

Equality Impact and Needs Assessment Form



A) Description	
	Name of service, function, policy (or other) being assessed
	School Admissions
	Directorate or organisation responsible (and service, if it is a policy)
	Education and Learning, Children’s Services
	Date of assessment (DD/MM/YY)
	2.1.2023
	Date next assessment due (3 years)
	2.1.2026 (or on any further change to the policy)
	Names and/or job titles of people carrying out the assessment
	Andrew Brent, Senior Policy Officer (Education)
	Accountable person (e.g. Head of Service)
	Simon Niles, Children’s Services Strategic Manager
	Date EINA Form approved by accountable person (e.g. Head of Service)
1.	<p>What are the aims or main purpose of the service, function or policy? What does it provide and how does it provide it?</p> <p>Devon County Council aims to assist parents seeking places in maintained schools by operating policies and protocols which comply with relevant legislation and are consistent, fair and transparent. The policies combine to provide a framework for admission according to the different needs and circumstances of children.</p> <p>The Admissions Team provides an objective and informed service to parents, schools and other local government officers. It operates the policies and protocols which are determined by the Council and seeks to monitor their effectiveness.</p> <p>The service seeks to determine pupil admission arrangements which maximise parental preference and promote social equity and community cohesion.</p>

	The Admissions Policy sets out the procedures for ensuring that parents and learners are able to access statutory mainstream education aligned to national policy/code.
2.	Location or any other relevant information
	Current policies and protocols are held on the School Admissions Arrangements website (www.devon.gov.uk/admissionarrangements) and can be accessed via webpages such as the determined admission arrangements and admissions. All admissions policies of the LA are published at http://devon.cc/lapolicies and, for individual schools at http://devon.cc/schoolpolicy
3.	List any key policies or procedures to be reviewed as part of this assessment.
	Co-ordinated In-Year Admissions Scheme Co-ordinated Normal Round Admissions Scheme In-Year Fair Access Protocol Individual admissions policies for mainstream state-funded schools in Devon
4.	Who is intended to benefit from the service, function or policy?
	Devon-resident children and their parents/carers, children living outside of the Devon County Council area who attend schools within Devon and their parents/carers; schools, stakeholders and local authority officers.
5.	Who are the stakeholders? What is their interest?
	The stakeholders are: Parents and carers – interested in their children receiving appropriate education, according to their preferences wherever that is achievable; Schools – interested in enabling children to apply for and register with them; Local diocese officers – enabling children to be admitted to particular schools on faith grounds; Local authority officers – clear procedures to enable applications to be submitted, processed and resolved; including reference to the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller and wider BME communities. School Organisation, Capital and Admissions Group – monitoring the fairness and legality of the scheme; Devon Schools Leadership Service, Devon Association of Governors – interested in the efficient working of admission arrangements for their schools and pupils.
6.	Are there any concerns at this stage which indicate the possibility of inequalities/negative impacts? For example: complaints, comments, research, outcomes of a scrutiny review. Please describe:
	While the number of school places in an academic year is largely finite, there will continue to be a number of schools under-subscribed and others which are over-subscribed. Some parents will wish

	to appeal against a decision to refuse an application. Care must be taken to retain public confidence that the policies are as fair as possible and do not result in disproportionate numbers of refusals for particular groups of children or a disproportionate number of challenging children in schools
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B) Relevance – Note: if not relevant, do not complete this form

Select all that apply:			Scale of relevance	
7.	Service or function that people use.	Yes	Low	
8.	Discretion is exercised, or potential for people to experience different outcomes or level of satisfaction.	Yes	Medium	Section C applies
9.	Employment policy – where discretion is not exercised.		Medium	
10.	Employment policy – where discretion is exercised (e.g. recruitment or disciplinary process).		High	Sections C & E apply
11.	Concerns at a local, regional or national level of discrimination/inequalities.	Yes	High	
12.	Major change such as the closure, removal or transfer of a service/provision.		High	
13.	Community and regeneration strategies, local area agreements and organisational or directorate/partnership strategies/plans.		High	

Other:

State why it is relevant:

How relevant (high, medium or low?):

Mark 'X' to confirm which strands are relevant to the review:

Age	X	Disability	X
Gender (men and women)	X	Race/ethnicity	X
Trans-gender	X	Religion/belief	X
Sexual orientation	X	Other (state below)	

Any other (such as Human Rights, people on low incomes and specific sub-strands requiring particular focus such as Travellers and Gypsies, Deaf people):

The Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities

Children from split families.	
C) Information	
14.	What information (monitoring or consultation data) have you got and what is it telling you? <i>Required where relevance is Medium or High.</i>
	Customer response surveys are intended to analyse the outcomes for service users: is any group in the community disproportionately represented among those refused a school place? What levels of satisfaction with the service are demonstrated across different communities, irrespective of the service outcome? How do service users feel about the admissions process?
D) Assessment	
15.	Describe any NEGATIVE impacts (actual or potential):
Gender	<p>Is the service easier to access for either gender? Non-resident parents – often Fathers - their child may feel disenfranchised from the Admissions process. The information process does not take into account whether a child lives with one or both parents. Literature is sent to the child’s registered address unless there is a specific request for it to be sent to an additional address.</p> <p>Children who are transgender may feel their circumstances are not acknowledged in the Admissions process when seeking admission to single-sex schools outside Devon.</p> <p>Children or their parents may feel alienated by the use of gender-specific or limiting questions in applications.</p>
Race/ethnic origin	<p>Parents and carers for whom English is a second language or without any knowledge of the English language may have difficulty in accessing information about Admissions.</p> <p>Parents and carers may not feel that the service is operated by or for their community representatives. Cultural norms for some communities may combine with other issues to make access to Admissions services more difficult.</p>
Disability	<p>Parents and carers with visual impairment may have difficulty accessing information.</p> <p>Children or parents and carers with mobility challenges may feel it is more difficult to access maintained education establishments.</p> <p>People with learning disabilities may find it difficult to access information or to communicate with staff.</p>

		Parents with learning disabilities may find it difficult to complete application and supplementary information forms, including those available as hard copies only.
	Sexual orientation	People who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender may feel that the language used is not inclusive and they are thereby less comfortable accessing it.
	Age	<p>While the large majority of service users are aged below 50, older parents and carers may feel isolated by use of language and assumptions regarding the relationship with the child.</p> <p>The needs of service users of working age may be ignored through the provision of Admissions meetings and open days which are at an inconvenient time.</p> <p>Access to education is limited to people within a set age range. Devon does not offer admission to maintained schools to adults nor manage admissions post 16.</p>
	Religion or belief	<p>Does the provision of the service and choice of school in Devon reflect the needs and preferences of members of different religious faiths? There are no maintained schools serving the Muslim, Hindu or Jewish faiths for example.</p> <p>Do families with a preference for “non-faith” schools feel their wishes are ignored in areas where the number of non-faith schools is limited?</p> <p>Do admission arrangements impose unfair admissions criteria on children of faiths other than Christian?</p>
	Other socio-economic factors	<p>Is the means of presentation of information socially divisive – do those people without internet access have reasonable options to access information? Are groups such as ex-offenders or unemployed people disadvantaged by the practices of the service? Is there a fair distribution of resources across areas of Devon?</p> <p>Are there schools in all areas that are rated Good or Outstanding by Ofsted or have a positive perception by their local and wider communities?</p> <p>Following guidance from the Department for Education, priority for siblings of children will be limited to children living in the same household as a single family unit. Do economic considerations prevent access to education, particularly in more rural areas of Devon?</p>

	Human rights	Does this service impact on freedom of expression, thought or belief? Does it respect the right to privacy and family life?
16.	Describe any POSITIVE impacts:	
	Gender	<p>The service makes no distinction between gender, either for applicants or children. All Devon state-funded schools are co-educational.</p> <p>To support non-resident parents in the application process, Admissions contacts them whenever there is a possibility that there is disagreement between parents. This allows non-resident parents the opportunity to provide court orders or to seek them with regard to Child Arrangements.</p> <p>To support transgender applicants, information is provided to encourage applications to a person's preferred school and for discussion with the relevant admissions authority regarding gender identity.</p> <p>There is no impact on the admissions decision for Devon's co-education schools support would be provided for families seeking admission to a single-sex school in another LA area.</p>
	Race/ethnic origin	<p>The oversubscription criteria enable children to seek admission to schools away from the home local area. Where an area is home to a greater proportion of children from a minority ethnic group, the service facilitates greater integration at other establishments.</p> <p>No interviews are allowed in the admissions process, reducing the risk that a member of the black or minority ethnic communities may feel their outcome was adversely affected.</p> <p>Composite prospectuses contain a statement translated into main community languages explaining that additional support is available in other languages.</p> <p>The 11+ selection tests for entry to the county's selective school comply with the Admissions Code in being flexible to parents and carers needs. This would include a facility for a test on a Saturday or Sunday to take account of religious observances.</p>

	Applications do not ask for a child's nationality, immigration status or whether the child is in this country at the point of application. All applications are considered in the same way.
Disability	<p>Information is available through the Devon Parent Partnership for those with visual impairment or where the person is unable to attend at school open days.</p> <p>All schools seek to enable access to people with physical disabilities and mobility challenges. Reasonable measures must be put in place to meet individual need so that children with disabilities are treated no less favourably than other children.</p> <p>Where a parent seeks additional priority for admission to a specific school on his or her own exceptional needs, this can be taken into account for admissions.</p>
Sexual orientation	Applications for school places are welcomed from any person holding parental responsibility for the child. Language used seeks not to make express assumptions regarding gender or sexual orientation.
Age	Applications for school places are welcomed from any person holding parental responsibility for the child. Language used seeks not to make express assumptions regarding a person's age or relationship to the child. Devon offers information regarding the provision of adult education services.
Religion or belief	<p>Applications for school places are welcomed from any person holding parental responsibility for the child. Language used seeks not to make express assumptions regarding a person's religion or belief. Information is available online every day. Hard copy and access to advice from the Admissions Team is not restricted to days which may preclude contact from observers of any religion.</p> <p>Devon offers a range of schools for those of no faith or Christian faith.</p> <p>Faith schools have removed priority for children of other faiths as this imposed inequitable criteria to establish membership of a faith / that a person practices the faith.</p>
Other socio-economic factors	The Admissions Team and the schools are all free to the service user. No fee is charged and parents and carers are encouraged to make use of the schools themselves when submitting requests for school places.

		<p>The Fair Access Protocol is an admissions safety net that supports those children who face challenging circumstances and are vulnerable to being unable to access appropriate education in-year.</p> <p>Co-ordination schemes recognise the needs of children from the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.</p> <p>Following guidance from the Department for Education, priority for siblings of children will be for children living in the same household as a single family unit, regardless of the familial or other link.</p>
	Human rights	The service supports freedom of thought, belief and religion and respects the right to privacy and family life. No information is requested of parents and carers which is not compatible with the School Admissions Code.
17.	Provide any information about NEUTRAL impacts that have been identified (there is neither a positive or negative impact):	
	Gender	<p>Applications for school places are welcomed from any person holding parental responsibility for the child without reference to gender. Non-resident parents and carers may apply for a school place though this may conflict with the preference of a resident parent or carer.</p> <p>Applications for children who are transgender are encouraged for any preferred school, including single-sex schools in other Local Authority areas.</p>
	Race/ethnic origin	Applications for school places are welcomed from any person holding parental responsibility for the child without reference to race or ethnic origin.
	Disability	Applications for school places are welcomed from any person holding parental responsibility for the child without reference to disability. Information and access to it is provided in different formats on request.
	Sexual orientation	Applications for school places are welcomed from any person holding parental responsibility for the child without reference to sexual orientation.
	Age	Applications for school places are welcomed from any person holding parental responsibility for the child without reference to age.

	Religion or belief	Applications for school places are welcomed from any person holding parental responsibility for the child without reference to religion or belief.		
	Other socio-economic factors	<p>Applications for school places are welcomed from any person holding parental responsibility for the child without charge.</p> <p>Measurements from home to school are from a physical, readily identified point at the school (generally the centre of the main entrance). This will improve parental understanding and is not expected to advantage or disadvantage any particular group of applicants.</p>		
	Human rights	The Schools Admissions process does not breach any Human Rights.		
E) Consultation				
18.	Did you carry out any consultations? <i>Required where relevance is High.</i>			
	YES			
19.	Who was consulted? Include your findings in 15, 16 and 17 above.			
	<p>There is a formal, statutory consultation on the admission arrangements proposed within Devon. This takes place in the academic year before applications to schools are made. This consultation includes parents and the wider community, schools, faith groups and local authorities.</p> <p>Feedback from service user experiences inform policy decisions, in particular where complaints have been received.</p> <p>Comments are invited regarding every aspect of the arrangements detailed in this policy.</p>			
20.	Describe other research, studies or information used to assist with the assessment and include your findings above:			
	The arrangements for neighbouring local authorities are reviewed as a benchmarking exercise to identify good practice and to ensure that Devon residents are not unfairly or unlawfully treated when seeking admission to schools outside of the Devon County Council area. Guidance from the DfE is also consulted.			
F) Conclusions				
	Action/objective/target OR Justification	Resources required	Timescale	I/R/S/O
a)	The policy complies with legislation. It will be reviewed annually to ensure continued	Review by Senior Policy (Education)	Following determination	R

	compliance and fairness (as required under the School Admissions Code).		of policy annually	
b)	In order to improve access for those communities identified above, the School Admissions Team should review their publicity and publications to the public and within the County and its partners.	Review by School Admissions Team	ongoing	O
c)	Provide support and advice from Devon's Equality Officer and Ethnic Minority Achievement, the School Admissions Team to overcome accessibility issues.	Review by Equality Officer, Ethnic Minority Achievement, the School Admissions Team	ongoing	O
d)	Ensure that procedures for translation of the policy into other languages are in place.	Review by Ethnic Minority Achievement	ongoing	O
e)	Enable both parents to take part in the admissions process, whether together or estranged.	Policy specifically enabling.	In place	I
f)	Ensure language is not gender-specific or assumes any particular relationship or orientation.	Language used complies with this aim	In place	I
g)	Enable schools to be established by or in co-operation with other religious or belief groups	School Organisation and the Education and Skills Funding Agency allow for new schools to be established	In place	I
h)	Reduce the costs to be incurred by any parent seeking to access the admissions process by establishing freephone number and freepost address for enquiries to the Admissions Team.	Consider bid for resources by Children's Services Strategic Manager	Budget preparation round	O
i)	Monitor the normal round and in-year admissions processes to inform policy and practice. Also, to identify issues prompting in-year transfers and children moving to Elective Home Education and CME status.	Consider random and routine post admission parental surveys	Ongoing	O

(I) Taking immediate effect.

(R) Recommended to Council/Directors through a Committee or other Report*.

(S) Added to the Service Plan.

(O) Added to the Fair for All Programme (as an organisational improvement)**

Provide information in local community languages and undertake outreach work with the voluntary sector to provide information to key under represented communities. Provide some men only and women only sessions at leisure centres. Target recruitment publicity to better reach under-represented groups Introduce positive action schemes to encourage greater recruitment of underrepresented groups, including work placement schemes for school leavers. Consult with local people about how to make the services on offer more appealing to the diverse communities in the city, including those that are currently not taking up the services in sufficient numbers. Images used in local publicity may put off groups in the community, such as disabled people and people who are gay or lesbian. If groups are not represented in photographs and images used in publicity they may feel that the service is unlikely to respect or reflect their needs. Consider using different images in publicity to make it more representative of the community. The charging or membership policies may make it difficult for people on very low incomes to access services at all, even during off-peak times. Introduce substantial reductions for those on low incomes.