

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) form: the initial impact assessment

1. Process and guidance

The purpose of an EqIA is to make sure that the council is meeting the needs of all our residents by ensuring we consider how different groups of people may be affected by or experience a proposal in different ways.

The council has a two stage EqIA process:

- Stage 1 - the initial impact assessment
- Stage 2 - the full impact assessment.

This form is for use at Stage 1 of the process. This must be completed when undertaking a project, policy change, or service change. It can form part of a business case for change and must be completed and attached to a Project Initiation Document. The findings of the initial impact assessment will determine whether a full impact assessment is needed.

Guidance and tools for council officers can be accessed on the council's Tackling Inequality Together intranet pages.

Date started:	25 th August 2022
Completed by:	Piers Brunning
Service:	Childrens Services
Project or policy EqIA relates to:	Proposals for two Wave 15 Special Free Schools
Date EqIA discussed at service team meeting:	30/08/22
Conclusion (is a full assessment needed?):	No
Signed off by (AD):	Sal Thirlway
Sign off date:	30/08/22

2. Summary of the policy, project, or service

This section should be used to summarise the project, policy, or service change (the proposal).

What is the purpose of the proposal, what are the aims and expected outcomes, and how does it relate to service plans and the corporate plan?

The proposal is that proposals for two special free schools are submitted to the DfE for consideration under the DfE's Wave 15 national Free Schools Programme. These would be schools for 100 students, with SEMH and Severe Learning Difficulties (complex needs)

The aims are:

To become the local school of choice for children with these needs.

That they should lead to a reduction in the number of children placed at schools outside the borough, including independent special schools.

To reduce the volume (total passenger distance) of movement out of the borough to special schools.

Outcomes:

To maintain standards of education provision for children with high levels of Special Education Need and Disabilities.

To improve the welfare of children by reducing the length of their home to school transport journey.

To reduce spend (including projected future spend) from the Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Block.

To reduce spend (included projected future spend) from the Home to School Transport Budget.

Corporate Objectives:

Enriching lives: Champion excellent education and enable our children and young people to achieve their full potential, regardless of their background.

Support and challenge all schools to provide the right environment for effective learning for all pupils.

How will the proposal be delivered, what governance arrangements are in place and who are the key internal stakeholders?

The project would be delivered through a partnership between the Council and the DfE.

Governance occurs at a number of levels.

The decision as to whether or not to proceed with the project lies with the Council’s Executive, who are scheduled to consider the matter during their September 2022 meeting. Executive will (if the proposals are taken up by the DfE) also have responsibility for determining whether or not the sites can be transferred to the DfE. These arrangements are in accordance with the Council’s Constitution.

A partnership board would be established, with senior officer representation from a number of services would be established to work in collaboration with DfE representatives to oversee the development and delivery of the project.

Who will be affected by the proposal? Think about who it is aimed at and who will deliver it.

The proposal is intended to directly benefit children and young people with Special Education Needs and Disabilities. It will also provide opportunities for borough residents to be employed locally, both in the initial build phase, and, more importantly, in the open schools, supporting both teaching and providing necessary support services.

3. Data & Protected Characteristics

This section should be used to set out what data you have gathered to support the initial impact assessment.

The table below sets out the equality groups that need to be considered in the impact assessment. These comprise the nine protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010 and other priority areas defined by the council.

Age	Disability	Gender reassignment	Marriage and Civil Partnership	Pregnancy/Maternity
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Religious belief	Race	Sex	Sexual Orientation	Socio-economic disadvantage
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What data and information will be used to help assess the impact of the proposal on different groups of people? A list of useful resources is available for officers on the Council's Tackling Inequality Together intranet pages.

Age

The purpose of the schools would be to deliver improved services to children and young people aged 4 to 19.
The school will employ people of working age (18 to 67)

The age distribution of children and young people with high levels of SEND (with Education Health and Care Plans) can be ascertained from school census data and National Statistics.

Disability

The schools are intended solely to support children and young people with special education needs and disabilities.
The premises would be accessible and therefore the schools could employ individuals with disabilities.

Details of the needs and disabilities of children placed in special schools are held on internal confidential records.

Gender re-assignment

Relevant data would include the employment and HR policies of the Trusts that would operate the premises. These are unknown at this point.

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Relevant data would include the employment and HR policies of the Trusts that would operate the premises. These are unknown at this point.

Pregnancy / maternity

Relevant data would include the employment and HR policies of the Trusts that would operate the premises. These are unknown at this point.

Religious belief

The schools would serve pupils solely based on education need or disability, information on religious beliefs is not collected.

Relevant data would include the employment and HR policies and records of the Trusts that would operate the premises. These are unknown at this point.

Race

The declared ethnicity children and young people with high levels of SEND (with Education Health and Care Plans) can be ascertained from school census data and National Statistics.

Sex

The gender of children and young people with high levels of SEND (with Education Health and Care Plans) can be ascertained from school census data and National Statistics.

Sexual orientation

Relevant data would include the employment and HR policies and records of the Trusts that would operate the premises. These are unknown at this point.

Socio economic disadvantage

The school would serve children based on need, not economic circumstances. No records are collected on parental or carer circumstances.

4. Assessing & Scoring Impact

This section should be used to assess the likely impact on each equality group, consider how significant any impacts could be and explain how the data gathered supports the conclusions made.

Scoring impact for equality groups	
Positive impact	The proposal promotes equality of opportunity by meeting needs or addressing existing barriers to participation and/or promotes good community relations
Neutral or no impact	The proposal has no impact or no disproportionate impact.
Low negative	The proposal is likely to negatively impact a small number of people, be of short duration and can easily be resolved.
High negative	The proposal is likely to have a significant negative impact on many people or a severe impact on a smaller number of people.

Referring to the Scoring table above, please give an impact score for each group, explain what the likely impact will be, and briefly set out how the data supports this conclusion.

Equality group	Impact score	Impact and supporting data
Age	Positive Impact	The core purpose of the proposal is to benefit children and young people.
Disability	Positive Impact	The core purpose of the proposal is to benefit children and young people with disabilities.
Gender reassignment	Neutral impact	While no information on the Trust who will be responsible for running the schools is available, the DfE have a vetting process to ensure responsible bodies adhere to statutory employment requirements, including adherence to the Equality Act requirements.

Marriage and Civil Partnership	Neutral impact	While no information on the Trust who will be responsible for running the schools is available, the DfE have a vetting process to ensure responsible bodies adhere to statutory employment requirements, including adherence to the Equality Act requirements.
Pregnancy/Maternity	Neutral impact	While no information on the Trust who will be responsible for running the schools is available, the DfE have a vetting process to ensure responsible bodies adhere to statutory employment requirements, including adherence to the Equality Act requirements.
Religious belief	Neutral impact	While no information on the Trust who will be responsible for running the schools is available, the DfE have a vetting process to ensure responsible bodies adhere to statutory employment requirements, including adherence to the Equality Act requirements.
Race	Neutral impact	While no information on the Trust who will be responsible for running the schools is available, the DfE have a vetting process to ensure responsible bodies adhere to statutory employment requirements, including adherence to the Equality Act requirements.
Sex	Neutral impact	While no information on the Trust who will be responsible for running the schools is available, the DfE have a vetting process to ensure responsible bodies adhere to statutory employment requirements, including adherence to the Equality Act requirements.
Sexual Orientation	Neutral impact	While no information on the Trust who will be responsible for running the schools is available, the DfE have a vetting process to ensure responsible bodies adhere to statutory employment requirements, including adherence to the Equality Act requirements.
Socio-economic disadvantage	Neutral impact	While no information on the Trust who will be responsible for running the schools is available, the DfE have a vetting process to ensure responsible bodies adhere to statutory employment requirements, including adherence to the Equality Act requirements.

5. Conclusion and next steps.

Based on your findings from your initial impact assessment, you must complete a full impact assessment if you have identified any groups as having a low or high negative impact.

If no impact, or a positive impact has been identified, you do not need to complete a full assessment. However, you must include reference to the initial assessment in any associated reports, and it must receive formal approval from the Assistant Director responsible for the project, policy, or service change.

As the only identified impacts are positive, there is no requirement to complete a full assessment.