

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: Darren Crawley	Contact number: 0113 3787227

Title: Outcome of consultation to establish a new specialist free school in Headingley from September 2021		
Is this a:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Strategy / Policy	<input type="checkbox"/> Service / Function	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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 utilising the existing buildings at Rose Court, Buckingham Road, Headingley. This free school would deliver 150 generic special school places for learners 4-16 years and 50 partnership places within mainstream settings from September 2021.

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"> • 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?**

There is an identified need for additional specialist places within both primary and secondary phases across Leeds, to meet projected demand over future years. Current projections indicate the need for approximately 200 additional specialist places to be created each academic year from now until 2022-2023.

Consequently, Children's and Families Service Good Learning Places Board (GLPB) gave approval for consultation to take place on the proposal to establish a new special free school at Rose Court.

Stakeholders were consulted on the proposal from 18 November 2019 to 19 December 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 via 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 and Twitter advertising campaign designed to directly target people living across the city.

Stakeholders including parents/carers were able to find out more about the proposals by attending one of two drop-in sessions held at Rose Court and Merrion House in 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 (4 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.

- **Key findings**

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

The LA SEND Strategy is embedded within Leeds' citywide commitment to be a Child Friendly City and is part of our 3 As strategy to improve Attendance, Achievement and

Attainment of our most vulnerable learners. The strategy has a focus on closing the gap between our SEND learners and the rest of the school population. Leeds is ambitious for all its learners and has developed strong partnerships with agencies and settings across the whole age range to improve outcomes. We also work closely with our neighbouring authorities to ensure that every child has access to the most appropriate educational setting regardless of where they live.

Our SEND strategy holds inclusion, and the rights of every learner to access the most appropriate education to meet their needs, within their own community, at its heart. This was reinforced in our recent Strategic SEND review, which responds to families wishes around SEND provision. To this end we have developed a continuum of provision across each area of the city. Our strategy supports and promotes inclusive mainstream settings and schools, making each and every local mainstream school an option for as many pupils as possible. Alongside this, the LA continues to create additional specialist places for those with more complex and specific learning needs, such as Autism, within mainstream resourced schools and mainstream partnership schools. Our partnership schools are unique to Leeds and give parents and learners the additional option of being on the roll of a special school whilst attending a mainstream school for some or all of their education offer. The special schools in Leeds are called Specialist Inclusive Learning Centres (SILCs) and are all generic rather than specialising in just one type of need. This promotes our ethos of enabling all young people to grow up and attend school within their own community. The SILCs are very popular with our families and demand far outweighs the spaces currently available as the needs in the city continue to grow, particularly in the areas of complex learning difficulties and complex communication difficulties.

Leeds is also committed to maintaining its children's centres across the city and our 0-25 SEND strategy means that children in their early years can attend their local children's centre with their peers before transferring to their local mainstream school, or more specialist provision. The ethos of promoting learners access to provision within their own community is also evident at post 16. Strong partnerships have been developed with local colleges to support options for Post-16. This enables learners to remain within their local community and benefit from flexible college provision. This provides learners with the opportunities to follow a range of pathways that support life skills to more vocational learning, including supported internships and opportunities for work. All our provisions deliver a learning offer that supports the wider Preparation for Adulthood (PFA) outcomes.

This new generic special school therefore fits well with the existing five generic SILCs which provide quality education, are of comparable size, are strategically located around the city and have partnership schools that enable children and young people to learn in a local mainstream school. It meets the significantly growing need within the city and is completely in line with parental preference as families and young people tell us that they want more generic special school places.

Areas across 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 Rose Court 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.

In line with Leeds SEND strategy, the new special school would support inclusive learning within neighbouring mainstream settings. In addition to the 150 places at the main site, a further 50 specialist places will be established on a partnership arrangement at local primary and secondary schools. The pupils would be on the roll of the special school but would benefit from being supported in a specialist environment within a mainstream setting alongside their peers, providing opportunities for inclusive learning within the pupil's own community.

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 new school would also deliver a mainstream outreach model working across local schools. Where individual children need further support, a package should be identified to enable them to move back into mainstream provision. The Partnership model and Leeds' commitment to a mainstream outreach programme is very important in developing the skills and expertise within the mainstream sector; increasing staff individual ability and whole school confidence in meeting the needs of children with SEND.

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.

During the consultation period there were 211 survey responses received. In total, 195 respondents (92% of the total) strongly or somewhat supported the proposal. In comparison there were 15 who somewhat or strongly opposed it (7% of the total). A further 3 respondents stated that they neither supported nor opposed the proposal (1% of the total). 163 of the 211 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.

- **Actions**

If the proposal progresses, the additional places would start to become available following the modifications to the school building which is expected to be completed by September 2021. 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.

The successful sponsor has a duty to consult with stakeholders and the local community during the pre-opening phase of the school for a period of approximately 6 weeks. This process allows the sponsor to use and build on the feedback and suggestions received as policies for the new school are developed.

During the consultation process, due regard to equality was given to all aspects of developing and implementing the proposal. 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 site would be fully compliant with the Equality Act 2010. This would ensure that the building is accessible to all users; students, staff and visitors.

The 50 partnership places within local mainstream schools would be expected to be created by the successful sponsor in partnership with LCC, once the free school is fully established and relationships forged with the identified schools.

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	
Date screening completed		

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:

For Executive Board or Full Council – sent to Governance Services	Date sent:
For Delegated Decisions or Significant Operational Decisions – sent to appropriate Directorate	Date sent:
All other decisions – sent to equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk	Date sent: