
- Exeter College
- Bicton College

## 6. Stakeholders, their interest and potential impacts

Under this proposal, there will be no change for our current Year 11 or Year 12 students. A phased closure of the sixth form provision will mean that students on roll as of September 2024 will continue to have access to the courses they have started, completing these qualifications in summer 2026. The college will remain fully committed to delivering a high quality Sixth Form provision until students have completed their courses, ensuring the very best outcomes and destinations for these students.

The closure, if implemented would, enable us to target our resources more effectively towards Years 7 – 11, thus enabling us to improve educational standards and outcomes for the majority of students at the College.

For the students who will be looking for post-16 options after Sept 2026, we are satisfied that there is choice and sufficient places among other local Post-16 providers who offer the same or a greater breadth of provision currently on offer at Clyst Vale Community College. Students who previously may have selected Clyst Vale will be able to select from any of the following:

- The King’s School – Ofsted rated ‘Outstanding’
- Colyton Grammar School – Ofsted rated ‘Outstanding’
- Sidmouth College – Ofsted rated ‘Good’
- Exeter College - Ofsted rated ‘Outstanding’
- Bicton College – Ofsted rated ‘Good’

We provide our students with the best guidance on their post-16 options, ensuring they are supported in making informed decisions about the most suitable pathways and providers. By offering impartial information, advice, and guidance, we help students navigate their choices effectively. As part of their career education, students are directed to various open days and events hosted by different FE providers and participate in several careers events. These include:

- Apprenticeship days / Apprenticeship Fayres
- Careers Talks
- Exeter College Open Day
- Bicton College

The closure, if implemented, would lead to a reduction in curriculum demand across many subjects. Through phasing the closure over two years the intention would be to minimise any staffing cuts that may be required through careful consideration of whether to readvertise vacancies following resignations. If this is not possible and the loss of post-16 funding in addition to the reduction in curriculum demand leads to redundancies then the Principal would work in close partnership with the Trade Unions to manage this risk, should it arise.

The closure of the Post-16 provision will inevitably create uncertainty regarding job security and potentially impact staff morale. Additionally, as the Post-16 provision has been an integral part of the College, all staff will likely feel a sense of loss, which could affect the overall sense of community and belonging. To mitigate these impacts, we will maintain open and transparent communication, ensuring staff understand the reasons for the closure, the timeline, and the available support. Furthermore, staff will be actively involved in the transition process, giving them a sense of agency and control over the changes.

## 7. Additional relevant research used to inform this assessment

DfE Guidance: Making significant changes to an academy, April 2024.

School Census Spring 2024

Cabinet Office consultation principles

UN Convention of the rights of the child (UNCRC)

## 8. Description of consultation process and outcomes

The consultation will run from 9.00am on 21<sup>st</sup> June to midnight on 12th July 2024.

The Trust will be consulting widely, including with:

- Parents/Carers/Students of Clyst Vale College
- Feeder Primary Schools to Clyst Vale College
- Staff at CVCC
- All Schools in the area
- Further Education Colleges in the area
- Devon County Council
- MP
- County and District Councillors

The Trustees of the Academy Trust will meet following the close of the consultation period to consider all responses made to the consultation and make a decision as to whether to submit an application to the Department for Education's Regions Group who will make the final decision on the proposal. Consultation responses received will form part of the submission to the DfE Regions Group.

A drop-in session, open to all those interested in the proposal, will be held on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at Clyst Vale Community College. You are welcome to drop in anytime from 5-7pm. Trustees will be available to answer questions. We would ask that you inform us of your intention to attend this meeting by contacting Chris Faulkner either via email [faulknerc@clystvale.org](mailto:faulknerc@clystvale.org) or telephone 01392 463930.

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## Background information

### 9. Equality analysis

#### Age

This proposal will change the age range in the school from 11-18 years to 11-16 years. This will impact pupils currently in Year 7 to Year 10 who previously would have had a choice to stay at CVCC for sixth form provision. Students currently in Year 12 and Year 13 will remain at Clyst Vale's Sixth Form to complete their studies. The last year group to be admitted into the Sixth Form would be in September 2024. Students admitted into the Sixth Form in September 2024 will complete their studies in the Sixth Form.

The negative impact on pupils who would like to stay at the school for sixth form cannot be completely mitigated, although every student will be supported in securing the right pathway for them. CVCC already has an established relationship with local schools and local FE colleges including Exeter College and Bicton College. As part of the existing careers provision all students in Year 11 are provided with the information and support required to make a positive transition from secondary school to post-16.

The closure will provide the financial stability needed to maintain and enhance our current 11 – 16 provision, allowing us to retain and expand the breadth of our curriculum provision at KS3 and KS4. It will enable us to

keep class sizes at KS3 & KS4 at an optimum number and ensure we are able to deliver great teaching to these students. By doing so our students will make excellent progress, providing them with the qualifications that will enable them to take full advantage of the wide range of post-16 provision that already exists in the local area.

### **Race and culture: nationality/national origin, ethnic origin, skin colour, religion and belief, asylum seeker and refugee status, language needs**

There are 21 students on roll with English as an additional language. The consultation documents can be made available in a different format or language upon request.

### **Sex and gender identity and reassignment (including men, women, non-binary and transgender people), and pregnancy and maternity (including women's right to breastfeed)**

No negative impact is anticipated.

### **Sexual orientation, and marriage/civil partnership if work related**

No negative impact is anticipated.

### **Other relevant socio-economic factors and intersectionality**

If this proposal is approved, it may have an adverse impact for some children and families living within the school's catchment area that could previously attend the Sixth Form. Families would have to arrange and fund travel to alternative post-16 provision which would impact those on lower incomes. Devon County Council does not provide a universal post-16 assisted travel scheme. Please see DCC's Post-16 transport guide for further information: [Education Travel Policy Post-16 Students and Learners aged 19 to 25 – Education and Families \(devon.gov.uk\)](#) However, if there is a financial barrier to remaining in education, schools and colleges can be approached for assistance. Most colleges receive 16-19 bursary funds to provide targeted help. Bursary awards are targeted towards young people facing financial barriers to participation including the costs of transport.

### **Special Educational Needs and Disability**

Under DCC's Post-16 transport policy, students with an Education and Health Care Plan must meet the same eligibility criteria for transport assistance that apply to all young people, unless he or she is unable to do so on the grounds of disability or medical condition. Please see: [Education Travel Policy Post-16 Students and Learners aged 19 to 25 – Education and Families \(devon.gov.uk\)](#)

## **10. Human rights considerations:**

Trustees are satisfied that there is choice and sufficient places among other local Post-16 providers who offer the same or a greater breadth of provision currently on offer at Clyst Vale Community College.

## 11. Environmental analysis

For some students there are likely to be increased travel distances and journey times which will have a negative environmental impact.

## 12. Economic analysis

### **Impact on knowledge and skills**

This proposal will provide the financial stability needed to maintain and enhance our current 11 – 16 provision, allowing us to retain and expand the breadth of our curriculum provision at KS3 and KS4. It will enable us to keep class sizes at KS3 & KS4 at an optimum number and ensure we are able to deliver great teaching to these students. By doing so our students will make excellent progress, providing them with the qualifications that will enable them to take full advantage of the wide range of post-16 provision that already exists in the local area.

### **Impact on employment levels**

The closure, if implemented, would lead to a reduction in curriculum demand across many subjects. Through phasing the closure over two years the intention would be to minimise any staffing cuts that may be required through careful consideration of whether to readvertise vacancies following resignations. If this is not possible and the loss of post-16 funding in addition to the reduction in curriculum demand leads to redundancies then the Principal would work in close partnership with the Trade Unions to manage this risk, should it arise.

### **Impact on local business**

It is considered there is unlikely to be any impact of significance on local businesses.