



Equalities Impact Assessment - Proposal to open a 20 place Specialist Resourced Provision for Pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder and Speech, Language and Communication needs at Bysing Wood Primary School, Faversham.

Summary and recommendations of equality analysis/impact assessment.

Context

The Local Authority is responsible for maintaining EHCPs for children and young people between the ages of 0-25 years. As of January 2025, in Kent there were 20,635 children and young people with an EHCP, an increase of 1,229 from January 2024. ASD remains the most common need type in the County with 9,535 EHCPs with ASD as the primary need type.

There is a need for additional Specialist Resourced Provisions (SRP) places for pupils with ASD and SLCN in the primary sector in Swale. Currently there are 3 primary SRPs in the District. Two on the Isle of Sheppey, these are at Thistle Hill primary school for ASD and West Minster Primary school for SLCN. There is only one SRP in Sittingbourne for SLCN at The Oaks Infant and Minterne Junior Schools. There is currently not an SRP for ASD in Faversham and surrounding villages and this provision will help to fill this gap in provision.

Forecasts suggest that the number of children and young people with an EHCP for ASD will increase by c500 over the next 5 years. A number of whom will require the additional support that a primary school based SRP can offer, such as the proposed at Bysing Wood Primary School.

The Proposal

The proposal is to open a SRP for children with ASD and SLCN at Bysing Wood Primary School from January 2027. This would ultimately provide 20 places for pupils in years Reception to Year 6 with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) for ASD and SLCN.

In bringing forward this proposal all parties believe that opening an SRP for ASD and SLCN pupils will:

- Provide a much-needed resource that will support the growing number of primary aged pupils with ASD and SLCN in Faversham and Swale district.
- It will reduce distances pupils need to travel to access appropriate support.
- Build on the expertise that the School and the Trust has in educating children with special educational needs including ASD and SLCN.
- Have a positive impact on the education and social understanding of other pupils within the school.
- Support pupils with ASD and SLCN in the transition from early years to primary school and then from primary to secondary school.

Part 1 Screening

Could this policy, procedure, project or service, or any proposed changes to it, affect any Protected Group (listed below) less favourably (negatively) than others in Kent?

Could this policy, procedure, project or service promote equal opportunities for this group?

Protected Group	Please provide a brief commentary on your findings. Fuller analysis should be undertaken in Part 2.	
	High/ Medium/ Low Negative Impact	High/Medium/Low Positive Impact Evidence
Age	Low	Positive impact for young people aged 4-11. Currently there are 3 primary SRPs in the District. Two on the Isle of Sheppey these are at Thistle Hill primary for ASD, West Minster Primary school for SLCN. There is only one SRP in Sittingbourne for SLCN at The Oaks Infant and Minterne Junior. There is currently not an SRP for ASD in Faversham and this provision will help to fill this gap.
Disability	Low	Positive impact for young people aged 4-11. ASD is a recognised disability.
Gender	Low	Positive impact for the young people aged 4-11 who access the provision as provision provides for all genders.
Gender identity/ Transgender	Low	NA
Race	Low	NA
Religion and Belief	Low	The school will provide for all pupils regardless of faith
Sexual Orientation	Low	N/A
Pregnancy & Maternity	Low	N/A
Marriage & Civil Partnerships	Low	N/A
Carer's Responsibilities	Low	Positive impact as the creation of specialist places will mean that Carers and Parents of young people aged 4-11 who require the specialist support may be able to access a specialist facility in a more local primary school reducing travel distances.

Information and Data used in the assessment

Kent County Council is responsible for maintaining EHCPs for children and young people between the ages of 0-25 years. As of January 2025 (Figure 1), there were 20,635 children and young people with an EHCP, an increase of 1,229 from January 2024. ASD remains the most common need type in the County with 9,535 EHCPs with ASD (46%) as the primary need type.

In Swale District, there were 383 primary aged pupils with ASD as their primary need and 345 with SLCN. A total of 728 Of these, 328 were attending a mainstream school, 40 an SRP within a mainstream school, 339 a maintained special school and 21 an independent school (independent special or otherwise).

Primary aged students with an EHCP for ASD in Swale in January 2025, primary aged pupils with an EHCP with a primary SEND need type of ASD and SLCN in Faversham area, were travelling on average 8.8 miles to access an appropriate specialist provision, whilst across Kent this was 6.5 miles. Travelling such distances is rarely in the best interest of the pupils. More local SRPs would reduce journey times and distances enabling more pupils to go to a school nearer to where they live.

Figure 1 shows the number and percentages of EHCPs for each need type, and by age group.

Figure 1: EHCPs by age group and need type January 2025

SEN Type 2025	Under 5	Aged 5-10	Aged 11-15	Aged 16-19	Aged 20-25	Total	Kent %	England %
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	338	3,182	3,688	1,967	360	9,535	46%	31%
Social Emotional Mental Health	8	658	1,840	1,245	82	3,833	19%	21%
Speech, Language and Communication Needs	212	1,625	1,181	467	98	3,583	17%	21%
Moderate Learning Difficulty	13	226	479	269	54	1,041	5%	11%
Severe Learning Difficulty	27	190	297	217	76	807	4%	4%
Physical Disability	33	213	211	153	34	644	3%	4%
Specific Learning Difficulty	3	56	191	119	17	386	2%	2%
Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulty	14	125	135	76	22	372	2%	1%
Hearing Impairment	6	58	78	43	9	194	1%	1%
Not Recorded	2	18	33	52	15	120	>1%	>1%
Visual Impairment	5	30	30	21	3	89	>1%	>1%
Multi-Sensory Impairment	3	10	8	4	2	27	>1%	>1%
Other Difficulty/Disability	0	1	3	0	0	4	>1%	>1%
Kent Total	664	6,392	8,174	4,633	772	20,635		

[Commissioning Plan for Education Provision - Kent County Council](#)

Currently there are 3 primary SRPs in the District. Two on the Isle of Sheppey these are at Thistle Hill primary for ASD, West Minster Primary school for SLCN. There is only one SRP in Sittingbourne for SLCN at The Oaks Infant and Minterne Junior Schools. There is currently not an SRP for ASD and SLCN in Faversham and this provision will help to fill this gap in provision.

Bysing Wood Primary School provides education for pupils of all abilities aged 4-11.

In the most recent OFSTED report (June 2024), it was judged to be Good for its overall effectiveness.

This is a welcoming and inclusive school, where all pupils are valued and supported, whatever their needs may be. There is a positive culture built on a shared commitment for pupils to 'Believe, Wonder, Progress, Succeed'. Pupils portray a great sense of belonging to the school community. They are happy to come to school and enjoy learning. They are very enthusiastic about the 'forest school', where, they said, they have fun but also learn to work together, persevere and take risks.

Bysing Wood is 1 of 12 primary schools in the Faversham and the surrounding villages. The school has 31.8% of pupils with SEND, with either SEND support or an EHCP. 4.9% of pupils have an EHCP. It also has 49% FSM. (School Census data Spring 2026)

Who have you involved, consulted and engaged?

The following stakeholders will be consulted with:

- All parents/carers
- All schools in Swale district
- Local KCC Members
- Swale District Council
- Local MPs
- The Clinical Commissioning Group
- SEND support groups/charities

Analysis: To be completed after the informal consultation period.

Adverse Impact: N/A

Positive Impact: Positive impact for young people aged 4-11. ASD is a recognised disability. Positive impact for the young people aged 4-11 who access the provision as provision provides for all genders. Carers and Parents of young people aged 4-11 who require the specialist support may be able to access a specialist facility in a more local primary school reducing travel distances.

JUDGEMENT

- **No major change** - no potential for discrimination and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken.
- The analysis and impact assessment evidence above shows that there is no potential for discrimination from this proposal and that the impact will be positive.

Equality Impact Analysis/Assessment Action Plan- to be updated during the consultation if required.

Protected Characteristic	Issues identified	Action to be taken	Expected outcomes	Owner	Timescale	Cost implications