

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

Title of EIA		Supporting Children who are unable to attend their education setting under Section 19 of the Education Act 1996
EIA Author	Name	James Gillum
	Position	Head of SEND
	Date of completion	24/02/25
Head of Service	Name	Rachael Sugars
	Position	Strategic Lead – Education
Cabinet Member	Name	Cllr Kindy Sandhu
	Portfolio	Education and Skills

PLEASE REFER TO [EIA GUIDANCE](#) FOR ADVICE ON COMPLETING THIS FORM

SECTION 1 – Context & Background

1.1 Please tick one of the following options:

This EIA is being carried out on:

- New policy / strategy
- New service
- Review of policy / strategy
- Review of service
- Commissioning
- Other project (*please give details*)

1.2 In summary, what is the background to this EIA?

In August 2024, the Department for Education (DfE) introduced new statutory guidance for schools and LAs, 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' the DfE also updated other relevant guidance documents including, the Suspension and Permanent Exclusions Guidance.

This guidance sits under Section 19 of the Education Act 1996, which places a duty on Local Authorities (LA) to 'Make arrangements for the provision of suitable education at school or otherwise than at school for those children of compulsory school age who, by reason of illness, exclusion from school or otherwise, may not for any period receive a suitable education unless such arrangements are made for them.' This applies to all such children who are resident in the area, whether they are on the roll of a school, and whatever type of school they attend.

All local authorities should have a written, publicly accessible policy statement on their arrangements for complying with the Section 19 duty. The Council has arrangements and process in place for delivering Section 19 duty, but these arrangements are not currently included in a Cabinet approved policy. This policy will, therefore:

provide clarity regarding roles and responsibilities of schools, the Council and other agencies (including financial).

ensure that all children and young people (CYP) have access to a suitable, full-time education which meets their individual needs to enable them to thrive and fulfil their ambitions and aspirations.

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ensure, when a child of compulsory school age is unable to access their educational setting due to illness, exclusion or otherwise, the Council complies with its duty under section 19 of the Education Act 1996 to ensure suitable provision for them.

1.3 List organisations and people who are involved in this area of work

The main stakeholders are:

- Children and young people (CYP)
- Parents/carers of statutory school age children and young people
- Schools
- Local Authority – Education, SEND, wider Children's Services
- InspirED Pathways
- Alternative Provision Providers
- Health Partners

For the above question, please consider:

- Who is directly impacted by this decision
- Who is indirectly impacted...?
- Who is potentially impacted...?
- Whose help is needed to make the decision work?
- Who knows about the subject?
- Who will have an interest in the subject?

1.4 Who will be responsible for implementing the findings of this EIA?

Implementation of the policy and the findings of the EIA is the responsibility of the Strategic Lead for Education

SECTION 2 – Consideration of Impact

Refer to guidance note for more detailed advice on completing this section.

In order to ensure that we do not discriminate in the way our activities are designed, developed and delivered, we must look at our duty to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conflict that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between two persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not

To find out more about local data, please visit the below links:

[Facts about Coventry
Census 2021](#)

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[Joint Strategic Needs Assessment \(JSNA\)](#)

2.1 Baseline data and information

Please include a summary of data analysis below, using both your own service level management information and also drawing comparisons with local data where necessary. Where possible, compare your data to local data using: Facts about Coventry; Census 2021; JSNA.

The policy sets out the Council’s approach to meeting the needs of children of compulsory school age for whom it has a legal responsibility to provide an education, but who for reasons relating to illness, exclusion from school or other reasons experience barriers to accessing a full and suitable education offer.

This policy only relates to children and young people of statutory school age, i.e. children in the reception through to the end of Year 11.

The following provides information on the demographics of the pupil population and this cohort where information is available.

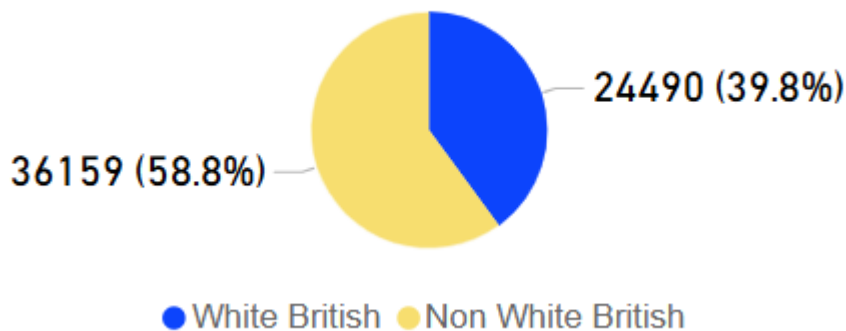
The January 2024 school census shows 34,056 children were enrolled in primary schools, 25,278 in secondary schools and 1,259 in special schools. Of those, 51% were male and 49% were female, 0% did not identify as male or female.

3.8% of this population had an EHC Plan and 16.7% were in receipt of school support for special educational needs.

The January 24 census shows 28.7% of this population were entitled to free school meals.

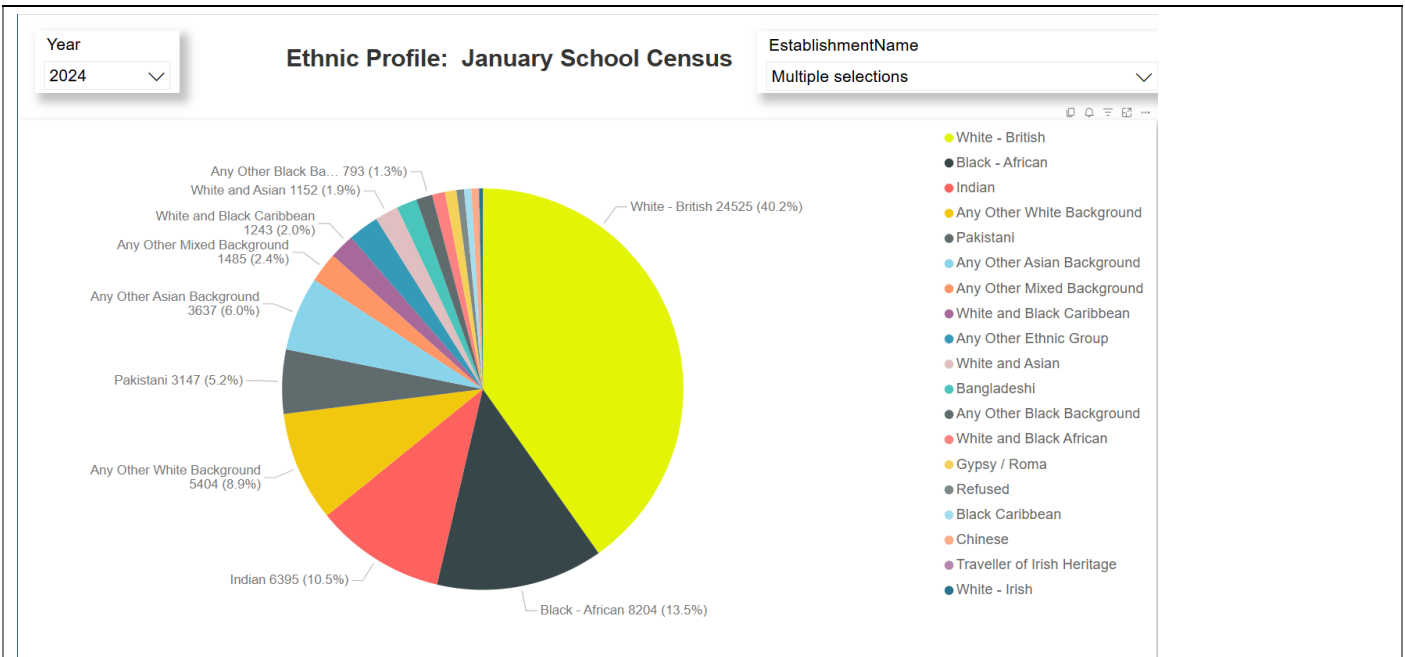
The composition of the population by ethnicity was as follows:

Ethnic Origin Summary (% White British)



Further broken down as follows:

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Children not attending school due to exclusion – we have the most information on this area. Information on exclusions is also collated by the DfE and published.

In the 23/24 academic year there were 117 permanent exclusions in Coventry. 31 were from primary schools, 84 from secondary schools and 2 from special schools.

Of those children who were excluded, 76% were male and 24% were female, 0% did not identify as male or female.

7.7% of children excluded had an EHC Plan and 52% were in receipt of school support for special educational needs.

60% of the children excluded had entitlement to free school meals, and 64% were in receipt of pupil premium.

The composition of children excluded by ethnicity was as follows:

Permanent Exclusions 2023/24

Ethnicity	Number of Students
BAFR - Black African	15
WEEU - White Eastern Euro'n	Less than 10
AIND - Indian	Less than 10
BCRB - Black Caribbean	Less than 10
MWAS - White and Asian	Less than 10
REFU - Refused	Less than 10
WBRI - White British	62
AOTH - Any Oth Asian b'ground	Less than 10
MOTH - Any Oth Mixed b'ground	Less than 10
APKN - Pakistani	Less than 10

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WOTH - Any Oth White b'ground	Less than 10
MWBA - White and Black African	Less than 10
BOTH - Any Oth Black b'ground	Less than 10
ABAN - Bangladeshi	Less than 10
WENG - White English	Less than 10
BNGN - Black Nigerian	Less than 10
NOBT - Info not yet obtained	Less than 10
WROR - Roma	Less than 10
OOTh - Any other Ethnic Group	Less than 10
MWBC - White & Black Caribbean	Less than 10
Total	117

Data source: Capita One

Data as at 21/02/2025

Children not attending school due to ill health

Children who are unable to attend school due to ill health are discussed at a panel meeting convened by the Council.

Between September 23 and February 25 on average the panel received 15 referrals per month, and approximately 4 young people per month have received support from InspirED Pathways.

On 21/02/2025, a total of 74 children and young people were in receipt of education through InspirED pathways either as their main school or subsidiary school. Please note that only 2 of these are under section 19 duty.

In the current academic year a further 23 children and young people were brought to the attention of the Local Authority as potentially requiring provision under Section 19. As of February, one has been identifying as meeting criteria for Section 19 and a further three cases are in the process of being decided.

Moving forward demographic data relating to the cohort will be collected and reviewed by the Panel.

SECTION 3 – Protected Groups

3.1 On the basis of evidence, complete the table below to show what the potential impact is for each of the protected groups.

- Positive impact (P),
- Negative impact (N)
- Both positive and negative impacts (PN)
- No impact (NI)

Protected Characteristic	Impact type P, N, PN, NI, UI	Nature of impact and any mitigations required
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Age 0-18	P	<p>The exercise covers statutory school age within this age group. This is from age 5 in reception until the end of Year 11 (age 16). This policy is applied universally to this age group but it will only be relevant in certain circumstances.</p> <p>There are arrangements and process in relation to section 19 duty already in place but the introduction of a policy will provide greater clarity for all stakeholders.</p>
Age 19-64	P	The policy could have a positive impact for parents and guardians because it supports children and young people.
Age 65+	NI	It is anticipated that there will be no impacts on individuals with this protected characteristic if this policy is implemented.
Disability	P	It is anticipated there will be positive impacts. If a child or young person has a disability that impacts upon their health and means they are unable to attend school for over and above 15 consecutive days this policy will support the provision of education.
Gender reassignment	NI	It is anticipated that there will be no impacts on individuals with this protected characteristic if this policy is implemented.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	NI	It is anticipated that there will be no impacts on individuals with this protected characteristic if this policy is implemented.
Pregnancy and maternity	NI	It is anticipated that there will be no impacts on individuals with this protected characteristic if this policy is implemented.
Race (Including: colour, nationality, citizenship ethnic or national origins)	NI	It is anticipated that there will be no impacts on individuals with this protected characteristic if this policy is implemented. Specific work streams around behaviour and exclusions (which is one part of the policy) will monitor data and demographics and consider specific work in relation to disproportionality.
Religion and belief	NI	It is anticipated that there will be no impacts on individuals with this protected characteristic if this policy is implemented
Sex	NI	It is anticipated that there will be no impacts on individuals with this protected characteristic if this policy is implemented. Specific work streams around behaviour and exclusions (which is one part of the policy) will monitor data and demographics and consider specific work in relation to disproportionality.
Sexual orientation	NI	It is anticipated that there will be no impacts on individuals with this protected characteristic if this policy is implemented
Care Experienced	NI	It is anticipated that there will be no impacts on individuals with this protected characteristic if this policy is implemented. The Virtual School headteacher is in charge of promoting the educational achievement of all the children looked after by the Local Authority. This has been widened (non-statutory) to include children with a social worker including those in kinship care. The Virtual School would be involved for any children and young people in our care.

SECTION 4 – Health Inequalities

Consideration of impact - Health inequalities

4.1 Please tell us how the proposal you are submitting this EIA form will reduce health inequalities:

Please include which Marmot Principles this work covers.

Give every child the best start in life

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Enable all individuals to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives
Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities

4.2 What information do you have to show you are going to reduce health inequalities?

Research undertaken in the UK over the past decade has found that extended non-attendance has a negative impact on children, young people and families and sustains health inequalities, across the areas of education and skills, income and employment, disability and gender and ethnicity. A clear policy and approach that supports re-integration, improved attendance, and sets out the Council's approach to meeting the needs of children of compulsory school age for whom Section 19 duty applies will support the reduction of health inequalities.

4.3 Who/which groups of people might face the biggest health inequalities for your work and why: What can be done to improve health equity for the groups of people you have identified?

Children who do not have access to education of some form will, by definition, be less able to develop their skills and reach their potential.

The impact of extended non-attendance on families can be significant, with parents sometimes needing to take time off paid employment to support their children during period of absence from school.

Extended non-attendance disproportionately affects children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and can be associated with mental ill health.

Whilst deeper analysis of demographic data is needed, we are aware that some groups are disproportionately represented amongst the cohort of children with low attendance at school.

Finally, children with FSM entitlement and / or in receipt of pupil premium are over represented in the exclusions data.

Work to support re-integration and improved attendance alongside clarity in relation to Section 19 duty, and a panel to oversee referrals will help to improve health inequality for the groups identified.

4.4 What can be done to improve health equity for the groups of people you have identified?

Continued work to support re-integration and improved education attendance alongside Implementation of policy and process.

The overarching aim of the policy is to provide education to children and young people who are not able to access school for reasons of exclusion or poor health. In addressing this aim, the policy will reduce health inequalities for those groups who are most affected by the issue of non-attendance; including those with special educational needs, disabilities and mental ill health.

The policy will also reduce the negative consequences of non-attendance on the development of education and skills for CYP and on income and access to work for families.

Finally, the policy will reduce inequalities for marginalised groups, such as CYP who have been excluded from school, by providing a pathway back into education.

SECTION 5 – Digital Inequalities

The Covid-19 pandemic accelerated the uptake of digital services nationally, whereby people who are digitally enabled have better financial opportunities, can access new information and are better connected to others (Lloyds Consumer

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Digital Index, 2021). However, for those who are digitally excluded, the digital divide has grown during the last two years, and without intervention people will be left behind with poorer outcomes across employment, health and wellbeing, education and service access. Some people are more likely to be excluded including: older people, people from lower income households, unemployed people, people living in social housing, disabled people, school leavers before 16 with fewer educational qualifications, those living in rural areas, homeless people, or people who’s first language is not English. ([NHS Digital](#))

If you need assistance in completing this section, please contact: [Laura Waller](#) (Digital Services & Inclusion Lead). More details and worked examples can be found on the [intranet](#).

5.1 Thinking of the main aims of your work area that this EIA is for; does your work area impact digital inequalities or exacerbate them?

Does your work assume service users have digital access and skills? Do outcomes vary across groups, for example digitally excluded people benefit the least compared to those who have digital skills and access? Consider what the unintended consequences of your work might be.

Schools will work alongside parents in relation to this policy. Notifications and referrals for exclusions or pupils with health needs will come from schools.

5.2 Where are the opportunities for your area to reduce digital exclusion inequalities and embed supports/interventions as part of your work?

If any digital inequalities are identified, how can you reduce these? For e.g. if a new service requires online registration you may work with partner organisations to improve digital skills and ensure equitable processes are available if someone is unable to access online.

NA

SECTION 6 – Next steps

6.1	Action Planning		
Inequality/Protected Characteristic	Planned Action	Owner	Timescale

6.2 How will you monitor and evaluate the effect of this work?

Demographic information for CYP who come to the extended non-attendance panel and /or are accessed as requiring provision under Section 19 will be gathered and analysed by the Education Leadership team. This will feed into future policy review and update as required.

SECTION 7 – Impact on Council Staff

7.1 Will this area of work potentially have an impact on Council staff? No

SECTION 8 – Completion Statement

As the appropriate Head of Service for this area, I confirm that the potential equality impact is as follows:

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- No impact has been identified for one or more protected groups
- Positive impact has been identified for one or more protected groups
- Negative impact has been identified for one or more protected groups
- Both positive and negative impact has been identified for one or more protected groups
- The potential impact of this proposal on protected groups is not yet known

Before you submit this form - please save your progress and forward the email you receive with any questions to equality@coventry.gov.uk. The team will review your Equality Impact Assessment and provide you with feedback.

Only click submit if the Equality Impact Assessment has been reviewed and you have been advised to by the equality team.

7.0 Approval

Name of Head of Service: Rachael Sugars, Strategic Lead - Education	Date approved by Head of Service: 24/02/25
Name of Director: Sukriti Sen	Date sent to Director: 24/02/25
Name of Lead Elected Member: Cllr Kindy Sandhu	Date sent to Councillor: 24/02/25