

Section 4

Equality

Analysis Toolkit

Sir Tom Finney Community High School

For Decision Making Items

January 2021

Question 1 - What is the nature of and are the key components of the proposal being presented?

The proposal relates to the expansion of Sir Tom Finney Community High School by increasing the number of places in the school from the current number of 173 to 245. Sir Tom Finney Community High School is a school for pupils with general learning difficulties aged between 11 and 19 years.

Question 2 - Scope of the Proposal

Is the proposal likely to affect people across the county in a similar way or are specific areas likely to be affected – e.g. are a set number of branches/sites to be affected?

The proposal may affect children and young people with special educational needs and their families who currently attend Sir Tom Finney Community High School as the proposal means there will be an increased number of pupils attending the school in the future.

Question 3 – Protected Characteristics Potentially Affected

Could the proposal have a particular impact on any group of individuals sharing protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, namely:

- Age
- Disability including Deaf people
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race/ethnicity/nationality
- Religion or belief
- Sex/gender
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage or Civil Partnership Status

And what information is available about these groups in the County's population or as service users/customers?

This proposal will have a particular impact on children and young people with disabilities and their families. Pupils will be within the age (younger people) protected characteristics group and are likely to meet the definition for the disability protected characteristics group.

78% of the people who completed the survey were female. 53% of respondents identified themselves as members of staff. It seems likely the impact on this group whether they are family members of members of staff will be greater.

Although the numbers completing the consultation were relatively low, all respondents identified as being White which may mean this ethnicity is over-represented amongst respondents than it is in the communities which the school will potentially serve.

Question 4 – Engagement/Consultation

How have people/groups been involved in or engaged with in developing this proposal?

This proposal is an element of the SEND Sufficiency Strategy. An overview of the consultation that has taken place in relation to this strategy is provided below.

13 separate consultations were undertaken between 15th October and 5th November 2019. These were as follows:

- 1 meeting with 6 young people who were representatives of the POWAR group
- 5 meetings with a total of 25 parents and carers at different locations across the county that were organised in collaboration with the Parent Carer Forum
- 7 meetings with a total of 52 headteachers at different locations across the county that were organised in collaboration with the Lancashire headteachers' associations

The information was also presented to Schools Forum at a meeting 17th October 2019 and the SEND Partnership Board on 14th November 2019.

- Further consultation was undertaken through an online survey between 6th July and 18th September 2020. Lancashire residents were made aware of this through notifications on Lancashire County Council website, Twitter and Facebook websites, the Local Offer website and Facebook page and via the Parent Carer Forum. Notification was provided in the SEND Partnership update in July 2020. In addition a letter was sent directly to each of the following stakeholders advising them of the consultation:
 - POWAR
 - Lancashire Parent Carer Forum chair
 - Governing bodies of maintained schools and maintained nursery Schools in Lancashire via the Schools Portal
 - Governing bodies, proprietors or principals of post-16 institutions in Lancashire
 - Providers of relevant early years education in Lancashire
 - Governing bodies of non-maintained special schools in Lancashire and those attended by Lancashire residents

- Proprietors of Academies in Lancashire via School Portal
- Advisory boards of children's centres in Lancashire via the Children, Family and Well-being Service who have responsibility for children's centres
- Youth offending team
- Local Members of Parliament
- Diocesan/Church Authorities
- The Regional Schools Commissioner
- Governing bodies, proprietors or principals of other schools and post-16 institutions in England and Wales that the authority thinks are or are likely to be attended by children or young people for whom it is responsible and children or young people in its area who have a disability

Consultation has also been undertaken in relation to this specific proposal to expand Sir Tom Finney Community High School. Informal consultation was carried out between 10 July and 8 September 2020. This included a public meeting on 15 July on the school site and an online survey between 10 July and 8 September.

The outcomes of the informal consultation were presented to Cabinet on 1 October 2020 and approval was given to undertake a formal consultation in relation to this proposal.

The formal consultation included an online survey between 11 December 2020 and 22 January 2021 on the Council's 'Have your say' website. Statutory notices were published in the Lancashire Evening Post on 11 December 2020 as well as in the online version of this local newspaper at the same time. A public consultation meeting was arranged for 7 January 2021. Originally arrangements had been made for this consultation to be held at Sir Tom Finney Community High School however these were later changed to online video conferencing meetings because of the COVID lockdown restrictions that were introduced in January 2021.

The majority of respondents to the consultation have supported the proposal and comments included that a greater number of special school places are needed locally, that there is space within the Sir Tom Finney Community High School to accommodate an increased number of pupils and that staff have the required skills to provide a

supportive and quality education and school experience for pupils. There were, however, a couple of concerns amongst comments from those who support the proposal about space for parking and the possible impact of building work at the site in terms of noise. A small number of respondents did not support the proposal.

Question 5 – Analysing Impact

Could this proposal potentially disadvantage particular groups sharing protected characteristics and if so which groups and in what way? This pays particular attention to the general aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty:

- To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation because of protected characteristics;
- To advance equality of opportunity for those who share protected characteristics;
- To encourage people who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life;
- To contribute to fostering good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not/community cohesion;

Elements of this proposal could disadvantage some children and young people with special educational needs and their families.

The proposal to expand Sir Tom Finney Community High School is likely to have an adverse effect on some pupils who currently attend the school, and their families. There may be some disruption to existing pupils' education while building works are carried out and this may also affect access to the school site for families who transport their children to school during the same time period.

There will be an increase in the number of pupils attending the school, however class size should not be affected and therefore the impact on

existing pupils will be limited after any modifications to the building have been completed.

It is anticipated that for many pupils and more widely for children and young people who may be able to access Sir Tom Finney Community High School if pupil numbers increase, the impact will be positive and their equality of opportunity will be advanced. Some consultation respondents referred to there not being sufficient school places for the numbers of pupils with special educational needs in Lancashire and one respondent stated that their child was struggling in mainstream education with individual support and could potentially have an enhanced school experience if they could attend a school where they could be in class alongside other pupils.

Some respondents also referred to the proposal potentially reducing the number of children and young people who need to attend out of county special school provision. Where it is possible for pupils to attend school closer to home and to remain at home and it is also the wish of the children and their parents and carers to do this, their ability to have links in their local community is likely to increase contributing both to advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between communities.

Question 6 –Combined/Cumulative Effect

Could the effects of this proposal combine with other factors or decisions taken at local or national level to exacerbate the impact on any groups?

Other factors and decisions that might have a combined and/or cumulative effect include the redesign of the short breaks offer that is currently underway. This is a service that is provided for children and young people with disabilities, many of whom will attend some of the specialist provision that is being considered as part of this proposal. The covid-19 pandemic has also affected the short breaks offer as it has not been possible to provide all of the short break activities and day time and overnight breaks that are usually available. It is also not possible to foresee how provision in schools and in relation to short

breaks will develop over time in the light of any changes that will need to be made in response to the pandemic.

Question 7 – Identifying Initial Results of Your Analysis

As a result of the analysis has the original proposal been changed/amended, if so please describe.

The proposal has not been changed or amended.

Question 8 - Mitigation

Will any steps be taken to mitigate/reduce any potential adverse effects of the proposal?

Steps will be taken to minimise the impact of the building work on existing pupils' education.

Question 9 – Balancing the Proposal/Countervailing Factors

This weighs up the reasons for the proposal – e.g. need for budget savings; damaging effects of not taking forward the proposal at this time – against the findings of the analysis.

The proposal is designed to have a positive overall impact on children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities as it reflects the overall objectives of the reforms that were introduced with the Children and Families Act 2014. Nationally there was 21.6% increase in demand for places in maintained special schools between 2015/16 and 2019/20; in Lancashire there was a 22.9% increase in demand over the same time period. Families seek placements in private and independent special schools where these are not available within the maintained sector. This increases the demand on high needs block funding because for the main part special school places within the private and independent sector are more expensive. This proposal will increase the number of special school places available to

children and young people within the south area of the county and support a more efficient use of the resources available to children and young people with special educational needs.

In addition, the improved facilities and additional space that would be afforded by the relocation to the new site is likely to have a positive effect on the quality of teaching and learning for young people who attend the school.

There may be some disruption while any building works are carried out however this will only be for a time limited period. The number of pupils attending the school will increase although class size should not be affected.

Question 10 – Final Proposal

In summary, what is the final proposal and which groups may be affected and how?

The proposal remains to expand Sir Tom Finney Community High School by adapting the upper floor that is not used currently to create additional classrooms and teaching space.

This proposal will enable the council to fulfil its statutory duties in relation to making the provision needed for a greater number of children and young people with special educational needs in the south area of the county.

It is likely that children and young people with special educational needs who attend the school currently will be affected during the time building work is being undertaken.

Question 11 – Review and Monitoring Arrangements

What arrangements will be put in place to review and monitor the effects of this proposal?

The local authority is required to review the special educational provision and across the local area for children and young people who

have special educational needs or disabilities as part of its statutory duties. This can only be achieved by monitoring the changing needs of the local population of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities and making sure the outcomes in education, health and care are being improved as a result of the provision being made. This is one of the primary functions of the SEND Partnership Board, which is a multi-agency group with representatives from across the local area including young people, parents and carers as well as commissioners and providers of education, health and care services. The SEND Partnership Board meets every two months. It is led by senior post holders from within the council and NHS, including the Executive Director of Education and Children's Service and the Joint Chief Officer within the NHS and reports directly to the Health and Wellbeing Board.

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Position/Role Head of Service Inclusion/Equality & Cohesion Manager

Equality Analysis Endorsed by Line Manager and/or Service Head

Decision Signed Off By

Cabinet Member or Director

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