

# 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.

<b>Directorate:</b> Children and Families	<b>Service area:</b> Sufficiency and Participation
<b>Lead person:</b> Darren Crawley	<b>Contact number:</b> 0113 3787227

**Title:** Assessing the consultation process on a proposal to establish a new special free school at Elmete Wood.

Is this a:

Strategy / Policy

Service / Function

Other

**If other, please specify**

The proposal seeks to ensure a sufficiency of specialist learning places in the city.

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

The Education Act 1996 places a duty on local authorities to ensure there are sufficient learning places for all children living in its area. The local authority (LA) is also required to promote choice and diversity, and therefore must also ensure that there are a range of options available to parents.

The proposal is to create a new special free school on the Elmete Wood site. This free school would deliver 200 generic special school places for learners 4-16 years and 50 partnership places within mainstream settings.

This screening form looks at the equality considerations that have taken place during the consultation and engagement process with stakeholders. It also seeks to identify any future action required to ensure that equality, diversity, cohesion and integration continues to be well considered throughout the process, should the proposal continue

through to the next stage.

**3. Relevance to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration**

All the council’s strategies and policies, service and functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – city wide or more local. These will also have a greater or 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. Also those areas that impact on or relate to equality: tackling poverty and improving health and well-being.

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"> <li>• Eliminating unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment</li> <li>• Advancing equality of opportunity</li> <li>• Fostering good relations</li> </ul>	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?**

There is an identified need for additional specialist places within both primary and secondary phases across Leeds, to meet projected demand over future years. In response to this growing demand for specialist places Leeds City Council submitted a successful bid to the DfE for Wave 2 – SEN/AP special free school funding. The proposed 200 additional free school places and 50 partnership places form part of the solution to address anticipated pressure on specialist provision in Leeds which is projected to increase by around 200 places per year for the foreseeable future.

After the announcement of the successful Wave 2 funding bid, a citywide stakeholder event

was held that included SILC principals, primary and secondary head teachers, parent support groups, SENSAP, SENDIASS, Chairs of Governors, Free School/Multi Academy Trust representatives and council officers from various services. The aim of the event was to present the established need for additional specialist provision places and to collectively explore what options may be available to meet future demand in the city. The proposed new free school at Elmete Wood was presented to the attendees as an option. This event was followed by a sponsor engagement session which provided interested sponsors with an opportunity to learn more to the local context, the rationale for a new special school and the detail within the published specification.

Consequently, the Good Learning Places Board provided approval for consultation to take place on a number of proposals to establish SEND provision in future years including; the expansion of East SILC and the new special free school. This report focusses on the latter proposal.

We consulted with stakeholders from 19 June 2019 to 24 July 2019, including: all parent/carers with a child currently attending a SILC; parent support groups; all Leeds schools; Multi Academy Trusts (MATs); local residents; ward members; MPs, the Diocese; and other relevant stakeholders.

To ensure maximum engagement with families all existing SILCs and schools in the city were asked to promote the consultation on the proposals through their usual methods of communication such as school websites, texts and newsletters. In order to engage the wider community in the consultation it was promoted through posters in the local area and leaflets delivered to local residents. Emails containing information about the consultation were sent to parent groups supporting families with a child with SEND and the consultation was promoted on the Leeds Local Offer webpage. There were also a large amount of online promotional activity including via Leeds City Council Social media and the Leeds City Council website, as well as through an organised Facebook advertising campaign designed to directly target people living closest to the proposed sites.

Stakeholders were able to find out more about the proposals by attending one of the five drop-in sessions held at different times of day and at various venues within East Leeds and the city centre.

Interested parties could submit their views on the proposals by completing an online survey or by emailing/writing to the Sufficiency and Participation team. The length of consultation (5 weeks) and the variety of methods in which people could respond to the consultation were intended to make the consultation open to all and was in line with DfE guidance.

During the consultation period there were 97 survey responses received. In total, 67 out of the 97 respondents (69.8% of the total) strongly or somewhat supported the proposal. In comparison a further 27 who somewhat or strongly opposed it (28.1% of the total). 2 respondents stated that they neither supported nor opposed the proposal. 72 of the 97 respondents stated that they found the consultation process useful.

Further details about the responses and issues identified by stakeholders and respondents during the consultation period are included in the main body of the Executive Board report.

- **Key findings**

From the equality impact screening the Sufficiency and Participation team found that these proposals would have a positive effect on some of the 6 categories listed below;

- Age
- Gender
- Religion
- Ethnicity
- Disability
- Sexual orientation

The additional learning places would create more opportunities for more pupils to be supported in a way that meets their individual needs, regardless of gender, religion, ethnicity, disability or sexual orientation, in an inclusive specialist provision environment.

This proposal supports that aim and would not have an adverse impact on any child or young person who attends the proposed provision included in this proposal.

This proposal for a new special free school provides parents and carers of children and young people with SEND aged 4-16 with more choice when making preference choices about which specialist provision they would like them to attend.

Areas across East Leeds have experienced extremely high levels of demographic growth over the past decade with a resulting increase in demand for primary and secondary specialist provision. This proposal at the Elmete Wood site would ensure that additional places allow for learners to be educated close to where they reside and reduces the distance they have to travel to access education.

Within the 200 places created there would be 8 places reserved for high needs SEMH-ASC pupils that would usually require expensive out of authority provision. The school building would include a bespoke environment for these learners, with additional breakout areas and immediate access to secure outdoor spaces.

The proposal would have a positive impact on promoting choice and diversity for local families who would be applying for a specialist school place, supporting the achievement of The Best Council Plan outcome that states that 'we want everyone in Leeds to do well at all levels of learning and have the skills they need for life'. Leeds City Council's commitment to helping achieve our ambition for Leeds to be the best city to grow up in, supporting the priority aims of improving educational attainment and closing achievement gaps for children and young people vulnerable to poor learning outcomes.

All proposals which involve changing or creating new SEND provision must meet the requirements of the SEN Improvement Test. This involves demonstrating how any proposed changes would improve the range and quality of SEND provision, including access to wider support services and specialist teaching and that these are in line with the local authority's wider strategic plan for SEND provision and also the drive to enable mainstream inclusion.

The local authority has a statutory duty to ensure the sufficiency of learning places for all the children living in Leeds. In addition to our statutory duty we want to further support the

authority's aspiration to be the best city to grow up in and be a Child Friendly City.

- Actions**

If the proposal is taken forward, the additional places would start to become available following the completion of the school building which is expected during the academic year 2022/23. The local authority would provide support to the identified sponsor throughout the remainder of free school process and beyond. The 50 partnership places within local mainstream schools would be expected to be created by the successful sponsor once the free school is fully established and relationships forged with the identified schools.

During the consultation process, all views and responses were considered equally. If the proposal is approved, during the design process for the new school accommodation, the plans would be shared with stakeholders. Through the design process, the new sites would be fully compliant with the Equality Act 2010. This would ensure that the building is accessible to all users; students, staff and visitors.

**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
Darren Crawley	Sufficiency and Participation Lead	30/09/2019
<b>Date screening completed</b>		30/09/2019

**7. Publishing**

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**.

A copy of this equality screening should be attached as an appendix to the decision making report:

- 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](mailto:equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk) for record.

Complete the appropriate section below with the date the report and attached screening was sent:

For Executive Board or Full Council – sent to <b>Governance Services</b>	Date sent: 30/09/2019
For Delegated Decisions or Significant Operational Decisions – sent to appropriate <b>Directorate</b>	Date sent:
All other decisions – sent to <a href="mailto:equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk">equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk</a>	Date sent: