

# Equality Impact Assessment Template

Before carrying out an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA), you should familiarise yourself with the [guidance](#). This document should be in **plain English**, include **Stakeholder** involvement and be able to stand up to **scrutiny** (local and/or court) if/when challenged to ensure we have met the councils public sector equality duty.

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) should be completed when you are considering:

- developing, reviewing or removing policies
- developing, reviewing or removing strategies
- developing, reviewing or removing services
- developing, reviewing or removing a council function/system
- commencing any project/programme

## Assessor(s) Name and job title:

**Abbie Cook, Home to School Transport Project Officer**

## Directorate and Team/School Name:

**School Transport**

## Name, aim, objective and expected outcome of the programme/ activity:

**Name:** Proposed changes to School Transport Policy for compulsory school age pupils

**Aim:** To align the School Transport Policy with national DfE guidance, remove some discretionary entitlements and increase spare seat charges.

**Objective:** To provide transport for all eligible children in line with statutory guidance.

**Expected outcome:** For all recommendations detailed in the Cabinet Paper to allow the transformation of the School Transport Service and align with DfE guidance and other local authorities.

## Reason for Equality Impact Assessment (tick as appropriate)

This is a **new** policy/strategy/service/system function proposal

This is a proposal for a **change** to a policy/strategy/service/system function proposal function (*check whether the original decision was equality impact assessed*)

**Removal of a** policy/strategy/service/system function proposal

**Commencing** any project/programme

Yes

## Equality and Diversity considerations

Describe the ways in which the groups below may be impacted by your activity (**prior to mitigation**). The impact may be negative, positive or no impact.

Protected Characteristic	Negative, positive or no impact (before mitigation/intervention) and why?	Does the proposal have the potential to cause unlawful discrimination (is it possible that the proposal may exclude/restrict this group from obtaining services or limit their participation in any aspect of public life?)	How will you advance the equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not.	What concerns have been raised to date during consultation (or early discussions) and what action taken to date?	What evidence, analysis or data has been used to substantiate your answer?	Are there any gaps in evidence to properly assess the impact? How will this be addressed?	How will you make communication accessible for this group?	What adjustments have been put in place to reduce/advance the inequality? ( <i>Where it cannot be diminished, can this be legally justified?</i> )
<b>Age</b> (restrictions/difficulties both younger/older)	<b>Proposal one Positive – Personal Travel Budget</b> Will allow more flexibility for families to provide transport in a way that will suit their needs.	<b>No</b> - As the school transport service is provided for eligible children and young people of school age (eligibility as set out in the Policy), it is recognised that they and their families/carers would be affected by the recommendations with regards to age as a protected characteristic. The age-related nature	Our proposals do not discriminate against protected characteristics regardless of age.	Some respondents within the consultation have referenced four year old children who are reliant on school transport provision. Statutory guidance does not require local authorities to provide	The proposals are underpinned by statutory guidance issued by the DfE.  1. Personal Transport Budgets would be something that gives more flexibility to children and families although it is anticipated that it will only be	None identified.	The policy and process to apply will be available on the Isle of Wight Council website.	As the school transport service is provided for eligible children and young people of school age (eligibility as set out in the Policy), it is recognised that they and their families/carers would be affected by the recommendations with regards to age as a protected characteristic.

	<p><b>Proposal two Positive – Independent Travel Training</b> Introduction of Independent Travel Training will benefit those students who are approaching adulthood by supporting them to become more independent i.e. using public transport, as apposed to travelling to school in smaller vehicles.</p> <p><b>Proposal three Negative – Passenger Assistant renewals</b> The review of allocated passenger assistant may result in some assistants to be</p>	<p>of the service is required by law.</p>		<p>funded transport to this age group. Our new policy will outline the age groups who are eligible for school transport.</p>	<p>an option for some families.</p> <p>2. Independent Travel Training (ITT) would be a service offered to students as they prepare for approaching adulthood and would only be suitable for a small number of students. For the students that it is suitable for and who choose to take part in the training, ITT would be a strengths-based service that, for some, would result in greater independence. The Council would work closely with families and school to implement ITT.</p> <p>3. The review of the allocation of Passenger Assistants (PA) would see that some students who no longer require a PA would have their PA phased out</p>			<p>The age-related nature of the service is required by law.</p>
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	<p><b>Proposal four Negative – Increase in contribution rates</b></p>			<p>and students whose needs have changed and require one, would be identified for allocation of a PA in a more timely way.</p> <p>4. The increase in contribution rates for children receiving discretionary transport arrangements will disproportionately affect children and young people of school age and their families. The number of families affected is approximately 82 of the approximate 1,614 students receiving school transport arranged by the Council.</p> <p>5. Changes to the school transport policy is anticipated to be positive as the changes would ensure it is up to date, relevant to the service and</p>			
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	<p><b>Proposal six – Neutral – Removal of Year 10 and 11 discretionary transport</b></p>			<p>In addition, respondents commented that Proposal six would negatively impact Year 10 and 11 students. Statutory guidance does not require local authorities to provide funded transport to this age group. Our new policy will outline the age</p>	<p>easy to understand. Part of these changes is to only provide transport for compulsory school age children therefore this will disproportionately affect children who start primary school at the age of 4. Currently we transport 10 children who fall under this category therefore is deemed as a low risk.</p> <p>6. This is a discretionary service which is provided by the council and we do . There are currently 15 children who are entitled to transport under this criteria. Students would be able to apply for a spare seat on a school bus. If students apply for their nearest school but we are unable to provide them with a school place, and</p>			
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				groups who are eligible for school transport.	the school they are attending is the next nearest school with places they would be entitled to funded transport.			
<b>Disability</b> <b>a) Physical</b> <b>b) Mental health</b> (must respond to both a & b)	<b>Proposal one</b> <b>Personal Travel Budget</b> Positive	No	Our proposals do not discriminate against protected characteristics regardless of disability.	1. Some respondents were considered that offering PTB's would shift the responsibility on to the parent, increase stress of parents with SEN children and may encourage home schooling. The Council and parents would need to mutually agree that a PTB would be suitable for the family and it would not be mandatory to accept a PTB.	<b>1.</b> PTBs will disproportionately affect Children and Young people with disabilities and their families. The change will mean that children, young people and their families with disabilities who are suitable for a PTB will have more flexible options for their transport arrangements.	1. As this is a proposal would be a mutually agreeable decision there is no gap.	The policy and process to apply will be available on the Isle of Wight Council website.	As the school transport service is provided for eligible children and young people of school age (eligibility as set out in the Policy), it is recognised that they and their families/carers would be affected by the recommendations with regards to disability as a protected characteristic. The age-related nature of the service is required by law.
	<b>Proposal two</b> <b>Independent Travel Training</b>			2. Respondents highlighted	<b>2.</b> Introduction of Independent	2. As this is a proposal would be a		

	Positive			concerns that travel training will be forced on families and wouldn't be suitable for all children as children's complex needs can fluctuate. The Council and parents would need to mutually agree that a ITT would be suitable for the family and it would not be mandatory to accept a ITT. Current transport would also not be removed unless the child was successful in their training.	Travel Training will benefit those students who are approaching adulthood by supporting them to become more independent i.e. using public transport, as apposed to travelling to school in smaller vehicles. ITT would disproportionately affect Children and Young people with disabilities and their families. Most people offered ITT would have SEND. For the students that it is suitable for and who choose to take part in the training, ITT would be a strengths-based service that, for some, would result in greater independence. The Council would work closely with families and school to implement ITT.	mutually agreeable decision there is no gap.		
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	<p><b>Proposal three – Regular Review of Passenger Assistants</b> Negative low</p>			<p>3. Respondents felt that this could lead to the PA being removed when families believe it should remain. The Council, parents and schools would work together to come to a joint decision.</p>	<p>3. The review of PAs would disproportionately affect children and young people (around 6%) and their families with disabilities as PAs are mostly used to support students with SEND. The proposal would see that some students who no longer require a PA would have their PA phased out and students whose needs have changed and require one, would be identified for allocation of a PA in a timelier way.</p> <p>4. The increase in contribution rates for students in receipt of discretionary travel arrangements would have no identified impact based on disability. There are currently only 3 children who have SEND that</p>	<p>3. As this is proposal would be a joint decision with all relevant parties, there is no gap.</p> <p>4. Part 1 - No SEN families impacted by this proposal.</p> <p>Part 2 – There are 7 children who are currently entitled to transport as an</p>		
	<p><b>Proposal four – Increase of discretionary parental contribution rates (Spare Seats and Exceptions to Policy)</b> Neutral</p>			<p>4. Some respondents commented on the impact on SEND families with the cost of living rises. There are currently no SEN families that purchase a spare seat.</p>				



	<p><b>Proposal Five – Update Policy wording to reflect DfE guidance</b>  <b>Neutral</b> - There is no identified impact regarding updating and aligning school transport policy with updated DfE statutory guidance based on disability and therefore the impact has been assessed as neutral.</p>			<p>Exceptions to policy are decided on a case by case basis and may be subject to a waiver, where necessary.</p> <p>5. A small number of respondents were concerned about the wording and eligibility for SEND children. The updated wording has been changed to reflect DfE guidance, which we are required to adhere to as a local authority. The new statutory guidance does not remove eligibility for SEN children but does provide clarity on eligibility.</p>	<p>purchase a spare seat.</p> <p>5. There is no identified impact regarding updating and aligning school transport policy with updated DfE statutory guidance based on disability.</p>	<p>exception to policy. From September 2024 there will only be 2 children entitled under an exception to policy.</p> <p>5. There are no changes to eligibility for SEN students.</p>		
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	<b>Proposal Six – Removal of Year 10 &amp; 11 discretionary transport Neutral</b>				6. No concerns raised.	6. No concerns raised.	6. No concerns raised.		
<b>Race</b> (including ethnicity and nationality)	<b>No impact</b>	<b>No</b>			<b>No concerns have been raised through the consultation.</b>	There is no identified impact based on race and therefore the impact has been assessed as neutral.			
<b>Religion or belief</b> (different faith groups/those without a faith)	<b>No impact</b>	<b>No</b>	Our proposals do not discriminate against protected characteristics regardless of disability.	Proposal 5 Concerns were raised in regards to parental preference schools under faith in relation to transport eligibility.	Proposal 5. There have been no change to DfE guidance and the consideration of faith. It is not a statutory duty of the local authority to provide transport but could be considered under their discretionary powers.	There are no changes in eligibility			
<b>Sex</b> (Including Trans and non-binary – is your language inclusive of trans and non-binary people?)	<b>No impact</b>	<b>No</b>			<b>No concerns have been raised through the consultation.</b>	There is no identified impact based on sex and therefore the impact has been assessed as neutral.			
<b>Sexual orientation</b> (is your language inclusive of LGB groups?)	<b>No impact</b>	<b>No</b>			<b>No concerns have been raised through the consultation.</b>	There is no identified impact based on sexual orientation and therefore the impact has been assessed as neutral.			

<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	<b>No impact</b>	<b>No</b>		<b>No concerns have been raised through the consultation.</b>	There is no identified impact based on pregnancy and maternity therefore the impact has been assessed as neutral.			
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b>	<b>No impact</b>	<b>No</b>		<b>No concerns have been raised through the consultation.</b>	There is no identified impact based on marriage and civil partnership and therefore the impact has been assessed as neutral.			
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	<b>No impact</b>	<b>No</b>		<b>No concerns have been raised through the consultation.</b>	There is no identified impact based on gender reassignment and therefore the impact has been assessed as neutral.			

In order to identify the needs of the groups, you will need to review data, statistics, user feedback, population data, complaints data, staffing data ([SAPHRreports@iow.gov.uk](mailto:SAPHRreports@iow.gov.uk)), community/client data, feedback from focus groups etc. When assessing the impact, the assessment should come from an evidence base and not through opinion or self-knowledge.

## H. Review

How are you engaging people with a wide range of protected characteristics in the development, review and/or monitoring of the programme/ activity? Through a formal consultation which lasted 28 days, in line with DfE guidance. Following a decision at Cabinet on 9<sup>th</sup> May, new policy and processes will be communicated out to families via schools/colleges.

Date of next review:

## H. Sign-off

**Head of Service/Director/Headteacher sign off & date:**

Name: Ashley Jefferies  
Date: 28/03/2024

**Legal sign off & date:**

Name: Judy Mason  
Date: 03/04/2024