



**Equality Relevance Assessment**

<b>1. Details of proposal</b>					
<b>Policy title</b>	Redesign of hearing impairment service for schools				
<b>Lead officer</b>	Elaine Cook – Head of Education Services				
<b>Date relevance considered</b>	04/09/14				
<b>2. Does the council have control over how this policy will be implemented?</b>					
<table border="1"> <tr> <td><b>YES</b></td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> <td><b>NO</b></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>		<b>YES</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>NO</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>YES</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>NO</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<b>3. Do you have evidence or reason to believe that this policy will, or may potentially:</b>					
<b>General Duties</b>	<b>Impact on equality (Yes or No)</b>				
Reduce or increase discrimination, victimisation or harassment against people covered by the equality protected characteristics?	Yes				
Reduce or increase equality of opportunity between people who share an equality protected characteristic and those who do not?	Yes				
Provide opportunity to improve good relations between those who share an equality protected characteristic and those who do not?	No				
<b>4. Equality impact assessment required? (Two Yes above = full assessment necessary)</b>					
<table border="1"> <tr> <td><b>YES</b></td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> <td><b>NO</b></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>		<b>YES</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>NO</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>YES</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>NO</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<b>5. Decision rationale</b>					
<p>The proposed changes will provide hearing impairment provisions integrated into individual schools, as an alternative to the current provision (support staff moving between schools). The nature of the proposal infers that those with hearing impairments will be disproportionately impacted. As a result, a full equality impact assessment is required.</p>					

- **No assessment required – process ends**
- **Assessment required – continue to next section**

## Equality Impact Assessment

<b>1. Details of proposal</b>	
Details of others involved	Andrew Sneddon - Customer and Performance Manager Alison Raeburn - Additional Support for Learning Manager Elaine Cook – Head of Education Services Kenny Selbie – Equality Officer Hannah Gardner – Equalities Analyst
Date assessment conducted	18/12/14
<b>2. Aims of the proposed change to council policy or resources</b>	
<p>The primary objective of this project is to realise efficiencies and improved business processes through a range of measures across the education sectors (pre-school, primary and secondary) and within Education Services over a five year period. There is a need to enhance service delivery through more effective ways of working. The project aims to focus on greater efficiency in school coursing, timetabling and maximising student choices in the senior phase, reviewing all school support, quality assurance and administration processes which underpin raising attainment.</p> <p>It is intended that the project be delivered via a direct reduction in the DSM budgets, with some services to schools being integrated into the support strategy for every school, streamlining processes and procedures, promoting greater collaboration between schools and school to school improvement and service redesign.</p> <p>In relation to equalities, proposed changes to the hearing impairment provision provided in schools within West Lothian require to be impact assessed as a result of its direct impact on those with disabilities. The proposal indicates that the current system of provision will be redesigned to allow for a more inclusive service (e.g. integrating hearing impairment provisions within schools, rather than a 'roaming' service across schools).</p>	
<b>3. What equality data, research or other evidence has been used to inform this assessment?</b>	
Research was drawn from a mixture of national evidence (provided by the Scottish Government), and academic research in the area of educational inclusion.	
<b>4. Details of consultation and involvement</b>	
The assessment has been subject to scrutiny by representatives of the equality community forums through a specific focus on Delivering Better Outcomes projects as agreed by the council's Corporate Working Group on Equality.	
<b>5. Issues identified and 'protected characteristics' impact (Covering: age; disability; gender; gender identity; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief and sexual orientation equality)</b>	

Recent legislation has led to developments in the provision of education for deaf pupils. It places duties upon local authorities to ensure that education is directed to the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of children to their fullest potential, and also to raise educational standards. Deaf pupils are entitled to have their needs identified and met, and to have arrangements for support reviewed regularly. Some deaf pupils may not require high levels of support but still require to have their progress monitored. For others, careful planning and support will be needed to enable them to achieve the desired outcomes.

Research conducted by the University of Edinburgh indicates that there has been an increase in the number of pupils with a hearing impairment, and that there are currently more boys with either a hearing or a visual impairment than there are girls. Further, results imply that there is an association between social deprivation (as measured by SIMD 2009) and hearing impairment; this is less pronounced for those with other types of sensory impairment. With regard to educational attainment, pupils with no additional support needs achieve better national qualifications than those with additional support needs.

The '*Supporting Children's Learning*' code of practice states that it is preferable to ensure that support is provided in ways that are well integrated within everyday practice and do not single out the child requiring additional support. The following proposals would support this practice. In addition, the integrating of hearing impairment provision will also improve the mainstreaming of equality within West Lothian schools.

#### **6. What measures are in place to monitor the actual impact following implementation?**

The Delivering Better Outcomes projects are being monitored by the Modernisation Board during implementation and equality impact assessment is identified as a key enabler for projects.

#### **7. Recommendation**

- Implement proposal with no amendments
- Implement proposal taking account of mitigating actions (as outlined below)
- Reject proposal due to disproportionate impact on equality

#### **8. Mitigating actions and additional outputs**

The impact of the proposed change to hearing impairment provisions in schools across West Lothian will be monitored once implemented, and reassessed if necessary.

- **Equality impact assessment completed**