

PART A - Initial Equality Screening Assessment

As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality and diversity.

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provide a record of both the process and decision. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions.

Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality and diversity
- whether or not equality and diversity is being/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an Equality Analysis (Part B).

Further information is available in the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance – see page 9.

1. Title	
Title: Proposal to close Rowan Centre PRU	
Directorate: CYPs	Service area: Education
Lead person: Nathan Heath	Contact number: 01709 254821
Is this a: <input type="checkbox"/> Strategy / Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Service / Function <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other	
If other, please specify: Proposal to formally close the Rowan Centre Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) following DfE statutory procedure, to then make the site available for other education purposes	

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening

Following the opening of Elements Academy, all pupils who attended Rowan Centre PRU have now transferred to the new Academy in line with statutory Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) processes.

Proposals have been brought forward to commence a statutory process following DfE statutory guidance to close the Rowan Centre PRU to make the site available for other education purposes.

3. Relevance to equality and diversity

All the Council's strategies/policies, services/functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – borough wide or more local. These will also have a greater/lesser relevance to equality and diversity.

The following questions will help you to identify how relevant your proposals are.

When considering these questions think about age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, civil partnerships and marriage, pregnancy and maternity and other socio-economic groups e.g. parents, single parents and guardians, carers, looked after children, unemployed and people on low incomes, ex-offenders, victims of domestic violence, homeless people etc.

Questions	Yes	No
Could the proposal have implications regarding the accessibility of services to the whole or wider community? <i>(Be mindful that this is not just about numbers. A potential to affect a small number of people in a significant way is as important)</i>		X
Could the proposal affect service users? <i>(Be mindful that this is not just about numbers. A potential to affect a small number of people in a significant way is as important)</i>	X	
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics? <i>(Consider potential discrimination, harassment or victimisation of individuals with protected characteristics)</i>	X	
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal? <i>(It is important that the Council is transparent and consultation is carried out with members of the public to help mitigate future challenge)</i>	X	
Could the proposal affect how the Council's services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom? <i>(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from commissioning or procurement)</i>	X	
Could the proposal affect the Council's workforce or employment practices? <i>(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from your HR business partner)</i>		X
If you have answered no to all the questions above, please explain the reason		

If you have answered **no** to **all** the questions above please complete **sections 5 and 6**.

If you have answered **yes** to any of the above please complete **section 4**.

4. Considering the impact on equality and diversity

If you have not already done so, the impact on equality and diversity should be considered within your proposals before decisions are made.

Considering equality and diversity will help to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and take active steps to create a discrimination free society by meeting a group or individual's needs and encouraging participation.

Please provide specific details for all three areas below using the prompts for guidance and complete an Equality Analysis (Part B).

- **How have you considered equality and diversity?**

(think about the scope of the proposal, who is likely to be affected, equality related information, gaps in information and plans to address, consultation and engagement activities (taken place or planned) with those likely to be affected)

The new Elements Academy is a specialist school for children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), with a presenting need of Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH).

Proposals were brought forward in 2020 to establish a new school to meet the specific needs of children with an EHCP with a SEMH presenting need who were attending Pupil Referral Unit provision.

The establishment of Elements Academy created specialist provision to meet the SEMH needs of children and opened in September 2022. All pupils who attended PRU provision with an EHCP with SEMH as the presenting need were transferred to Elements Academy in line with statutory EHCP processes.

This meant that all children attending Rowan Centre PRU transferred to the specialist provision. All pupils and staff have vacated the Rowan site and the site is currently unoccupied.

As the site is no longer required for PRU provision, it is necessary to follow DfE statutory guidance and bring forward proposals for consultation to formally close the PRU. The formal closure of the PRU will then mean that the vacated site can be brought forward for other educational purposes.

Equality and diversity has been considered via a range of forums and stakeholder engagement sessions, wide reaching consultation with a range of stakeholders in relation to proposals to establish the new school and transfer pupils to the appropriate provision to meet their needs. Wide reaching consultation was also undertaken during the appointment of the sponsor process, and post appointment philosophy and ethos of the sponsor, voice of the child, accessibility and whether stakeholders agree to the sponsor entering in to a funding agreement with DfE.

Consultation has also been undertaken with all staff employed at Rowan Centre PRU and trade union representation during a TUPE process, where staff were transferred to the Elements Academy along with pupils.

- **Key findings**

(think about any potential positive and negative impact on different equality characteristics, potential to promote strong and positive relationships between groups, potential to bring groups/communities into increased contact with each other, perception that the proposal could benefit one group at the expense of another)

Elements Academy is part of an inclusive Trust family of schools that accommodates pupils who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) naming the school.

All pupils who attended Rowan Centre PRU were transferred to Elements Academy with effect from September 2022 meaning the Rowan site is now vacated.

To enable the Rowan site to brought back in to use for education purposes, the LA must first formally close the Rowan Centre following DfE statutory guidance.

As part of the statutory process to formally close the Rowan Centre, further consultation is required with all stakeholders identified in DfE guidance.

- **Actions**

(think about how you will promote positive impact and remove/reduce negative impact)

Actions highlighted during consultation events to establish Elements Academy and transfer pupils from Rowan Centre PRU have been actioned and a regular communication strategy allowed for any issues arising to be addressed in the lead up to transfer to the new school.

A report to Cabinet seeking approval to commence the statutory process of bringing forward proposals to formally close Rowan Centre PRU is scheduled for November 2022. Should the report be approved, a full equalities assessment will be completed as the views of stakeholders are ascertained during pre statutory consultation and will be kept under review through out the statutory process.

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	November 2022 – March 2023
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	January 2023
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	Nathan Heath

5. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening:

Name	Job title	Date
Nathan Heath	Assistant Director of Education and Inclusion	13.9.22
Julie Day	Head of SEND	"
Dean Fenton	Head of Access to Education	"
SEND strategic board		"

6. Publishing

This screening document will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given.

If this screening relates to a **Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision** a copy of the completed document should be attached as an appendix and published alongside the relevant report.

A copy of all screenings should also be sent to equality@rotherham.gov.uk For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.

Date screening completed	13.9 2022
Report title and date	Proposal to close Rowan Centre PRU
If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication	Scheduled for Cabinet for November 2022
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	13.9. 2022