

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.

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Title:	Poulner Junior School - New Autism Resourced Provision
Related EIAs:	None
EIA for Savings Programme:	No
Service affected	Poulner Junior School
Description of the service/policy/project/project phase	Poulner Junior School is a mainstream community school in Ringwood for pupils aged between 7 - 11 years old. The school has seen an increase in children with Autism identified within Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP). In addition to this, the New Forest district of Hampshire has also seen an increase in pupils with Autism needs. There is a statutory duty to provide school places for all children, including those who have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Hampshire County Council are committed to further developing successful provision to meet this demand within the SEND sector. The proposed additional SEND provision outlined within this report will help manage some of the school place pressures generated by the increase in the number of EHCPs maintained by Hampshire County Council. Demand has resulted in a corresponding pressure for places in Special Schools and Resourced Provisions.

	Hampshire County Council is committed to further developing successful provision or creating new provision where possible to meet demand for places. There are an increasing number of children in the county who are being diagnosed with Autism. The proposed additional SEND provision outlined within this EIA will help manage some of the school place pressures generated by the increase in the number of EHCPs maintained by the Local Authority. The additional accommodation will meet the needs of up to 12 additional Junior aged pupils with Autism which will be phased from September 2026.
New/changed service/policy/project	The proposal is to create a new 12 place Resourced Provision for pupils with Autism at Poulner Junior School from September 2026. This will be phased over 2/3 years to allow the Resourced Provision to get established and to get fully staffed. The pupils who would attend this new provision would generally be from the local area. They would be on roll at Poulner Junior School and the school would receive additional resources to ensure that the children's needs are well supported so that they can successfully access the mainstream environment and curriculum, when appropriate. This will not affect the published admission number for mainstream School places. Additional specific classroom space is required as a base for the Resourced Provision. The proposal is utilise existing surplus accommodation to become the base for the Resourced Provision, internal reconfiguration, safeguarding measures, IT, and furniture will be required together with an external play space. Costs will be finalised after tenders are received and be outlined in the Children's Services Capital Programme.

Engagement
An initial 4 week consultation is currently in progress between 13 October - 17 November with a drop in date having taken place on Monday 20 October.

Equalities considerations - Impact Assessment

Age

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Positive
Rationale	The new Resourced Provision will support junior aged pupils with special education needs, specifically Autism and enable them to thrive in an inclusive, and supportive specialist environment. The expansion to the school will provide accommodation to meet the needs of up to 12 junior aged pupils with Autism in phases from September 2026. The staff of Poulner Junior School will also benefit from working alongside; developing their skills, knowledge and training within the area of ASC Special Educational Needs
Mitigation	

Disability

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Positive
Rationale	

	This project will provide accommodation to meet the needs of up to 12 junior aged pupils with Autism and allow more pupils to attend schools in their respective local communities and alongside their peer groups; have access to trained staff and specialist resources, in order to support their needs, and in an environment that can adapt accordingly in an inclusive setting.
Mitigation	

Gender Reassignment

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	Due to the age of those affected, gender reassignment is unlikely to be an impacted characteristic. All relevant policies and procedures will be adhered to.
Mitigation	

Pregnancy and Maternity

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	Due to the age of those affected, pregnancy and maternity is unlikely to be an impacted characteristic. All relevant policies and procedures will be adhered to.
Mitigation	

Race

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	There will be no change in benefits to this protected characteristic group, over and above the current circumstances and over other protected characteristics groups, therefore the impact has been assessed as neutral for both staff, children and young people. All relevant policies and procedures will be adhered to.
Mitigation	

Religion or Belief

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	

	There will be no change in benefits to this protected characteristic group, over and above the current circumstances and over other protected characteristics groups, therefore the impact has been assessed as neutral for both staff, children and young people. All relevant policies and procedures will be adhered to.
Mitigation	

Sex

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	The school is mixed-gender and all genders will be equally affected. All relevant policies and procedures will be adhered to.
Mitigation	

Sexual Orientation

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	There will be no change in benefits to this protected characteristic group, over and above the current circumstances and over other protected characteristics groups, therefore the impact has been assessed as neutral for both staff, children and young people. All relevant policies and procedures will be adhered to.
Mitigation	

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	Due to the age of those affected, marriage and civil partnership is unlikely to be an impacted characteristic. All relevant policies and procedures will be adhered to.
Mitigation	

Poverty

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	There will be no change in benefits to this protected characteristic group, over and above the current circumstances and over other protected characteristics groups, therefore the impact has been assessed as neutral for both staff, children and young people. All relevant policies and procedures will be adhered to.
Mitigation	

Rurality

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	There will be no change in benefits to this protected characteristic group, over and above the current circumstances and over other protected characteristics groups, therefore the impact has been assessed as neutral for both staff, children and young people. All relevant policies and procedures will be adhered to.
Mitigation	

Geographical Impact:New Forest

Equality Statement

Additional information:

Hampshire County Council has a statutory duty to provide school places for all children including those who have special educational needs and/or a disability. The County Council is committed to further developing successful provision to meet this demand within the Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) sector within the County of Hampshire to reduce using the more expensive private and independent school sector. This is part of an ongoing drive to seek opportunities in Hampshire Schools to expand, develop or re-designate themselves. or increase their pupil numbers, in order to meet the increasing need for SEN places.

Staff at the school will have opportunity for specialist training in supporting pupils with autism and specialist staff will also be employed.

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: 01010

Date of production of EIA for publication: 30/10/2025