

Extract from EQiA from Education and Skills Cabinet Panel on Tuesday 13 March 2012

Equality Implications

The Equality Act 2010 require the Council when exercising its functions to have due regard to the need to (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act; (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it and (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share it. The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are: race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation, religious belief and pregnancy & maternity.

Members must be fully aware of, and have actively considered, the Council's statutory obligations in relation to equalities. This will include paying close attention to any equalities impact assessment produced by officers.

Amending the coordinated scheme to allow an increase in preferences from three to four for all application processes will enable parents of all children to exercise more choice and to increase the possibility of the child being allocated one of the ranked school placements requested. In that way they will improve access to school places to all sectors of the communities in which they are located.

Amending the oversubscription criteria to permit children looked after and children who were looked after to be the highest priority in its oversubscription criteria is in line with the new legal Admissions requirements. This is applicable to all sectors of the community and will therefore not have any adverse effect on any particular group with a protected characteristic.

Amending the oversubscription criteria to remove the current priority given to twins and multiple birth children in the under 11s oversubscription criteria is unlikely to have any adverse impact on any particular group with a protected characteristic, as a new legal requirement permits schools to exceed infant class size limits to avoid the separation of twins / multiple births.

Amending the nearest school definition to include Academies will not have an adverse effect on any particular group with a protected characteristic.

Excluding the new parish of Great Ashby from the priority area for Hitchin Boys School is unlikely to have any adverse effect on any particular group with a protected characteristic, because there is a general Rule 2 criteria which permits those who can demonstrate medical or social reasons why they need to attend a particular school to be ranked higher than others (except children looked after or children who were looked after) in the case of oversubscription.

Amending the PAN numbers of the specified schools will not have any adverse effect on any particular group with a protected characteristic as it will enable additional school places to be made available as close as possible to the demand for them. In that way they will improve access to school places to all sectors of the communities in which they are located.