

**Kent County Council
Equality Analysis/ Impact Assessment (EqIA)**

Directorate/ Service:

Children, Young People and Education

Name of decision, policy, procedure, project or service:

Proposal to amalgamate St James' Church of England Voluntary Aided Infant School and St James' Church of England Junior School

Responsible Owner/ Senior Officer:

John Tutt, Executive Head Teacher, St James' CE Infant and Junior Schools
David Adams, Area Education Officer, Kent County Council

Version: 2

Author: Paul Wilson

Pathway of Equality Analysis: N/A

Summary and recommendations of equality analysis/impact assessment.

- **Context**

The Governing Bodies of St James' C.E. (VA) Infant School and St James' C.E. (VC) wish to consolidate their already close links with an amalgamation into one school. The schools have well established existing ties and share the same site, with the schools only 4 metres apart at the closest point. The schools share kitchen facilities and benefit from various cross-schools staff arrangements, including sharing the same Executive Headteacher.

The Governing Bodies have already written to parents asking for comments on the possible amalgamation and have responded to the queries raised. This included responding to concerns regarding the Junior school changing to VA, with governors reassuring parents that the religious character of the school will not significantly change. Governors noted that pupils already complete Years R to 2 of their schooling within the VA Infant school before moving to the VC Junior school. Admission records indicate that nearly all the pupils who attended the VA Infant school moved onto the VC Junior school.

The Governing Bodies of both schools have met with KCC and agreed that amalgamation of the two schools to create an all-through primary school would be the natural progression for the schools, which will secure benefits for staff and pupils.

- **Aims and Objectives**

The Governing Bodies of the St James' schools are jointly proposing to amalgamate the two schools in order to create one all-through primary school from 1 September 2019.

The Governing Bodies are seeking the views of the wider community on the educational merits of the proposal via this public consultation. This is the early stage of the consultation process and no final decisions have yet been made. The consultation process is designed to establish the views of parents and carers, pupils, staff, the local community and other interested parties. As the proposed changes are “statutory proposals” KCC will be the decision maker.

- **Summary of equality impact**

No adverse impacts have been identified at this stage; however, the outcome of the public consultation and community consultation will enable the Governing Bodies to test out these assumptions.

Adverse Equality Impact Rating Low

Attestation

I have read and paid due regard to the Equality Analysis/Impact Assessment concerning the proposed amalgamation of St James' Church of England Voluntary Aided Infant School and St James' Church of England Junior School. I agree with the risk rating and the actions to mitigate any adverse impact(s) that has /have been identified.

Senior Officer

Signed:
Job Title: Executive Head Teacher

Name: John Tutt
Date: 04 February 2019

Signed:
Job Title: Area Education Officer

Name: David Adams
Date: 04 February 2019

DMT Member

Signed:
Job Title: Director – Education Planning
and Access

Name: Keith Abbott
Date: 04 February 2019

Part 1 Screening

Could this policy, procedure, project or service, or any proposed changes to it, affect any Protected Group (listed below) less favourably (negatively) than others in Kent? Could this policy, procedure, project or service promote equal opportunities for this group?

Protected Group	Please provide a brief commentary on your findings. Fuller analysis should be undertaken in Part 2.			
	High negative impact EqIA	Medium negative impact Screen	Low negative impact Evidence	High/Medium/Low Positive Impact Evidence
Age				Yes. Positive: The proposal would offer the St James' pupils greater continuity as they progress through their Primary education years
Disability				N/A
Sex				The school would remain co-educational
Gender identity/ Transgender				The provision will accept children regardless of gender identity
Race				The school will admit pupils regardless of race or ethnicity.
Religion and Belief				The school curriculum will continue to cover all religions, with a Church of England ethos.
Sexual Orientation				N/A
Pregnancy and Maternity				N/A
Marriage and Civil Partnerships				N/A
Carer's Responsibilities				N/A

Part 2**Equality Analysis /Impact Assessment****Protected groups**

No negative impact on protected groups is anticipated.

Information and Data used to carry out your assessment

The information and data used to carry out the assessment is taken from school census records and the published data shown in the County Council's Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2018-22, which is a five-year rolling plan that is updated annually. It sets out KCC's future plans as Strategic Commissioner of Education Provision across all types and phases of education in Kent. A copy of the plan can be viewed from this link:

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/education-skills-and-employment-policies/education-provision>

St James' Infant School:

Pupils on Roll at St James' Infant School - Schools' Census Autumn 2018:

Year 2 6+	Year 1 5+	Year R 4+ PT Total	Total Statutory Roll	Total Roll
90	89	90	179	269

- 1.9% of the children were eligible for free school meals, which is well below the Kent and National averages of 13.4% and 13.7%* (*Spring census 2018) respectively.
- 2.6% of the children received SEN support which is below the Kent average of 10.1%
- The majority of the pupils speak English as their first language; however, 23.8% of the pupils have English as an additional language (EAL), which is well above the Kent average of 12.4%* (*Spring census 2018).

St James' Junior School:

Pupils on Roll at St James' Junior School - Schools' Census Autumn 2018:

Year 6 10+	Year 5 9+	Year 4 8+	Year 3 7+	Total Roll
90	91	90	91	362

- 2.8% of the children were eligible for free school meals, which is well below the Kent and National averages of 13.4% and 13.7%* (*Spring census 2018) respectively.
- 8.3% of the children received SEN support which is slightly below the Kent average of 10.1%

- The majority of the pupils speak English as their first language; however, 28.2% of the pupils have English as an additional language (EAL), which is well above the Kent average of 12.4%* (*Spring census 2018).

Who have you involved consulted and engaged?

The consultation document will be distributed via the schools to parents, members of staff, governors and local residents. The consultation will be emailed to all key stakeholders, including but not limited to the following groups:

- The Department for Education
- The Diocese of Rochester, Canterbury and Southwark
- Elected Members (Kent County Council, Tunbridge Wells District and Parish Councils)
- Local MP
- Trade Unions
- Local Children's Centres
- Schools in Tunbridge Wells area
- Local Libraries in the Tunbridge Wells area
- All stakeholders will be able to access copies of the document on the KCC website

Analysis

The proposal to amalgamate the two St James' school will have benefits to pupils, parents and staff members, but will not significantly change the offer of primary education to current or prospective pupils. Therefore, the change will not impact negatively on pupils from Protected Groups or lead to them being treated less favourably.

This proposal is in line with Kent County Council's policy as set out in the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2018-2022, which states KCC believes that 'all-through primary schools deliver better continuity of learning as the model for primary phase education in Kent. When the opportunity arises, we will either amalgamate separate Infant and Junior schools into a single primary school or federate the schools.'

Adverse Impact,

No adverse impacts have been identified at this stage; however, the consultations will provide the opportunity for the Governing Bodies and KCC to test out these assumptions.

Positive Impact:

There are a number of benefits when amalgamating two schools; these are primarily educational. The key benefits are set out below.

Benefits for Children

An all-through primary school that provides education for children aged 4-11 years benefits from:

- A consistent educational philosophy from when a child first enters the school until they move on to secondary education.
- A more coherent delivery of the National Curriculum from Foundation Stage through to the end of Key Stage Two.
- A consistent approach to the ways in which children are taught.
- Greater ability to safeguard the needs of all pupils.
- Seven uninterrupted years of education without a potentially unsettling transition to another school.
- Easier sharing of good practice across the whole school.

Benefits for Parents/Carers

In an all-through primary school, parents and carers are able to develop a longer-term relationship with all of those involved in the school, including the Headteacher and support staff. School policies are the same throughout the primary years. For example:

- How children with special needs are supported.
- Arrangements for open evenings and school events.
- School closure days, etc.

This means parents and carers know what to expect. Over time the staff build up a good knowledge of children and their families as they progress through the school, creating a sense of the school as a 'family', which in turn helps develop trust and confidence. Another benefit to parents is that there would no longer be a requirement to apply for a Junior school place for Year 3 from September 2020.

Benefits for Staff

Teaching and support staff can draw upon their current expertise, experience and specialist knowledge in order to share and develop best practice more effectively. Staff from both schools would have the development opportunity to gain experience in all phases of primary education.

JUDGEMENT

- **No major change** - no potential for discrimination and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken

Internal Action Required

YES/NO

None

Equality Impact Analysis/Assessment Action Plan

Protected Characteristic	Issues identified	Action to be taken	Expected outcomes	Owner	Timescale	Cost implications

Have the actions been included in your business/ service plan?

Yes

Appendix

Please include relevant data sets

Please forward a final signed electronic copy and Word version to the Equality Team by emailing diversityinfo@kent.gov.uk

If the activity will be subject to a Cabinet decision, the EqIA must be submitted to committee services along with the relevant Cabinet report. Your EqIA should also be published.

The original signed hard copy and electronic copy should be kept with your team for audit purposes.