

# Equality & Poverty Impact Assessment 00976 (Version 1)

## SECTION ONE: ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

<b>Service &amp; Division:</b>	Children's Services Education	<b>Lead Officer Name:</b>	Paul Wilcox
		<b>Team:</b>	ASN Team
		<b>Tel:</b>	01324 506657
		<b>Email:</b>	paul.wilcox@falkirk.gov.uk
<b>Proposal:</b>	Increase teaching staff ratios from 1:6 to 1:8 in all primary and secondary ASC provisions	<b>Reference No:</b>	

<b>What is the Proposal?</b>	<b>Budget &amp; Other Financial Decision</b>	<b>Policy (New or Change)</b>	<b>HR Policy &amp; Practice</b>	<b>Change to Service Delivery / Service Design</b>
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Who does the Proposal affect?</b>	<b>Service Users</b>	<b>Members of the Public</b>	<b>Employees</b>	<b>Job Applicants</b>
	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
<b>Other, please specify:</b>				

### Identify the main aims and projected outcome of this proposal (please add date of each update):

24/01/2025	<p>To increase the max number of pupils in our ASC classes in our Primary and Secondary ASC provisions from 6 to 8 and reduce the number of classes overall and redeploy the staffing surplus.</p> <p>Reduction of 4 classes in Secondary ASC's from 18 to 14 classes, reduction of 4.8 FTE teaching staff. This change will increase the number of Secondary ASC placements by 4.</p> <p>Reduction of 2 classes in Primary ASC's from 12 to 10 ,reduction of 2.4 FTE teaching staff. This change will increase the number of Primary ASC placements by 8.</p>
24/01/2025	To make a more efficient service/use of ASN resources and a fairer, more equitable use of the public pound when allocating resources to children with significant additional support needs.
24/01/2025	It is anticipated the full year savings would be achieved from April 26 to March 27, with partial savings realized in 25/26 from August 25 to March 26

Identify the main aims and projected outcome of this proposal (please add date of each update):	

## SECTION TWO: FINANCIAL INFORMATION

For budget changes ONLY please include information below:			Benchmark, e.g. Scottish Average
Current spend on this service (£'0000s)	Total:	Total £3,360,081	
Reduction to this service budget (£'0000s)	Per Annum:	Total max service reduction of 6classes: 6 Teachers + NCCT (£454,387)	
Increase to this service budget (£'000s)	Per Annum:		
If this is a change to a charge or concession please complete.	Current Annual Income Total:		
	Expected Annual Income Total:		
If this is a budget decision, when will the saving be achieved?	Start Date:	01/08/2025	
	End Date (if any):	31/03/2027	

**SECTION THREE: EVIDENCE**

Please include any evidence or relevant information that has influenced the decisions contained in this EPIA. (This could include demographic profiles; audits; research; health needs assessments; national guidance or legislative requirements and how this relates to the protected characteristic groups.)

**A - Quantitative Evidence**

This is evidence which is numerical and should include the number people who use the service and the number of people from the protected characteristic groups who might be affected by changes to the service.

The current staffing compliment in each ASC is as follows:

**SfLAs**

Easter Carmuir's ASC: 4 FTE (120 hours) – 2 classes

Ladeside ASC: 15 FTE (450 hours) – 7 classes

Sacred Heart ASC: 6 FTE (180 hours) – 3 classes

Denny HS ASC: 12 FTE (360 hours) – 6 classes

Grangemouth HS ASC: 13 FTE (390 hours) – 6 classes

Larbert HS ASC: 12 FTE (360 hours) – 6 classes

**Teachers**

Easter Carmuir's: 1.78 FTE plus 1 PT – 2 classes

Ladeside: 7.12 FTE plus 1 DHT & 1 PT – 7 classes

Sacred Heart: 2.67 FTE plus 1 PT – 3 classes

Denny HS ASC: 6 FTE plus 1 PT – 6 classes

Grangemouth HS ASC: 6 FTE plus 1 PT – 6 classes

Larbert HS ASC: 6 FTE plus 1 PT – 6 classes

The total number of pupils in each ASC split by gender is:

**22/23 (Primary):**

Easter Carmuir: 13 pupils (12 male/1 female)

Ladeside: 41 pupils (29 male/12 female)

Sacred Heart: 16 pupils (15 male/ 1 female)

**23/24 (Primary):**

Easter Carmuir: 11 pupils (10 male/ 1 female)

Ladeside: 41 pupils (29 male/ 12 female)

Sacred Heart: 19 pupils (17 male/ 2 female)

**24/25 (Primary):**

Easter Carmuir: 12 (10 male / 2 female)

Ladeside: 39 pupils (30 male / 9 female)

Sacred Heart: 19 (16 male / 3 female)

**23/24 (Secondary):**

Denny HS: 30 (28 male/ 2 female)

Grangemouth HS: 36 pupils (30 male/ 6 female)

Larbert HS: 36 pupils (29 male/ 7 female)

**24/25 (Secondary):**

Denny HS: 36 (33 male/ 3 female)

Grangemouth HS: 34 (29 male/ 5 female)

Larbert HS: 36 pupils (28 male/ 8 female)

**25/26 (Secondary):**

Denny HS: 34 pupils (31 male / 3 female)

Grangemouth HS: 36 pupils (30 male/ 6 female)

Larbert HS: 36 pupils (28 male/ 8 female)

**B - Qualitative Evidence**

This is data which describes the effect or impact of a change on a group of people, e.g. some information provided as part of performance reporting.

**Social - case studies; personal / group feedback / other**

The impact on staffing within ASCs more generally will mean a small increase in assessment and planning. Some staff may be redeployed as part of this change.

The service will continue to offer the specialist aspects below as a stage 4 provision in a mainstream school. Flexible timetabling and activities can be used to mitigate the slight increase in number of pupils per class.

This model protects the educational provision model, whilst achieving efficiency savings which could also result in a more equitable redeployment of ASN resources.

## **Primary School ASCs – Ladeside, Easter Carmuir and Sacred Heart**

Based within each mainstream school, the ASCs provide additional support for pupils whose needs arise from significant social and communication difficulties, including those who have a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder. This resource seeks to enable pupils who require significant additional support to access a differentiated mainstream curriculum through a carefully managed learning environment and structure of the school day. Where possible, pupils in the ASC may be supported into mainstream classes, and will be included in the life of the school.

### **Key Features:**

- Significant differentiation and adaptation of the Curriculum for Excellence, designed to meet the unique needs of each individual child as determined by their Child's Plan, and where applicable, their Co-ordinated Support Plan.
- Provision of a communication rich learning environment where the use of symbols, signing and Picture Exchange Communication is common practice.
- A learning environment and specialist teaching approaches that cater to particular sensory/curricular and other additional support needs of individual pupils.
- The ASC provides a highly structured environment, placing particular emphasis on daily routine, whilst ensuring the flexibility to get it right for all of the learners.
- The ASC classroom provides a safe base upon which mainstream inclusion is available. This is always carefully planned and subsequently evaluated by the school team and the Team Around the Child (TAC).
- The base provides a low sensory stimulation environment to support the sensory needs of the young people.
- Support from allied professionals such as Speech and Language therapy and Educational Psychologists.
- A high ratio of teaching and support staff – children are ordinarily taught in classes of 6 pupils with a teacher and support staff.

### **Criteria/Evidence:**

Significant social and communication difficulties and differences in learning arising from social and communication difficulties, impacting across the curriculum.

Significant additional barriers to learning arising from other factors, such as:

- Complex emotional, social and behavioural development

- Sensory processing
- Pronounced difficulties in learning
- Mainstream/enhanced provision inclusive educational approaches being insufficient
- A specialist and highly adapted learning environment is likely to meet the additional support needs.

### **High School ASCs – Denny, Grangemouth and Larbert**

Falkirk currently has three mainstream secondary schools offering additional specialist support to pupils experiencing severe specific learning and communication difficulties and in most cases related to the triad of impairments associated with Autism Spectrum Disorders. These facilities enable pupils who require additional support to access the mainstream curriculum and classes, and be included optimally in the life of the school, as well as providing close support for communication and social development.

#### **Key Features:**

- Differentiation of the Curriculum for Excellence
- Specialist teaching approaches and autism friendly pedagogy
- A base classroom to support pupils for a flexible proportion of the school day.
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- A high ratio of teaching and support staff when taught in small groups.
- Mainstream stage class with support.
- Where assessment indicates, support by Speech and Language Therapy Service.
- A structure of the day which is flexible
- A supported social area for breaks and lunchtimes.
- Regular home/school contact with key staff

#### **Criteria/Evidence:**

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- Significant social and communication difficulties and differences in learning arising from social and communication difficulties, impacting across the curriculum
- Inclusive educational approaches being insufficient and causing significant anxiety and/or distressed behaviours.

- A combined small group learning environment and mainstream secondary school is likely to meet the additional support needs as offered by the facilities.

### Impact

Learners in our ASCs have access to a small class setting, timetabled across the week, the rest of the time they are in class sizes which vary from 20-33 pupils with 1 teacher. Therefore, increasing the small class setting from 6 learners to 8 will have minimal impact. There will be no reduction in the quality of teaching and they are being provided with the same quality and care when they need it. As the support and service continues, there will still be a positive relationship between the authority and service users. Currently, there is flexibility about group sizes in Primary and Secondary and sometimes they work in larger and smaller groups than 6 as the curricular plans and staffing allow. There will be no change to these aspects. There will be no change to disruption or schedule- The school plan this carefully with learners to meet their needs, this will continue. The model is planned to be bespoke to meet the varying needs of the learners and there is a high ratio of adult support for these learners which continues to ensure they meet their potential. There are no identified impacts on working parents, as the time spent in the school day is not affected. Schools may also apply for exceptional SFLA hours where there is an identified need, so therefore, there should be no instance of this change negatively affecting learners.

<b>Best Judgement:</b>	
<b>Has best judgement been used in place of data/research/evidence?</b>	No
<b>Who provided the best judgement and what was this based on?</b>	
<b>What gaps in data / information were identified?</b>	
<b>Is further research necessary?</b>	Yes
<b>If NO, please state why.</b>	

**SECTION FOUR: ENGAGEMENT**

Engagement with individuals or organisations affected by the policy or proposal must take place

<b>Has the proposal / policy / project been subject to engagement or consultation with service users taking into account their protected characteristics and socio-economic status?</b>	No	
<b>If YES, please state who was engagement with.</b>		
<b>If NO engagement has been conducted, please state why.</b>	Budget proposal under consideration by Members. Alternative mitigation has been identified.	
<b>How was the engagement carried out?</b>	<b>What were the results from the engagement? Please list...</b>	
<b>Focus Group</b>	No	
<b>Survey</b>	No	
<b>Display / Exhibitions</b>	No	
<b>User Panels</b>	No	
<b>Public Event</b>	No	
<b>Other: please specify</b>		
<b>Has the proposal / policy/ project been reviewed / changed as a result of the engagement?</b>	Yes / No	
<b>Have the results of the engagement been fed back to the consultees?</b>	Yes / No	
<b>Is further engagement recommended?</b>	Yes	

## SECTION FIVE: ASSESSING THE IMPACT

**Equality Protected Characteristics:** What will the impact of implementing this proposal be on people who share characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010 or are likely to be affected by the proposal / policy / project? This section allows you to consider other impacts, e.g. poverty, health inequalities, community justice, carers etc.

Protected Characteristic	Neutral Impact	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Please provide evidence of the impact on this protected characteristic.
<b>Age</b>	✓			There will be a slight reduction in adult to child ratio in both primary and secondary settings equally. This equates to around an hour per week of less 1:1 time with an adult per child for illustrative purposes only.
<b>Disability</b>	✓			There will be a slight reduction in adult to child ratio in both primary and secondary settings equally. This equates to around an hour per week of less 1:1 time with an adult per child for illustrative purposes only.
<b>Sex</b>	✓			There will be a slight reduction in adult to child ratio in both primary and secondary setting equally. This equates to around an hour per week of less 1:1 time with an adult per child for illustrative purposes only.  Given the sex split within each ASC it is clear that this will have a disproportionate impact on male pupils given the majority of pupils in an ASC tend to be male.
<b>Ethnicity</b>	✓			We do not have data to measure the impact on this group.
<b>Religion / Belief / non-Belief</b>	✓			We do not have data to measure the impact on this group.
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	✓			We do not have data to measure the impact on this group.
<b>Transgender</b>	✓			We do not have data to measure the impact on this group.
<b>Pregnancy / Maternity</b>	✓			We do not have data to measure the impact on this group.
<b>Marriage / Civil Partnership</b>	✓			We do not have data to measure the impact on this group.
<b>Poverty</b>	✓			There will be a slight reduction in adult to child ratio in both primary and secondary settings equally. This equates to around an hour per week of less 1:1 time with an adult per child for illustrative purposes only.
<b>Care Experienced</b>	✓			There will be a slight reduction in adult to child ratio in both primary and secondary settings equally. This equates to around an hour per week of less 1:1 time with an adult per child for illustrative purposes only.
<b>Other, health, community justice, carers etc.</b>	✓			We do not have data to measure the impact on this group.

**Public Sector Equality Duty: Scottish Public Authorities must have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance quality of opportunity and foster good relations. Scottish specific duties include:**

	<p>In our ASC's we have a generous adult to child ratio to support intensive skills development so children can thrive when in their mainstream class.</p> <p>Our ASC model provides 1 teacher and 2 SFLA's and access to this small setting is based around the needs of each individual learner.</p> <p>This model protects the educational provision model, whilst achieving efficiency savings which could also result in a more equitable redeployment of ASN resources.</p>
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	<b>Evidence of Due Regard</b>
<b>Eliminate Unlawful Discrimination (harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct):</b>	The service provided to pupils will still be protected as part of this change.
<b>Advance Equality of Opportunity:</b>	The service provided to pupils will still be protected as part of this change.
<b>Foster Good Relations (promoting understanding and reducing prejudice):</b>	The proposal is not applicable to this duty.

**SECTION SIX: PARTNERS / OTHER STAKEHOLDERS**

<b>Which sectors are likely to have an interest in or be affected by the proposal / policy / project?</b>		<b>Describe the interest / affect.</b>
<b>Business</b>	No	
<b>Councils</b>	No	
<b>Education Sector</b>	No	
<b>Fire</b>	No	
<b>NHS</b>	No	
<b>Integration Joint Board</b>	No	
<b>Police</b>	No	
<b>Third Sector</b>	No	
<b>Other(s): please list and describe the nature of the relationship / impact.</b>		

## SECTION SEVEN: ACTION PLANNING

**Mitigating Actions:** If you have identified impacts on protected characteristic groups in Section 5 please summarise these in the table below detailing the actions you are taking to mitigate or support this impact. If you are not taking any action to support or mitigate the impact you should complete the No Mitigating Actions section below instead.

Identified Impact	To Who	Action(s)	Lead Officer	Evaluation and Review Date	Strategic Reference to Corporate Plan / Service Plan / Quality Outcomes
Disability, Age, Sex, Poverty & Care experienced	Young People	Adjustments could be made to the timetable to protect young people's 1:1 time with an adult. Our SFLA staffing is already more generous than required and will mitigate the increase in pupils from 6-8 in a class.	Kerry Drinnan	01/08/2025	Service Plan

### No Mitigating Actions

Please explain why you do not need to take any action to mitigate or support the impact of your proposals.

**Are actions being reported to Members?** Yes

**If yes when and how ?** This will be considered as part of the Council's 25/26 budget proposals in March 2025.

**SECTION EIGHT: ASSESSMENT OUTCOME**

Only one of following statements best matches your assessment of this proposal / policy / project. Please select one and provide your reasons.

No major change required	Yes	The proposal is considered to have a neutral impact at the moment. Therefore, no major change is required.
The proposal has to be adjusted to reduce impact on protected characteristic groups	No	
Continue with the proposal but it is not possible to remove all the risk to protected characteristic groups	No	
Stop the proposal as it is potentially in breach of equality legislation	No	

**SECTION NINE: LEAD OFFICER SIGN OFF**

Lead Officer:

Signature:	<i>Paul Wilcox</i>	Date:	05/02/2025
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**SECTION TEN: EPIA TASK GROUP ONLY**

<b>OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF EPIA:</b>	<b>Has the EPIA demonstrated the use of data, appropriate engagement, identified mitigating actions as well as ownership and appropriate review of actions to confidently demonstrate compliance with the general and public sector equality duties?</b>	No
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<b>ASSESSMENT FINDINGS</b>	The data provided refers to staffing and gender breakdown of pupils, with the qualitative evidence providing an explanation on the minimal impact (at the end of this part in section 3). No engagement has taken place, therefore the impact has not been fully analysed.	
<b>If YES, use this box to highlight evidence in support of the assessment of the EPIA</b>		
<b>If NO, use this box to highlight actions needed to improve the EPIA</b>		

<b>Where adverse impact on diverse communities has been identified and it is intended to continue with the proposal / policy / project, has justification for continuing <u>without making changes been made</u>?</b>	No	If YES, please describe:
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**LEVEL OF IMPACT: The EPIA Task Group has agreed the following level of impact on the protected characteristic groups highlighted within the EPIA**

LEVEL		COMMENTS
HIGH	No	
MEDIUM	No	
LOW	Yes	The explanation provided in section 3 regarding the minimal impact suggests a low risk of impact of the proposal to service users.

**SECTION ELEVEN: CHIEF OFFICER SIGN OFF**

<b>Director / Head of Service:</b>		
<b>Signature:</b>	<i>Jon Reid</i>	<b>Date:</b> 18/02/2025