

Equality Impact Assessment:

Full assessment

Name/title of the policy area/strand or programme with which this assessment is concerned

Proposed establishment by the Roman Catholic Diocese of East Anglia (RCDEA) of a voluntary aided (VA) Roman Catholic (RC) primary school at Hampton Water part of the Hamptons East development in Peterborough

Description/summary of the policy area/strand or programme

Under the Education and Inspections Act 2006, the Council has a statutory duty to provide a school place for every child living in its area of responsibility who is of school age and whose parents want their child educated in the state funded sector.

The granting of planning permission for the Hamptons East development included recognition that two new primary schools would be required to provide school places for the residents of that development. One at Hampton Lakes which opened in September 2019 run by the Hampton Academies Trust. The second at Hampton Water.

The Department for Education (DfE) announced on 14 June 2019, that it had approved in principle, 90% of the capital funding required to establish a new 3 form entry (FE)/630 place VA RC primary school at Hampton Water, to be sponsored by the RCDEA, subject to the approval of Peterborough City Council as the decision maker.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/voluntary-aided-schools-capital-scheme-applicant-information/voluntary-aided-schools-bids-approved-in-principle-and-bids-placed-on-hold>

All of the following can be found at this link:

<https://www.rcdea.org.uk/vaschools-2/>

- The RCDEA's original proposal (September 2019) to establish the new RC primary school
- the outcome of the local consultation on that initial proposal; and the
- subsequent formal proposal (November 2019) to the Council formally seeking approval to open the proposed new school in September 2022

The evidence base

Pg 25 of the Peterborough Education Organisation Plan (at the link below) explains the rationale for the 5th and final primary school required to serve the wider Hamptons development namely at Hampton Water to open in September 2022.

<https://www.peterborough.gov.uk/residents/schools-and-education/school-organisation-plan>

What the evidence shows – keys facts

The primary school at Hampton Water will need to provide 630 places serving the 4- to 11 year old age range when it is fully operational. It will need to open in September 2022 as by then Hampton Lakes Primary School will be operating at or near to capacity in Reception, Yr 1 and Yr 2. There will also be a need for early years provision for 2 to 4 year olds living in Hampton East as existing provision locally will not have capacity to meet the needs of young families moving into the development. The proposed new primary school will open with a 30 full time equivalent place nursery for 2 to 4 years olds and envisages providing 'wrap around' before and after school care as well which will also operate during the school holidays.

In its application to the DfE to access funding to build the proposed school, the RCDEA had to evidence that:

- *there is basic need for a high proportion of the school places that the new school will provide, to prevent creating an oversupply of places in the area;*
- *there is parental demand for the type of school proposed, and it will bring added diversity and choice to the area;*
- *the school once open will be welcoming and address the needs of pupils from all faiths and none, and from different backgrounds and communities in a way that meets our integration and community cohesion objectives and is in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010;*
- *it has the appropriate education, finance and governance capacity and capability to set up and run a successful and viable school;*
- *the proposed site represents good value for money*

When it carried out its initial local consultation on its proposal over a 6 week period in September/October 2019, the RCDEA received a total of 1146 responses, with 82% of respondents strongly in favour and 8% strongly against, the proposal. In addition, a petition with almost 300 signatures was received in support of the proposal.

During the course of the 4 week representation period following the RCEA's publication of a statutory notice setting out its formal proposal to establish a new VA primary school, the Council received 1904 responses with 84% in support of the proposal and 16% against.

The response to both the initial local consultation and the subsequent

statutory representation period confirmed that there is very strong support for a Roman Catholic primary school to be opened at Hampton Water.

As a voluntary aided school the admissions authority for the proposed school will be the school's governing body. The governing body decides the school's admission arrangements subject to the statutory Schools Admissions Code. In addition, specific exemptions from Section 85 of the Equality Act 2010 enable voluntary faith schools to use 100% faith criteria in prioritising pupils for admission to those schools.

The RCDEA has already published its intention to allocate 20% of places (Open places) to children without reference to faith in the event of there being more applicants than places available in the first year that the school is opened.

Challenges and opportunities

There are currently 4 primary schools across the wider Hamptons (Hamptons West, and Hamptons East) development. This school would be the 5th and final primary school required to meet the demand for primary school places across the Hamptons.

None of the existing 4 primary schools is a faith school. If RC families living on the Hamptons wish their child(ren) to attend an RC primary school they currently have to travel 4.7 and 6.3 miles respectively to The Sacred Heart RC VA and St Thomas More RC VA primary schools in central Peterborough. Whereas families living in the various neighbourhoods of the Hamptons who do not wish their children to attend a school with a religious ethos, can express a preference for the other 4 local primary schools. All families live within one mile of other primary schools on the Hamptons development whose over-admissions criteria do not differentiate by way of faith. The statutory walking distance is 2 miles for those aged under 8 years and 3 miles for those aged over 8 years.

Summary of Equality Impact Assessment

An adverse impact is unlikely. On the contrary there is potential to reduce barriers and inequalities that currently exist. There is insufficient evidence, however, for this assessment to be made with as much confidence as is desirable.

Analysis of:

- demographic forecasts and
- current demand for and capacity of places in the two existing RC primary schools in Peterborough and
- comparison with another VA faith primary school on a recent

development in Peterborough indicates that there will, in all likelihood, be more places available to serve the local community in the Hamptons than the proposed over-admissions criteria for the new school would suggest. The exact level of availability is hard to predict, given the levels of error inherent around forecasts, but the evidence available points towards a 'tight fit' with forecast demand following the opening on the school in 2022 and on into 2023.


Overall this carries with it a medium level of risk with regard to the future availability of places at the school for local children without faith.

Next steps

All admission authorities must determine (i.e. formally agree) admission arrangements every year, even if they have not changed from previous years and a consultation has not been required. Once admission authorities have determined their admission arrangements, they must notify the appropriate bodies and must publish a copy of the determined arrangements on their website displaying them for the whole offer year (the school year in which offers for places are made). Admission authorities must send a copy of their full, determined arrangements to the local authority.

The Diocese have confirmed that the admission arrangements for this school, including the provision of 'Open places' will be reviewed annually by the school governing body which is the Admission authority for the school. Where any change to the admission arrangements is proposed, the governing body will consult in accordance with statutory requirements.

In addition annually in the autumn term, the Council publishes how primary school places were allocated at each school in the previous April for entry into Reception in that September.

Policy review date	Summer term 2022
Assessment completed by	Clare Buckingham: Strategic Education Place Planning Manager (Cambridgeshire and Peterborough)
Date Full EqIA completed	6 January 2020
Signed by Head of Service	Hazel Belchamber Assistant Director: Education (Cambridgeshire and Peterborough) 

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