

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
Helen Humphry	Assistant Strategic Development Officer Children's Services	helen.humphry@hants.gov.uk

Title:	Pennington CE Primary School - Proposed Special Educational Needs Unit
Related EIAs:	None
EIA for Savings Programme:	No
Service affected	Pennington CE Primary School, Pennington, Lymington
Description of the service/policy/project/project phase	Pennington CE Primary School provides education for up to 210 pupils aged between 4 and 11 years old. The school has opened in January 2026, following an amalgamation of Pennington Infant School and Pennington CE Junior, which resulted in the closure of Pennington Infants and the pupils relocating into the junior school building (both on Priestlands Road in Pennington). Since this time, the former infant building has been vacant. Hampshire County Council and Pennington School are proposing to establish a Special Educational Needs (SEN) Unit for up to 50 primary aged pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH), opening in phases from academic year 2027/28. There is a growing number of children in the New Forest area with SEMH needs, and the need for specialist educational support is increasing. Pennington CE Primary School already has a Resourced Provision supporting five children with SEMH needs,

	and this new provision will enhance the support available, helping more children access education within their local community.
New/changed service/policy/project	The proposed project comprises of the conversion of the former Pennington Infant School accommodation with internal alterations and refurbishment of the building to create specialist teaching rooms. There will also be improvements to external areas, parking, drop-off and access arrangements. This will result in a specialist SEN unit, with a dedicated safe and enclosed outdoor space for the children of the SEN unit to access. The car parking, drop-off and access arrangements will be managed by the school, with appropriate operational procedures and risk assessments in place to ensure the safety of pupils, staff and visitors.

Engagement
An information consultation on the proposal to open a SEN Unit at Pennington CE Primary School was held between 9 January to 6 February 2026, with a drop-in held on the afternoon of Wednesday 21 January 2026 at Pennington CE Primary School. A statutory public notice consultation ran between 15 May and 19 June 2026, running concurrently with a pre-planning consultation relating to the proposed design of the building and outside areas, and a further drop-in event held in the afternoon of Tuesday 9 June 2026 at Pennington CE Primary School.

Equalities considerations - Impact Assessment

Age

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Positive
Rationale	The new SEN Unit will support primary aged pupils (4-11 years) with special education needs, specifically Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs 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 50 primary aged pupils with SEMH. The staff of Pennington CE Primary School already run a Resourced Provision for pupils with SEMH and will also benefit from working alongside; developing their skills, knowledge and training further within the area of SEMH.
Mitigation	

Disability

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Positive
Rationale	This proposal will provide specialist accommodation to meet the needs of up to 50 primary aged pupils with SEMH and allow more pupils to attend school in their respective local communities. It is intended for pupils in the SEN Unit may participate in some activities within the primary school alongside their peer groups. Pupils will 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	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	

Pregnancy and Maternity

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	

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	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	

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	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	

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	Positive
Impact on staff	Positive
Rationale	Although Pennington is considered an urban area of Lymington, it is surrounded by the New Forest, resulting in pupils needing to travel further to access specialist SEN provision. By opening the proposed SEN Unit at Pennington CE Primary School, this will meet a need for a provision in an overall rural area, which will enhance pupils with SEMH needs' wellbeing and education. It could also provide employment in the area.
Mitigation	

Geographical Impact:New Forest

Equality Statement

Additional information:

This EIA is to support a report being taken to the Executive Member for Education Decision Day.

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: 01206

Date of production of EIA for publication: 29/07/2026