

Addressing Inequalities

Equalities Impact Assessment

Surrey County Council Equality Impact Assessment Template

Stage one – initial screening

What is being assessed?	Admissions Policy and Coordinated Schemes 2014
Service	Admissions and Transport
Name of assessor/s	Claire Potier
Head of service	Peter-John Wilkinson
Date	31 January 2013
Is this a new or existing function or policy?	Existing policy under review

Write a brief description of your service, policy or function. It is important to focus on the service or policy the project aims to review or improve.

The policies being considered under this EIA set out the processes and criteria for admitting children to Community and Voluntary Controlled schools and how Surrey County Council will coordinate admission applications and outcomes within the County Council and across County borders. In accordance with the School Admissions Code, these policies include processes and criteria that are fair, objective and transparent.

Indicate for each equality group whether there may be a positive impact, negative impact, or no impact.

Equality Group	Positive	Negative	No impact	Reason
Age	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents of 4 year olds can ask for their child to defer entry or start Reception full / part-time • Older applicants will be prioritised for

				admission to nursery as they will have less time to spend in nursery
Gender Reassignment			X	
Disability	X			Provision is made for SEN children to be admitted to school Provisions made within the policy for priority to be given to medical need
Sex			X	
Religion and belief	X			Provision made within the admissions timetable for faith schools to rank their applicants
Pregnancy and maternity			X	
Race			X	
Sexual orientation			X	
Carers	X			Potential for child carers to claim for social priority for a school place
Other equality issues – please state	X			Looked After Children, including children who have left care through adoption, a residence order or special guardianship order, receive top priority for a school place by law A translation service is on offer for parents who might find language a barrier to understanding the literature and Surrey's Schools and Childcare service acts as a Choice Advice service to help parents understand the process

HR and workforce issues			X	
Human Rights implications if relevant			X	

If you find a negative impact on any equality group you will need to complete stage one and move on to stage two and carry out a full EIA.

A full EIA will also need to be carried out if this is a high profile or major policy that will either effect many people or have a severe effect on some people.

Is a full EIA required?	Yes (go to stage two) X	No
If no briefly summarise reasons why you have reached this conclusion, the evidence for this and the nature of any stakeholder verification of your conclusion.		
Briefly describe any positive impacts identified that have resulted in improved access or services		

For screenings only:

Review date	
Person responsible for review	
Head of Service signed off	
Date completed	

- Signed off electronic version to be kept in your team for review
- Electronic copy to be forwarded to Equality and Diversity Manager for publishing

Stage 2 – Full Equality Impact Assessment - please refer to [equality impact assessment](#) guidance available on Snet

Introduction and background

Using the information from your screening please describe your service

or function. This should include:

- **The aims and scope of the EIA**
- **The main beneficiaries or users**
- **The main equality, accessibility, social exclusion issues and barriers, and the equality groups they relate to (not all assessments will encounter issues relating to every strand)**

The policies being considered under this EIA set out the processes and criteria for admitting children to Community and Voluntary Controlled schools and how Surrey County Council will coordinate admission applications and outcomes within the County Council and across County borders. These are statutory policies required by legislation and in accordance with the School Admissions Code, these policies include processes and criteria that are fair, objective and transparent and that comply with equalities legislation and the Human Rights Act.

The main users of the policies will be parents applying for Surrey schools, schools and neighbouring Local Authorities.

The admission policy allows for SEN children to be admitted ahead of other applicants. SEN admissions fall outside the scope of admissions legislation.

The admission criteria make provision for Looked After Children, including children who have left care through adoption, a residence order or special guardianship order, as a top priority for admission. The second criteria for admission allows for children who have a social or medical need for a place at a particular school to be given priority, this might include a child who has a disability or a child who has caring responsibilities for a parent.

Most children start school in the year after they turn 4 years old but all children must be in school in the term after they turn 5 years old. By law the admission arrangements for entry to Reception allow for a parent of a 4 year old to defer their entry until later in the school year and for parents of 4 year olds to ask that their child start school part time.

The arrangements for admission to nursery allow nurseries to give a higher priority to older children who might have less time to spend in nursery.

The policies and application procedure are widely publicised on Surrey County Council's website, in print and through publicity posters throughout the County and the closing dates are broadcast on local radio. Parents are encouraged to apply online and leaflets are sent out widely setting out how parents can apply and how they might obtain a paper copy of the application form. Schools act as a support and advisory point for parents and primary schools are asked to target parents of children in their nursery to make sure they apply for a Reception place. Primary schools are also asked to check the applications made to ensure that all children who are approaching Year 7 transition have made an application. Online application numbers are high at over 95%, which demonstrates that most parents have the access and ability

to apply online. However paper forms are readily available for parents who do not have the access or ability to apply online to ensure that these parents have equal access to school places. There is no evidence that would indicate that these families are not currently accessing the service.

The County Council also employs a dedicated translation service for all written material and the Contact Centre is used to support parents who might have difficulty in understanding and applying the policy.

Now describe how this fits into ‘the bigger picture’ including other council or local plans and priorities.

Surrey County Council acts as admission authority for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools, whilst the governing body of each school acts as the admission authority for Academies and Foundation, Trust and Voluntary Aided schools. The admission arrangements for all schools must be determined by 15 April each year and the arrangements and processes to determine which children will be admitted must be lawful and comply with the School Admissions Code.

Under the Coordination regulations each Local Authority must coordinate applications for children living in their area and must publish schemes setting out how it will do this.

The over-arching aspect of admission arrangements and coordinated schemes is that they must be fair and objective, give every parent the opportunity to apply for schools that they want for their child, provide parents with clear information and provide support to parents who find it hardest to understand the system.

Evidence gathering and fact-finding

What evidence is available to support your views above? Please include a summary of the available evidence including identifying where there are gaps to be included in the action plan.

Remember to consider accessibility alongside the equality groups

95% of parents applied online in 2012 and paper forms were readily available to parents who could not or chose not to apply online

32 places offered at Community and Voluntary Controlled schools to Looked After Children as top priority in 2012 as part of the normal intake to schools

28 places offered at Community and Voluntary Controlled schools on exceptional grounds (social/medical need) in 2012 as part of the normal intake to schools

Sources of evidence may include:

- Service monitoring reports including equality monitoring data
- User feedback
- Population data – census, Mosaic
- Complaints data
- Published research, local or national.
- Feedback from consultations and focus groups
- Feedback from individuals or organisations representing the interests of key target groups
- Evidence from partner organisations, other council departments, district or borough councils and other local authorities

How have stakeholders been involved in this assessment? Who are they, and what is their view?

Schools which have changes being proposed have been consulted on the changes and are in support. All Community and Voluntary Controlled schools were sent confirmation of the PAN that was to be proposed and were offered the opportunity to query it if they felt it was incorrect or if they had anticipated a change.

The consultation was the opportunity to engage with parents and the wider school community. As part of the consultation process the proposed admission arrangements and coordinated schemes were widely publicised both on the County Council website and in schools and nurseries. All forms of responses were accepted including the standard response form, online responses and any other relevant correspondence. A total of 138 responses were received online and by email/letter.

Of the total online responses, 102 (76%) respondents completed the equality monitoring form. Of those completing a monitoring form:

Age

- 1% of respondents were aged 18 – 29
- 88% of respondents were aged 30 – 49
- 6% of respondents were aged 50 – 64
- 5 % of respondents were aged 65 and over

Race

- 97 % of respondents described themselves as white and British.
- 3% of respondents came from a range of BME groupings with no major cohort being overly represented

Disability

- No respondents indicated that they had a disability
- One respondent indicated that they had a permanent and substantial condition or impairment

Gender

76% of respondents were female
24 % of respondents were male

Faith

66 % of respondents indicated that they were of Christian Faith
29 % of respondents indicated that they had no faith-based affiliation
2 % of respondents preferred not to supply this information
The remaining 3% indicated an affiliation with other faiths

Sexual Orientation

93% of respondents stated that they were heterosexual
2% of respondents stated that they were bisexual
5% of respondents preferred not to supply this information or did not provide an answer

Analysis and assessment

Given the available information, what is the actual or likely impact on minority, disadvantaged, vulnerable and socially excluded groups? Is this impact positive or negative or a mixture of both? (Refer to the EIA guidance for full list of issues to consider when making your analysis)

Based on the assessment of the policies and the evidence, these policies will have an overall positive equality impact.

What can be done to reduce the effects of any negative impacts? Where negative impact cannot be completely diminished, can this be justified, and is it lawful?

No evidence of any negative impact.

Where there are positive impacts, what changes have been or will be made, who are the beneficiaries and how have they benefited?

Recommendations

Please summarise the main recommendations arising from the assessment. If it is impossible to diminish negative impacts to an acceptable or even lawful level the recommendation should be that the proposal or the relevant part of it should not proceed.

Action Plan – actions needed to implement the EIA recommendations

Issue	Action	Expected outcome	Who	Deadline for action

- Actions should have SMART Targets
- Actions should be reported to the Directorate Equality Group (DEG) and incorporated into the Equality and Diversity Action Plan, Service Plans and/or personal objectives of key staff.

Date taken to Directorate Equality Group for challenge and feedback	
Review date	
Person responsible for review	Claire Potier
Head of Service signed off	Peter-John Wilkinson
Date completed	31 January 2013
Date forwarded to EIA coordinator for publishing	

- **Signed off electronic version to be kept in your team for review**
- **Electronic copy to be forwarded to your service EIA coordinator to forward for publishing on the external website**

EIA publishing checklist

- Plain English – will your EIA make sense to the public?
- Acronyms – check that you have explained any specialist names or terminology
- Evidence – will your evidence stand up to scrutiny; can you justify your conclusions?
- Stakeholders and verification – have you included a range of views and perspectives to back up your analysis?
- Gaps and information – have you identified any gaps in services or information that need to be addressed in the action plan?
- Legal framework – have you identified any potential discrimination and included actions to address it?
- Success stories – have you included any positive impacts that have resulted in change for the better?
- Action plan – is your action plan SMART? Have you informed the relevant people to ensure the action plan is carried out?
- Review – have you included a review date and a named person to carry it out?
- Challenge – has your EIA been taken to your DEG for challenge
- Signing off – has your Head of Service signed off your EIA?
- Basics – have you signed and dated your EIA and named it for publishing?