

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:	Pennington CE Primary School SEMH Unit
Related EIAs:	None
EIA for Savings Programme:	No
Service affected	Pennington Church of England Primary School, Lymington.
Description of the service/policy/project/project phase	Pennington Church of England Primary School (with effect from 1 January 2026), formally Pennington Church of England Junior School, is a Voluntary Controlled School in the New Forest for pupils aged between 4 – 11 years old. 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 Education, Health, and Care Plans (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

	<p>provision where possible to meet demand for places. There are an increasing number of children in the county who are being diagnosed with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. 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.</p>
New/changed service/policy/project	<p>The proposal is to expand Pennington Church of England Primary School from September 2027 through the establishment of a 50 place SEN Unit utilising the former Pennington Infant School accommodation. The Department for Education (DfE) identifies two types of SEN provision provided by mainstream schools: Resourced Provisions and SEN Units. Both are for pupils with special educational needs who require additional support and have an EHCP and provide specialised facilities and a focused environment to address specific needs. Pennington Church of England Primary School has an established Resourced Provision catering for 8 pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. This provision is based within the main Primary School accommodation and will not be affected by this proposal. The adjacent former Pennington Infant School has accommodation for 177 infant aged mainstream pupils together with appropriate ancillary facilities and external areas including a 30-place nursery in temporary buildings. There is also a permanent former children's centre building at the front of the site that is currently underutilised. This provides a unique opportunity to utilise existing purpose-built education accommodation for a much-needed specialist provision to serve Lymington and the surrounding New Forest areas. The site and accommodation available at the site can create a new SEN provision for up to 50 primary aged pupils – this reflects the Department for Education building guidance and class sizes. The existing pre-school can be relocated to the more permanent former Children's Centre building for better access and independent from any new SEN provision. The pupils who would attend this new provision would generally be from the local area and have an EHCP. They would be on roll at Pennington Church of England Primary School and the school would receive additional resources to ensure that the children's needs are well supported. Pupils would spend majority of their time in the Unit depending on the needs of the individual child, joining mainstream peers for some aspects of school life e.g. assembly, social time, PE, where appropriate and beneficial for their individual needs and the wider community. Required works will be funded from the High Needs Capital funding allocation. This funding is subject to future approval and will be included in a later Children's Services Capital Programme Report.</p>

Engagement
An initial informal consultation will run from 9 January - 6 February 2026 with a drop in date on 21 January 2026.

Equalities considerations - Impact Assessment

Age

Impact on public	Positive
Impact on staff	Positive
Rationale	The proposal will support primary aged pupils with special education needs, specifically SEMH 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 Church of England Primary School will also benefit from working alongside; developing their skills, knowledge and training within the area of SEMH 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 50 primary aged pupils with SEMH and allow more pupils to attend school 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, gender reassignment 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	Positive
Impact on staff	Positive
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 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 SEMH and specialist teachers 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: 01069

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