

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) form: the initial impact assessment

1. Process and guidance

The purpose of an EqIA is to make sure that the council is meeting the needs of all our residents by ensuring we consider how different groups of people may be affected by or experience a proposal in different ways. EqIAs help us to meet our [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) and where applicable the [Armed Forces Duty](#)

The council has a two stage EqIA process:

- Stage 1 - the initial impact assessment
- Stage 2 - the full impact assessment.

This form is for use at Stage 1 of the process. This must be completed when undertaking a project, policy change, or service change. It can form part of a business case for change and must be completed and attached to a Project Initiation Document. The findings of the initial impact assessment will determine whether a full impact assessment is needed.

Guidance and tools for council officers can be accessed on the council's [Tackling Inequality Together](#) intranet pages.

Date started:	10/09/2025	
Completed by:	Piers Brunning	
Service:	Childrens Services	
Project or policy EqIA relates to:	Wokingham Borough School Organisation Plan 2025-2030	
Date EqIA discussed at service team meeting:		

Conclusion (is a full assessment needed?):	No	
Signed off by (AD):		
Sign off date:		

2. Summary of the policy, project, or service

This section should be used to summarise the project, policy, or service change (the proposal).

What is the purpose of the proposal, what are the aims and expected outcomes, and how does it relate to service plans and the corporate plan?

The Wokingham Borough School Organisation Plan 2025-29 is intended to ensure there are sufficient school and other education places for children and young people in the borough until 2030.

The planned outcome is that there will be sufficient school places to meet local school place needs.

The strategy relates to the Transitional Corporate Plan objectives relating to “Enriching Lives”, in particular to the proposals to “Provide sufficient school places and more help for children with special educational needs”.

How will the proposal be delivered, what governance arrangements are in place and who are the key internal stakeholders?

The proposals will be delivered through multi-disciplinary teams, working cross-council and in partnership with schools and academy trusts.

Governance will be through an Education Sufficiency Board and Education Capital Programme Board, under the overall control of the Director of Children’s Services and the Executive Director of Childrens Adults and Health.

Who will be affected by the proposal? Think about who it is aimed at and who will deliver it.

The key beneficiaries will be Wokingham Borough children and young people aged 0 to 18 requiring early years and school places in the borough.

Other groups likely to be affected by the strategy include parents and carers of Wokingham Borough resident children, wider family members and people employed in schools.

3. Data & Protected Characteristics

This section should be used to set out what data you have gathered to support the initial impact assessment.

The table below sets out the equality groups that need to be considered in the impact assessment. These comprise the nine protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010 and other priority areas defined by the council.

Age	Armed Forces Communities	Care Experienced People	Disability
Gender Reassignment	Marriage and Civil Partnership	Pregnancy/Maternity	Religious belief
Race	Sex	Sexual Orientation	Socio-economic disadvantage

The Armed Forces Act 2021 requires consideration of the [impact on Armed Forces Communities](#) when exercising certain housing, education or healthcare functions (excluding social care). Further guidance can be found [here](#).

What data and information will be used to help assess the impact of the proposal on different groups of people? A list of useful resources is available for officers on the Council's Tackling Inequality Together intranet pages.

The impact assessment takes account of the known characteristics of children and their families who are likely to require mainstream school places in the borough. Data about the school population is collected from a number of sources, not least the termly school census returns, as summarised in the annual DfE publication “Schools, pupils and the characteristics”. The strategy is only concerned with part of the process of making changes to education provision in the borough, so important aspects of the proposed changes are outside scope. This is of particular importance because this exclusion applies to the management of schools, who would be responsible for the delivery of education and other services to pupils, matters that are important to equality impacts.

4. Assessing & Scoring Impact

This section should be used to assess the likely impact on each equality group, consider how significant any impacts could be and explain how the data gathered supports the conclusions made.

Scoring impact for equality groups	
Positive impact	The proposal promotes equality of opportunity by meeting needs or addressing existing barriers to participation and/or promotes good community relations
Neutral or no impact	The proposal has no impact or no disproportionate impact.
Low negative	The proposal is likely to negatively impact a small number of people, be of short duration and can easily be resolved.
High negative	The proposal is likely to have a significant negative impact on many people or a severe impact on a smaller number of people.

Referring to the Scoring table above, please give an impact score for each group, explain what the likely impact will be, and briefly set out how the data supports this conclusion.

Equality group	Impact score	Impact and supporting data
Age	Positive	The proposals relate to education provision for children and young people (age 0 to 19) and intend to ensure high quality local school place provision is available to them.
Disability	Positive	New specialist provision of direct benefit to children and young people with Special Education Needs and Disabilities is proposed. All new provision will be inclusive in design, with level access, good acoustics and lighting and appropriate hygiene facilities.
Gender reassignment	Neutral	As all schools should act in accordance with national guidance, the impact of this strategy will be neutral.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Neutral	No impact has been identified.
Pregnancy/Maternity	Neutral	No significant impact has been identified.
Religious belief	Neutral	No significant impact has been identified.
Race	Neutral	No significant impact has been identified.
Sex	Neutral	No significant impact has been identified.
Sexual Orientation	Neutral	As all schools should act in accordance with national guidance, the impact of this strategy will be neutral.
Socio-economic disadvantage	Positive	Ensuring local provision of school places will reduce financial burdens on families, connected to travel to school, which would have the greatest impact on families with some level of socio-economic disadvantage. Children with significant levels of socio-economic disadvantage (being eligible for free school meals) have additional but not automatic rights to free transport to school.
Armed Forces Communities	Neutral	No significant impact has been identified.
Care Experienced People	Neutral	No significant impact has been identified.

5. Conclusion and next steps.

In respect of all categories of 'equality groups', a positive or neutral impact has been identified. As such, a full assessment is not required in this instance. The impact of any changes that are implemented as a function of the implementation of the Strategy will be monitored, with input from key partners and service-users, so as to ensure that no negative impacts materialise (or are mitigated, if they do).