



Norfolk County Council

New Primary (Free) School in Silfield

Equality Impact Assessment – Findings and Recommendations

April 2023
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Equality impact assessments enable decision-makers to consider the impact of proposals on people with protected characteristics.

You can update an assessment at any time to inform service planning and commissioning. For help or information please contact equalities@norfolk.gov.uk

1. The proposal – New Primary (Free) School, Silfield, Norwich

- 1.1 Norfolk County Council is proposing to establish a new mainstream primary (free) school in Silfield near Wymondham, planned to open in September 2024.
- 1.2 Norfolk County Council has a statutory duty to secure sufficient schools across Norfolk and to work with the market to ensure sufficient childcare places to meet the demands of the population. The County Council publishes an annual snapshot of demand in the form of a Local Growth & Investment Plan (LGIP), which is available on [this link](#).
- 1.3 Where a Local Authority identifies the need for a new school in its area, it must seek proposals to establish a Free School (Section 6A of the Education & Inspections Act 2006).
- 1.4 The planning area of Wymondham has experienced significant population growth over many years and has seen the previous infant and junior schools serving the town reorganised to six form of entry all through primary phase to accommodate the additional places since 2015.
- 1.5 Through the growth of the 1500 new homes remaining to be built in Wymondham and the popularity of the area it is expected continued pressure will exist until the introduction of the new school in the Silfield area. The housing has secured Section 106 contributions and land for a new 2 FE primary school generating 420 places as a maximum.
- 1.6 Norfolk County Council expects a yield of 422 places from the development of 1500 homes and would want this new school to serve the development as a centre for the community.
- 1.7 Norfolk County Council's analysis demonstrates the demand for the new school based on the existing and future expected growth.
- 1.8 The site for the new school will come to the County Council free of charge from the developers. The new school will be designed and procured by Norfolk County Council and will then be transferred by the County Council on a 125 year lease, to the successful bidder.
- 1.9 This new Free School will be built to the standardised specification for Norfolk primary schools. The two storey school will be built to current DfE Building Bulletin 103 requirement for primary schools and will be a modern design, offering high quality facilities for the benefit of the new school and the wider community.

1.10 Admissions are determined by the admission authority but must prioritise local children and fully comply with the school admissions code. All proposers will be expected to follow the DfE School Admissions Code and the School Admission Appeals Code. Proposers will be required to participate in Norfolk County Council's co-ordinated scheme for admissions and the Council's in-year admissions procedure.

2. Legal context

- 2.1 Public authorities are required by the Equality Act 2010 to give due regard to equality when exercising public functions¹. This is called the 'Public Sector Equality Duty'.
- 2.2 The purpose of an equality impact assessment is to consider the potential impact of a proposed change or issue on people with protected characteristics. (Appendix A)
- 2.3 If the assessment identifies any detrimental impact, this enables mitigating actions to be developed.
- 2.4 It is not always possible to adopt the course of action that will best promote the interests of people with protected characteristics. However, equality assessments enable informed decisions to be made that take every opportunity to minimise disadvantage.

3 Information about the people affected by the proposal

- 3.1 It is proposed that a new school will be established in Silfield, within the new housing development, from September 2024, offering local places for local children. The age range of the school will be from 4 – 11 years (Reception to year 6), eventually providing places for 420 pupils. The school will provide places for boys and girls (mixed). It is proposed to phase the provision of additional places to provide sufficient capacity without destabilising neighbouring schools
- 3.2 The proposed new school will provide additional school places that will primarily serve the surrounding areas of the new school site, and if necessary, the wider Silfield area. It is proposed that the new proposed school's catchment is based on the boundaries of Silfield.
- 3.3 As the housing development is not completed, only part of the new community currently exists. Therefore the following pupil profile information reflects the data of the existing pupils in the Wymondham Parish area.

Element	Category	Number	Percentage
Pupil Population (Spring 2023)	All pupils in NC1,NC2 & Yr R - 6	1376	N/A
	Yr 6 (for KS2) Summer 2022	192	N/A
Free School Meals (FSM)	FSM Eligible - YES	198	16.8%
	FSM Eligible - NO	1178	83.2%
Children in Care (CiC) <i>(numbers from Norfolk VS CiC Dashboard - w/e 14/04/2023)</i>	CiC cohort (Primary phase)	4	0.3%
Previously Looked After Children (PLAC)	N/A	N/A	N/A
	N/A	N/A	N/A
ETHNICITY - MAIN GROUP	BME	160	11.6%
	White British (WBRI)	1174	85.3%
	Information Not Yet Obtained	36	2.6%
	REFUSED (to say)	6	0.4%
Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND)	EHCP	26	1.9%
	SEN Support	148	10.8%
	No Recorded SEN / Blank	1202	87.4%
Key Stage 2 outcomes (2021/22 AcYr) DfE Validated data	RWM expected	125	65.1% (Norfolk 50%)
	Reading Expected	155	80.7% (Norfolk 70%)
	Writing Expected	142	74% (Norfolk 60%)
	Maths Expected	148	77.1% (Norfolk 65%)

Above based on pupils at schools in Wymondham Parish* from Spring 2023 Census unless indicated otherwise.

* Ashleigh Primary and Nursery School; Browick Road Primary and Nursery School; Robert Kett Primary School

3.4 There are no other schools within a 3 mile radius of this school

3.5 Early years; There will not be nursery provision due to the constraints of the site. The Silfield area has one “forest” preschool in the immediate area. In addition, within a 5 – 10 miles radius there is 1 maintained nursery, 2 full day care, 7 preschools, and 11 childminders. With the recent government announcement, it is anticipated that additional early years places will be needed in the coming years.

4 Potential impact

- 4.1 Based on the evidence available, this proposal is likely to have a positive impact on children aged 4 – 11 years old, providing local places for local children, which meets the County Council’s policy. The additional school will extend the range of preferences available for parents/carers.
- 4.2 The new school will **not** have a negative impact on public or service users and that no particular groups of people or current local schools will be adversely affected by the new school.
- 4.3 However, should the new school opening be delayed, from September 2024, then there is significant risk that;
- children will be without school places in the local area,
 - longer journeys will be made to an alternative school with spaces
 - the number of parental preference cases not being satisfied will increase.
- 4.4 The school will be expected to be fully inclusive and to provide education children with special educational needs and/or disability where mainstream education is considered appropriate.
- 4.5 Please find below detailed analysis of the impact on people with protected characteristics and identifies action to mitigate, were possible.

Protected characteristic	Impact; positive, detrimental, disproportionate or negative	What mitigation can be in place?
Age	<p>This proposal will provide additional primary phase places for the relevant aged children required.</p> <p>The school will phase the provision of additional places to provide sufficient capacity without destabilising neighbouring schools.</p> <p>There is no negative age-related impact.</p>	<p>Pupil numbers and age ranges will be monitored to inform whether or not the number of places available reflects the need.</p>
Disability	<p>The school will be designed to current DfE Building Bulletin 103 requirement for primary schools and will be a modern design, offering high quality facilities.</p> <p>The school will be fully inclusive and meet the needs of children in the local area, including those with Special Education Needs and/or Disability (SEND).</p> <p>It is not anticipated there the proposal will affect people disproportionately due to issues of disability.</p>	<p>Once an academy sponsor has been confirmed, we will work with the Trust staff to ensure that any issues identified for pupils, staff or visitors can be addressed.</p>

People with a long-term health condition	It is not anticipated that the proposal will affect people disproportionately because of long term health conditions.	No mitigation is currently required but the position will continue to be monitored and if any issues in respect of this protected characteristic are identified then the Action Plan will be amended accordingly.
Gender reassignment	It is not currently anticipated that the proposal will affect people disproportionately, because of issues around gender reassignment.	No mitigation is currently required but the position will continue to be monitored and if any issues in respect of this protected characteristic are identified then the Action Plan will be amended accordingly.
Marriage/civil partnerships	It is not currently anticipated that the proposal will affect people disproportionately, because of issues around marriage and civil partnership.	No mitigation is currently required but the position will continue to be monitored and if any issues in respect of this protected characteristic are identified then the Action Plan will be amended accordingly.
Pregnancy and Maternity	It is not currently anticipated that the proposal will affect people disproportionately, because of issues around pregnancy and maternity	No mitigation is currently required but the position will continue to be monitored and if any issues in respect of this protected characteristic are identified then the Action Plan will be amended accordingly.
Race	The school will be required to accept all children regardless of race or ethnicity and therefore will have a positive impact on this characteristic.	No mitigation is currently required but the position will continue to be monitored and if any issues in respect of this protected characteristic are identified then the Action Plan will be amended accordingly.
Religious/belief	The school is not being proposed as a religious school and therefore has a positive impact on this characteristic, as it will cater for children of all religions and be inclusive of all faiths.	The Regional Director may decide that this school should be sponsored by an Academy Trust with a particular religious focus, which could have a potential to impact on school admissions and whether to admit a children based on religion or belief. However assurances would be sought during the application and assessment process, on how the Trust would cater for all religions, as the school should be inclusive of all faiths, in order to serve the new community the school is located in.
Sex	The proposal will have a positive impact on this characteristic, as the school will be for both male and female pupils.	No mitigation is currently required but the position will continue to be monitored and if any issues in respect of this protected characteristic are identified then the Action Plan will be amended accordingly.
Sexual orientation	It is not currently anticipated that the proposal will affect people disproportionately, because of issues around sexual orientation.	No mitigation is currently required but the position will continue to be monitored and if any issues in respect of this protected characteristic are

		identified then the Action Plan will be amended accordingly.
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5 Recommended actions

If your assessment has identified any detrimental impacts, set out here any actions that will help to mitigate them.


Number	Action	Lead	Date
1.	Monitor pupil places	Place Planning	ongoing
2.	Work with trust sponsor, once appointed on accessibility issues	Capital	by Sept 24
3.	Delivery of new school on time, compliant with DfE Building Bulletin 103 requirement for primary schools	Capital	By Sept 24
4.	If the RD sponsors a Trust with a religious focus, to work with the trust, to ensure the school will be inclusive	Partnership Adviser	From Sept 22 – Sept 24

6 Evidence used to inform this assessment

Reference any other evidence your analysis has drawn upon:

- [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#)
- Demographic factors set out in [Norfolk’s Story 2021](#)
- [Digital Inclusion and COVID-19](#) equality impact assessments
- Norfolk County Council [Area Reports](#) on Norfolk’s JSNA relating to protected characteristics
- Business intelligence and management data, as quoted in this report
- Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty codes of practice

7 Further information

	<p>If you need this document in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact Caroline Money on schoolreview@norfolk.gov.uk</p>
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Appendix A – table of protected characteristics

The following table sets out details of each protected characteristic. Remember that people with multiple characteristics may face the most barriers:

Characteristic	Who this covers
Age	Adults and children etc, or specific/different age groups
Disability	<p>A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.</p> <p>This may include but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People with mobility issues (eg wheelchair or cane users, people of short stature, people who do not have mobility in a limb etc) • Blind and partially sighted people • People who are D/deaf or hearing impaired • People with learning disabilities • People who have mental health issues • People who identify as neurodiverse (this refers to neurological differences including, for example, dyspraxia, dyslexia, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, the autistic spectrum and others) • People with some long-term health conditions which meet the criteria of a disability.
People with a long-term health condition	People with long-term health conditions which meet the criteria of a disability.
Gender reassignment	<p>People who identify as transgender (defined as someone who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing, or has undergone a process or part of a process to reassign their sex. It is not necessary for the person to be under medical supervision or undergoing surgery).</p> <p>You may want to consider the needs of people who identify as non-binary (a spectrum of gender identities that are not exclusively masculine or feminine).</p>
Marriage/civil partnerships	People who are married or in a civil partnership. They may be of the opposite or same sex.
Pregnancy and maternity	Maternity refers to the period after birth and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination

Characteristic	Who this covers
	is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.
Race	<p>Race refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, or nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.</p> <p>A racial group can be made up of two or more distinct racial groups, for example a person may identify as Black British, British Asian, British Sikh, British Jew, Romany Gypsy or Irish Traveller.</p>
Religion/belief	Belief means any religious or philosophical belief or no belief. To be protected, a belief must satisfy various criteria, including that it is a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour. Denominations or sects within a religion can be considered a protected religion or religious belief.
Sex	This covers men and women. Also consider the needs of people who identify as intersex (people who have variations in sex characteristics) and non-binary (a spectrum of gender identities that are not exclusively masculine or feminine).
Sexual orientation	People who identify as straight/heterosexual, lesbian, gay or bisexual.

Document review

Reviewed and updated:	Reviewer
October and November 2016	Corporate Planning & Partnerships Manager
December 2017	Equality & Diversity Manager
October 2018	Equality & Diversity Manager
May and November 2019	Equality & Diversity Manager
May and November 2020	Equality & Diversity Manager
June and September 2021	Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

¹ The Act states that public bodies must pay due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic¹ and people who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

[The full Equality Act 2021 is available on legislation.gov.uk.](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)