



The Public Sector Equality Duty

The Equality Duty requires public bodies to have **due regard** to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

Protected Characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Marriage and Civil Partnership (elimination of discrimination only)
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

Due Regard means consciously thinking about the three aims of the Duty as part of the process of decision-making. For example:

- How they act as employers
- How they develop, evaluate and review policy
- How they design, deliver and evaluate services
- How they commission and procure from others

Advancing equality of opportunity involves considering the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people because of their protected characteristics
- Meet the needs of people with protected characteristics
- Encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is low

Fostering good relations involves tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people who share a protected characteristic and others.



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Complying with the Equality Duty may involve treating some people better than others, as far as this is allowed in discrimination law. This could mean making use of an exception or positive action provisions in order to provide a service in a way that is appropriate for people who share a protected characteristic.

Officers should:

Keep an adequate record showing that the equality duties and relevant questions have been actively considered.

Be rigorous in both inquiring and reporting to members the outcome of the assessment and the legal duties.

Final approval of a proposal, can only happen after the completion of an equality impact assessment. It is unlawful to adopt a proposal contingent on an equality impact assessment

Title of the Assessment:	Consultation on Admission Arrangements 2015/16	Date of Assessment:	28 August 2012
Responsible Officer	Name:	Lydia Braisher	Extension Number:
	Title:	Admissions Manager	
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			74769

Stage 1 - Setting out the nature of the proposal and potential outcomes.

Stage 1 – Aims and Objectives
<p>1.1 What are the objectives of the proposal under consideration?</p> <p>Central Bedfordshire Council’s consultation on admission arrangements for the academic year 2015/16, include the Council’s co-ordinated admissions scheme and the admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools where the Council is the admissions authority.</p> <p>The co-ordinated admissions scheme is the timetable which the Council in conjunction with academies and schools in the area will adhere to, in order to process applications received for the normal year of entry for those institutions. The Council is the co-ordinating authority for all academies and school and the scheme ensures that every child in Central Bedfordshire has a school place.</p> <p>Many of the admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools will remain unchanged, however the Council is proposing the following changes to some of its schools, as detailed below:</p>

GUIDANCE

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- 1) Amending the existing catchment areas for Hawthorn Park Primary, Houghton Regis Primary, Tithe Farm Primary and Thornhill Primary following the implementation of a two tier structure from a three tier structure in the Houghton Regis area.
- 2) The implementation of a catchment area for Greenleas Lower School – Sandhills site from September 2015 and a change to the admissions criteria for the school to prioritise applicants within the catchment area from the current criteria of straight line distance.
- 3) A change to the admission arrangements for St. Andrew’s Lower School, in Biggleswade due to the proposed expansion of the school over two sites, with the new site due to open in September 2015. The school would have two catchment areas for each of the sites.
- 4) Decreasing the published admission number at Watling Lower School from 45 to 30 from September 2015.

The School Admissions Code sets out the requirement for the Local Authority to have a co-ordinated admissions scheme for the area. This has to be formulated by 1 January in the year the admission arrangements are to be determined for the relevant academic year and has to be consulted on.

Central Bedfordshire Council is the admissions authority for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools and therefore is required to consult on any changes it proposed to the admissions arrangements.

Consultation on admission arrangements has to take place between the 1 November and the 1 March for a minimum of 8 weeks. The Council will consult between the 11 November and 20 January to fulfil this requirement.

1.2 Why is this being done?

The co-ordinated scheme is a necessary requirement for the Council to have in place to ensure

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that parental preference can be exercised when applying for a place in an intake year and that a child secures an offer of a school place at only one academy or school and offers can be co-ordinated with other local authorities where required. The co-ordinated scheme sets out the deadlines and timescales which are essential to meet this statutory obligation.

The proposed changes in admission arrangements for Hawthorn Park Primary, Houghton Regis Primary, Tithe Farm Primary and Thornhill Primary are in response to the change of age range across the Houghton Regis area which is now exclusively two tier.

The implementation of a catchment area for Greenleas Lower School – Kestrel Way in Leighton Buzzard has been proposed to harmonize the admission process for this new site which is an extension of Greenleas Lower School, Derwent Road and to complement the other admission arrangements in the Leighton Buzzard area which mainly prioritise pupils by catchment.

St. Andrew's Lower School, in Biggleswade is due to expand over two sites, with the new site due to open in September 2015. The proposed change is to provide the school with two catchment areas for each of the sites.

Watling Lower School in Dunstable currently operates one and a half forms of entry per year group and has a published admission number (PAN) of 45. The school would like to decrease the published admissions number to become a one form entry lower school with a PAN of 30 from September 2015, which will enable the school to organise classes more effectively without the inconsistency that is currently experienced as a result of fluctuations in the school's intake numbers.

1.3 What will be the impact on staff or customers?

The Local Authority has a statutory duty to ensure that admissions are co-ordinated in their area for all children being admitted into the normal year of entry and only one offer of a school place is made. The Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for the academic year 2015/16 fulfils this requirement, setting out the timeframes for processing admission applications.

The Local Authority is the admission authority for Community and Voluntary-Controlled schools. The proposed admissions criteria for all Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools for the

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Academic Year 2015/16 remain largely unchanged apart from:

- 1) Amending the catchment area from Lower to Primary for the following schools:
Hawthorn Park Primary, Houghton Regis Primary, Tithe Farm Primary, Thornhill Primary
- 2) Changes to the admissions criteria for:
 - Greenleas Lower School, Kestrel Way – Leighton Buzzard
 - St. Andrews Lower School, Biggleswade
- 3) A decrease to the published admissions number is proposed for:
 - Watling Lower School

1.4 How does this proposal contribute or relate to other Council initiatives?

The Council's admission arrangements and co-ordinated admissions scheme supports the Medium Term Plan priority to improve educational standards at key stage 4.

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<p>1.5 In which ways does the proposal support Central Bedfordshire’s legal duty to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate unlawful discrimination harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act • Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it • Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it <p>Legislation contained within the School Admissions Code sets out the requirement for the Local Authority to have a co-ordinated admissions scheme for the area and for admission authorities to consult on their admission arrangements between the 1 November and the 1 March for a minimum of 8 weeks.</p> <p>The Council will fulfil its statutory responsibilities by consulting within the timescales set out above and conducting a consultation with the relevant parties on changes to admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools, inviting thoughts and comments from all consultees.</p> <p>The consultation sets out the requirement for the Local Authority to have a co-ordinated scheme for Central Bedfordshire to co-ordinate admissions in the normal year of entry for schools and academies so only one offer of a place is made to a child for a school or academy. This applies to admissions for Starting School and the transfer rounds for Middle, Secondary, Upper and the University Technical College.</p> <p>Part of the consultation includes the admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools as detailed above.</p>	<p><i>E.g. does it consider the needs of people who are at greater risk of lower quality of life outcomes, close achievement gaps, reduce racial tensions, increase participation in decision making and service delivery processes or increase a sense of belonging amongst different communities or groups?)</i></p>
<p>1.6 Is it possible that this proposal could damage relations amongst groups of people with different protected characteristics or contribute to inequality by treating some members of the community less favourably such as people of different ages, men or women, people from black and minority ethnic communities, disabled people, carers, people with different religions or beliefs, new and expectant mothers, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities?</p>	



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The Local Authority is the admission authority for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools and therefore must conduct its consultation in line with legislation with the following parties:

- a) Parents of children between the ages of two and eighteen
- b) Other persons in the relevant area who in the opinion of the admissions authority have an interest in the proposed admissions
- c) All other admission authorities within the relevant area.
- d) The Governing Bodies of Community and Voluntary Controlled schools
- e) Adjoining neighbouring local authorities
- f) The body or person representing religious denomination schools.

The 8 week consultation period will give all relevant parties the opportunity to respond.

Stage 2 - Consideration of national and local research, data and consultation findings in order to understand the potential impacts of the proposal.

This is the most critical part of the assessment

Stage 2 - Consideration of Relevant Data and Consultation

In completing this section it will be helpful to consider:

- **Publicity** – Do people know that the service exists?
- **Access** – Who is using the service? / Who should be using the service? Why aren't they?
- **Appropriateness** – Does the service meet people's needs and improve outcomes?
- **Service support needs** – Is further training and development required for employees?
- **Partnership working** – Are partners aware of and implementing equality requirements?
- **Contracts & monitoring** – Is equality built into the contract and are outcomes monitored?

2.1. Examples of relevant evidence sources are listed below. Please tick which evidence sources are being used in this assessment and provide a summary for each protected characteristic in sections 2.2 and 2.3.

Internal desktop research

And 2.3 Refer to Equality Checklist (Pages 4-7 of guidance)

Please refer to the Equality Impact Assessment Screening for your Service / Business Plan for examples of relevant evidence or contact: Clare



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	Place survey / Customer satisfaction data		Demographic Profiles – Census & ONS
	Local Needs Analysis	X	Service Monitoring / Performance Information
	Other local research		
Third party guidance and examples			
	National / Regional Research		Analysis of service outcomes for different groups
X	Best Practice / Guidance	X	Benchmarking with other organisations Tower Hamlets, Haringey and Wandsworth EIAs
	Inspection Reports		
Public consultation related activities			
x	Consultation with Service Users	x	Consultation with Community / Voluntary Sector
	Consultation with Staff		Customer Feedback / Complaints
	Data about the physical environment e.g. housing market, employment, education and training provision, transport, spatial planning and public spaces		
Consulting Members, stakeholders and specialists			
x	Elected Members		Expert views of stakeholders representing diverse groups
X	Specialist staff / service expertise		
<p><i>Please bear in mind that whilst sections of the community will have common interests and concerns, views and issues vary within groups. E.g. women have differing needs and concerns depending on age, ethnic origin, disability etc</i></p> <p>Lack of local knowledge or data is not a justification for assuming there is not a negative impact on some groups of people. Further research may be required.</p>			
2.2. Summary of Existing Data and Consultation Findings: - Service Delivery			

Harding,
Corporate Policy
Advisor (Equality
& Diversity) for
further details

For details of
existing
consultation
findings please
contact Karen
Aspinall
Consultation
Manager, Office
of the Chief
Executive
[Karen.Aspinal@c
entralbedfordshire
.gov.uk](mailto:Karen.Aspinal@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)
Telephone 0300
300 6286 (x
42967)

*Please set out in
an Appendix to*

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Considering the impact on Customers/Residents

- Age: e.g. Under 16 yrs / 16-19 yrs / 20-29 yrs / 30-44 yrs / 45-59 yrs / 60-64 yrs / 65-74 yrs / 75+

The admission arrangements apply to all children who are of statutory school age or where the majority will become statutory school age during the academic year in which they start.

- Disability: e.g. Physical impairment / Sensory impairment / Mental health condition / Learning disability or difficulty / Long-standing illness or health condition / Severe disfigurement

All maintained schools are required to admit a child with a statement of special educational needs that names the school. The place is normally allocated before all other places in the admissions process and if the statement is finalised after this, the child is normally admitted over and above the admission number of the school. Admission to a Special School is dealt with by the Assessment and Monitoring Team, which is covered by different legislation.

Children with special educational needs, disabilities or medical needs who do not have a statement are covered by Fair Access Protocol which the Local Authority is required by the School Admissions Code to operate and all admission authorities must participate in. The Fair Access Protocol operates outside the admission arrangements and ensures that a child eligible under the protocol is secured a school place where this has been unattainable.

- Carers: A person of any age who provides unpaid support to family or friends who could not manage without this help due to illness, disability, mental ill-health or a substance misuse problem

Children who are carers are covered by the Fair Access Protocol and ensures that a child eligible under the protocol is secured a school place where this has been unattainable.

- Gender Reassignment: People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have

this assessment the details of data and consultation findings relating to diversity areas shown below. In this section please summarise findings and the conclusions you have drawn from those findings in relation to the areas

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undergone a process (or part of a process) to reassign their sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex

All Community and Voluntary Controlled schools are co-educational and provide for both male and female children and young people and must not discriminate against pupils who have the protected characteristic of gender reassignment.

Gender reassignment is a personal process (rather than a medical process) which involves a person expressing their gender in a way that differs from or is inconsistent with the physical sex they were born with. This personal process may include undergoing medical procedures or, as is more likely for school pupils, it may simply include choosing to dress in a different way as part of the personal process of change.

- Pregnancy and Maternity: *e.g. pregnant women / women who have given birth & women who are breastfeeding (26 week time limit then protected by sex discrimination provisions)*

Admission arrangements apply to all children and young people and a pregnant mother or mother who has given birth and breastfeeding and is of statutory school age has the right of access to education.

- Race: *e.g. Asian or Asian British / Black or Black British / Chinese / Gypsies and Travellers / Mixed Heritage / White British / White Irish / White Other*

All Local Authorities and Admission Authorities have a duty to ensure that admission arrangements are fair and do not discriminate against race. Applications for school places do not ask for a child's nationality or ethnic origin as this is not a factor when allocating school places.

- Religion or Belief: *e.g. Buddhist / Christian / Hindu / Jewish / Muslim / Sikh / No religion / Other*

Community Schools

Religious Education in community schools follows the agreed Religious Education Syllabus for

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the Authority.

Voluntary Controlled.

Religious worship usually follows the teaching of the Church of England, under the direction of the school Governors. Religious education follows the agreed Religious Education Syllabus for the Authority.

Voluntary Controlled schools can include faith as part of their admissions criteria and the following VC schools prioritise children whose parents/carers have, at the time of application, shown commitment to the Church of England or another Christian church by attending a service at least once a month for the year prior to an application being made above any other children.

- Dunton
- St. Andrews
- Wrestlingworth
- Edward Peake

Applications made on faith grounds are ratified by the admissions team and the school, with details provided to the School Admissions Team to allocate places accordingly as part of the co-ordinated admissions scheme.

Voluntary Aided schools are faith schools and can include faith criterion as part of their admissions criteria in line with the provisions of the School Admissions Code. Applications made on faith grounds are ratified by the school, with details provided to the School Admissions Team to allocate places accordingly as part of the co-ordinated admissions scheme.

- Sex: *e.g. Women / Girls / Men / Boys*

All Community and Voluntary Controlled schools are co-educational and provide for both male and female children and young people.

- Sexual Orientation: *e.g. Lesbians / Gay men / Bisexuals / Heterosexuals*

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Any child or young person has the right of access to education and all schools are required to admit pupils regardless of sexual orientation.

- **Other:** *e.g. Human Rights, Poverty / Social Class / Deprivation, Looked After Children, Offenders, Cohesion, Marriage and Civil Partnership*

Admission arrangements have to comply with the School Admissions Code and other legislation which affects the admission of children and young people to school, such as the Equality Act 2010, the Human Rights Act 1998.

The admission arrangements prioritise all 'looked after' children or children who were previously 'looked after', this is in line with the mandatory provisions of the School Admissions Code which prescribe that all 'looked after' children and those who were previously 'looked after' must be given the highest priority in oversubscription criteria.

The proposed admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools for 2015/16 are detailed in the attached appendix 3.

2.3. Summary of Existing Data and Consultation Findings – Employment Considering the impact on Employees **Not Applicable for this policy**

- **Age:** *e.g. 16-19 / 20-29 / 30-39 / 40-49 / 50-59 / 60+* **N/A**

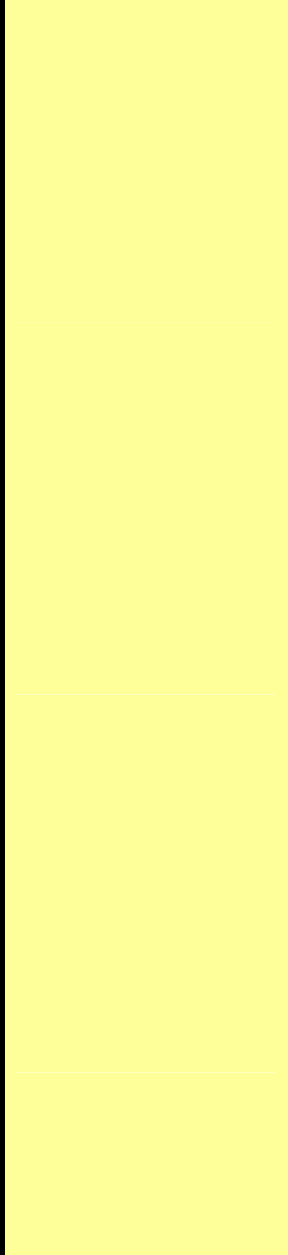
- **Disability:** *e.g. Physical impairment / Sensory impairment / Mental health condition / Learning disability or difficulty / Long-standing illness or health condition / Severe disfigurement* **N/A**

- **Carers:** *e.g. parent / guardian / foster carer / person caring for an adult who is a spouse, partner, civil partner, relative or person who lives at the same address* **N/A**



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- Gender Reassignment: <i>People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process (or part of a process) to reassign their sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex</i> N/A
- Pregnancy and Maternity: <i>e.g. Pregnancy / Compulsory maternity leave / Ordinary maternity leave / Additional maternity leave</i> N/A
- Race: <i>e.g. Asian or Asian British / Black or Black British / Chinese / Gypsies and Travellers / Mixed Heritage / White British / White Irish / White Other</i> N/A
- Religion or Belief: <i>e.g. Buddhist / Christian / Hindu / Jewish / Muslim / Sikh / No religion / Other</i> N/A
- Sex: <i>Women / Men</i> N/A
- Sexual Orientation: <i>e.g. Lesbians / Gay men / Bisexuals / Heterosexuals</i> N/A
- Other: <i>e.g. Human Rights, Poverty / Social Class / Deprivation, Looked After Children, Offenders, Cohesion, Marriage and Civil Partnership</i> N/A
2.4. To what extent are vulnerable groups more affected by this proposal compared to the population or workforce as a whole?
2.5. To what extent do current procedures and working practices address the above issues and help to promote equality of opportunity?
1) Consultation Process It is proposed that the consultation period will commence from 11 November 2013 and conclude on 20 January 2014. The Local Authority will publish the Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme and



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the proposed admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools on the website and advertise the consultation as widely as possible to gather the views of Parent/Carer(s), Governing Bodies of Community and Voluntary Controlled schools, all other admission authorities in the area, neighbouring local authorities and the Church of England and Catholic diocese

2) Content of Policy

The admission arrangements prioritise all 'looked after' children or children who were previously 'looked after'.

Children who live in the catchment area with siblings at the school are prioritised above children living in the catchment area in order to keep families together. Other siblings are then prioritised before nursery or faith criteria. Children who do not meet any of the criteria for a Community and VC school are then prioritised according to their straight line distance from the school.

Young offenders are covered by the Fair Access Protocol and ensures that a child eligible under the protocol is secured a school place where this has been unattainable.

15 responses were received to the consultation via the online portal. 46% stated support for the proposed arrangements and 27% of respondents objected, with 27% neither agreeing or disagreeing.

Respondents to the consultation were:

- 60% were parent/carers of a child who currently attends a Central Bedfordshire school or academy
- 13% were parent/carers of a child who will be applying for a place at a Central Bedfordshire school before 2015.
- 7% were parent/carers of a child who will be applying for a place at a Central Bedfordshire school during or after 2015.
- 7% a school employee.
- 13% classed themselves as 'other'.

A further response was received via email who was from an 'other' who disagreed with elements of the consultation.



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In terms of the personal characteristics of respondents 53% were female and 47% were male.

The age range of respondents were as follows:

20% = 20-29 years

54% = 30-44 years

13% = 45-59 years

13% = 60-64 years

13% of respondents considered themselves to be disabled.

The ethnicity of respondents were as follows:

93% White British

7% Other ethnic group

2.6. Are there any gaps in data or consultation findings

None identified

2.7. What action will be taken to obtain this information?

N/A

Stage 3 - Providing an overview of impacts and potential discrimination.

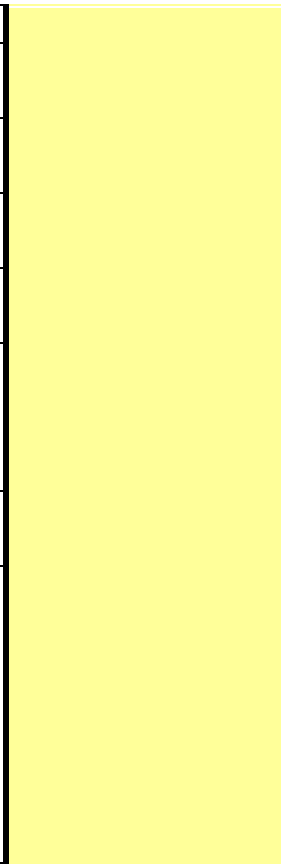
Stage 3 – Assessing Positive & Negative Impacts

Analysis of Impacts	Impact?		Discrimination?		Summary of impacts and reasons
	(+ve)	(- ve)	YES	NO	
3.1 Age					
3.2 Disability					
3.3 Carers					

Impact should be shown as Yes or No

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3.4 Gender Reassignment					
3.5 Pregnancy & Maternity					
3.6 Race					
3.7 Religion / Belief					
3.8 Sex		√			Inclusion of Feeder school/nursery criterion could disadvantage parents who choose an alternative nursery for child care reasons
3.9 Sexual Orientation					
3.10 Other e.g. Human Rights, Poverty / Social Class / Deprivation, Looked After Children, Offenders, Cohesion Marriage and Civil Partnership					





Stage 4 - Identifying mitigating actions that can be taken to address adverse impacts.

Stage 4 – Conclusions, Recommendations and Action Planning

4.1 What are the main conclusions and recommendations from the assessment?

Following feedback received during the consultation period, two responses were received regarding the inclusion of nursery criteria in school admission policies. One respondent felt that parents choose to send their children to other nurseries or childcare for important reasons, either they feel other nurseries suit their child or working situation better. Another response cited the recently published report from the Office of the Schools Adjudicator where one of the main findings recommended that Local Authorities ensure fair access for all children on reaching compulsory school age and are not disadvantaged by any decisions their parents make about the care of their children prior to compulsory school age or by access to specific child care.

Other responses received included concerns regarding the increase in Russell Lower School's published admissions number from 60 – 90 in September 2015. This increase in the admissions number is following the school's expansion from two form entry lower school to a three form as a result of housing development in the Ampthill area. The concerns conveyed concerned the impact to traffic congestion around the school site. This issue is being address as part of the school's travel plan.

4.2 What changes will be made to address or mitigate any adverse impacts that have been identified?

The nursery criterion which was consulted upon to be included in the admission policies for Greenleas Kestrel Way Lower School, Hawthorn Park Primary School and Tithe Farm Primary School will not be included in the school admissions policies for 2015. The Council will consult on this criterion being removed from the policies of Community and Voluntary controlled schools who currently have this, in the next consultation period which will be conducted between November 2014 and January 2015 for admissions in September 2016 onwards. This will ensure



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fair access for all children in line with the main findings and recommendations of the report of the Office of the Schools Adjudicator.

4.3 Are there any budgetary implications?

None.

4.4 Actions to be taken to mitigate against any adverse impacts:

Action	Lead Officer	Date	Priority

Priority should be either High, Medium or Low. You can add rows using the Table>Insert Rows

Stage 5 - Checking that all the relevant issues and mitigating actions have been identified

Stage 5 – Quality Assurance & Scrutiny: Checking that all the relevant issues have been identified	
5.1	What methods have been used to gain feedback on the main issues raised in the assessment?
	Step 1: Consultation document and online and paper questionnaire for all interested parties to provide feedback.
	Has the Corporate Policy Advisor (Equality & Diversity) reviewed this assessment and provided feedback? Yes/No
	Summary of CPA’s comments:
	Step 2:
5.2	Feedback from Central Bedfordshire Equality Forum

The Corporate Policy Adviser will advise whether



this step is necessary.



Stage 6 - Ensuring that the actual impact of proposals are monitored over time.

Stage 6 – Monitoring Future Impact
<p>6.1 How will implementation of the actions be monitored? The recommendation to Executive to approve the admissions criteria for all Community and Voluntary Controlled schools will be for admissions from September 2015. Data of those applicants who are successful and unsuccessful and which criterion they fall into are collected as part of the admissions process which enables the Local Authority to monitor the impact.</p>
<p>6.2 What sort of data will be collected and how often will it be analysed? The data collected is at applicant level and would collect the child’s catchment area, straight line distance from the school and which criterion they met on the school’s admission policy.</p>
<p>6.3 How often will the proposal be reviewed? Admission authorities are required to consult on changes to admission policies where a change is proposed or if the policy has not been consulted on in the last 7 years as no changes have been made.</p>
<p>6.4 Who will be responsible for this? Admissions Manager, School Admissions Team</p>
<p>6.5 How have the actions from this assessment been incorporated into the proposal? Views and feedback have been considered throughout the consultation and have informed the recommendation to Executive.</p>

Please give details and make clear whether this is already planned, or just a possibility. Clear ownership in terms of team etc must be given.

Finalised Assessments can be used to inform the Equality Section of Committee



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Stage 7 - Finalising the assessment.

Reports and

Stage 7 – Accountability / Signing Off

7.1 Has the lead Assistant Director/Head of Service been notified of the outcome of the assessment

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

7.2 Has the Corporate Policy Adviser Equality & Diversity provided confirmation that the Assessment is complete?

Date: _____

should be saved with the strategy, policy, project, contract, or decision file for audit purposes and Freedom of Information Act requests.