

# Equality Impact Assessment Template

Please complete this template using the [Equality Impact Assessment Guidance document](#)

**Version 3: January 2013**

Title of proposal <i>(include forward plan reference if available)</i>	Sandwell Residential Education Centres: Charges for the period 1 August 2020-31 July 2021 (Key Decision Ref. SMBC03/07/2019)
Directorate and Service Area	Education, Skills and Employment; Residential Education Centres
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Names and titles of other officers involved in completing this EIA	
Partners involved with the EIA where jointly completed	
Date EIA completed	24 May 2019
Date EIA signed off or agreed by Director or Executive Director	
Name of Director or Executive Director signing off EIA	
Date EIA considered by Cabinet Member	

See [Equality Impact Assessment Guidance](#) for key prompts that must be addressed for all questions

- 1. The purpose of the proposal or decision required  
(Please provide as much information as possible)**

- 1.1 The proposal seeks to set charges sufficient to enable sustainable high-quality service provision in support of Sandwell Vision 2030, whilst keeping the Centres accessible to Sandwell children and schools.
- 1.2 The proposal recommends continuing with the three-season charging policy approved by Cabinet in 2018.
- 1.3 The proposal recommends increasing charges to Sandwell schools and Sandwell Academy schools by 2% in line with inflation and increasing charges to non-Sandwell schools by 3%, with an overall 2.4% increase in term-time income.
- 1.4 The proposal recommends that school holiday and weekend charges, to generate additional income and support Sandwell school courses, will continue to be set at a rate determined by the Service Manager with Centre Heads.
- 1.5 About 6,000 Sandwell children and young people experience residential visits to the centres each year, and about 2,000 experience day visits, in support of Sandwell's Vision 20130.
- 1.6 The Residential Education Service operates in a competitive market, with a zero-revenue budget since April 2017.
- 1.7 Centres have to generate sufficient income to cover all revenue costs of approximately £2 million, including meeting pay awards.
- 1.8 A 2.5% overspend was reported in 2018/19. This follows a decision taken in 2017 not to implement a proposed 2% increase in charges because of valid concerns about proposed school budget reductions. The three-season charging structure and charges agreed by Cabinet in July 2018 (Key Decision Ref. No. SMBC01/09/2018 refers) are projected to generate an additional 4.6% income in 2019/20.
- 1.9 The new charges will be effective from 1 August 2020.
- 1.10 The current and proposed charges are competitive, especially for Sandwell schools and academy schools.
- 1.11 Additional income to enable subsidised Sandwell charges is generated by more work with non-Sandwell groups, weekends, day visits, holiday-time working, and commercial events, in part made possible by Council investment in the properties.

- 1.12 Sandwell academy schools are currently charged about 20% less, and Sandwell maintained schools 40% less, than non-Sandwell schools.
- 1.13 Service managers regularly review the competitive market in residential education to ensure that Sandwell's centres are competitive. They also regularly receive feedback and communicate with Sandwell school leaders and group leaders. Sandwell school attendance has declined over the last two years, and the three season, limited charge increase, with a focused plan to engage more Sandwell schools, seeks to address this.
- 1.14 Keeping charges at current levels does not account for inflation in operating costs, including pay and living wage rises.
- 1.15 Not addressing seasonality risks centres being empty or underused for more weeks each year, with reduced income and fewer benefits to children.
- 1.16 Putting charges too high risks reduced uptake of places, with overall reduced income and fewer benefits to children.
- 1.17 Sandwell Looked After Children will continue to be able to attend the centres with their school during term-time free of charge.

## **2. Evidence used/considered**

Evidence considered is based on:

- On-going monitoring of uptake of courses and places by groups – especially schools – from within and outside Sandwell
- Monitoring of attendance by gender, disability, and LAC.
- Benchmarking against other external providers of similar services.
- Feedback from Head teachers, and other school/group leaders.

## **3. Consultation**

Consultation has taken place through formal and informal discussion with Head Teachers individually, at Learning Community meetings, and Secondary and Primary Partnership meetings.

## **4. Assess likely impact**

Please give an outline of the overall impact if possible.

The three-tier charges for 2019-20 give schools more price options.

Holding low-season charges at current prices will continue to give schools a best-value option, when demand is lowest.

Introducing a mid-season charge slightly above current low-season charges is expected to have little impact on bookings and numbers attending.

A small increase in charges in the summer high season is unlikely to put off schools that want to come then.

Bookings for 2019-20 are stronger than at the same time last year.

The proposal seeks an price rise to Sandwell schools and academy schools in line with inflation, and to non-Sandwell schools a price rise slightly above inflation.

Sandwell school pupils currently pay about £60 per course less than non-Sandwell pupils; Sandwell academy school pupils pay £30 less than non-Sandwell. The proposal, whilst increasing charges overall, enables greater subsidy of Sandwell places through additional non-Sandwell income.

There is no separate change to any of the protected characteristics listed below.

**Please complete the table below at 4a to identify the likely impact on specific protected characteristics**

#### 4a. Use the table to show:

- Where you think that the strategy, project or policy could have a negative impact on any of the equality strands (protected characteristics), that is it could disadvantage them or if there is no impact, please note the evidence and/or reasons for this.
- Where you think that the strategy, project or policy could have a positive impact on any of the groups or contribute to promoting equality, equal opportunities or improving relationships within equality characteristics.

Protected Characteristic	Positive Impact ✓	Negative Impact ✓	No Impact ✓	Reason and evidence (Provide details of specific groups affected even for no impact and where negative impact has been identified what mitigating actions can we take?)
Age			✓	Centres are attended by all age groups from reception upwards. There is no variation in strategy regarding age.
Disability			✓	Centres have improved their facilities and provision for disabled people, and monitor attendance. It is anticipated that there will not be a downturn in proportional attendance.
Gender reassignment			✓	No variation in strategy.
Marriage and civil partnership			✓	No variation in strategy.
Pregnancy and maternity			✓	No variation in strategy.

<b>Race</b>			✓	<b>No variation in strategy.</b>
<b>Religion or belief</b>			✓	<b>No variation in strategy.</b>
<b>Sex</b>			✓	<b>No variation in strategy.</b>
<b>Sexual orientation</b>			✓	<b>No variation in strategy.</b>
<b>Other</b>			✓	<b>No variation in strategy.</b>

Does this EIA require a full impact assessment? Yes  No

If there are no adverse impacts or any issues of concern or you can adequately explain or justify them, then you do not need to go any further. You have completed the screening stage. You must, however, complete sections 7 and 9 and publish the EIA as it stands.

If you have answered yes to the above, please complete the questions below referring to the guidance document.

**5. What actions can be taken to mitigate any adverse impacts?**

The Centres have developed more versatile cost-options, including pods, more adaptable accommodation, different lengths of courses, and seasonal charging. Overall capacity at the Centres has increased, with more external income and commercial income from lettings and events helping to reduce the impact on Sandwell schools and children.

Schools are encouraged to use Pupil Premium, PE funding and other sources to enable pupils to attend, and where appropriate we can put fund-raisers in touch with schools.

**6. As a result of the EIA what decision or actions are being proposed in relation to the original proposals?**

None.

**7. Monitoring arrangements**

Attendance is monitored and reported by the Residential Education Service Manager.

**8. Action planning**

You may wish to use the action plan template below

Question no. (ref)	Action required	Lead officer/ person responsible	Target date	Progress

## 9. Publish the EIA

### **Where can I get additional information, advice and guidance?**

In the first instance, please consult the accompanying guide “Equality Impact Assessment Guidance”

#### **Practical advice, guidance and support**

Help and advice on undertaking an EIA, using the electronic EIA toolkit or receiving training related to equalities legislation and EIAs is available to **all managers** across the council from officers within Improvement and Efficiency. The officers within in Improvement and Efficiency will also provide overview quality assurance checks on completed EIA documents.

**Please contact:**

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