

Full Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)

An EQIA Screening has identified that this proposal/policy/project requires a full EQIA. This means there is a risk of significant adverse impact on service users/ residents including 'vulnerable groups' and/or and those from certain protected characteristics. An EQIA shows how you have and intend to ensure equalities issues are taken into account in:

1. making key decisions e.g. there are 3 cost saving proposals and you need to agree one
2. implementing an agreed decision e.g. you have agreed the proposals and need take on board the needs of those affected and reduce any negative impact where possible
3. reviewing the outcome of the decision e.g. reviewing the actual impact on people and whether it was successful in achieving savings

This document is a way of recording processes and is a key part of our obligation to show 'due regard'. The document can be updated and shared with decision makers throughout the project to inform which approaches/ ideas etc. are taken forward, how it is implemented and to review its success.

Please append all related:

- **EQIA screenings**
- **Full Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)**
- **Equality Impact Assessment Quality Assurance Checklist**
- **Proposals- budget/ practice/ policy**

Officers Involved in completing screening	
Officer completing Equality Impact Assessment: <i>Responsible for gathering the information needed for the forms and completing the forms</i>	Judith Westcott
Head of Service or Operational Director authorising Equality Impact Assessment: <i>Responsible for ensuring that equality impact of any proposal has been fully considered</i>	Ian Gibbons and Helen Jones
Date Equality Impact Assessment completed:	5 November 2019

1. Proposal being Assessed

Title of Budget Option/ Report: <i>Name of the proposed new or changed legislation, policy, strategy, project or service being assessed</i>	Special Schools Transformation programme
Service Area and Directorate:	Commissioning
Budget Option:	
Budget Reference: <i>Relevant reference if this screening is being used for a formal budget proposal as part of the budget cycle</i>	
Date proposal to be considered at Cabinet (if known):	19 November 2019
Is this a new proposal?	This is a presentation of a proposal that has been developed over the last three years and has had previous equalities impact assessment (November 2017, November 2018 and November 2019)
If linked to previous years give details:	Cabinet November 2017, Cabinet Report November 2018, Cabinet Report May 2019
On whom will the policy / decision impact?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service users <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other public-sector organisations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Voluntary / community groups / trade unions <input type="checkbox"/> Others, please specify below
Brief description of policy / decision to be screened: <i>This needs to be written in plain English so that the public are able to ascertain exactly what is being assessed. This should include a brief description of the current service, function, policy and the proposed changes.</i>	On the 22 May 2019, Cabinet: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approved the establishment of a new maintained special school with a single leadership team for the existing St Nicholas, Rowdeford and Larkrise schools as soon as possible and no later than 1 September 2021.

- Approved the closure of St Nicholas, Rowdeford and Larkrise school as a related proposal on the 31 August 2021.
- Approved expansion on the existing Rowdeford site to accommodate up to 400 pupils as part of the new special school by September 2023.
- Approved that St Nicholas and Larkrise stay in use on their current sites until the new provision is ready, and it is appropriate for children to transition to the new site at Rowdeford.

The Secretary of State approved the issue of a statutory notice and 4-week representation period on the proposal.
This 4-week representation period finished on 30 September 2019.

2. Reasoning behind the Proposal

Please see the papers being presented to cabinet link:

Cabinet reports of the 22 May 2019 and 27 November 2018 <http://moderngov.wiltshire.council/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=141&Year=0>

The linked documents describe the reasoning and information which was used to put forward proposals on the 22nd of May 2019 following four years of debate, deliberation and consultation. There have been four stages of consultation leading to this point

- In November 2017, wide consultation was taken forward with stakeholders about the role, significance and quality of SEND services, with a specific focus on the role of special schools.
- In the summer of 2018 a further consultation was taken forward with stakeholders in schools (parent/carers, staff and governors) as well as an online consultation looking specifically at the qualities of schools that were important going forward.
- In January/February 2019 specific consultation was taken forward on a pre-statutory phase for opening a new school and statutory consultation on closing the three current schools
- A statutory representation period of consultation in September 2019 following the Secretary of States approval to consult on establishing a new maintained school.

This created two areas of significant risk:

- Reputational damage - Where the council does not have significant support regarding proposals there is the possibility of reputation damage where the public does not think that the council is listening to their views.
- Legal challenge – Where stakeholders believe that there is sufficient evidence to show that the council:
 - Has not reached a reasonable decision from the information available
 - Has not used the appropriate information
 - Has not followed procedure appropriately

This EIA is now considering the impact of the new proposals for decision making in November 2019, as opposed to consultation on proposals. The consultation period is complete and new proposals being put forward to cabinet modify the proposals as follows:

1. Approves the establishment of a new maintained special school with a single leadership team for the existing St Nicholas, Rowdeford and Larkrise schools as soon as possible and no later than 1 September 2021
2. Approves the closure of St Nicholas, Rowdeford and Larkrise school as a related proposal no later than the 31 August 2021
3. Approves expansion on the existing Rowdeford site to accommodate up to 400 pupils as part of the new special school by September 2023
4. Commits £33 million required to deliver this proposal
5. Approves that the sites of St Nicholas and Larkrise stay in use until the new provision is ready, and it is appropriate for children to transition to the new site at Rowdeford
6. Authorises the Executive Director of Children’s Services, after consultation with the Cabinet member for Children, Education and Skills, the Director of Legal, Electoral and Registration Services and Chief Finance Officer/Section 151 Officer to take all necessary steps to implement Cabinet’s decision

That this is achieved by:

- a) Approving that the Council would present a proposal to the Schools’ Adjudicator to open a new amalgamed maintained special school
- b) Approving that the New School will have primary, secondary and Post 16 provision on the Rowdeford site (early years not to be included due to sufficiency)
- c) Noting and approving the proposal for a parallel programme of work to create a cross county approach to Post 16 special education and transition to independent living
- d) Approving the use of the statutory processes, (under the ‘Making Significant Changes (Prescribed Alterations) to Maintained Schools’ Guidance November 2018), to consult on the appropriateness of transferring the provision at St Nicholas and Larkrise to the Rowdeford site no later than 12 months before opening all the new provision. This consultation would be determined by:
 - The demand for places forecasted at the time of the consultation

- The views of current and future stakeholders and particularly children and young people with SEND and their parent carers
- The wider development of inclusive education for children and young people with SEND living in Wiltshire and the role of the New School within this system.

Results from the screening

Specify which protected characteristics (and groups within) were identified in the screening as at risk of adverse impact

Age	Disability	Race	Religion or belief	Gender
Children and young people are within scope of the proposal from birth to age 25, but specifically school age children/ young people.	The proposals will impact on all children and young people with SEND who are educated or will be in a special school in the north of the county and their families. Approximately 12.5% of children have an EHCP or have a SEN Support plan. The proposals will also make changes to the building on the Rowde site making upper floors more accessible to staff and children who might not be able to use stairs.	Services and schools, and access to services and schools are not restricted to or by race and ethnicity.	Services and schools and access to services and schools are not restricted to or by religion or belief.	Services and schools and access to services and schools are not restricted by gender.
Maternity or pregnancy	Transgender	Sexual Orientation	Marriage or Civil Partnership	Socio-economics/ at risk groups
There is no direct relationship to maternity or pregnancy. However, any decisions made about staff will need to take into	Neutral impact	Neutral impact	Neutral impact	There is a higher incidence of SEND amongst children and young people who are in receipt of free school meals therefore both the benefits

account appropriate guidance regarding staff currently pregnant or on maternity leave.				and risks will impact on this group. The role of parent/carer can be a stressful one and the decision may increase pressures on families with children with SEND if they are worried about any future changes to their child's education.
--	--	--	--	--

3. Making Informed Decisions – Useful Data

The data is given in the cabinet reports and the scrutiny task groups reports.

Data Gathering - Summary

If not clearly identified above briefly summarise how different groups will be affected by the proposal(s)

To create this EIA background analysis was completed by stakeholders leading the project that can be made available if required.

Profile:	Are any groups disproportionately impacted by the changes (who, how and why):
Age profile:	Are any age groups disproportionately impacted by the changes (who, how and why): Age groups are not disproportionately impacted, but this a proposal which is focused on children and young people.
Disability profile:	Are disabled people or those with certain disabilities disproportionately impacted by the changes (how and why): This proposal is focused on children/young people with SEND and the plans are designed to improve school provision and wellbeing for children/young people in special and mainstream schools. Key concerns raised in the pre-consultation were that:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some children will have a longer journey – this is now overcome by the proposal that the school operating across three sites and the site for growth is the most central site for travel. • There was limited choice – by retaining all three sites and investing particularly in one site there should be both the benefit of strong leadership, shared vision and differentiation as needed for each pupil with economies of scale. <p>It should be noted that the Council will consult on the appropriateness of transferring the provision at St Nicholas and Larkrise to the Rowdeford site no later than 12 months before opening all the new provision.</p>
Race profile:	<p>Are any ethnic groups disproportionately impacted by the changes (how and why):</p> <p>Ethnic groups are not disproportionately impacted</p>
Religion or belief profile:	<p>Are any faith groups disproportionately impacted by the changes (how and why):</p> <p>Faith groups are not disproportionately impacted</p>
Gender profile:	<p>Are male/female residents disproportionately impacted by the changes (how and why):</p> <p>There are no specific impacts related to gender</p>
Maternity or pregnancy:	<p>Are pregnant women or breastfeeding mothers disproportionately impacted by the changes (how and why):</p> <p>There is the potential of stronger links with maternal health services through the new school, health services are able to work closer together.</p>
Transgender profile:	<p>Are transgender residents disproportionately impacted by the changes (how and why):</p> <p>Transgender residents are not disproportionately impacted</p>
Sexual Orientation profile:	<p>Are heterosexual/ gay/ lesbian/ bisexual residents disproportionately impacted by the changes (how and why):</p> <p>Heterosexual/ gay/ lesbian/ bisexual residents are not disproportionately impacted</p>

Marriage or Civil Partnership:	<p>Are people who are married or who have entered into a civil partnership disproportionately impacted by the changes (how and why):</p> <p>People who are married or who have entered into a civil partnership are not disproportionately impacted</p>
Socio-economics/ at risk groups profile:	<p>Are any groups disproportionately impacted by the changes (how and why):</p> <p>In the pre-consultation there was consideration that those on lower income levels may be affected where the travel time is more costly for parents. It is also acknowledged that families with children with SEND may need one of both of the parent/carers to not engage in fulltime work in order to support and care for their child. Thus any changes should take into account the additional financial strain and impact on the wellbeing of the families.</p>
Multiple characteristics: (e.g. males with a learning disability)	<p>Are there any groups which may be impacted in a cumulative way due to multiple protected characteristics?</p> <p>Yes. Families with children with special educational needs and/or disability will have multiple protected characteristics. For example, parents have less access to paid employment (because of their significant caring role) and will therefore be on lower income levels. Detailed background work of how socio-economic, age and disability characteristics may interact was completed to support this analysis.</p>

4. Making Informed Decisions – Stakeholder Consultation/Engagement

Views From Stakeholder Consultation/ Engagement:

The Consultation Methodology

In September 2019 Wiltshire Council, in partnership with Wiltshire Parent Carer Council (WPCC) began the “representation” phase of the proposal. This included:

- Meetings run by Wiltshire council for:
 - Parent/carers with children/young people attending the three schools in each of the schools
 - Staff and governors of the three schools
 - Pupil representatives at each of the three schools
 - Wiltshire Youth Union

- An online survey accompanied by the timeline for the proposal
- A webinar run by WPCCC for parent/carers across the county including parent/carers of younger children currently attending district specialist centres (Nursery settings for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities – SEND)
- An email address where all longer comments and concerns could be sent
- Officers meeting with representatives of the Friends of Larkrise and St Nicholas

Links to the online documentation and consultation options were shared with:

- All neighbouring Local Authorities
- Local Authorities other than Wiltshire maintaining or funding children’s EHCPs who attend one of the special schools
- Local Area boards and parish/town councils
- Provider stakeholders e.g. Virgin Care and Oxford Health
- Wiltshire Parent Carer Council (WPCCC)
- All parents/carers of children/young people with an EHCP
- All Wiltshire schools via Right choice and via direct email
- Special schools in neighbouring counties
- District Specialist Centres and the Portage Service
- All registered early years and childcare provision in Wiltshire
- Post 16 education providers

The representation was held over 4 weeks. A summary of the meetings is below:

Meeting hosted by	Where	Audience	When	Time
Wiltshire Council	Rowdeford	Staff	12 Sep 2019	15.30 – 16.30
Wiltshire Council	Rowdeford	Parent carers	12 Sep 2019	16.45 – 17.45
Wiltshire Council	Rowdeford	Governors	12 Sep 2019	18.00 – 19.00
Wiltshire Council	St Nicholas	Parent carers	18 Sep 2019	14.30 – 15.30
Wiltshire Council	St Nicholas	Staff	18 Sep 2019	15.30 – 16.30
Wiltshire Council	St Nicholas	Governors	18 Sep 2019	18.00 – 19.00
Wiltshire Council	St Nicholas	Parent carers	18 Sep 2019	19.00 – 20.00
Wiltshire Council	Larkrise	Parent carers	19 Sep 2019	14.15 – 15.15

Wiltshire Council	Larkrise	Staff	19 Sep 2019	15.45 – 16.45
Wiltshire Council	Larkrise	Governors	19 Sep 2019	17.00 – 18.00
Wiltshire Council	St Nicholas – Poplar College	Students	24 Sep 2019	13.00 – 14.00
Wiltshire Council	St Nicholas	Pupils	24 Sep 2019	14.00 – 15.00
Wiltshire Council	Rowdeford	Pupils	25 Sep 2019	11.15 – 12.15
Wiltshire Council	Larkrise	Pupils	25 Sep 2019	13.30 – 14.30
WPCC	Webinar	Parent carers	25 Sep 2019	18.00 – 19.00
Wiltshire Council	County Hall	Wiltshire Youth Union	26 Sep 2019	18.00 – 19.00
Wiltshire Council	County Hall	Parent carers	30 Sep 2019	10.30 – 11.30

There were lower levels of engagement online in comparison with the pre-publication consultation, with 93 responses:

- 35 from “Parent/carer of a child attending Larkrise, St Nicholas or Rowdeford School”
- 3 from “A child or young person attending Larkrise, St Nicholas or Rowdeford School”
- 8 from “Friend or other relative of a family with a child attending Larkrise, St Nicholas or Rowdeford School”
- 31 from “Staff member or governor of Larkrise, St Nicholas or Rowdeford School”
- 16 from “Professional with an interest in special educational needs and/or disability”
- 16 from “Parent/carer of a child with a special educational need and/or disability being educated elsewhere”
- 4 “Friend or other relative of a family with a child with a special educational need and/or disability being educated elsewhere”
- 9 “Other”¹

Of those that recorded that they were linked to one of the schools, there was an even split of representation (22 for each school)

¹ (NB recipients could tick more than one category)

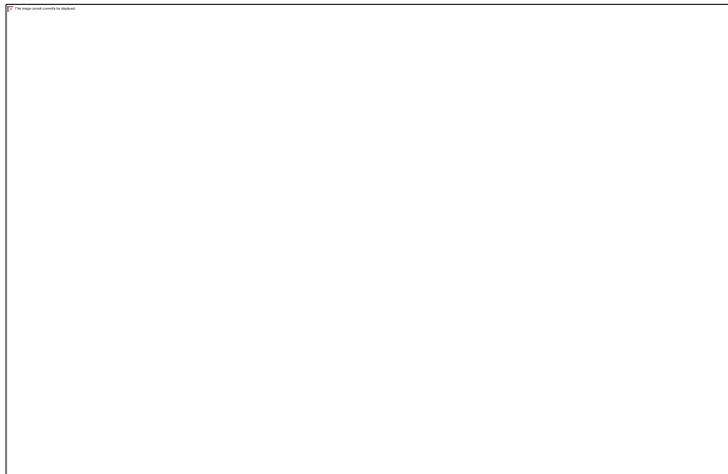
Use the slider to show if you're happy that there will be Post-16 provision at the new school.



Are you happy that we don't need to have nursery (early years) provision at the new school?



Are you happy that the new school is planned to be a local authority-maintained school as opposed to an academy?



To what extent to you think the new school should support mainstream schools about being more inclusive and accessible to children and young people with SEND?



To what extent do you support the proposal?

The consultation was managed through four stages as shown below in the published form.

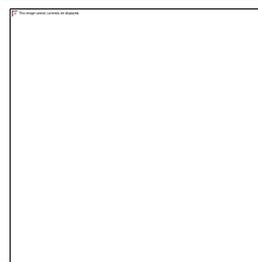
Stage 1	Publication	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The proposal will be published on the websites of Rowdeford, St Nicholas and Larkrise Schools and that of Wiltshire Council from the 2 September 2019 for 4 term time weeks.• The proposal will also be shared with all schools and settings in Wiltshire via the Rightchoice website and to Local Area Boards for forward engagement of town and parish councils as appropriate.• For the three schools concerned, we will share the proposal with the following:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the registered parents of registered pupils at the school;• the local district or parish council where the school that is the subject of the proposal is situated;
----------------	--------------------	---

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • any local authority which maintains an EHC plan or statement of special educational needs in respect of a registered pupil at the school; • the governing body (as appropriate); • pupils at the school; • the trustees of the school (if any); • teachers and other staff at the school; • any local authority likely to be affected by the proposal, in particular neighbouring authorities where there may be significant cross-border movement of pupils; • the governing bodies, teachers and other staff of any other school that may be affected; • parents of any pupils at other schools who may be affected by the proposal including where appropriate families of pupils at feeder primary schools; • any trade unions who represent staff at the school; and representatives of any trade union of staff at other schools who may be affected by the proposal; • MPs whose constituencies include the school that is the subject of the proposal or whose constituents are likely to be affected by the proposal; and • any other interested organisation / person that the Council thinks is appropriate. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses can be made via the online survey http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/council-democracy-consultations • To obtain a paper copy of the proposal and response survey, email SpecialSchools@wiltshire.gov.uk, or write to Special Schools Consultation, Commissioning Team, Wiltshire Council, Bythesea Rd, Trowbridge, BA14 8JN. • Comments must be received by 9am on the Monday 30 September 2019 to be considered in the decision making. 	
--	--	--	---	--

	Stage 2	Representation (Formal consultation and representation 4 weeks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The period of consultation will be the four weeks Monday 2 September to Monday 30 September 2019. • Surgeries will be arranged in this time, led by the Wiltshire Council Project lead in each of the Schools for: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff and Governors 2. Parents/carers • In addition, wider Question and Answer surgeries will be held particularly for parent/carers of children not currently at these special schools by Wiltshire Council in the north and south of the County. • Dates will be advertised and invitations sent via schools, Wiltshire Council and Wiltshire Parent Carer Council (WPCC). 	
	Stage 3	Decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the representation period of consultation, the Council through its Cabinet will consider the comments and feedback received. Subject to Cabinet approval the proposal will be submitted to the Schools' Adjudicator. The Schools' Adjudicator is the decision maker for the opening of the amalgamated new maintained school, and the related proposal to close all three existing maintained special schools. • All the views submitted during the representation, including all support for, objections to, and comments on the proposal will be submitted to the Schools' Adjudicator. • The proposal can be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Approved ○ Rejected ○ Approved with modifications. ○ Approve with/without modifications, subject to certain criteria • The Schools Adjudicator's decision will be published within one week of the decision and; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Published on the same sites as the proposal • Sent to parent/carers of every registered pupil 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sent to the Governing bodies. • There is no right of appeal against determinations made by the Schools Adjudicator. Adjudicator decisions can be challenged only by Judicial Review in the Courts.
Stage 4	Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The implementation date is set as the start of the school year 2021 subject to appropriate processes and timetables. • The Secretary of State will be informed by updating the Department for Education's Register of Educational Establishments. • If the proposal is accepted an implementation plan will be agreed with the schools involved beginning with the creation of a shadow governing body.

Views of Service Users and Other Stakeholders - Summary



39% of respondents choose an emoji that supported the overall proposal. 11% did not have a strong view either way. Of the 50% that gave low scores (emoji 1 or 2), the main reasons given were: the resulting size of the new school at Rowdeford would be too large ('untenable', 'overwhelming', 'institution'); and the decision to build the extra places in a perceived isolated location (lack of community facilities, distance to travel; concerns over current road infrastructure to accommodate increased traffic). There was also a concern about jeopardising what makes Rowdeford 'special' – sacrificing space for numbers. Most who selected either emoji 1 or 2 were assuming that Larkrise and St Nicholas schools would close in two years' time and that parental choice will be removed. For some, there is a desire that the investment should be split between the three sites (Chippenham, Trowbridge and Rowde). The MP for South West Wiltshire, Rt Hon Andrew Murrison, responded that the St Nicholas and Larkrise sites should remain for Key Stages 1 and 2 at least.

Analysis of the Representation Meetings, Letters and Emails

A copy of the transcripts staff, parent carer and governor meetings are attached as Appendix 3. To view the WPCC webinar for parent carers [click here](#)². A copy of the letters and emails received is attached as Appendix 4. Letters that specifically refer to individual children, or the respondent has not given consent to share their response, are not being made publicly available, but have been shared with Cabinet Members with names redacted as appropriate. The audio tapes of all meetings have been made available to the Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Skills

Where	Audience	Key themes
Rowdeford	Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadly in support of the proposal • Some voiced concern about loss of space • Recognition of professional development opportunities • Welcomed the opportunity to grow and become a nationally recognised school
St Nicholas	Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns about all the funding going to Rowdeford and that St Nicholas would be a poor relation • General concerns that the Local Authority was intent on shutting all but the Rowdeford site • Admin staff were concerned about job security • Some staff mentioned that this was an opportunity for career development
Larkrise	Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns made about the potential loss of provision in the locality and that this was a key part of the success of the provision at Larkrise • Concerns about lack of capital investment in Larkrise • Concerns about job security and opportunities going forward • Wish for better understanding of the New School staffing model and any transition arrangements • Worried about the children they teach • Concerns about the lack of experience in teaching children with complex needs at Rowdeford
Rowdeford	Parent carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parent carers voiced concerns that they had read negative historical concerns in the press • On the whole, support for the new proposal

St Nicholas	Parent carers (2 sessions held)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some concerns about the actual clarity of the final proposal • Many favourable comments about the potential of a 3 site 1 school solution – the beacon of excellence that this might afford was an ambition that resonated with several parent carers
Larkrise	Parent carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong concerns and opposition to the proposal as it was believed that the LA was intent on closing the Larkrise site • Feeling that the proposal was misleading • Concern that there is no capital being allocated to enhance the SEND provision in Trowbridge • Some parents articulated a lack of trust in the LA and officers
County Hall	Parent carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally supportive of the 1 school 3 site model, feeling this gave parent carers greater choice • A desire for regular engagement in order to move the proposal forward
Rowdeford	Governors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chair of Governors spoke favourably about the proposal in general • Much discussion was had on the nature and make-up of the proposed Shadow Governing Body and the Governing Body
St Nicholas	Governors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of clarity about the actual configuration being proposed • A number of concerns raised about the proposal • Many felt that trust had been eroded over time • They felt they had not been listened to previously but wanted to work with the LA on any proposal going forward • Supported the wider inclusion agenda
Larkrise	Governors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very positive views expressed about the choice that a 3 site 1 school proposal afforded parent carers • It was felt that the proposal (if all 3 sites were kept open) was an exciting opportunity • The governors chose to lead the meeting with a set of questions for the LA officers, wanting to get clarity on the best way forward

² <https://register.gotowebinar.com/recording/8649164585650968834>

Poplar College	16+ students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive discussion about what is working well at Poplar College. • Some concerns about travel arrangements • Enjoyed the range of sporting and recreational activities afforded by Poplar and wanted to ensure they continued to build on this in the New School
St Nicholas	Pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The hydrotherapy pool, walking, gardening, outside space were among those things they liked and wanted to build on • They wanted to have more outside space • Children enjoy the interaction with the Chippenham locality • They have the Paralympics in the summer in partnership with Hardenhuish
Rowdeford	Pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They felt that vocational options, work skills and community interaction were very important • Lots of emphasis on the hands-on activities – go carting, swimming • Interest and support for a 6th form offer although some wanted to consider whether they might be better served in alternative post 16 provision • Desire for enhanced lunchtime facilities • Journey to and from schools was problematic to some, but liked by others
Larkrise	Pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students enjoyed the ease in which they could integrate into the local community • A desire for more play activities • Wanted to continue to use their excellent IT skills going forward
County Hall	Wiltshire Youth Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The young people expressed some support for the 3 sites 1 school model • The importance of locality provision was emphasised • The efficacy of primary bases was mentioned as potentially offering a model for secondary provision • The young people were keen to engage in any shadow governing body and actual governing body if possible as associate governors • There was strong support for the inclusion agenda

The key findings are:

- There is support for keeping the three sites open with parent carers arguing that this affords them choice
- Having a single integrated leadership team to run all three sites is supported
- Some consultees believe that Council's long-term intent is to close the two sites at Larkrise and St Nicholas
- Those supporting the proposals do not want further delay, and believe that there needs to be greater certainty for pupils, parents and staff
- A number of people felt that building all the new provision at Rowdeford was not appropriate and that new places should also be built at the other two sites
- Planning for the transition of pupils from and to the various sites needs to be sensitively considered, particularly being mindful of the need to have additional places in 2020 and onwards prior to the new school places being available
- There needs to be a clear change management plan with support and professional development to ensure all staff improve their skills and abilities to teach a wider range of children and young people

The table below works through these issues identifying a score for the current position or the proposals prior to mitigation, amelioration or modification followed by a score based on accepting, modifying or rejecting the proposals. These scores relate to the four areas identified as outcomes for the project³.

- Sufficiency - the creation of additional places
- Quality - the proposals lead to increased quality (partnerships, physical space, engagement, education)
- Outcomes for pupils - the proposals lead to better outcomes for pupils (health, wellbeing, educational/vocational goals, preparation for adulthood and independent living)
- Financial efficacy - the proposals enable needs to be met within the available funds.

The table below identifies:

- the key issues (listed above),
- comments on the issue and the potential mitigated and then suggests a score for before and after mitigation (e.g. 1/9 would be a score of 1 now (poor) and a score of 9 (good) if all mitigation is outworked through the project)

³ See paragraph 5 of the main report for more detail.

- Identifies how this should impact on accepting, modifying or reject the proposal.

Issue	Comment/mitigation	Sufficiency	Quality	Pupil outcomes	Financial efficacy	Accept/Modify/Reject
The consultation methodology	The consultation has been thorough and followed DFE guidance	-	-	-	-	It is recommended that the Council accept the proposal
One school on three sites	The consultation suggested that a model of one leadership team but with three sites was welcomed	1/9	7/8	7/8	5/7	Accept the proposal. Consult further on the appropriateness of transferring any provision
Travel Time and Routes	The journeys are not as cost effective as all pupils going to one site, but would potentially keep children in their locality and the Devizes site remains the central location	-	3/5	4/7	3/4	The analysis suggests this is not a reason for rejecting or modifying the proposals
Medical and health support	Parent/carers were worried about increased health risk, but also came up with some creative solutions to bring paediatrician clinics to the school and build strong teams through local training and support in the school and out to mainstream schools	5/6	7/7	7/7	5/7	The feedback suggests that the benefits within the proposal on this matter had significant support
Post 16	Consultees felt that it was a distinct loss losing all post 16 within schools. The proposal is that a modification should be made to include a wider model of post 16 provision which incorporates activity at the one school.	6/7	7/7	8/8	5/7	The feedback suggests it would be worth modifying the proposal - basing a coordination team on site supporting a virtual school approach and some on site provision
Lack of community engagement for students	The three site option offers choice and diversity of settings that parents/carers wanted, however it is acknowledged that all new places will be at the central Rowde site	6/8	6/8	6/8	6/6	Three sites offers wider opportunity. The School will also further develop links with mainstream schools
Co-production	At the start of the consultation there was criticism that the approach was not broad enough. However, the LA modified the approach and offer a range of different engagements. Co-production must be on-going.	-	5/7	-	-	There continues to be a strong relationship with WPCC and parent/carers which must continue

The Centre of Excellence	There was strong support for the Centre of Excellence. It was felt that this could improve outcomes across mainstream schools and support inclusion, potentially reducing demand for special school places.	5/6	6/7	6/7	4/5	It is recommended that the LA work with special schools to take this forward ahead of the school build
Transition planning to the new schools	There were concerns about the anxiety and difficulty in moving schools for both children and parents. Mitigation will need to involve clear plans for additional support for parent/carers during the development and transition period. Every child/young person will need a transition plan. This should be costed and established as part of the plan. In addition, full commitment should be made to on-going network support for parent/carers if the school feels less available. Consideration should also be given to a phased build and phased start for different groups of pupils.	-	7/6	6/5	4/3	Accept the plan with commitment to support the transition process. This could involve phased opening, but could have cost implications
Status of the new school	There was strong support for a maintained school	-	-	-	-	We now await the schools' adjudicator's decision if cabinet accept the proposal
The building options and the right location	Consultees suggested alternate locations or use of the sites considered in the May 2019. Despite further investigation, Rowdeford remains the strongest option for new places. But there is strong support for keeping buildings in Trowbridge and Chippenham.	-	6/6	7/7	5/6	The proposal is for a one school, three site model although there will be further consultation
Early years	Consultees felt there was minimal need for pre-school provision at the one school site It is suggested that the pre-school option is removed	8/8	7/7	7/7	7/7	The modified proposal removed pre-school provision
Staffing, recruitment and retention	Staff posed a number of concerns regarding travel, recruitment, retention and the status of the school and the loss of jobs. However it was also acknowledged that the one senior leadership team would be beneficial and that there would be career opportunities for staff	6/6	6/6	6/6	5/5	Accept the proposals ensuring that the forward plan works with staff and support positive on-going recruitment and retention

Costs and feasibility of what will be built	The feasibility study identifies that costs are higher once risks are identified and mitigated. This assessment will need further work when plans are agreed	See separate assessment	Accept the proposals with the medium-term risk assessment £33m
Admissions	Admissions were only raised in as much as to clarify that the SEND designations would remain complex needs. Further work will be needed to develop an admissions policy for the new school. Strong view from parent/carers that EHCPs should say site and not just the school.		This will need to be reviewed and decided upon by the emerging senior leadership team and governance
Ethos and Religious character and balance of denominational provision	This has not been a key issue within the consultation.	- - - -	No impact to accepting the proposals
Impact on rural schools	No impact, but positive for the Rowde area	- - - -	No impact to accepting the proposals
Displaced pupils Curriculum and SEND	No impact	- - - -	No impact to accepting the proposals
Effect on educational standards.	Drawing staff teams together should support higher educational standards. This was not a contentious issue within the consultation	6/7 7/8 7/8 4/6	Accept the proposals

The protected characteristics are assessed in the attached document. This document assesses risk by three parties:

- A LA officer developing the programme
- The independent view of an external consultant with 20 years of experience of developing school projects
- A representative of WPCC

5. Overall Impact

The impact assessment suggests that mitigating actions can reduce, but not eliminate risk. However, the new proposal while not universally supported has gone a long way to address concerns if three sites remain open. Key will be on-going co-production with parent/carers, governors and staff.

The assessment of issues and of protected characteristics suggests that overall the proposals can have a significant positive impact for children and young people with SEND in terms of:

- Wellbeing
- Progress
- Attainment
- Health
- Community opportunities,
- Inclusion and integration

However, it is recognised that some students:

- May have worries during the development of the project about what school will be like in the future.
- May feel that the older buildings are not as nice as the new build at Rowde

For some parents:

- Require ongoing commitment by officers to build relationships and engagement, particularly where consultees see the outcome as not their preferred option.

We hope this will be mitigated by:

- Many opportunities for engagement in the development of the new school and centre of excellence
- Good transition plans and investment in support for children, staff and families
- Increased support and networking with families via the schools, WPCC and the Council.
- Well-arranged transport and transport plans
- Good planning, coproduction and communication throughout the progress of the project

6. EQIA Outcome

No change – continue to implementation

The policy is robust and evidence shows no potential for discrimination and all opportunities to advance equality have been taken.

Adjust the policy and continue with implementation

Adjust to remove identified adverse effects and missed opportunities to promote equalities and achievement of outcomes

Stop and remove

Remove or change the policy if the EQIA identifies actual or potential unlawful discrimination.

7. Mitigating Action Plan

Action	Anticipated Outcome	Lead	Deadline	Actual Outcome	Comments
On-going communication, and formally established engagement groups	Building of trust and shared ownership	Judith Westcott			
Project plan	Shared plan	David Paice	November 2019		
Taking the proposal to the schools' adjudicator	Agreed new school	Judith Westcott	December 2019		

8. Next Steps

Are there plans to provide feedback to the groups or people that have been consulted in preparing for this assessment?	There is a full communication plan and information will be fed back to all groups consulted following the cabinet report of the 19 th November 2019
How is it proposed that the Mitigating Actions Plan will be monitored?	The Director of Commissioning will hold oversight and will be reporting to Executive Directors, Cabinet and with members of the scrutiny group. The project will be built into the new SEND and Inclusion Strategy and FACT programme
Has the assessment been included with Cabinet papers?	Assessment will be included with all relevant papers
Has a review date been identified to revisit this assessment to consider if there has been a significant change in circumstances?	Yes, Following the cabinet report on the 19 th of November 2019, a full decision needs to be taken by the Schools' adjudicator. A further report will come to cabinet in the spring of 2020

Officers Involved in Completing Screening

Officer completing Equality Impact Assessment	Judith Westcott
Date submitted	05/11/2019
Head of Service or Operational Director sign off	I agree with the content and outcome of this Equality Impact Assessment
Date approved by Head of Service or Operational Director	

Impact Assessment

Criteria	Impact 4 is high negative impact, 0 is low negative impact	Likelihood	Impact	Combined score	Residual Likelihood	Residual Impact	Residual Combined Score
Legal challenge to the Authority under the Public Sector Equality Duty. There was a legal challenge through judicial review However modifications to the proposals suggest this risk is now greatly reduced.		4	4	16	2	2	4
Financial costs/implications There is a risk assessment of the possible cost implications of the build (made available to cabinet). Three scenarios presented identify low, medium and high risk and the possible financial implications.		3	2	6	3	2	6
People impacts These have been widely considered in the report and the EIA		3	3	9	1	1	1
Reputational damage It is acknowledged that it has been hard to manage some of the public messages around this project. A full communication plan has been in place and significant mitigating action has been made to ensure that the public are aware of the LA's commitment to a working with parent/carers and sharing their thinking.		3	3	9	2	3	6
Totals				10			4.25