

# Equality Impact Assessment for the Proposal to expand the existing SEN Unit at Stepgates Community Primary School

Did you use the EIA Screening Tool?

Yes

## 1. Explaining the matter being assessed

**This is a:**

- A change to a service or function

Stepgates Community Primary School is a one-form entry (1FE) primary school in the borough of Runnymede in Surrey. The school was rated 'Good' by Ofsted in November 2017.

In agreement with the school's Headteacher and Governing Body, Surrey County Council is proposing that Stepgates Community Primary School expands their SLCN designated SEN Unit by 8 places, from 21 places to 29 places in total. All pupils placed by Surrey County Council in the SEN Unit will have identified Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) and will have an EHCP specifying the specialist provision within the school as an appropriate placement to meet their individual needs.

The proposal will impact:

- Pupils currently attending Stepgates Community Primary School
- Staff at Stepgates Community Primary School
- Parents and families of pupils currently attending Stepgates Community Primary School or likely to attend the school in the future.

**How does your service proposal support the outcomes in [the Community Vision for Surrey 2030](#)?**

- Children and young people are safe and feel safe and confident
- Everyone benefits from education skills and employment opportunities that help them succeed in life
- Communities are welcoming and supportive, especially of those most in need, and people feel able to contribute to community life

Are there any specific geographies in Surrey where this will make an impact?

- Runnymede

## Assessment team

### Detail here who you have involved with completing this EIA:

- Rachael Wardell, Surrey County Council, Executive Director Children Families and Learning
- Liz Mills, Surrey County Council, Director of Education and Learning
- Carrie Trail, Surrey County Council Assistant Director of Education
- Eamonn Gilbert, Surrey County Council, Assistant Director Commissioning
- Jodi Emery, Surrey County Council, Service Manager, SEND Commissioning
- Mike Singleton, Surrey County Council, Service Manager, Education Place Planning
- Emily George, Surrey County Council, Assistant Director, SEND Transformation
- Emilie Williams Jones, Surrey County Council, Programme Manager SEND and AP Capital Programmes
- Lauren Comer, Surrey County Council, Commissioning Manager, Education Place Planning
- Tess Jerwood, Surrey County Council, Commissioning Assistant, Education Place Planning
- Tara Ford, Stepgates Community Primary School, Headteacher
- Michael Pope, Stepgates Community Primary School, Chair of Governing Body
- Surrey County Council Capital Programme Board

### Consultation Information:

Surrey County Council and Stepgates Community Primary School consulted on the proposal to expand their existing SLCN designated SEN Unit at Stepgates Community Primary School by 8 places, from 21 places to 29 places in total.

The aim of the consultation was to seek views on the proposal from all interested parties, particularly from pupils and their families who attend Stepgates Community Primary School, pupils and their families who may attend the school in the future, and the views of the local community.

The informal consultation was open from Monday 7 November – Monday 5 December 2022. The associated documentation was published on the [Surrey County Council 'Surrey Says' website](#) and circulated to local stakeholders. Interested parties were invited to return responses to the consultation via an online form or alternatively email or post responses.

There were 4 responses to the consultation. 100% of respondents agreed with the proposal to expand the existing SEN Unit at Stepgates Community Primary School.

A public meeting was offered on 24 November 2022 at 7pm.

Statutory Notices were published from 13 January – 10 February 2023. The associated documentation was published on the [SurreySays Website](#) and circulated to local stakeholders. Interested parties were invited to return responses to the consultation via an online form or alternatively email or post responses.

## 2. Service Users / Residents

Who may be affected by this activity?

There are 9 protected characteristics (Equality Act 2010) considered in the proposal. These are:

1. Age including younger and older people
2. Disability
3. Gender reassignment
4. Pregnancy and maternity
5. Race including ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality
6. Religion or belief including lack of belief
7. Sex
8. Sexual orientation
9. Marriage/civil partnerships

Though not included in the Equality Act 2010, Surrey County Council recognises that there are other vulnerable groups which significantly contribute to inequality across the county and therefore they should also be considered within EIAs. If relevant, you will need to include information on the following vulnerable groups:

- Members/Ex members of armed forces
- Adult and young carers\*
- Those experiencing digital exclusion\*
- Those experiencing domestic abuse\*
- Those with education/training (literacy) needs
- Those experiencing homelessness\*
- Looked after children/Care leavers\*
- Those living in rural/urban areas
- Those experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage\*
- Out of work young people)\*
- Adults with learning disabilities and/or autism\*
- People with drug or alcohol use issues\*
- People on probation
- People in prison
- Migrants, refugees, asylum seekers
- Sex workers
- Children with Special educational needs and disabilities\*
- Adults with long term health conditions, disabilities (including SMI) and/or sensory impairment(s)\*
- Older People in care homes\*
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities\*
- Other (describe below)

(\*as identified in the Surrey COVID Community Impact Assessment and the Surrey Health and Well-being Strategy)

Impacts have been identified under the protected characteristics **Age including younger and older people** and **Disability**. The following vulnerable groups have also been identified, **Children with Special educational needs and disabilities** and **those experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage**.

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## Disability

(Including Children with Additional Needs and Disabilities and Adult and Young carers)

### Pupils at the school

There are 228 pupils currently on roll at Stepgates Community Primary School. Pupils currently placed by SCC and attending the SEN Unit are included in this total number.

**Table 1: Number of Pupils on roll at Stepgates Community Primary School by National Curriculum Year (NCY) Group (provided by the school, February 2023)**

Number of pupils	Year R	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Total
Specialist unit	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	18
Mainstream school	30	29	30	30	30	30	31	210

(3 spaces in SLCN unit – 1 in Reception, 1 in Year 1, 1 in Year 2 (February 2023))

### Pupils who may attend the school in the future

The proposal is to expand the SLCN designated SEN Unit at Stepgates Community Primary School by 8 places, from 21 places to 29 places in total. All pupils placed by Surrey County Council in the SEN Unit will have identified Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) and will have an EHCP specifying the specialist provision within the school as an appropriate placement to meet their individual needs.

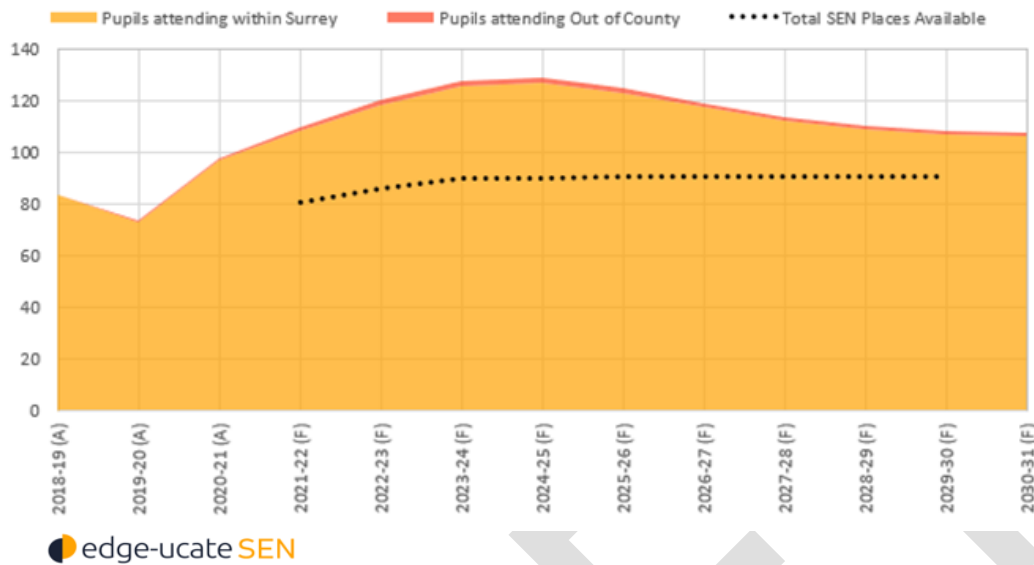
The specialist unit at Stepgates Community School caters for children from across North Surrey – 70% of children attending the unit live in the North West of the county and 30% live in the North East of the county.

The number of children living in the North of Surrey with an EHCP in Years R to 6 with a primary need of SLCN has increased by 17% since 2018. Latest sufficiency modelling projects growth of 31% by 2024-2025, along with a 30% shortage of specialist unit places within this timescale.

**Graph 1** illustrates that the demand for SEN Unit places for pupils with a primary need for SLCN in Years R-6 will peak in 2024-2025. This is then followed by a forecast decrease in the number of specialist unit SLCN places required by 2030-2031. This follows the county-wide demographic trend as pupils born at the peak in 2012 will be leaving the primary sector.

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**Graph 1: Demand for SEN unit places from children in north Surrey with an EHCP in Years R-6 and a primary need of SLCN**



**Table 2: NW and NE quadrant residents in Years R-6 who attend specialist units with SLCN identified as their primary need and projected demand for additional places in 2024-25 and 2030-31**

District or Borough	Actuals 2020-21	Projected demand for places in 2024-2025	Projected growth from 2020-21 to 2024-2025	Projected demand for places in 2030-2031	Projected growth from 2020-2021 to 2030-31
North West	41	63	54%	54	32%
North East	57	66	16%	54	-5%
Rest of Surrey	112	129	15%	118	5%

This data illustrates the projected demand for additional specialist unit places in and across Surrey over the next ten years. The North West of Surrey is forecast to have the highest percentage growth over the forecast period. There is a forecast decrease for specialist places needed in North East Surrey and a smaller demand for specialist SLCN unit placements across the rest of Surrey.

## Positive Impacts:

- The proposal positively impacts pupils with Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) aged 4 years to 11 years old, who require a specialist school place with access to inclusion in a mainstream school.

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- A school place that is closer to home will positively impact students, parents and carers who will have the opportunity to be part of a school community closer to home as well as reducing potential travel time for centre pupils and their families.

The Report to Surrey County Council on 28 March 2023 [Developing Local Special Educational Needs And Disability \(Send\) Provision In Surrey To Meet Demand From 2023/24 Onwards](#) outlines the delivery of additional specialist school places and intended benefits to Surrey's children, young people and residents:

1. Benefits realisation ensures Surrey's maintained specialist education provision is fit for purpose and creates additional employment/supported internship opportunities for residents around areas of expansion.
2. Children, young people, and families can access the same level of high-quality support wherever they live in Surrey. We have a good, shared understanding of our children and young people who have additional needs and disabilities in Surrey and our support offer matches their identified needs.
3. Expanding Surrey's specialist provision aligns with the Preparation for Adulthood programme and strategy for Post-16 to create local further education and employment pathways such as apprenticeships and supported internships. This enables young people who have additional needs and disabilities to make a successful transition to adulthood and secure employment.
4. Capacity created locally will also make certain that additional needs and disabilities home to school transport distance and costs are reduced so that pupils attend their closest most appropriate school with shorter journey times. Opportunities for developing independent travel skills can be maximised as a result of children and young people being educated closer to home. This will also address local congestion around school sites as well as traffic flow around the county, which will be of benefit to Surrey's Green Agenda
5. The approved remodification and expansion programme will ensure that additional places are matched appropriately to need type, phases of education and geographic locations.

**What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of residents? Are there any dependencies decision makers need to be aware of?**

The proposal to expand the existing SEN Unit at Stepgates Community Primary School is part of the strategy developed by Surrey County Council to expand the specialist education estate by more than 2,440 places to meet projected demand in the long-term.

**SEND Capital Programme Cabinet Report 28 March 2023:**

[Developing Local Special Educational Needs and Disability \(Send\) Provision in Surrey to Meet Demand From 2023/24 Onwards](#)

**Any negative impacts that cannot be mitigated?**

No

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## Age including younger and older people

The proposal positively impacts pupils with Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) aged 4 years to 11 years old, who require a specialist school place with access to inclusion in a mainstream school.

**Describe here suggested mitigations to inform the actions needed to reduce inequalities.**

N/A

**What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of residents? Are there any dependencies decision makers need to be aware of?**

The proposed SEN unit at Ashford Park Primary School is part of the strategy developed by Surrey County Council to expand the specialist education estate by more than 2,440 places to meet projected demand in the long-term.

**SEND Capital Programme Cabinet Report 28 March 2023:**

[Developing Local Special Educational Needs and Disability \(Send\) Provision in Surrey to Meet Demand From 2023/24 Onwards](#)

**Any negative impacts that cannot be mitigated?**

No



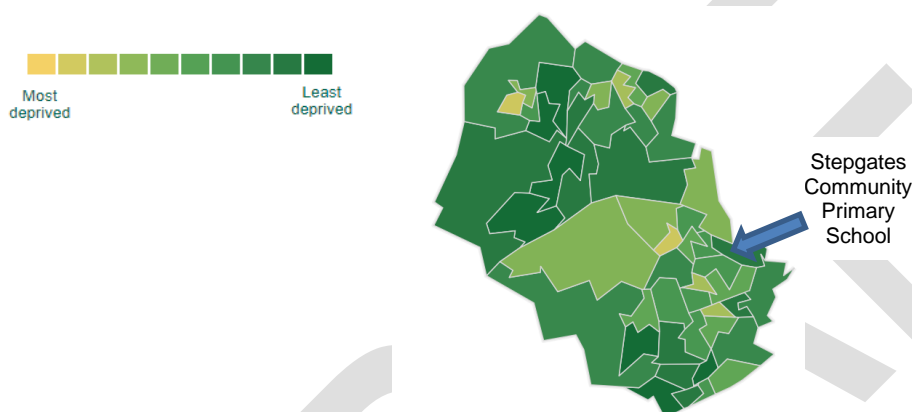
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## Socio economic disadvantage

[The Indices of deprivation 2019](#) finds that 2 out of 53 Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOA) in Runnymede are between 20% - 30% most deprived area in the country. 11 out of 53 areas are more deprived than 50% of England. 7 out of 53 Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOA) in Runnymede are in the least deprived 10% in the country, however there are pockets of deprivation in the borough.

**Figure 1: English Index of Multiple Deprivation Runnymede**

### Map of Runnymede



Source: Indices of deprivation 2019 in Surrey by Surrey-i helpdesk

**Positive impact:** More families will be able to access specialist provision closer to home.

**Describe here suggested mitigations to inform the actions needed to reduce inequalities.**

Placements co-ordinated through the SEND admissions process will place pupils at the appropriate placement identified through the Education Health and Care Plan. Additional local places will mean more pupils will be able to attend provision local to home.

**What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of residents? Are there any dependencies decision makers need to be aware of?**

The proposed expansion of the SEN Unit at Stepgates Community Primary School is part of the strategy developed by Surrey County Council to expand the specialist education estate by more than 2,440 places to meet projected demand in the long-term.

**SEND Capital Programme Cabinet Report 28 March 2023:**

# Equality Impact Assessment

[Developing Local Special Educational Needs and Disability \(Send\) Provision in Surrey to Meet Demand From 2023/24 Onwards](#)

**Any negative impacts that cannot be mitigated?**

No

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## 3. Staff

Any impacts for staff with protected characteristics will be considered by the Governing Body of Stepgates Community Primary School.

**Positive impact:** Development opportunities for staff with the expansion of the SEN Unit at Stepgates Community Primary School.

**Describe here suggested mitigations to inform the actions needed to reduce inequalities.**

Communication and consultation with staff throughout the decision-making process.

**What other changes is the council planning/already in place that may affect the same groups of residents? Are there any dependencies decision makers need to be aware of?**

The proposed expansion of the SEN Unit at Stepgates Community Primary School is part of the strategy developed by Surrey County Council to expand the specialist education estate by more than 2,440 places to meet projected demand in the long-term.

**SEND Capital Programme Cabinet Report 28 March 2023:**

[Developing Local Special Educational Needs and Disability \(Send\) Provision in Surrey to Meet Demand From 2023/24 Onwards](#)

**Any negative impacts that cannot be mitigated?**

No.

## 4. Recommendation

Based your assessment, please indicate which course of action you are recommending to decision makers. You should explain your recommendation below.

- **Outcome One: No major change to the policy/service/function required.** This EIA has not identified any potential for discrimination or negative impact, and all opportunities to promote equality have been undertaken
- **Outcome Two: Adjust the policy/service/function** to remove barriers identified by the EIA or better advance equality. Are you satisfied that the proposed adjustments will remove the barriers you identified?
- **Outcome Three: Continue the policy/service/function** despite potential for negative impact or missed opportunities to advance equality identified. You will need to make sure the EIA clearly sets out the justifications for continuing with it. You need to consider whether there are:
  - Sufficient plans to stop or minimise the negative impact
  - Mitigating actions for any remaining negative impacts plans to monitor the actual impact.
- **Outcome Four: Stop and rethink the policy** when the EIA shows actual or potential unlawful discrimination. (For guidance on what is unlawful discrimination, refer to the [Equality and Human Rights Commission's guidance and Codes of Practice on the Equality Act](#) concerning employment, goods and services and equal pay).

### Recommended outcome:

- **Outcome One: No major change to the policy/service/function required.** This EIA has not identified any potential for discrimination or negative impact, and all opportunities to promote equality have been undertaken.

### Explanation:

No negative equalities impacts have been identified.

## 5. Action plan and monitoring arrangements

There is no current action plan as no negative impacts have been identified

### 6a. Version control

Version Number	Purpose/Change	Author	Date
0.1	Draft	Tess Jerwood	February 2023
0.2	Amendments to draft at end of Informal Consultation	Tess Jerwood	March 2023
0.3	Final draft at the end of the Statutory Notice period	Lauren Comer	March 2023
1	Final version for Cabinet Member of Education and Learning Decision Meeting	Lauren Comer	April 2023

# Equality Impact Assessment

## 6b. Approval

Secure approval from the appropriate level of management based on nature of issue and scale of change being assessed.

Approved by	Date approved
Head of Service - Liz Mills (Emily George)	4 April 2023
Executive Director – Rachael Wardell	13 April 2023
Cabinet Member – Clare Curran	12 April 2023
Directorate Equality Group – Liz Mills	

**EIA author:** Lauren Comer, Commissioning Manager, Education Place Planning

## 6c. EIA Team

Name	Job Title	Organisation	Team Role
Lauren Comer	Commissioning Manager	SCC	Author, Project Manager
Tess Jerwood	Commissioning Assistant	SCC	Project Group member
Emilie Williams Jones	Programme Manager, SEND and AP Capital Programmes	SCC	Programme Manager
Tara Ford	Headteacher	Stepgates Community Primary School	Service Expert
Liz Mills	Director of Education and Learning	SCC	Sponsor

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