

Equality Impact Assessment

What is an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) and why does the County Council do them?

The [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) (PSED) is an obligation within the [Equality Act 2010](#) (“the Act”), which asks public authorities, like Hampshire County Council, to give ‘due regard’ to equality considerations, in particular to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

This includes assessing the impact of policies and practices on individuals and communities with a protected characteristic, as defined in the Act and some other specific groups. The County Council uses EIAs to ensure it has paid ‘due regard’ to equalities considerations when there are changes to a service or policy, a new project or certain decisions.

EIA author	Position & Department	Contact
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Title:	Amalgamation of Pennington Infant School and Pennington CE Junior School
Related EIAs:	EIA Number: 695 & 768
EIA for Savings Programme:	Yes EIA - Childrens Services -
Service affected	Pennington Infant School and Pennington CE Junior School
Description of the service/policy/project/project phase	The governing bodies of both Pennington Infant School and Pennington CE Junior School approached Hampshire County Council to discuss opportunities for both schools to work closer together following discussions over recent months regarding low pupil numbers and concerns over the financial positions of both schools. The pupil forecasts indicate that there is a reduced demand for places in the locality compared with recent years. This has led to budget issues at both schools, creating significant difficulties with budget recovery and on-going viability. Since 2022, the published admission number for both schools were reduced to 30 children (having previously been at 52 pupils in 2021 and before).
New/changed service/policy/project	In view of this, the Governing bodies and Hampshire County Council feel the best way forward is to re-organise the schools into a single primary school. The proposed amalgamation to form a 1 form of entry (1FE), or 30 places per year

group, primary school presents a better opportunity to secure an improved budget position with a more settled pupil number intake and organisational structure. This approach would result in one governing body overseeing the new school, rather than separate Infant and Junior governing bodies as currently exists. There are many advantages to bringing Pennington Infant School and Pennington CE Junior School together, some of which are listed below: - Greater continuity in planning the curriculum across the key stages of education so that pupils make the best possible progress in learning. - A consistent approach to the ways in which children are taught. - Enhance teachers' professional development through increased opportunities to teach across a wider age range within the same school. - Removes the need for separate admission and transfer at the end of key stage 1 (infant to junior transfer) - Parents are able to develop a longer-term relationship with the school. - Gives children the opportunity to work with or alongside younger or older pupils allowing them to put their own learning in context and develop important social skills. Hampshire County Council is therefore proposing to amalgamate Pennington Infant School and Pennington CE Junior School, through the closure of Pennington Infant School and extension of the age range of Pennington CE Junior School to become a Primary School. The school will continue to offer 30 places for Year R (age 4+). If agreed, it is anticipated that this proposed change would take effect no earlier than 1 January 2026 following a statutory process. It has been concluded that the junior school site would be used to accommodate the new primary school due to its layout and its relationship to the playing field and hard play area. Estimated costs for the works identified are £100,000 and will be funded in full from the Children's Services Capital Programme. Approval for the required capital expenditure has been obtained from Executive Lead Member for Children's Services decision in January 2025 regarding the Children's Services Capital Programme 2025/26 – 2027/28. There will be no impact to the Special Educational Needs Resourced Provision for pupils with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) located at Pennington CE Junior School. Conversations have commenced with Pennington Village Pre School regarding the siting of their provision, this is to support the ongoing delivery of preschool provision in the area.

Engagement

A non-statutory consultation was conducted from 18 October to 22 November 2024 which included a letter sent to stakeholders, a website with information including FAQs, and a public drop-in session. People and groups consulted included the parents of both schools, other educational settings within two miles (including other primary schools, the local secondary school and early years settings), the Member of Parliament, local councillors, and Trade Unions.

From this consultation, there were eight responses: four were supporting the proposal and one objection was received, based upon concerns of the use of the vacated infant site and the impact on local roads. The responses also raised the following questions: what would happen to the preschool?; what adaptations to the junior site would occur to meet early years foundation stage learning needs; how will the pupils transition to the new building?; what will the uniform be, especially for low income families; and how will staff's job roles be ensured/safeguarded. These questions have been considered by the team supporting this proposal and addressed within the report presented to the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services on 12 February 2025. From this decision day, it was agreed for a Public Notice to be issued regarding this proposal.

A statutory consultation ran between 21 February 2025 and 21 March 2025 following the issuing of the Public Notice on 21 February. Stakeholders and previous consultees were advised of this statutory consultation and how comments could be made. One response was received, in support of the proposal, which also requested that the infant site be repurposed for an educational provision, such as an alternative provision.

Equalities considerations - Impact Assessment

Age

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>There is a neutral impact envisaged in relation to age as the proposal, if approved, will mean that school provision remains in the area and will serve the same pupil age range within one school setting. Whilst the proposal, if approved, would result in the closure of the infant school, the junior school would increase its age-range to serve pupils aged between 4-11 years old. Therefore the only impact would be that the infant school age pupils would need to move from the building they are currently being educated in, over to the junior school building, which is adjacent on the same site, should that be the decision.</p> <p>It is intended that the privately-run preschool will remain on the school site, even if this means relocating their modular building to a new position on the school site - conversations have commenced with the preschool regarding this.</p>
Mitigation	<p>In relation to staff there is a negative low impact envisaged as the age of staff will have no bearing in relation to any staff reorganisation that will be necessary as a result of the changes planned through the proposal. The Hampshire County Council Human Resources department will work with and support all members of staff in line with all appropriate policies, regardless of their age, to assist with finding alternative employment elsewhere if needed.</p>

Disability

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>It is assessed there will be a neutral impact on disability as the proposal, if approved, does not make any changes to the policies and practices that the junior school utilises which will continue to be used should the school become a primary with the approval of the proposal.</p> <p>Any building works will be managed accordingly to ensure that there will be no impact on movement around the building that will affect anyone with a disability.</p>

Mitigation	

Gender Reassignment

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	It is assessed there will be a neutral impact on gender reassignment as the proposal, if approved, it does not make any changes to the policies and practices that the junior school currently has and these will still apply once it becomes a primary school should that be the final decision.
Mitigation	

Pregnancy and Maternity

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>The proposed change is expected to have a neutral impact on people who share pregnancy and maternity as a protected characteristic. All schools will have a policy in relation to this protected characteristic which will be adhered to if required.</p> <p>The Hampshire County Council Human Resources department will support and work with all members of staff of Pennington Infant School in line with all appropriate policies, including those on maternity or paternity leave, to assist with finding alternative employment elsewhere, if required, once the infant school closes.</p>
Mitigation	

Race

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	It is assessed there will be a neutral impact on race as the scheme does not make any changes to the policies and practices that the Junior school currently has which will continue when they become a primary school, should the proposal be approved.
Mitigation	

Religion or Belief

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>It is assessed there will be a neutral impact on religion or belief as the scheme does not make any changes to the policies and practices that the Junior school currently has which will continue when they become a primary school, should the proposal be approved. The primary school will be a Church of England voluntary controlled school under the Diocese of Winchester. By expanding the age range, it will enable a Church of England school providing Key Stage 1 education within area of Pennington.</p> <p>There is no impact to staff as the school will continue to adhere to equality employee policies relating to recruitment and employment.</p>
Mitigation	

Sex

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>It is assessed there will be a neutral impact on sex as the scheme does not make any changes to the policies and practices that the Junior school currently has which will continue when they become a primary school, should the proposal be approved</p>
Mitigation	

Sexual Orientation

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>It is assessed there will be a neutral impact on sexual orientation as the scheme does not make any changes to the policies and practices that the Junior school currently has which will continue when they become a primary school, should the proposal be approved</p>
Mitigation	

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	<p>It is assessed there will be a neutral impact on marriage and civil partnership as the scheme does not make any changes to the policies</p>

	and practices that the Junior school currently has which will continue when they become a primary school, should the proposal be approved
Mitigation	

Poverty

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	It is assessed there will be a neutral impact on marriage and civil partnership as the scheme does not make any changes to the policies and practices that the Junior school currently has which will continue when they become a primary school, should the proposal be approved
Mitigation	

Rurality

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	It is assessed there will be a neutral impact on rurality as the proposal does not make any changes to the provision of school places in the local area and that the policies and practices that the junior school currently has will continue when they become a primary school, should the proposal be approved
Mitigation	

Geographical Impact:New Forest

Equality Statement

Additional information:

If this proposal is agreed, it is planned for Pennington Infant School to close on 31 December 2025 and re-open as part of Pennington CE Primary School (with Pennington Junior School) on 1 January 2026.

Overview Statement:

A summary assessment to show that due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty has been paid, which is undertaken when a full EIA is not needed:

EIA reference number: 00877

Date of production of EIA for publication: 09/04/2025