



## Equality Impact Assessment – School Organisation Change

### *Consultation on the potential closure of North Walney Primary and Nursery School from 1 September 2024.*

Directorate	Children’s Services
Functional Area	Quality, Resources and Transformation
Assistant Director Responsible for EIA	Amy Holliman, Assistant Director, Quality, Resources and Transformation
Functional Area of EIA or Proposal	School Organisation

#### **Aims of the EIA**

Purpose of the EIA	To identify any negative impacts to protected groups and associated mitigating actions as outlined below and also any other risks arising from proposal to close North Walney Nursery and Primary School from 1 September 2024.
Summary of findings	<p>There are some potential negative impacts that have been identified.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children currently at the school will need to secure school places at alternative schools in the area. This may result in concerns about disruption to their education and concerns about how children and their families will be supported as the children transition to new settings.</li> <li>• Closure will result in loss, or changes of employment, for staff at the school.</li> </ul> <p>It is proposed that these negative impacts can be mitigated by the actions proposed in section 3 below. Any other issues identified during the consultation process will be addressed appropriately at a later stage and added to this assessment.</p>
Scope of the EIA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One directorate</li> <li>• Cross directorate</li> <li>• Outsourced organisation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One Directorate – Children’s Services</li> <li>• Schools with abutting catchment areas</li> <li>• The local community</li> </ul>



## Phase 1: Gathering information

List examples of background information that you think are **relevant**. If carrying out an assessment of a proposal this section should include the data used to establish whether the proposal has an impact.

Type of information	Findings
The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013	<a href="http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2013/3109/contents/made">http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2013/3109/contents/made</a>
Equality Needs Analysis 2023	<a href="https://cumbria.gov.uk/elibrary/Content/Internet/535/609/38323/44648152628.pdf">https://cumbria.gov.uk/elibrary/Content/Internet/535/609/38323/44648152628.pdf</a>
Cumbria Observatory (Children's Centre Profiles)	North Walney Primary School lies in the Bram Longstaffe Children's Centre Footprint. Profiles of the Children's Centre footprints can be found at: <a href="https://www.cumbriaobservatory.org.uk/childrens-centre-footprint-profiles/">https://www.cumbriaobservatory.org.uk/childrens-centre-footprint-profiles/</a>
Education	Ofsted Inspection Report: June 2019 'Good'  <a href="https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50089137">https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50089137</a>
Ethnicity	7.5% of all pupils are from a Minority Ethnic background (January 2023 School Census) and there are 86 languages spoken in Cumbria's schools.
Special Educational Needs	Schools monitor pupils by category of Special Educational Need rather than disability. The population of children with different Special Educational Needs is monitored to help ensure we have the provision as well as the policies to meet these needs, thus improving equality of opportunity.
Gender	In line with national data there is an attainment gap between girls and boys at KS1 and KS2. In Cumbria in 2019, the gap between the performance of the boys and girls for reading, writing and maths combined at KS1 was 12.1 percentage points for those achieving the expected standard. For KS2 the gap was 7.5 percentage points for reading, writing and maths combined.
Social Care	The Children's Social Care service collects data on age, gender, ethnicity and disability. Issues arising from an analysis of the information include the proportion of BME and mixed-race children seeking adoption compared to White British families and the supply of BME fosterers and adopters.



## Phase 2 Impacts

From the evidence above use this section to identify the risks and benefits according to the different characteristics protected by the Equality Act.

**All/general:** Any issue that cuts across a number of protected characteristics

Issue	Positive Impact or benefits	Negative impact or risks	Action Required
Overall Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivation, measures deprivation across seven domains as follows: Income; Employment; Education, Skills and Training; Health and Disability; Crime; Barriers to Housing and Services; and Living Environment)..		<p>Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is from 2019. A decile of 1 refers to the 10% most deprived communities in England, while a decile of 10 refers to the 10% least deprived communities in England.</p> <p>In relation to overall levels of deprivation, the 2019 IMD classified the area where North Walney Primary School is located as sitting within decile 2 (the 20% most deprived of communities in England).</p>	<p>Awareness of issues -action will be taken in accordance with Westmorland and Furness Council (WFC) policies where appropriate. This may include provision of support with new uniform costs, etc if required following discussions with families and staff at North Walney and possible receiving schools.</p>
Geographical Barriers to Services (Sub-Domain of the Index of Multiple Deprivation, which measures physical proximity to essential services)	In relation to geographical barriers to services, the 2019 IMD classified the area North Walney is sitting within lies in decile 10 (within the 10% least deprived of communities in England).		



<p>Impact on education of children from the closure of the school and nursery.</p>	<p>Birth rates in the area are falling and those children moving to alternative schools in the area will help to maintain more viable numbers in those schools.</p>	<p>There are four other schools (including South Walney Infant and Junior schools together) within a two-mile radius of North Walney Primary School. Three of them are located on Walney Island and all of them have unfilled places. There is substantial unallocated capacity in the area with more than 30% of primary school places projected to remain unfilled during the academic years 2024/25, 2025/26 and 2026/27.</p> <p>All of the pupils that were on roll at the school at the time of the consultation can be accommodated at any of the other schools in the area, including at Vickerstown Primary School which is the nearest school to North Walney Primary and Nursery School. Given the availability of places within the area, the proposed closure should not result in increased transport usage as a result of changes to the mode of school travel journeys.</p> <p>There are very low numbers</p>	<p>Support will be given through the process by WFC officers and HR providers.</p>
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		accessing a funded nursery school place at the school with only 2 children projected to attend in summer 2024 term. There are no identifiable gaps in early years provision on Walney Island. Two of the other schools on Walney Island also have nursery classes with places available and there is a PVI childcare provider on the island that has nursery places available. Given this, the proposal to close North Walney Primary and Nursery School would create any issues with childcare sufficiency in the area.	
Employees – potential redundancy/displacements		Staff currently in the school face losing their employment or the disruption of moving to an alternative school.	All school staff will be offered bespoke packages of support. This may include career advice, skills development, pension advice, financial planning support, and, redundancy estimates in order to enable each member of staff to make the most appropriate decisions about their future based



			upon their own personal and professional situation.
Transport	There are a number of alternative schools and nursery providers within walking distance, including four other schools on Walney Island (including South Walney Infant and Junior Schools)		No action required

**Disability and health and wellbeing:** All forms of disability recognised under the Disability Discrimination Act including sensory impairment, mental health, learning disabilities, mobility related conditions, conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, and asthma. This also covers any impact on health and well being

Issue	Positive Impact or benefits	Negative impact or risks	Action Required
Children with special educational needs.	Funding for children with special needs follow the child.	Transition to a new school environment may prove to be particularly disruptive and unsettling for students with special educational needs.	Officers from the Local Authority will liaise with staff from North Walney and any receiving schools and North Walney to ensure a smooth transition to the new school and that any risk of disadvantage is minimised. The implementation of the proposal will be overseen by the Local Authority School Organisation Review Group.



**Gender, Transgender and Marital Status**

Issue	Positive Impact or benefits	Negative impact or risks	Action Required
None identified			

**Ethnicity:** All ethnic groups including Asian, Black, East Asian and white minority ethnic groups, including Eastern Europeans and Gypsy and Travellers.

Issue	Positive Impact or benefits	Negative impact or risks	Action Required
English as an Additional Language (EAL)	There are 86 languages spoken in Cumbria schools, not including English.	4.2% of children in schools in Cumbria are recorded as having an EAL (January 2023 School Census).	No action required.

**Sexual Orientation:** including heterosexual, gay, lesbian and bisexual people

Issue	Positive Impact or benefits	Negative impact or risks	Action Required
None identified			No action required.

**Age:** Where a person is at risk of unfair treatment because of their age group

Issue	Positive Impact or benefits	Negative impact or risks	Action Required
None identified			No action required.

**Religion/belief:** all faiths including Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism and non religious beliefs such as Humanism

Issue	Positive Impact or benefits	Negative impact or risks	Action Required

School religious belief	The closure would lessen parental choice to some degree but there would still be a choice between community schools or a Roman Catholic school on the island.		No action required.
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**Community Cohesion:** This is where a decision or a change to services may risk creating tensions between community groups in a local area.

Issue	Positive Impact or benefits	Negative impact or risks	Action Required
Impact on other existing educational institutions locally.	There are four other schools on Walney Island (Vickerstown, St. Columba's and South Walney infant and Junior), whose budgets could be boosted through additional pupil numbers.	<p>All the pupils that were on roll at the school at the time of the consultation can be accommodated at any of the other schools in the area, including at Vickerstown Primary School which is the nearest school to North Walney Primary and Nursery School. Given the availability of places within the area, the proposed closure should not result in increased transport usage because of changes to the mode of school travel journeys.</p> <p>If the proposed is implemented, then Local Authority Officers will liaise with staff from North Walney Primary and Nursery school and staff from any receiving schools to ensure that appropriate transition support is in place for children and their families.</p>	<p>Local Authority Officers to work with receiving schools to discuss any barriers to smooth transition and agree any actions that may be required.</p> <p>This process will be overseen by the School Organisation Review Group.</p>



Impact on the community.	Movement to alternative schools in the area will help to increase the viability of those schools.	<p>On paper this proposal may indicate potential reduction in parental choice on Walney Island. However, there are only small numbers of parents choosing North Walney as their first preference schools in recent academic year and projections do not indicate that this pattern is likely to change during the medium term.</p> <p>There is substantial unallocated capacity in the area with more than 30% of primary school places projected to remain unfilled during the academic years 2024/25, 2025/26 and 2026/27.</p>	No action required.
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### Phase 3: Action Planning

Based on actions raised in the action required box above

Area for further action	Actions proposed	Lead officer	When	Resource implications	Outcome
Consultation process	<p>Work to identify inequality issues.</p> <p>Ensuring consultation process is as fair, transparent and inclusive as possible</p>	Sharyn Duffey	During planning stage		Equality issues addressed within consultation process
Regular refresh of the EIA throughout the course of the consultation	EIA regularly updated	Lee Turner	Ongoing	None	EIA is accurate and up to date



Update EIA with new information and issues raised from consultation	Following consultation period this EIA will be refreshed to consider inequality issues raised.	Lee Turner	Ongoing	Identified from issues raised	WFC pays due regard to preventing discrimination, promotes equality of opportunity and fosters good relations.
Implementation					

### Documents appended to the Equality Impact Assessment

### Quality Assurance and EIA completion

<b>Date completed</b>	December 2023
<b>Lead officer</b>	Sharyn Duffey
<b>Have staff been involved in developing the EIA?</b>	
<b>Have community organisations been involved?</b>	
<b>Date of next refresh</b>	This EIA will be updated at key points during the consultation, representation stages of the proposal and if the proposed is approved, will be reviewed and updated during the implementation process.