

# Equality Impact Assessment Form

<b>1- Policy details</b>	
<b>Name of policy</b>	School Places Strategy
<b>Department and service</b>	Children and Family Services, School Organisation
<b>Who has been involved in completing the Equality Impact Assessment?</b>	Renata Chantrill, Head of Service - Education Sufficiency
<b>Contact numbers</b>	01163050356
<b>Date of completion</b>	28 <sup>th</sup> November 2025

<b>2- Objectives and background of policy or practice change</b>	
<b>What is the proposal?</b>	A new School Places Strategy for Leicestershire covering the period from 2026-2031.
<b>What change and impact is intended by the proposal?</b>	<p>The Strategy will aim to ensure Leicestershire meets its statutory duties by delivering the right number of school places, in the right place, at the right time, with sufficient funding and resources in place to deliver future growth needs. The Strategy sets out the Council's approach to planning, commissioning, and funding school places across all phases, including mainstream, SEND, and alternative provision.</p> <p>The Strategy will clearly set out to stakeholders the processes and mechanisms the Council and partners will use to understand and deliver the required school capacity and ensure sustainable schools for the future.</p>
<b>What is the rationale for this proposal?</b>	Local authorities have a legal obligation to ensure that sufficient, high-quality school places are available for all children and young people in their area. This duty applies to both mainstream education and provision for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Local authorities are

required to act as strategic commissioners, forecasting demand, planning capacity, and working collaboratively with schools, academy trusts, and other partners to ensure that every child and young person can access suitable, high-quality education.

Since the publication of the previous strategy, significant changes to the Leicestershire educational landscape have been experienced which have led to the need for a new School Places Strategy for 2026-2031. This includes increasing academisation of schools, changes in birth rates and the impact on school place requirements and school sustainability, housing growth areas, and an increasing need for specialist school places for pupils with additional needs.

### 3- Evidence gathered on equality implications - Data and engagement

**What equalities information or data has been gathered so far?**

The School Places Strategy itself contains a summary of the key demographic and equalities information around children and young people in Leicestershire. Additional points are set out below;

**What does it show?**

Leicestershire's population was 712,336 at the latest census in 2021, a 9.5% increase to the county's population over the last 10 years. This makes Leicestershire one of the fastest growing areas in the country in terms of population (national average 6.6%). Understandably, this has placed added pressures on services for Children and Young People in the County. The County has approx. 143,063 children and young people aged up to 19 years (including 36,154 0 to 5 year olds). There were 296,400 households within the county. A further 10.2% growth in population is projected by 2031.

There are 101,247 children and young people educated in Leicestershire schools (aged 3-18) during the Autumn term census for 2025/26. This includes 54,454 Primary aged pupils, 44,722 Secondary aged pupils and 1,992 pupils in Special Schools. Children and Young People from minority ethnic groups account for 43.6% of all children living in Leicestershire, compared with 38% in the country as a whole. The largest minority ethnic groups are Asian or Asian British and Mixed.

**From our School Census in Spring 2025, we know that**

Percentage of Black, Asian and other ethnic communities of the total school population (excluding unclassified)	24.6%
Pupils eligible for free school meals	17.2%
Pupils needing SEN support	13.4%
Pupils with EHCPs	4.7%

The latest School Census, which includes all pupils on roll at a school within Leicestershire (aged 4 to 16 years), reports that there are now 13,983 pupils on a SEN Support plan and 7,196 with an Education, Health and Care Plan. SEND pupils account for 18.1% of the Leicestershire school population. Leicestershire has a proportion of children and young people with SEND (identified through EHCPs and SEN support) broadly in line with the English average.

In 2025, the annual school census (Spring term) reported that 13.4% of children and young people were identified at SEN Support level in the County, just below the England average. Previous longer-term trends had indicated a lower-than-average level in Leicestershire, but this gap has now largely closed.

As with the previous strategy, the School Places Strategy will ensure all children and young people in Leicestershire have access to a high-quality education, with places delivered in the right parts of the County at the right time.

**What engagement has been undertaken so far?**  
**What does it show?**

The strategy has been developed in conjunction with key stakeholders and responsible bodies.

We have used their feedback to help us to shape the strategy, ensuring it reflects shared priorities and processes and is aligned with the current educational landscape.

<b>4- Benefits, concerns and mitigating action</b>			
<b>Group</b>	<b>What are the benefits of the proposal for those from the following groups?</b>	<b>What are the concerns identified and how will these affect those from the following groups?</b>	<b>How will the known concerns be mitigated?</b>
<b>Age</b>	Improvements to school place availability will support all children and young people to access high quality education in Leicestershire.	None identified.	Not required.
<b>Disability</b>	Improvements to school place availability will support all children and young people to access high quality education in Leicestershire. The strategy sets out additional special school places to be created to meet the growing need within Leicestershire, ensuring that appropriate spaces are available to support those children and young people whose needs are not able to be met in mainstream schools.	None identified.	Not required.
<b>Race</b>	Improvements to school place availability will support all children and young people	None identified.	Not required.

	to access high quality education in Leicestershire.		
<b>Sex</b>	Improvements to school place availability will support all children and young people to access high quality education in Leicestershire.	None identified.	Not required.
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>	Improvements to school place availability will support all children and young people to access high quality education in Leicestershire.	None identified.	Not required.
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b>	No direct impact identified.	None identified.	Not required.
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	Improvements to school place availability will support all children and young people to access high quality education in Leicestershire.	None identified.	Not required.
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>	No direct impact identified.	None identified.	Not required.
<b>Religion or Belief</b>	Improvements to school place availability will support all children and young people to access high quality education in Leicestershire.	None identified.	Not required.
<b>Armed Forces (including veterans)</b>	No direct impact identified.	None identified.	Not required.
<b>People with lived care experience</b>	Improvements to school place availability will support all children and young people	None identified.	Not required.

	to access high quality education in Leicestershire.		
<b>Other groups: e.g., rural isolation, deprivation, health inequality, carers, asylum seeker and refugee communities, looked after children, deprived or disadvantaged communities</b>	Improvements to school place availability will support all children and young people to access high quality education in Leicestershire. The Strategy sets out how the Council will ensure that schools are sustainable for the future.	None identified.	Not required.

## 5- Action Plan

Produce a framework to outline how identified risks/concerns identified in section 4 will be mitigated.

<b>What action is planned?</b>	<b>Who is responsible for the action?</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Expected outcome</b>
Seek approval to consult on the School Places Strategy	Education Sufficiency	Cabinet – 18/11/25	Ensuring the Strategy is agreed with elected members prior to wider consultation.
Public consultation on the SEND and Inclusion Strategy following approval to consult by Cabinet	Education Sufficiency	C&FS Scrutiny Committee – 20/1/26 November 2025-January 2026	Feedback on proposed strategy to ensure feedback is fully considered before Strategy is agreed.

## 6- Approval Process

<b>Departmental Equalities Group</b>	
<b>Corporate Policy Team</b>	
<b>Sign off by the Senior Responsible Officer for the Project.</b>	

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