

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:	Permission to consult on proposed changes to the School Transport Policy (Oct 2026)
Related EIAs:	None
EIA for Savings Programme:	No
Service affected	The School Transport Service
Description of the service/policy/project/project phase	Hampshire County Council (the Council) has a statutory duty to provide free of charge School Transport for eligible children (eligibility as set out in the Council’s School Transport Policy). The school transport statutory guidance published by the Department for Education states that local authorities should consult on proposed changes to Policy. This EIA supports an Executive Lead Member of Children's Services decision day report to request permission to consult on changes to the School Transport Policy.
New/changed service/policy/project	Permission is being sought to undertake a full public consultation on proposed changes to the School Transport Policy. The changes are designed to provide greater clarity on the way that the service is administered whilst continuing to keep the policy in line with Department for Education statutory guidance on Travel to School for Children of Compulsory School Age. The changes include: -

referencing the armed forces covenant - reflecting recent changes to free school meal entitlement categories - removing all reference to working tax credit as it is no longer in use - correcting the explanation of how parental contributions are calculated - referring to 'nearest' school rather than 'nearer' school to improve clarity - adding links to relevant documents in the Appeals section - updating how tickets are referred to in the policy to incorporate different ticket types (e.g. printed QR codes), and clarifying that they must be presented when asked in order to board - referring to 'catchment schools' rather than 'designated catchment area schools' for simplicity - explaining how Personal Transport Budgets are calculated in more detail - clarifying provision for part-time arrangements and reduced hours The impact of the changes on young people with different protected characteristics will be captured as part of this consultation.

Engagement

This EIA accompanies an Executive Lead Member for Children's Services decision report on the 22 October 2026.

This EIA focusses on considering the potential impact of the proposed changes on the Public rather than Staff as there are no proposed changes to staff terms and conditions. Therefore, the impact has been assessed as neutral for Staff throughout.

A further EIA will be undertaken following the public consultation.

Equalities considerations - Impact Assessment

Age

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	Consultation – It is acknowledged that older people may be less likely to have access to the internet and may not be able to respond online to a consultation. The Council would ensure that paper copies of the consultation are available by request for postal submission. Proposals - The County Council proposes to update the information in the policy to provide improved clarity of how the policy is already applied and how the service is currently delivered. Whilst these specific changes would not have an impact on how the service is delivered to this group, they could help all groups to gain a better understanding of how the service is run. Relevant policies and procedures will be adhered to.
Mitigation	

Disability

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral

Rationale	Consultation – The Council acknowledge that people with disabilities may find it harder to engage with the consultation and will put in place measures to enable those with disabilities to take part. These include the consultation response form and information pack being available in an easy read format, a copy in another language or format (such as audio, large print, or Braille), or if they have any queries about the consultation, they would be able to request this by raising an online enquiry. Proposals - There is no identified impact based on disability and therefore the impact has been assessed as neutral. The policy is being updated to provide more detailed information for all users, but the service itself isn't changing, so there is no impact, regardless of disability. Relevant policies and procedures will be adhered to.
Mitigation	

Gender Reassignment

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	There is no identified impact based on gender reassignment and therefore the impact has been assessed as neutral. Relevant policies and procedures will be adhered to.
Mitigation	

Pregnancy and Maternity

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	There is no identified impact based on pregnancy and maternity and therefore the impact has been assessed as neutral. Relevant policies and procedures will be adhered to.
Mitigation	

Race

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	There is no identified impact based on race and therefore the impact has been assessed as neutral. Relevant policies and procedures will be adhered to.
Mitigation	

Religion or Belief

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	There is no identified impact based on religion or belief and therefore the impact has been assessed as neutral. Relevant policies and procedures will be adhered to.
Mitigation	

Sex

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	There is no identified impact based on sex and therefore the impact has been assessed as neutral. Relevant policies and procedures will be adhered to.
Mitigation	

Sexual Orientation

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	There is no identified impact based on sexual orientation and therefore the impact has been assessed as neutral. Relevant policies and procedures will be adhered to.
Mitigation	

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	There is no identified impact based on marriage and civil partnership and therefore the impact has been assessed as neutral. Relevant policies and procedures will be adhered to.
Mitigation	

Poverty

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	There is no identified impact based on marriage and civil partnership and therefore the impact has been assessed as neutral. Relevant policies and procedures will be adhered to.
Mitigation	

Rurality

Impact on public	Neutral
Impact on staff	Neutral
Rationale	There is no identified impact based on rurality and therefore the impact has been assessed as neutral. Relevant policies and procedures will be adhered to.
Mitigation	

Geographical Impact: All Hampshire

Equality Statement

Additional information:

This EIA accompanies an Executive Lead Member for Children's Services decision report on the 22 October 2026.

This EIA focusses on considering the potential impact of the proposed changes on the Public rather than Staff as there are no proposed changes to staff terms and conditions. Therefore, the impact has been assessed as neutral for Staff throughout.

A further EIA will be undertaken following the public consultation.

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: 01219

Date of production of EIA for publication: 25/08/2026