

EQIA

Section A

1. Name of Activity (EQIA Title):

Services to Schools (2025-26)

2. Directorate

Children Young People and Education (CYPE)

3. Responsible Service/Division

Education Planning and Access

Accountability and Responsibility

4. Officer completing EQIA

Note: This should be the name of the officer who will be submitting the EQIA onto the App.

Laura Murphy – CY EPA

5. Head of Service

Note: This should be the Head of Service who will be approving your submitted EQIA.

David Adams – CY EPA

6. Director of Service

Note: This should be the name of your responsible director.

Christine McInnes - CY EPA

The type of Activity you are undertaking

7. What type of activity are you undertaking?

Service Change – *operational changes in the way we deliver the service to people.* Answer Yes/No

Yes

Service Redesign – *restructure, new operating model or changes to ways of working.* Answer Yes/No

No

Project/Programme – *includes limited delivery of change activity, including partnership projects, external funding projects and capital projects.* Answer Yes/No

No

Commissioning/Procurement – *means commissioning activity which requires commercial judgement.* Answer Yes/No

No

Strategy /Policy – *includes review, refresh or creating a new document.* Answer Yes/No

No

Other – Please add details of any other activity type here.

Not Applicable

8. Aims and Objectives and Equality Recommendations – Note: You will be asked to give a brief description of the aims and objectives of your activity in this section of the App, along with the Equality recommendations. You may use this section to also add any context you feel may be required.

The national funding arrangements for schools and local authorities has been shifting over the years as the Department for Education (DfE) seeks to move schools and academies to a consistent funding arrangement. Kent

County Council (the Council) has long argued there should be parity of funding between maintained schools and academies, and between Kent schools and those in other parts of the Country.

With the introduction of the School Funding Reforms in 2013-14 Local Authorities were directed to delegate a number of former centrally retained DSG budgets to schools for the first time. A total of £8.7m of DSG funding was delegated to schools from 1 April 2013. At the same time, local Schools Funding Forums were given the powers to de-delegate and return some of this funding to the LA for certain categories of spend where better efficiency could be achieved through central delivery by the LA.

The Education Services Grant (ESG) allocated to local authorities by the Government for the provision of statutory services in relation to schools was withdrawn in 2016/17. The DfE introduced a provision within the School Funding Regulations for local authorities to agree a contribution from LA maintained schools budget shares towards the cost of statutory services. This principle reflects the charge that most Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) place on their schools for central services.

Between 2017 and 2023 the Local Authority School Improvement Monitoring and Brokering Grant was allocated to local authorities to support them in fulfilling their statutory school improvement functions. When this was withdrawn in 2022/23, local Schools Funding Forums were given the powers to de-delegate and return some of this funding to the LA. The DfE's withdrawal of grant reflects the fact that Academy Trusts are expected to fulfil the same functions for their schools, and that the funding to do so comes from the budgets of the schools in their trusts. With the introduction of the National Funding Formula and the withdrawal of DfE funding to Local Authorities to support schools, we have seen funding shifting from Local Authorities to schools to pay for services.

The Council provides a range of services and support to schools. Some services and support are provided to all state funded schools in line with our statutory duties. Others are provided solely to the schools we maintain as a local authority. The Council has looked at all the services it provides to schools to ensure it is treating schools fairly and delivering services and support in accordance with any requirements of the grant funding we receive.

The review has led the Council to consider how some services and support to its maintained schools (mainstream and special) and pupil referral units (PRUs) should be funded moving forward. It is therefore proposing the following changes (from 1 April 2025), and is consulting maintained schools and PRUs on these.

Proposed changes are as follow:

- 1. School Improvement Services (including delivery of the Council's responsibilities in relation to Schools Causing Concern) -** Our proposal for 2025-26 is that the full costs the Council's school improvement work, including both monitoring and intervention, is funded through a de-delegated fund entitled School Improvement and Intervention.
- 2. Moderation of end of key stage assessments -** The Education Act 2002 requires the Council to monitor National Curriculum assessment arrangements required by Orders made under s87(3) of the Act. We propose to introduce a new top-slice fund covering the costs of discharging the Council's responsibility to undertake moderation of national curriculum assessments.
- 3. Headteacher recruitment support -** The Council proposes to cease funding its support for governing bodies/management committees in their headteacher recruitment process. However, it believes it is important governing bodies and management committees access appropriate support in this important decision-making process. Therefore, we are seeking views of schools and PRUs on two options:

Option 1 – a de-delegated Headteacher Recruitment fund is created, under the school improvement de-delegation financial regulation.

Option 2 – schools commission directly the headteacher recruitment support they need.

4. Redundancy and early retirement costs - The proposal is to re-purpose the Schools in Financial Difficulties de-delegated fund to create a new Redundancy Fund which maintained schools and PRUs can access. Schools and PRUs are being consulted on whether this fund should cover both the redundancy payment and any associated early release of pension costs, or just the redundancy payment.

The overall cost if all the proposals for de-delegation/top-slicing are agreed is £15.46 per pupil for primary schools, £9.73 for secondary schools and £16.29 for special schools and PRU's.

The Council recognises that school budgets are also under pressure, thus we have considered how we minimise the impact of any changes. In coming forward with its proposals the Council has carefully considered the options available to it. These included whether the service should cease, reduce, continue or be funded differently. We have also determined that changes should be made over two budget years in order to give more time for schools to plan for these (please note the proposals for 2026-27 are being developed and are not considered in this EQIA). The Council believes that the above proposals will move schools and academies to a consistent funding arrangement which is in line with other schools in other parts of England.

The proposals for 2025-26 will affect all maintained schools (community, community special, foundation, foundation special, voluntary controlled, and voluntary aided schools) and pupil referral units (PRUs).

Section B – Evidence

Note: For questions 9, 10 & 11 at least one of these must be a 'Yes'. You can continue working on the EQIA in the App, but you will not be able to submit it for approval without this information.

9. Do you have data related to the protected groups of the people impacted by this activity? Answer: Yes/No

Yes

10. Is it possible to get the data in a timely and cost effective way? Answer: Yes/No

Yes

11. Is there national evidence/data that you can use? Answer: Yes/No

Yes

12. Have you consulted with Stakeholders?

Answer: Yes/No

Stakeholders are those who have a stake or interest in your project which could be residents, service users, staff, members, statutory and other organisations, VCSE partners etc.

LA maintained schools and PRUs are to be consulted 9 September to 18 October 2024. Final proposals will be presented to the Schools Funding Forum in December 2024 for their decision.

13. Who have you involved, consulted and engaged with?

Please give details in the box provided. This may be details of those you have already involved, consulted and engaged with or who you intend to do so with in the future. If the answer to question 12 is 'No', please explain why.

A Consultation is scheduled. It will be available on the KCC website and shared with schools via briefings. Those consulted will include maintained primary, secondary and special school and PRU headteachers, school business managers and governing bodies.

The assumptions made in this EQIA will be tested through the consultation process and reviewed in response to the responses received.

14. Has there been a previous equality analysis (EQIA) in the last 3 years? Answer: Yes/No

No

15. Do you have evidence/data that can help you understand the potential impact of your activity?

Answer: Yes/No

Yes - We have reviewed the evidence/ data and have carefully considered any impact this proposal may have on groups with protected characteristic. This includes pupils and staff in maintained schools.

The data collected included pupils sex, SEN, EHCP, EAL, FSM and ethnic minority. After applying the proposal which seeks to move schools and academies to a consistent funding arrangement we have concluded that there is no group which would be impacted above others - all schools and therefore pupils within each setting will be impacted equally and consistently under the proposal.

CYPE have also reviewed the Schools workforce in England 2023 data - [School workforce in England, Reporting year 2023 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/explore-education-statistics) After careful consideration we can't find any data or evidence which shows any significant impact on groups with protected characteristics. All staff and pupils in maintained schools will be treated equally within this proposal.

National information shows other LAs have adopted proposals similar to those we are considering. Academy schools in Kent already fund the services within our proposals from their school budgets. 50% of Kent's schools are academies, and these educate 66% of our pupils. Thus we concluded the proposed changes to how the services are funded does not on any group more than any other.

Section C – Impact

16. Who may be impacted by the activity? Select all that apply.

Service users/clients - *Answer: Yes/No*

Yes

Residents/Communities/Citizens - *Answer: Yes/No*

No

Staff/Volunteers - *Answer: Yes/No*

Yes

17. Are there any positive impacts for all or any of the protected groups as a result of the activity that you are doing? Answer: Yes/No

No

18. Please give details of Positive Impacts

Negative Impacts and Mitigating Actions

The questions in this section help to think through positive and negative impacts for people affected by your activity. Please use the Evidence you have referred to in Section B and explain the data as part of your answer.

19. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Age

a) Are there negative impacts for Age? Answer: Yes/No
(If yes, please also complete sections b, c and d).

No

b) Details of Negative Impacts for Age

Not Applicable

c) Mitigating Actions for Age

Not Applicable

d) Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions - Age

Not Applicable

20. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Disability

a) Are there negative impacts for Disability? Answer: Yes/No
(If yes, please also complete sections b, c and d).

No
b) Details of Negative Impacts for Disability
Not Applicable
c) Mitigating Actions for Disability
Not Applicable
d) Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions - Disability
Not Applicable
21. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Sex
a) Are there negative impacts for Sex? <i>Answer: Yes/No</i> <i>(If yes, please also complete sections b, c and d).</i>
No
b) Details of Negative Impacts for Sex
Not Applicable
c) Mitigating Actions for Sex
Not Applicable
d) Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions - Sex
Not Applicable
22. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender
a) Are there negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender? <i>Answer: Yes/No</i> <i>(If yes, please also complete sections b, c and d).</i>
No
b) Details of Negative Impacts for Gender identity/transgender
Not Applicable
c) Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender
Not Applicable
d) Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions - Gender identity/transgender
Not Applicable
23. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Race
a) Are there negative impacts for Race? <i>Answer: Yes/No</i> <i>(If yes, please also complete sections b, c and d).</i>
No
b) Details of Negative Impacts for Race
Not Applicable
c) Mitigating Actions for Race
Not Applicable
d) Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions – Race
Not Applicable
24. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Religion and belief
a) Are there negative impacts for Religion and Belief? <i>Answer: Yes/No</i> <i>(If yes, please also complete sections b, c and d).</i>
No
b) Details of Negative Impacts for Religion and belief
Not Applicable
c) Mitigating Actions for Religion and belief
Not Applicable
d) Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions - Religion and belief
Not Applicable
25. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
a) Are there negative impacts for sexual orientation. <i>Answer:</i> <i>Yes/No (If yes, please also complete sections b, c and d).</i>
No

b) Details of Negative Impacts for Sexual Orientation
Not Applicable
c) Mitigating Actions for Sexual Orientation
Not Applicable
d) Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions - Sexual Orientation
Not Applicable
26. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
a) Are there negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity? <i>Answer: Yes/No</i> <i>(If yes, please also complete sections b, c and d).</i>
No
b) Details of Negative Impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity
Not Applicable
c) Mitigating Actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
Not Applicable
d) Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions - Pregnancy and Maternity
Not Applicable
27. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for marriage and civil partnerships
a) Are there negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships? <i>Answer: Yes/No</i> <i>(If yes, please also complete sections b, c and d).</i>
No
b) Details of Negative Impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Applicable
c) Mitigating Actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Applicable
d) Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions - Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Applicable
28. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities
a) Are there negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities? <i>Answer: Yes/No</i> <i>(If yes, please also complete sections b, c and d).</i>
No
b) Details of Negative Impacts for Carer's Responsibilities
Not Applicable
c) Mitigating Actions for Carer's responsibilities
Not Applicable
d) Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions - Carer's Responsibilities
Not Applicable