

Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) Form

Updated 6 August 2024

Sections in this form:

Section 1 – Details of the service, service change, decommissioning of the service, strategy, function or procedure

Section 2 - Information – What do you know?

Section 3 - What did people tell you?

Section 4 - Review of information, consultation feedback and equality analysis

Section 5 - Justification, Mitigation and Actions

Section 6 - Monitoring and Review

Section 7 - Sign off

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This form should be completed in conjunction with reading the EIA Guidance.

Section 1 – Details of the service, service change, decommissioning of the service, strategy, function or procedure

Title of the EIA	Production of School Meals within the price of a School Meal
Assessment lead officer	██████████
Email	██
Telephone number	██████████
Directorate	Families & Wellbeing
Department	Education and Inclusion
Date of assessment	4 th September 2024
Details of the service, service change, decommissioning of the service, strategy, function or procedure.	<p>Warrington Borough Council provides a service level agreement (SLA) that delivers school meals for those schools that want to purchase the SLA. At present the school meals service contracts with sixty three primary schools and three special schools for the provision of school meals. Due to the economic crisis, the school meals service has been operating at a loss with the cost of producing a school meal being higher than the amount of funding the council receive from charging for a school meal.</p> <p>This EIA is being carried out on two changes being implemented to enable the production of a school meal within the price charged, as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is expected that the charge for a school meal will increase each year in line with increase costs to produce the meal, effected by the cost increase for staff salaries and food. This may be higher than inflation. The cost of a school meal will however remain broadly in line with other national council charges for school meals. 2. The use of specialist food stuff in the production of meals to meet dietary requirements will be managed in line with ensuring the cost of producing meals is aligned with the funding available. The school meals service is committed to providing a meal that suits every child’s dietary requirement, however this may not always involve the use of specialist foodstuff.

Who is affected?	All children that access the school meals service may be affected if they have specialist dietary requirements and/or pay for a school meal.
Links and impact on other services, strategies, functions or procedures.	The school meals service links into the corporate strategy with regards to supporting our most vulnerable families and the delivery of free school meals.


<p>How does the service, service change, strategy, function or procedure help the council meet the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty?</p> <p>The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) EHRC (equalityhumanrights.com)</p>	<p>Advance equal opportunity between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not by providing meals that meet the dietary needs of every child.</p>
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Section 2 - Information – What do you know?

What information (qualitative and quantitative) and/or research have you used to commission/change/decommission the service, strategy, function or procedure?	
<p>Information used</p>	<p>The cost of a school meal will remain broadly in line with other national councils who provide school meal services, this is checked on an annual basis and ascertained prior to any changes made.</p> <p>The ingredients used to produce meals will take account of dietary requirements (in accordance with the school meals ‘special diet and allergen agreement’ and ‘medical diet form for parent to complete’). Meals are produced in accordance to menu plans and meals for each dietary requirement are clearly labelled. A process is in place to identify children and the meal that they can have based on the dietary needs – this may include several options available.</p> <p>Based on research there are some school meals services that do not provide certain foodstuff, in Warrington we will provide any special foodstuff if it can be provided within the cost of a meal. There will always be a meal for every child to meet every dietary requirement. There is also a commitment to offer specialist foodstuff based where the service is able to and where there is demand.</p>
<p>Gaps in information</p>	<p>None known</p>

Section 3 - What did people tell you?

What consultation and engagement activities have you undertaken and what did people tell you? Is there any feedback from other local and/or external regional/national consultations that could be included in your assessment?

<p>Details and date of the consultation/s and/or engagement activities</p>	<p>Managers carried out a survey talking to six schools (6 head teachers and 20 pupils) as part of a review of the service.</p> <p>Annual parent, pupil and staff surveys will be carried out to inform the development of the school meals service.</p>																					
<p>Gaps in consultation and engagement feedback</p>	<p>None known</p>  <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Pupil Survey</th> <th>HT Survey</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Taste</td> <td>4.05</td> <td>4.25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Quality</td> <td>4.05</td> <td>4.33</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Variety</td> <td>4.52</td> <td>4.17</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Health</td> <td>4.76</td> <td>4.40</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Portion Size</td> <td>3.81</td> <td>4.67</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Overall Satisfaction</td> <td>4.29</td> <td>4.00</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Pupil Survey	HT Survey	Taste	4.05	4.25	Quality	4.05	4.33	Variety	4.52	4.17	Health	4.76	4.40	Portion Size	3.81	4.67	Overall Satisfaction	4.29	4.00
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Section 4 - Review of information, consultation feedback and equality analysis

In many cases it is likely that your proposal will impact more significantly on some protected characteristics more than others i.e. age, gender or disability. Your proposal may not impact on some protected characteristics at all i.e. marriage or civil partnership. If this is the case, please state “no impact” on the template.

Protected characteristics groups from the Equality Act 2010	What do you know? Summary of information used to inform the proposal including demographic information.	What did people tell you? Summary of customer and/or staff feedback.	What does this mean? Impacts identified from the information and feedback (actual and potential). These can be either positive, negative or have no impact.
Age	<p>May impact children in primary school who have a school meal and/or pay for a school meal.</p> <p>The School Meals service served 2,269,557 meals between 1st April 2023 and March 31st 2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 737,279 paid for meals (66% take up of paid for meals) - 1,532,278 FSM (75% take up of free school meals) <p>The school meals service serves over 12000 meals a day.</p>	<p>We asked other local authorities what their charge was for school meals, to ascertain whether Warrington remains within benchmark price of school meal.</p> <p>Six schools provided feedback on the School Meals service (6 head teachers and 30 pupils). See section 3</p> <p>The consensus is that the meals service overall is very good. Pupils rate highly the health and variety of food offered, however the portion size isn't quite right for all ages (too much for the younger age and too little for the older children). Headteachers rate highly the quality and taste of food.</p>	<p>School meals continue to be available at a cost equitable to other areas. Choice of food will be available which meets all dietary requirements.</p> <p>A review of food waste is being carried out, as well as portion sizes.</p>
Carers	NA		

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Care Experience as a child or young person and Care Leavers ¹	NA		
Disability	May impact children who have dietary requirements relating to their disability support. Children with disabilities accessing school meals is included in the 'age' data. The Green Lane and Fox Wood special schools served 42084 meals between 1 st April 2023 and March 31 st 2024.		Choice of food will be available which meets all dietary requirements.
Gender reassignment	NA		
Pregnancy and maternity	NA		
Race/ethnicity	NA		

¹ **Experience of the care system as a child or young person** – This refers to people who have spent time living with foster carers under local authority care, in residential care (e.g., a children’s home) or in kinship care ^[1] with relatives or friends as a child or young person. A **care leaver** is a young person aged 16-25 years old who has been ‘looked after’ at some point since they were 14 years old, were in care on or after their 16th birthday. The [Independent Review of Children’s Social Care](#) highlighted the significant levels of discrimination and disadvantage faced by care experienced people. In January 2024 this Council decided to treat “care experience” as if it were a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010”.

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Religion or belief	Out of sixty six schools seven are serving halal meat however in fifty nine schools parents have opted for their child to eat a fish option or vegetarian option. Vegetarian option is served at every meal. Schools also celebrate meat free Monday.	Pupil feedback is particularly positive with regards to the variety of food available within the school meals service.	A process is in place for parents to state what dietary needs their child has, with reference to the AL2 form and the Special Diet and Allergen Agreement. There remains a commitment by the service to serve specialist foodstuff where able, based on demand.
Sex	NA		
Sexual orientation	NA		
Marriage and civil partnership	NA		

Section 5 - Justification, mitigation and actions

Mitigation	What can you do? Actions to mitigate any negative impacts or further enhance positive impacts
Those families who do not meet FSM eligibility but are in economic crisis could be affected if they cannot afford the increase in school meal costs. Some schools do provide financial support to families in crisis. All schools promote foodbanks and other sources of support available.	Schools promote to families the free school eligibility check, as they may be eligible but have not claimed.

School meals must meet the legal nutritional requirements for school lunches: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-food-standards-resources-for-schools/school-food-standards-practical-guide>.

All school meals must adhere with the School Food Regulations 2014 which state that food must:

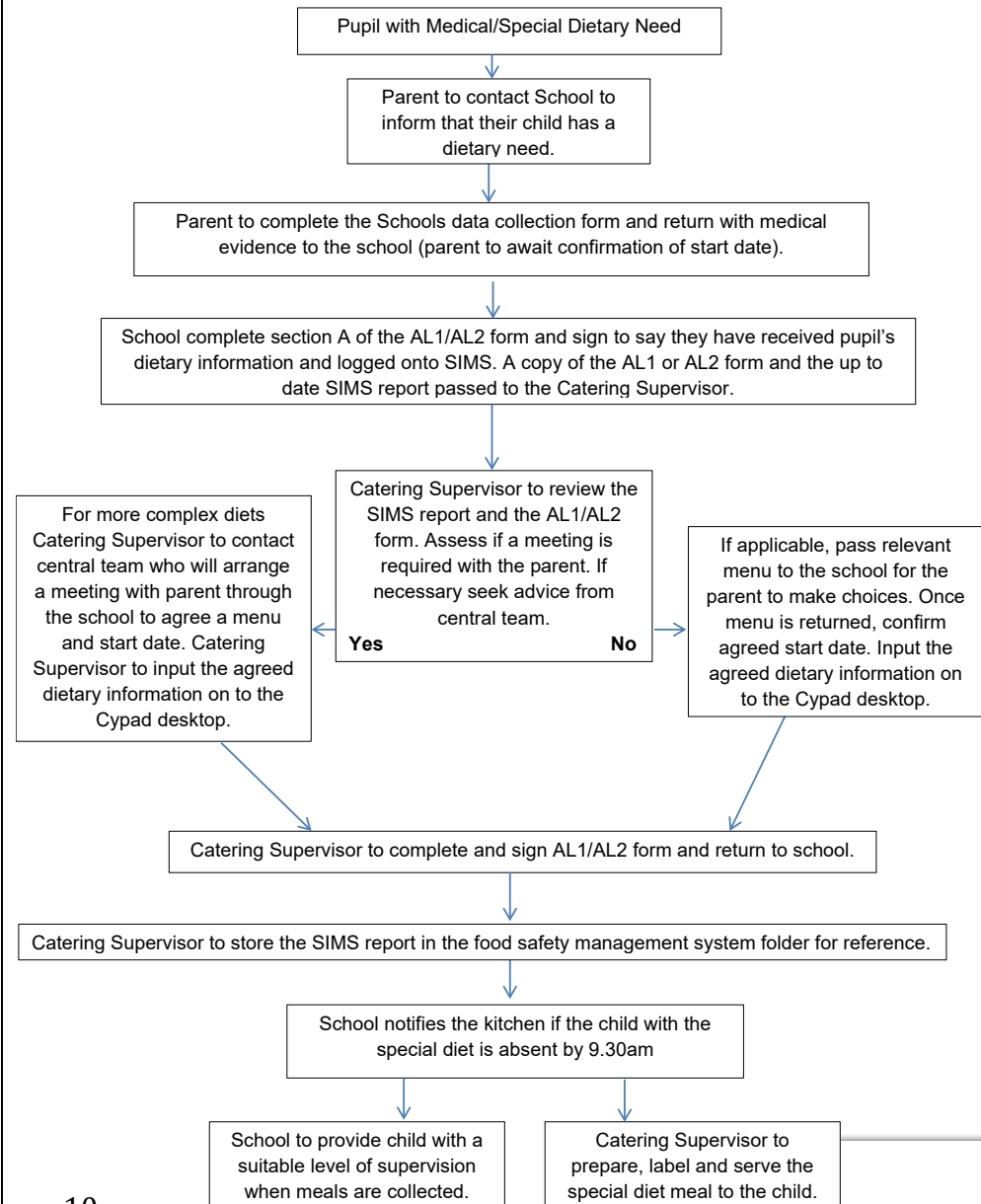
1. Be nutritious and of high quality;
2. Promote good nutritional health in all pupils;
3. Promote good eating behavior; and
4. Protect those who are nutritionally vulnerable.

The regulations set out the requirements for reasonable adjustments to be made for pupils with medical, dietary and cultural needs.

Under the Food Information Regulations 2014 school meals providers must show the allergen ingredients' information for the food they serve and comply with the requirements for labelling of allergens on prepacked for direct sale (PPDS) food.

The school meal service already provides specialist meals to meet dietary and allergen needs where requested. Where menus need to be adapted for a pupil's health requirements, the following steps are taken:

Allergy/Special Dietary Procedure




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Section 6 - Monitoring and review

How will the impact of the service, service change, decommissioning of the service, strategy, function or procedure be monitored? How will actions to mitigate negative impacts be monitored? Date for review of the EIA	
Details of monitoring activities	<p>The school meals management team monitor the uptake of school meal numbers. They also cross reference the number of FSM children and their take up of school meals. Where there are concerns on reducing numbers a visit to the school to discuss with the headteacher is carried out and note is taken of any concerns which informs future practices. At present however the demand for school meals continues to increase year on year.</p> <p>Annual parent, pupil and staff surveys will be carried out to inform the development of the school meals service.</p> <p>School Meals Forum is made up of a selection of schools , which informs the development of the service.</p>
Date and responsible officer for the review of the EIA	[REDACTED]

Section 7 - Sign off

When you have completed your EIA, it should be signed off by a senior manager within your Department (Assistant Director or above). **Please forward a copy of the EIA to the Business Intelligence Team at equalities@warrington.gov.uk.** EIA's will be published on the Council intranet and website.

Name	Signature	Date
[REDACTED]	 [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]/2024

Section 8 - Help and support

Contact the Business Intelligence Team at equalities@warrington.gov.uk