

Initial Equality Impact Assessment

Directorate	Service	Person responsible for the assessment:	Date assessment completed:
Children's Services	Property and Technology Management	Project Co-ordinator	August 2011
Title of the policy being assessed	The review of Special School provision in Lincoln including the closure of Queen's Park School		
The status of the policy	New Decision		
1.) What are the aims, objectives and purpose of the policy?	To decide whether to close Queen's Park School and the consequent expansion and amended age range at St Christopher's School as part of the process of ensuring appropriate provision in Lincoln for pupils with more complex learning difficulties and also assuring value for money.		
2.) Does the policy support other objectives of the Council?	The Decision supports: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and Young People's Plan • Value For Money Principles • The Sustainable Communities Strategy • SEN Strategy 2011 		
3.) Who is intended to benefit from the policy, and in what way?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and young people, their parents and carers – through assurance that their educational needs are considered and they are provided with an adequate level of provision. • The Council – through aiming to retain skilled and experienced staff, ensuring value for money and that community needs are met. 		

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4.) What outcomes are anticipated from the policy being in place?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the educational needs of children and young people with complex learning difficulties in Lincoln will be met with the best possible provision. • To maintain employment for staff within special schools. • The council will have assessed and ensured value for money. • The proposal will ensure an appropriate number of special school places in Lincoln and a sustainable solution for special school education will be provided. 		
5.) Who are the main stakeholders of this policy?	Community	Staff	Partners
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and young people, their families and carers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant children's services workforce • School staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Improvement Service • HR
6.) Are there any concerns that the policy <i>could</i> have a negative impact with regard to race and ethnicity?	No	There are no concerns that the impact of the decision will have a negative impact on race with respect to staff or pupils.	
What evidence (actual data or assumptions) do you have to support this?	Children currently at the school will be guaranteed a place at either St Francis School or St Christopher's School which will both have a similar ethnic composition and therefore there will be no negative impact. All staff members are employed by the County Council and it is expected that they will have the opportunity to continue their employment under their existing contracts at one of the receiving schools. This transfer would take place regardless of their ethnicity therefore there will be no negative impact.		
7.) Are there any concerns that the policy <i>could</i> have a negative impact with regard to gender?	No	There are no concerns that there could be a negative impact with regard to gender for either staff or pupils.	

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What evidence (actual data or assumptions) do you have to support this?	Children will be offered a place regardless of gender at either St Francis School or St Christopher's School or a placement at a DSU which will have a similar gender composition to Queen's Park and therefore there will be no negative impact. All staff members are employed by the County Council and it is expected that they will have the opportunity to continue their employment under their existing contracts at one of the receiving schools. This transfer would take place regardless of their gender therefore there will be no negative impact.	
8.) Are there any concerns that the policy <i>could</i> have a negative impact with regard to disability?	(a) Yes	There are concerns that, because of their more complex needs arising out of their disabilities, many of the pupils who are currently on roll at Queen's Park School will suffer distress because of the proposal to close Queen's Park School and will not be able to cope as well as able bodied persons to a change of school.
(b) No	There are no concerns that there could be a negative impact with regard to disability for staff.	
What evidence (actual data or assumptions) do you have to support this?	8(a) Opinions expressed in written responses to the consultation process	
What evidence (actual data or assumptions) do you have to support this?	8(b) All staff members are employed by the County Council and it is expected that they will have the opportunity to continue their employment under their existing contracts at one of the receiving schools. This transfer would take place regardless of any disability and therefore there will be no negative impact.	
9.) Are there any concerns that the policy <i>could</i> have a negative impact with regard to age?	No	There are no concerns that there could be a negative impact with regard to age for either staff or pupils.
What evidence (actual data or assumptions) do you have to support this?	All staff members are employed by the County Council and it is expected that they will have the opportunity to continue their employment under their existing contracts at one of the receiving schools. This transfer would take place regardless of age and therefore there will be no negative impact. In addition children will continue to have a place at an appropriate school where their needs can be met regardless of age.	

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10.) Are there any concerns that the policy <i>could</i> have a negative impact with regard to religion/belief?	No	There are no concerns that this proposal could have a negative impact on religion and belief.
What evidence (actual data or assumptions) do you have to support this?	There will be no impact on the number of denominational school places provided for children in the area. All staff members are employed by the County Council and it is expected that they will have the opportunity to continue their employment under their existing contracts at one of the receiving schools. This transfer would take place regardless of religion or belief and therefore there will be no negative impact.	
11.) Are there any concerns that the policy <i>could</i> have a negative impact with regard to sexual orientation?	No	There are no concerns that the policy will have a negative impact on sexual orientation.
What evidence (actual data or assumptions) do you have to support this?	The sexual orientation of staff is not considered to have any impact on the redeployment or retirement process.	
12.) Could the negative impact you have identified in questions 6-11 lead to the potential for <i>adverse</i> impact if the policy is implemented?	Yes	This proposal does result in the closure of a highly successful special school but will not result in a loss of school places for children and young people with complex special educational needs or the loss of staff expertise. It will form part of an integrated approach to provision in the city making best use of the facilities available at the St Christopher's and St Francis Schools and later with opportunities being developed at the two academies through the DSU Provision. The LA fully understands the difficulties involved in the move to another school but believes that in the long term the proposal will enable children and young people who currently attend Queen's Park school to access provision that is better able to accommodate their physical, medical, sensory emotional and behavioural needs both now and in the future. Also, the proposal involves only one change for the pupils – any other proposal would involve <u>more</u> changes

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Can this adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group? Or any other reason?	Yes	The LA fully understands the difficulties involved in the move to another school but believes that in the long term the proposal will enable children and young people who currently attend Queen's Park school to access provision that is better able to accommodate their physical, medical, sensory emotional and behavioural needs both now and in the future and will further improve the opportunities available to achieve their potential at school and prepare for adulthood.	
Can the impact be mitigated by existing means?	Yes	A significant number of the current pupils at Queen's Park School will be able to complete their education there as the school will not formally close until August 2013 although it is anticipated that all pupils will have transferred by April 2013. For those children and young people who do have to move, the management of this transfer of will be undertaken with sensitivity and patience over a sensible period of time to ensure a successful move.	
If yes, what actions will you undertake to mitigate these impacts and revise the policy?	See answer above		
13.) As a result of your assessment, and any actions undertaken, should the policy proceed to a partial impact assessment?	No	If yes, the date of completion for the partial assessment	

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<p><i>Has this assessment been undertaken by a minimum of two staff?</i></p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p><i>Has this assessment been scrutinised by your Directorate Steering Group?</i></p>	<p>No</p>
<p><i>If the policy is new, or requires a decision by Councillors to revise, has this Equality Impact Assessment been included with the report?</i></p>			<p>Yes</p>
<p><i>Have any actions identified in this assessment been included in your service equality and diversity action plan?</i></p>			<p>No</p>
<p><i>Completed by:</i></p>	<p><i>Linda Duffield Matt Clayton</i></p>	<p><i>Signed off by:</i></p>	<p><i>Paul Holmes</i></p>