

Initial Equalities Screening Record Form

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| Date of Screening: 5/3/24 | Directorate: People | | Section: SEND |
| 1. Activity to be assessed | The council is proposing to close College Hall Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) at the end of the 2023/24 academic year. The council currently commissions College Hall PRU for pupils in Bracknell Forest who are permanently excluded from school and provides preventative placements to support children who are at risk of exclusion. The reason for the proposal to close is due to the school being no longer financially viable and an inadequate Ofsted rating. | | |
| 2. What is the activity? | The decision to consult on the future of College Hall has not been made lightly but is being brought forward given the financial sustainability and inadequate Ofsted rating of the school. No decision to close the school has yet been made. A statutory process must be followed . A decision will be made by end of May 2024 and if decided to close, College Hall PRU will close on at the end of the 2023/24 academic year. | | |
| 3. Is it a new or existing activity? | New | | |
| 4. Officer responsible for the screening | Duane Chappell, Assistant Director Education and Learning | | |
| 5. Who are the members of the screening team? | Duane Chappell, Kellie Williams, Oliver May | | |
| 6. What is the purpose of the activity? | The local authority is proposing to close College Hall, located at West Road Wokingham RG40 3BT, at the end of the 2023/24 academic year. College Hall offers 56 placements for young people in key stage 3 and 4 who have experienced difficulty in maintaining a place in mainstream education. In the past, pupils have attended College Hall on an open-ended basis, with many remaining at the school for a long period of time or completing their key stage 4 education there, rather than returning to their main rolled mainstream school. The council and local schools are committed to stopping this practice and as a result, young people should only be educated at College Hall for a maximum of 12 weeks. A new funding model will be implemented that is based on actual and expected pupil numbers, rather than a flat number of placements. This will bring the funding model in line with how special schools are funded. College Hall management committee has determined that College Hall PRU is no longer financially viable. This, in addition to the inadequate Ofsted rating, is the reason for proposing the closing of College Hall. If the school was to close, children who are currently at College Hall will take an individual approach to meet their education needs, this may include the commissioning of bespoke packages of education that is tailored to their needs. | | |
| 7. Who is the activity designed to benefit/target? | Children and young people who are at risk of exclusion or are permanently excluded from school. We also recognise that parents, carers and other family members may be impacted by the changes to provision and services. | | |
| Protected Characteristics | Please tick yes or no | Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both? If the impact is neutral, please give a reason. | What evidence do you have to support this? E.g., equality monitoring data, consultation results, customer satisfaction information etc. Please add a narrative to justify your claims around impacts and describe the analysis and interpretation of |

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| | | | evidence to support your conclusion as this will inform members decision making, include consultation results/satisfaction information/equality monitoring data |
| <p>8. Disability Equality – this can include physical, mental health, learning or sensory disabilities and includes conditions such as dementia as well as hearing or sight impairment.</p> | <p>Y</p> | <p>Most young people at College Hall have special education needs and disabilities (SEND), but not all have an education, health, and care plan (EHCP). Most have social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) needs but there are also a small number of young people with autism, specific learning difficulties and moderate learning difficulties.</p> <p>For the young people currently at College Hall who have an EHCP, the council is currently talking to parents and carers regarding parental preferences and is consulting with the most appropriate provision to meet their special educational needs. Regardless of the school closes or not, the expectation is that these students will be accessing more appropriate provision to meet their SEND needs by the summer term 2024.</p> <p>For the young people at SEN support, the council intends to take an individual approach. This may include reintegrating into mainstream education or the commissioning of bespoke packages of education.</p> <p>The closure of the school will release resources which will enable improved diversity of education opportunity within Bracknell Forest. This will have the further effect of less funding will be spent on out of borough placements through the development of specialist provision in borough, meaning that children and young people with SEND will be able to access education within their local communities.</p> <p>Children and young people will feel more integrated and included within their local communities, with increased social opportunities and local friendship groups.</p> <p>Local provision will mean that children and young people will be able to access a quality education without having to travel long distances every day.</p> <p>Potential negative impact:</p> | <p>During the development of the council's Safety Valve proposals, regular engagement sessions were held with headteachers, chairs of governors and the Parent Carer Forum, which demonstrated widespread support for consulting on the closure of College Hall PRU. Furthermore, a letter from all secondary headteachers supporting the closure and advocating for the opening of a new social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) school reinforces the consensus among educational stakeholders. The parents and carers of all current College Hall students have been contacted and no concerns were raised regarding the closure and potential impact on children with SEND.</p> |

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| | | | <p>Closing the PRU will be a change in service delivery model, this might have a negative impact on CYP and their families in terms of the services they have been used to accessing. This could be due to disruption to family routines and the potential impact on mental health from needing to adjust to a change.</p> | |
| 9. Racial equality | Y | | <p>The majority of pupils at College Hall are white British with 92% of pupils at College Hall identifying as white British compared to the overall school population which is 62%. The closure of College Hall will therefore impact White British young people more.</p> <p>There is one student who identified as mixed/dual background of white and Asian and one White Gypsy/Roma. There are no other ethnicities represented at College Hall.</p> <p>All young people currently at College Hall will have more tailored approaches to their future education which will be done in collaboration with the young people, their parents and carers, and the staff currently working with them at College Hall. This personalised approach aims to address individual needs, ensuring a continuation of education and support tailored to each student's requirements. Therefore, the impact will likely be positive for all pupils.</p> | <p>School Census data (January 24) compared to College Hall</p> <p>White (all white backgrounds) – Census 79% and College Hall 96%</p> <p>Black (all black backgrounds) – Census 3.4% and College Hall 0%</p> <p>Asian (all Asian backgrounds) – Census 7.6% and College Hall 0%</p> <p>Mixed (white and black backgrounds) – Census 2.4% and College Hall 0%</p> <p>Mixed (white and asian backgrounds) – Census 2.2% and College Hall 4%</p> <p>Mixed (other) – Census 2.5% and College Hall 0%</p> <p>While the number of White British at College Hall is higher than school census figures, due to the relatively small numbers of young people at College Hall, a small change will have a significant impact on the demographic profile of the school.</p> |
| 10. Gender equality | Y | | <p>There are more boys than girls at College Hall. The closure of College Hall will therefore impact males more than females.</p> <p>However, as all young people currently at College Hall will have more tailored approaches to their future education which will be done in collaboration with the young people, their parents and carers, and the staff currently working with them at College Hall. This personalised approach aims to address individual needs, ensuring a continuation of education and</p> | <p>Currently 40% of the young people are female and 60% are male. Most recent national data, boys account for 71% of permanent exclusions, girls the remaining 29%. Boys account for 65% of suspension, girls 35% of suspension. Suspensions and permanent exclusions in England, Autumn term 2022/23 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK (explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk)</p> <p>Please note that this is not a perfect comparison as not all children and young people who are excluded or suspended go to a PRU.</p> |

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| | | | support tailored to each student's requirements. Therefore, the impact will likely be positive. | |
| 11. Sexual orientation equality | | N | We do not collect data on sexual orientation within the school. Therefore, it is not possible to quantify whether there will be an impact on CYP in relation to their sexual orientation. | While most young people currently at College Hall have social, emotional, and mental health needs and there is evidence that children who identify at LGBTQIA+ are at greater risk of some mental health challenges such as anxiety and depression, and isolation or barriers to speaking out Safeguarding LGBTQ+ children and young people NSPCC Learning . We have not found evidence to suggest they are at greater risk of exclusion |
| 12. Gender re-assignment | | N | We do not collect data on gender reassignment within the school. Therefore, it is not possible to quantify whether there will be an impact on CYP in relation to their gender reassignment. | While most young people currently at College Hall have social, emotional, and mental health needs and there is evidence that children who identify at LGBTQIA+ are at greater risk of some mental health challenges such as anxiety and depression, and isolation or barriers to speaking out Safeguarding LGBTQ+ children and young people NSPCC Learning . We have not found evidence to suggest they are at greater risk of exclusion |
| 13. Age equality | Y | | <p>The closure of College Hall will only impact young people in key stage 3 and 4 who will be aged between 11-16 who are at risk of/have been excluded from a school. However, all young people currently on roll are in year 9 (age 13-14), year 10 (age 14-15) and year 11 (age 15-16). The young people in year 11 will not be impacted by the closure as they will finish their education at College Hall before the proposed closure date.</p> <p>Young people currently at College Hall in year 9 and 10 will have their needs met in more tailored, personalised approach which may involve commissioning bespoke places so do not anticipate the having a negative impact on this age group.</p> <p>Many of the young people who are at risk of exclusion have SEMH. For future young people of this age group who are at risk of exclusion, their needs are</p> | <p>Since 2019/20 there has only been 1 permanent exclusion per year in Bracknell Forest</p> <p>Section 19 Education Act 1996 requires LAs to make suitable arrangements for children of compulsory school age who, because of exclusion, illness, or other reasons, would not receive suitable education without such provision. This duty does not have to be met by a PRU but can be met in a range of ways such as tutoring, whether at home or in a community setting.</p> <p>No young person of primary school age has been permanently excluded since 2017/18 and only a total of four young people of primary school age have been excluded in the past decade.</p> |

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| | | | likely to be met at with the creation of a new SEMH school There will be no change in provision for primary school age children at risk of exclusion | |
| 14. Religion and belief equality | | N | We do not collect data on religion and belief within the school or the school census. Therefore, it is not possible to quantify whether there will be an impact on CYP in relation to their religion or belief. | There is no anticipated impact to this characteristic. |
| 15. Pregnancy and maternity equality | | N | It is not envisaged that there will be an impact on pregnancy and maternity equality. | There is no anticipated impact to this characteristic. |
| 16. Marriage and civil partnership equality | | N | It is not envisaged that there will be an impact on marriage and civil partnership equality. | There is no anticipated impact to this characteristic. |
| 17. Please give details of any other potential impacts on any other group (e.g., those on lower incomes/carers/ex-offenders, armed forces communities) and on promoting good community relations. | We have not identified any other potential impact on any other groups. | | | |
| 18. If an adverse/negative impact has been identified can it be justified on grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group or for any other reason? | Whilst we have identified the potential for some adverse impacts, we believe that these are at a level where we can seek to mitigate them. | | | |
| 19. If there is any difference in the impact of the activity when considered for each of the equality groups listed in 8 – 14 above; how significant is the difference in terms of its nature and the number of people likely to be affected? | No. The main impact will be on the 27 young people currently at College Hall. However, many of these young people are in year 11 so will complete their key stage 4 education prior to the closure (if agreed) of College Hall. For the remaining young people, the aim is to return these young people either to their main roll school or secure education provision that better meets their needs – this will happen regardless of whether College Hall remains open or not. | | | |
| 20. Could the impact constitute unlawful discrimination in relation to any of the Equality Duties? | | N | | |
| 21. What further information or data is required to better understand the impact? Where and how can that information be obtained? | If the proposal to close College Hall is agreed, we will continue to engage with the parent, carers and young people who are currently at College Hall to ensure their education needs are met. This may be through commissioning bespoke placements for children but will seek to meet the needs of the young people as close to their communities as possible. | | | |

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| | We will continue to work with schools to support them to meet the needs of all young people at risk of exclusion, including the creation of a SEMH school in Bracknell Forest. | | |
| <p>22. On the basis of sections 7 – 17 above is a full impact assessment required?</p> | | N | <p>Please explain your decision. If you are not proceeding to a full equality impact assessment, make sure you have the evidence to justify this decision should you be challenged.</p> <p>The screening did not identify any potential equality considerations requiring further consideration during implementation.</p> <p>The initial equalities screening does not identify any impact that is not being adequately mitigated. The main impact will be on the young people who are currently at the school and will not complete their key stage 4 education prior to the proposed closure date. Mitigations are already in place for these young people to ensure their education needs are met and we believe will result in better outcomes for these young people than if they were to remain in at College Hall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the young people at College Hall who have an Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP), the council is currently having conversations with the parents and carers regarding parental preferences and is consulting with specialist providers. The expectation is that these students will be accessing appropriate provision by the summer term 2024 • Recognising the diverse needs of the remaining students without EHCPs, combined with the fact that some have been at College Hall for a considerable period, the council intends to take an individual approach. This may include the commissioning of bespoke packages of education. <p>In all cases, the process will involve collaboration with the young people, their parents and carers, and the staff currently working with them at College Hall. This personalised approach aims to address individual needs, ensuring a continuation of education and support tailored to each student's requirements.</p> |
| <p>23. If a full impact assessment is not required; what actions will you take to reduce or remove any potential differential/adverse impact, to further promote equality of opportunity through this activity or to obtain further information or data? Please complete the action plan in full, adding more rows as needed.</p> | | | |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Action</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Timescale</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Person Responsible</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Milestone/Success Criteria</p> |
| <p>Publish statutory proposal</p> | <p>11 March 2024</p> | <p>Assistant Directors: Education and Learning and Strategic Projects</p> | <p>Statutory proposal to close College Hall published</p> |
| <p>Conduct 'representation period' where any person or organisation can submit comments on the proposal to the local authority</p> | <p>11 March 2024 – 24 April 2024</p> | <p>Assistant Directors: Education and Learning and Strategic Projects</p> | <p>People with interest read proposal and submit comments to the local authority</p> |

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| Executive make decision on whether to close College Hall | May 2024 | Assistant Directors: Education and Learning and Strategic Projects | Following period of representation, the executive makes a decision on the proposal to close College Hall |
| Complete statutory process for school closure | 31 August 2024 | Assistant Directors: Education and Learning and Strategic Projects | School closes and current pupils successfully move to new education provision that better meets their needs |
| Regular engagement and consultation with headteachers, chairs of governors | Ongoing | Executive Director People and Assistant Director Education and Learning | Development of local provision to meet the need of children who are at risk of exclusion. Most notably the SEMH specialist school. |
| Regular engagement and consultation with parent and carer representatives | Ongoing | Executive Director People and Assistant Director Education and Learning | Development of local provision to meet the need of children who are at risk of exclusion. Most notably the SEMH specialist school. |
| 24. Which service, business or work plan will these actions be included in? | SEND | | |
| 25. Please list the current actions undertaken to advance equality or examples of good practice identified as part of the screening? | Improvements in data quality to ensure we can effectively monitor the impact on groups with protected characteristics. | | |
| 26. Assistant Director/Director signature. | <p>Signature: <i>D Chappell.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Date: 9 March 2024</p> | | |