

Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration (EDCI) 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 or has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an impact assessment.

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| Directorate: Children & Families Services | Service area: Learning Systems-Admissions and Family Information |
| Lead person: Laura Collier | Contact number: 0113 378 9766 |

1. Title: Determination of School Admission Arrangements for 2025/26

Is this a:

Strategy / Policy

 Service / Function

 Other

If other, please specify

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

The public consultation process on the 2025 admission policy (admission arrangements) runs for 6 weeks within the statutory window between 1 October 2023 and 31 January 2024. There is a statutory requirement for all admissions authorities to consult with parents of children between the ages of two and eighteen and with other relevant stakeholders under paragraph 1.47 of the School Admission Code (The Code) where changes are proposed to admission arrangements.

Following the public consultation, the Local Authority (LA) reviews all responses and that may lead to amendment(s) to the proposal. Once that has been completed, the final policy will be placed before Executive Board who will determine (set) by 28 February 2024 a

final admission policy for 2025/26 that applies to all Leeds Community & Voluntary Controlled (VC) schools.

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"> • 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

If you can demonstrate you have considered how your proposals impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration you have carried out an impact assessment.

Please provide specific details for all three areas below (use the prompts for guidance).

• **How have you considered equality, diversity, cohesion and integration?** (think about the scope of the proposal, who is likely to be affected, equality related information, gaps in information and plans to address, consultation and engagement activities (taken place or planned) with those likely to be affected)

Under The Code, admission authorities must ensure admission policy criteria are fair, clear, and objective. Admission applications must allow parents to express a preference for a minimum of 3 schools (in Leeds we allow parents to submit up to 5 preferences), but admission authorities must not give any guarantees that a preference will be met.

The Code mandates the use of parental preference alongside objective admission policy oversubscription criteria (whenever there are more applications than places). This means all admission system and all school admission arrangements will advantage some children and disadvantage others. However, when the admission authority makes changes to the current policy, these must not operate to disadvantage unfairly applicants from any disadvantaged social group or by those holding protected characteristics.

172 of the 270 Leeds maintained schools set their own admission policy and do not have to follow the Leeds policy. There are, and have been for several years, many different admission policies across the city.

Reduction in Published Admission Number (PAN) - A reduction in any school's PAN means fewer places are available at that specific school and across a specific area of the city. If there are more applications than available places for that school, those who meet higher admission criteria will be offered the places. The LA has considered whether local children can still access another local primary school if there are fewer places in a specific area and whether the reductions could disadvantage unfairly applicants from any disadvantaged social group.

Public consultation on all changes will ensure that local knowledge, and feedback from anyone who may be affected by the changes, is captured and considered in the review process. This will help to fill any potential gaps in information. Our consultation aims to obtain the views of parents of children aged 2-18 alongside the views of any other interested parties.

Public consultation on the proposal will take place between 23 October and 4 December 2023. We have followed the approach taken in 2022 and this includes:

- Hosting the consultation on the Leeds City Council (LCC) website. This will be written in plain English to help parents and other stakeholders understand the changes proposed;

- An online survey being available throughout the consultation to make it easy to respond. This will include an 'any other comments' free text box as well as set questions.
- Social media will be used to advertise the public consultation to parents of children aged 2-18 including parents of children aged 2-4 who are not in any education provision
- Email notification to stakeholders and interested parties (see below)

Both the LCC website and online survey can be used via online translation services or screen readers, so this is more accessible for those who have difficulties with reading or have English as an additional language.

Email notifications will be sent to the following persons/bodies, some of whom are also statutory consultees:

- All mainstream primary and secondary schools advising them of the consultation. We will also ask the schools to share the consultation with their families, this will help reach families who may not use social media;
- Ward and Parish Councillors and all community committees in Leeds. Views will be sought and we will ask them to share the consultation with their local communities;
- Governing bodies of community & VC schools views will be sought as they hold local knowledge for their school;
- Early years childcare providers will be contacted and we will ask them to share the consultation with local families;
- Representatives of neighbouring local authorities who can raise any concerns on behalf of their residents. Section 86(8) of the SSFA 1998 places an equal duty on local authorities to comply with parental preference in respect of parents living within and outside their boundary;
- The body or person representing the religion or religious denomination for schools;
- Other interested parties including EPIC and Leeds local offer and external bodies such as Leeds Jewish Council and Migration Yorkshire. Again, we will ask them to share the consultation with local families.

Consideration has been given to posting leaflets to Leeds addresses to ensure those who do not have internet access are made aware of the proposals. This is likely to be a small number of families in Leeds, and the cost of sending letters to all Leeds addresses based around 98 schools is significant. This is assessed as being cost prohibitive especially within the current financial challenges faced nationally and locally. Our solution is to ask early years childcare providers and all schools to share the consultation as they are likely to hold local knowledge and have existing communication mechanisms for communicating information with all and harder-to-reach Leeds families.

- **Key findings**

(think about any potential positive and negative impact on different equality characteristics, potential to promote strong and positive relationships between groups, potential to bring groups/communities into increased contact with each other, perception that the proposal could benefit one group at the expense of another)

The catchment areas proposed are local to each primary school. This supports walking to school and increasing attendance at school to provide a fuller education to all children. Having access to local education can have a positive impact on inequality.

• **Actions**

(think about how you will promote positive impact and remove/ reduce negative impact)

During the consultation process, all views and responses will be considered equally. Any proposed amendments will be reviewed to ensure they do not operate to unfairly disadvantage applicants with regard to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.

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 |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------|
| Laura Collier | Admission & FIS Coordinator | 16.10.23 |
| Date screening completed | | 16.10.23 |

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 for record.

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

| | |
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| For Executive Board or Full Council – sent to Governance Services | Date sent: |
|---|------------|

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| For Delegated Decisions or Significant Operational Decisions – sent to appropriate Directorate | Date sent: |
| All other decisions – sent to equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk | Date sent: |