

# Equality Analysis Toolkit

Applebee Wood Community Specialist School  
For Decision Making Items

August 2023

Appendix 'B'



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

The proposal relates to the expansion of Applebee Wood Community Specialist School to create two additional classes, in accommodation built and funded by school and located on the school site. Applebee Wood Community Specialist School is a special school for pupils with generic learning difficulties, catering for pupils aged 4-16. This will increase the number of special school places at Applebee Wood Community Specialist School from 147 to 167.

### **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 who currently attend Applebee Wood Community Specialist School as there would be an increased number of children and young people attending the school.

### **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.

87% of respondents identified as being white which may mean this ethnicity is over-represented amongst respondents in comparison with the communities which the schools 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 2019 to 2024. Final approval for this strategy was provided by Cabinet in October 2020 following a public consultation during the summer of that year. 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. 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, proprietors and principals of a range of educational providers including pre-school, school age and post-sixteen settings
- 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

The information relating to SEND provision, presented as part of this public consultation, was updated in May 2021. The updated information was shared with various stakeholders, including families and a range of education providers during a series of meetings that took place during the summer term 2021 and which included Local Area Partnership, head teacher update and Schools' Forum meetings.

An informal consultation was undertaken between 17 March 2023 and 29 April 2023, this included an online survey between those dates on the Council's 'Have your say' website and a public consultation meeting held on 18 April 2023.

The outcomes of the informal consultation were considered by the Executive Director of Education and Children's Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills and in May 2023 approval was given to undertake the formal consultation required to make the prescribed alteration/significant change to the school, that is to expand the school to create two additional classes to provide a further 20 places.

The formal consultation was undertaken between 19 June 2023 and 17 July 2023 and included an online survey on the Council's 'Have your say' website. Statutory notices were published in the Lancashire Evening Post on 19 June 2023 and a public consultation meeting was held on 12 July 2023 in school. A member of staff from Lancashire County Council attended.

The majority of the respondents strongly agreed with the proposal, comments included Applebee Wood Community Specialist School being a good school with excellent staff and the need for additional special school places. One respondent

neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposal and commented they would like the school to have a sixth form, one respondent strongly disagreed with the proposal and commented negatively about school.

### **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;

It is anticipated that for many pupils and more widely for children and young people who are able to access the Applebee Wood Community Specialist School provision, if this is approved, will have a positive impact and their equality of opportunity will be advanced. Some consultation respondents referred to there being insufficient specialist provision for the numbers of pupils with special educational needs in Lancashire. If this proposal is approved the ability for the children and young people 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?

Procedures will continue to be monitored and revised as appropriate to ensure best practice.

### **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.

Steps will be taken to minimise any disruption due to any increase in traffic.

### **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. Both nationally and in Lancashire there continues to be an increase in demand for places in maintained special schools. In addition, there are currently fewer SEN unit places in Lancashire in comparison with other authorities in England if they were the same size.

Families seek placements in private and independent special schools where specialist provision is 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 places available to children and young people within the south area of the county. It will support a more efficient use of the resources available to children and young people with special educational needs.

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 establish two additional classes on the school site at Applebee Wood Community Specialist School through building work funded by school.

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.

### **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 Inclusion Policy & Practice Development Officer/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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