

Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Screening



As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provides a record of both the **process** and **decision**. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions. Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.
- whether or not equality, diversity, cohesion and integration is being/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an impact assessment.

Directorate: Children and Families	Service area: Sufficiency and Participation
Lead person: Elizabeth Richards	Contact number: 0113 378 7235

Title: Statutory Notice on a proposal to change the age range of Moor Allerton Hall Primary School from 3-11 years to 4-11 years and permanently close the local authority-maintained nursery.

Is this a:

Strategy / Policy
 Service / Function
 Other

If other, please specify The proposal is to change the age range of Moor Allerton Hall Primary School. This screening process will enable us to ensure equality, diversity, cohesion and integration will be considered during the statutory consultation and in respect of the proposal and decision requested.

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening

Leeds City Council is consulting on a proposal to change the age range at Moor Allerton Hall Primary School (MAHPS), from 3-11 years to 4-11 years and permanently close the local authority-maintained nursery.

An initial, informal consultation ran from 13 May to 28 May 2024 seeking views on the proposed change. The outcome of that initial consultation was considered by Leeds City Council’s Executive Board at its meeting in July 2024 and a recommendation to publish a Statutory Notice was approved.

This screening form records the considerations that have been made in relation to the publication of the Statutory Notice, to ensure that the *consultation and engagement*

*process with stakeholders takes equality, diversity, cohesion and integration into account and that **relevance for the proposal and decision to be made** is considered*

It also ensures that any lessons are learned and applied from the initial informal consultation.

3. Relevance to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration

All the council's strategies/policies, services/functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – city wide or more local. These will also have a greater/lesser relevance to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.

The following questions will help you to identify how relevant your proposals are.

When considering these questions think about age, carers, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and any other relevant characteristics (for example socio-economic status, social class, income, unemployment, residential location or family background and education or skills levels).

Questions	Yes	No
Is there an existing or likely differential impact for the different equality characteristics?		X
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns about the policy or proposal?	X	
Could the proposal affect how our services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom?	X	
Could the proposal affect our workforce or employment practices?		X
Does the proposal involve or will it have an impact on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminating unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment • Advancing equality of opportunity • Fostering good relations 		X

If you have answered **no** to the questions above please complete **sections 6 and 7**

If you have answered **yes** to any of the above and;

- Believe you have already considered the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration within your proposal please go to **section 4**.
- Are not already considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration within your proposal please go to **section 5**.

4. Considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration

- **How have you considered equality, diversity, cohesion and integration?**

Research undertaken before the initial consultation, using the English Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), showed that both the number of pupils living in the most deprived 10% of neighbourhoods in England and free school meal eligibility at MAHPS are below the citywide average. Together these two statistical measures suggest that MAHPS does not

suffer greater levels of deprivation than the citywide average. There are a higher number of pupils with English as an additional language at MAHPS compared to the city-wide average. Our assessment of the population data findings for MAHPS indicated that there may be a need to help to families with English as an additional language, or who needed support, to engage with the consultation and share their views. The school included in their messaging to the community an offer to provide additional information and support in completing paper response forms, rather than the online survey, for anyone who needed support to share their views.

The initial informal consultation took place from 13 to 28 May 2024 seeking views on the proposed change to the age range at the school and permanent closure of the local authority-maintained nursery. That consultation was managed in accordance with local good practice, seeking to ensure that a wide range of stakeholders including schools and early years providers were consulted within the community, using various communication tools. The school also promoted the consultation through their usual methods of communication with families. Posters were distributed at key venues in the local area, and a drop-in session took place at the school. To include parents of children not in schools or early years settings in the consultation we promoted the consultation via Leeds City Council's 'Voice and Influence' team and their network of parent groups, particularly parents/carers of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. These measures helped to ensure maximum engagement with families and the community.

At the initial consultation stage some parents raised concerns that there may be less provision available if the school nursery were to close. However subsequently the school updated parents about its plans to bring in a private provider who would deliver a broader offer. This would include places being available from 9 months, all year-round. The private provider would offer funded or extended places for families who wanted to pay for extended hours and the places would be available from September.

At its meeting in July 2024, Leeds City Council's Executive Board noted the outcome of the consultation and approved a recommendation to publish a Statutory Notice. A Statutory Notice will be published in the Yorkshire Evening Post on 9 September 2024 marking the start of a four-week formal consultation (representation) period and will end on 6 October 2024. The full proposal will be published on Leeds City Council's website and all parents/carers at the school will receive notification, along with any stakeholder who responded to the first stage of public consultation and asked to be kept informed. Other local schools will also be informed about the proposal along with ward councillors and other relevant stakeholders.

Consideration has been given to comments submitted by stakeholders during the initial consultation and our assessment is that there are no specific targeted adjustments needed for groups with protected characteristics during the forthcoming statutory consultation period.

In respect of the proposal itself and decision to be requested, the proposal is to change the age-range of the school and permanently close the local authority-maintained nursery with effect from 1 January 2025.

The governing body at MAHPS approached the local authority (LA) following a fall in applications for their nursery, highlighting the negative financial impact this was having and would continue to have on resources and the wider school budget.

The school nursery had been catering for 3- and 4-year-olds, with a sessional offer for parents during core school hours, term-time only. The number of families taking up places at MAHPS's nursery declined to the point where there were only expected to be only a handful of children in nursery by September 2024 – just 5.5FTE children were expected to start in September. This was financially unsustainable and the staffing costs, alongside lower numbers in nursery, were negatively impacting on the school's overall budget, equating to an overall deficit of approximately £78,000.00 which is unsustainable.

The school have considered changing their nursery offer, however, cannot provide the flexible wrap-around care and all year-round nursery provision which some families are seeking. A joint decision was made, by the governing body and local authority, to temporarily close the local authority-maintained nursery from September 2024 due to low demand, pending the outcome of formal consultation to change the age range and permanently close the local authority-maintained nursery.

In terms of impact on staff, the school has worked to retain the existing nursery staff, some of whom have been at the school for several years, and they have been offered alternative positions within the wider school.

The change to the age range and proposed permanent closure of the local authority-maintained nursery is not anticipated to have any negative impact on families or children in terms of availability and choice of provision. Within the Roundhay/Wigton Childcare Planning Area there is a cross-sector mix of providers with childcare offers including school nurseries, childminders, full day care, playgroup/pre-schools and before and after school childcare across many school settings.

Additionally, MAHPS's Governing Body have agreed for a private provider to run flexible, all year-round childcare from the school premises for children aged from 9 months from September 2024. This means that the offer available at the school is broader than it previously was and will benefit families who would like funded or extended places both in and out of term time.

In addition, the school made the decision that the private provider would run the out of school club from September 2024. The staff working in the before and after school club at the school were made an offer to transfer to the new provider under the Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment rights (TUPE).

Whilst the school nursery would permanently close under this proposal, the replacement provision at the school run by a well-established private provider, which has several other 'outstanding' Ofsted rated nurseries does mean that there is an enhanced offer for families and children.

- **Key findings**

From the equality impact screening the Sufficiency and Participation Team found that this proposal would not have a negative impact on the protected characteristics listed below:

Age
Carers
Disability

Gender Reassignment

Race

Religion or belief

Sex

Sexual orientation

Other relevant characteristics

This is because whilst the proposal is to remove provision, there is an alternative cross-sector mix of early years provision across the Roundhay/Wigton Childcare Planning Area including school nurseries, childminders, full day care, playgroup/pre-schools and before and after school childcare across many school settings.

The school has taken the decision to bring in a private provider who will bring a more flexible model than the school itself had, and this will help ensure that there is a broader offer available for parents, whether they want to use their funded early education entitlement or pay for additional hours or wrap-around care. This provider will offer places from age 9 months, whilst the school run nursery only catered for 3- and 4-year-olds.

The range of childcare options available supports the ambition of 'ensuring that children in all areas of the city have the best start in life and enjoy a healthy, happy and friendly childhood'.

As noted above, the school has worked to retain the existing nursery staff, some of whom have been at the school for several years, and they have been offered alternative positions within the wider school. The staff working in the before and after school club at the school were made an offer to transfer to the new provider under the Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment rights (TUPE).

The Sufficiency and Participation team noted that during the initial consultation, whilst not all respondents supported the proposal, there were no specific concerns raised about the consultation or engagement.

- **Actions**

If the proposal to change the age range and close the school nursery is taken forward, the nursery would close permanently with effect from 1 January 2025. The nursery is temporarily closed and the provide provider is already operating from the school premises, hence ensuring that there is no gap in provision. There would be no further action needed.

We will be communicating with stakeholders via email to notify them with details of the statutory notice period including information on how to respond either via email or by post.

Information will be advertised in the Yorkshire Evening Post and details of the full statutory notice will be provided on the LCC website. The headteacher of MAHPS and headteachers of other local schools will be contacted and asked to send out key messages to their parents/carers. Anyone who responded to the initial consultation and asked to be kept informed with updates on the progress of the proposal will be contacted.

5. If you are not already considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration you will need to carry out an impact assessment.	
Date to scope and plan your impact assessment:	
Date to complete your impact assessment	
Lead person for your impact assessment (Include name and job title)	

6. Governance, ownership and approval		
Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening		
Name	Job title	Date
Tracy Waud	Sufficiency Manager	12/08/24
Date screening completed		

7. Publishing	
<p>Though all key decisions are required to give due regard to equality the council only publishes those related to Executive Board, Full Council, Key Delegated Decisions or a Significant Operational Decision.</p> <p>A copy of this equality screening should be attached as an appendix to the decision making report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance Services will publish those relating to Executive Board and Full Council. • The appropriate directorate will publish those relating to Delegated Decisions and Significant Operational Decisions. • A copy of all other equality screenings that are not to be published should be sent to equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk for record. <p>Complete the appropriate section below with the date the report and attached screening was sent:</p>	
For Executive Board or Full Council – sent to Governance Services	Date sent: 20/09/24
For Delegated Decisions or Significant Operational Decisions – sent to appropriate Directorate	Date sent:
All other decisions – sent to equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk	Date sent: