



Appendix 3 - Equality Impact Analysis Initial Screening Tool Proposed Amalgamation of Bishop Challoner Boy's and Girls' Schools

Section 1.0: Background Information

Name of Completing Officer:	Terry Bryan
Date of Initial Screening:	21.10.2022
Service Area & Directorate:	Pupil Access and School Sufficiency
Head of Service:	Terry Bryan

Section 2.0: Summary of policy, proposal or activity being screened

Name of policy, proposal or activity:

The Council, in partnership with the governors of the Bishop Challoner Catholic Schools Federation and Westminster Diocese, is proposing to merge the Bishop Challoner Catholic Boys' and Girls' Schools to create a Bishop Challoner Co-educational Catholic School with Sixth Form, for the start of the 2023/24 school year.

The amalgamated school would therefore open on 1 September 2023, catering for boys and girls from ages 11 to 18. The process to achieve this involves the 'technical closure' of Bishop Challoner Boy's School on 31st August 2023 and the expansion of Bishop Challoner Girls' School. It should be noted there will be no actual closure of school buildings.

What are the aims / objectives of the policy, proposal or activity?

The proposal is being put forward as part of the strategy for the Bishop Challoner Federation to provide an integrated 11 to 18 secondary school provision, rather than maintain separate boys' and girls' schools. The amalgamation will provide additional opportunities to maximise expertise and resources across the staff group, build on the existing co-educational practices and raise expectations and success for pupils.

Tower Hamlets has a great tradition of excellent education and values the important role that schools have in increasing the life chances of our children. This proposal forms part of the Council's wider School Organisation Strategy, intended to enhance the sustainability of schools and their ability to maintain high standards in the face of significant demographic changes.

From 21 September – 21st October 2022, the Bishop Challoner Federation, consulted their pupils, parents, staff and local communities, on the proposal to amalgamate the boys' and girls' schools. Feedback from the consultation confirms that consultees are in favour of the amalgamation. If, following this and further consultation, a merger is decided, the running of the newly amalgamated school will be overseen by a single headteacher.



Section 3.0: Equality Impact Analysis Test:

<p>Is there a risk that the policy, proposal or activity being screened disproportionately adversely impacts (directly or indirectly) on any of the groups of people listed below? This should include people of different:</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No ✓</p>	<p>Comments:</p> <p>The initial screening has not identified any major adverse impact, as set out in the relevant sections below.</p>																																				
<p>Age</p>		<p>✓</p>	<p><u>Pupils:</u></p> <p>Under the proposed amalgamation pupils will continue to attend school in the current location as both schools share one site. There will be minimal / no disruption to all children aged 11- 18 years. No one year group will be more adversely affected than others.</p> <p>The table below shows that pupil numbers will be slightly larger in KS4, which is the same in both the existing schools. However this is to be expected, given that both schools have had fewer numbers of Year 7 admissions in recent years. The current girls school has larger year groups than the boys school, given that its maximum intake is set at 5FE (150) compared to the boys schools, which is 4FE (120).</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="577 965 1827 1098"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year Group</th> <th>7</th> <th>8</th> <th>9</th> <th>10</th> <th>11</th> <th>12</th> <th>13</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Bishop Challoner Boys</td> <td>90</td> <td>102</td> <td>103</td> <td>112</td> <td>120</td> <td>36</td> <td>50</td> <td>613</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bishop Challoner Girls</td> <td>106</td> <td>115</td> <td>111</td> <td>142</td> <td>132</td> <td>73</td> <td>76</td> <td>755</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>196</td> <td>217</td> <td>214</td> <td>254</td> <td>252</td> <td>109</td> <td>126</td> <td>1368</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The proposed amalgamated school will have a combined Year 7 intake of 9FE (270) pupils, with all pupils able to continue at Bishop Challoner for their 6th form education.</p> <p>Recent Ofsted inspections in in the autumn of 2021 rated the Girl's School as 'Good' and the Boys' School as 'Requires Improvement'. There has been significant improvement in the Boys' School since the last inspection and the amalgamation will provide better opportunity to ensure that this journey of improvement continues. There is no evidence to show that a mixed school setting would be of disadvantage to the attainment of either girls of boys. There is evidence to suggest that amalgamation will benefit all pupils by maximising the available resources and thereby providing better educational opportunities.</p>	Year Group	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	Total	Bishop Challoner Boys	90	102	103	112	120	36	50	613	Bishop Challoner Girls	106	115	111	142	132	73	76	755	Total	196	217	214	254	252	109	126	1368
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Staff:

All staff at Bishop Challoner are employed under contract at the Girls' School, so the amalgamation will not result in change to their employment status. These staff would therefore automatically continue their employment in the mixed school. No redundancies are expected to occur under the proposal and where there are duplicates of posts, creative solutions will be sought to retain staff.

The age breakdown of Bishop Challoner staff:

Bishop Challoner	15 - 24	10
	25 - 34	53
	35 - 44	37
	45 - 54	37
	55 - 64	26
	65 - 74	3
	75 - 84	

Given that the amalgamation is not expected to lead to redundancies. No particular age group will be disadvantaged over another. The school will not be doing a full HR consultation unless there becomes a need to. In which case the consultation will follow the processes agreed with the trade unions, to maximise staff strengths and build on their expertise and good will. In addition, staff will continue to benefit from continuity of staff policies and procedures, and the same dates for staff training days and school holidays.



Sex



Pupils:

The proportionate breakdown of boys versus girls is in favour of the girls, mainly because the girls school is larger. The amalgamated school will therefore have a higher percentage of girls to boys (55:45), which means it will compare favourably to the other mixed schools in the area where girls are often in the minority. Following the amalgamation some sports and PSHE sessions will remain single sex as will changing facilities.

Irrespective of gender, all pupils will benefit from the increased long-term educational and financial sustainability that the proposed amalgamation would bring; therefore, no adverse impact is identified regarding this protected characteristic.

Pupil Roll	Total
Bishop Challoner Boys	613
Bishop Challoner Girls	755

It is acknowledged that the proposed amalgamation will remove the option for catholic families to send their children to a single-sex catholic schools in the Tower Hamlets area. However, this is considered a minor impact when balanced against the need for these two single- sex catholic schools to amalgamate in order to ensure the sustainability of catholic secondary school provision for all children in Tower Hamlets. In contrast, the failure to consider this amalgamation could result in the loss of catholic secondary education for boys and girls in Tower Hamlets, which would have a greater (major) impact on the equality of opportunity for Tower Hamlets children. We have also considered that there are alternative opportunities for families to access single-sex catholic education in the neighbouring boroughs of Newham, Hackney Greenwich and Southwark.

Staff:

The current staff gender breakdown is weighted heavily towards women (see table below), as is the case across most school provision in the borough and elsewhere. However, as no redundancies are proposed no disproportionate impact on either gender is anticipated.

Staff Employed	Female	Male	Total
Bishop Challoner Boys	N/A	N/A	N/A
Bishop Challoner Girls	117	49	166



Race



Pupils:

Both the Bishop Challoner Boys' and Girls' schools have a similar pupil demographic profile in terms of ethnicity, see table below:

Ethnicity	Bishop Challoner Boys	Bishop Challoner Girls	Total
Any Other Asian Background	12	13	25
Any Other Black Background	23	33	56
Any Other Ethnic Group	12	29	41
Any Other Mixed Background	19	26	45
Any Other White Background	44	61	105
Bangladeshi	86	46	132
Black - Any Other Black African Background	147	193	340
Black - Somali	4	2	6
Black Caribbean	41	56	97
Indian	5	12	17
Chinese	6	12	18
Pakistani	6	10	16
White - British	108	111	219
White and Asian	8	14	22
White and Black African	14	31	45
White and Black Caribbean	29	43	72
Vietnamese	13	11	24
Information Not Yet Obtained	36	52	88
Grand Total	613	755	1368

Pupils with English as an Additional Language:

	EAL	Not EAL	Total
Bishop Challoner Boys	245	368	613
Bishop Challoner Girls	307	448	755

Merging the two schools will not cause any significant changes to the pupil demographic. Both schools have pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) so there will be sufficient expertise to continue to properly support pupils who are bi/multi-lingual. All pupils, irrespective of ethnicity, will also benefit from the long-term stability that will be achieved through the merger.



Staff:

All 166 staff are currently employed under contract to the girls school. The proposed amalgamation will result in very little change to staff on a day-to-day basis and staff conditions of service will not be affected. Because of this, no particular ethnic group will be disadvantaged over another and children of all ethnicities will therefore benefit from the continuity of having the same known staff at the school.

Ethnicity	Bishop Challoner Boys	Bishop Challoner Girls
Any Other Asian Background	N/A	3
Any Other Ethnic Group	N/A	3
Any Other White Background	N/A	17
Bangladeshi	N/A	20
Black - Any Other Black African Background	N/A	21
Black - Somali	N/A	
Black Caribbean	N/A	13
Indian	N/A	2
Chinese	N/A	2
Pakistani	N/A	3
White - British	N/A	77
White and Asian	N/A	1
White and Black Caribbean	N/A	2
Information Not Yet Obtained	N/A	2
Total	N/A	166

Religion or Philosophical belief



The proposal is for these two single- sex catholic schools to amalgamate in order to ensure the sustainability of catholic secondary school provision for Tower Hamlets children. This is therefore a significant and positive equalities impact as it will ensure a degree of choice in the borough for those families who would prefer for their children to attend a catholic secondary school, due to their religious or philosophical beliefs.

The admissions criteria for the amalgamated school will remain largely the same, continuing to prioritise places for catholic children as well as providing places for children who are not of the catholic faith.

Bishop Challoner has recently introduced headscarves as part of its school uniform, this has been a popular change that will enable more children from other world faiths to attend the school.

Sexual Orientation



No impact identified – no data collected



Gender re-assignment		✓	No impact identified – no data collected															
<p>People who have a Disability (Physical, learning difficulties, mental health and medical conditions)</p>		✓	<p>The table below shows that the proportion of pupils requiring SEN Support and those with Education, Health & Care (EHC) Plans are significantly larger in the boys school. However the percentages are in line with schools across the borough. The girls school has a smaller proportion of pupils with SEN. Following the amalgamation the overall percentage of pupils with SEN will be much lower, enabling the School to make more efficient and effective use of its specialist resources for the benefit of all pupils with additional needs. This is a positive equalities impact to be gained from the amalgamation.</p> <p>Pupils Special Educational Needs (SEN)</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="582 568 1807 691"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>SEN Support</th> <th>EHC Plan</th> <th>None</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Bishop Challoner Boys</td> <td>54</td> <td>25</td> <td>534</td> <td>613</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bishop Challoner Girls</td> <td>57</td> <td>8</td> <td>690</td> <td>755</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The Governing Body has considered the equalities issues and concluded that, as children in the school already mix, there is unlikely to be difficulties for individuals or vulnerable groups. They are mindful that some children with additional needs or disabilities may need additional support to understand the amalgamation proposal and its implications.</p>		SEN Support	EHC Plan	None	Total	Bishop Challoner Boys	54	25	534	613	Bishop Challoner Girls	57	8	690	755
	SEN Support	EHC Plan	None	Total														
Bishop Challoner Boys	54	25	534	613														
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Marriage and Civil Partnerships status		✓	No impact identified – no data collected															
People who are Pregnant and Maternity		✓	No impact identified – no data collected															
Parents and Carers		✓	<p><u>Parents:</u></p> <p>Formal and informal responses to the first stage consultation were largely favourable, with carers and parents seeing the amalgamation as a natural next step in the efforts to continue to improve the education and continued sustainability of both schools. Parents welcomed the consultation on amalgamation as the first opportunity to establish improved levels of engagement with school leaders. The school has responded by giving its commitment to ensure the involvement of parents in decision-making about school development planning, provision and shaping future services, not just in consultation.</p>															
Socio and Economic		✓	<p><u>Pupils:</u></p>															



Both the Bishop Challoner Boys and Girls Schools have pupils with very similar socio-economic profiles, based on the proportion of pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM).

Pupils Eligible for Free School Meals

	FSM Eligible	No FSM	%	Total
Bishop Challoner Boys	216	397	35.2	613
Bishop Challoner Girls	258	497	34.2	755

Merging both schools should benefit pupils of all backgrounds through the maximisation of resources to create better opportunities for staff professional development, targeted academic support for disadvantaged pupils and a more efficient use of resources for wider strategies to address non-academic barriers to such as attendance, behaviour and social and emotional support. This will lead to an improved environment that will have a positive impact on the quality of education that all pupils receive.

People with different
Gender Identities

✓

No impact identified – no data collected

If you have answered **Yes** to one or more of the groups of people listed above, **a full Equality Impact Assessment is required.** The only exceptions to this are listed in sections 5.1 and 5.2 of this document.

Section 4.0: Justifying Discrimination:

Are all risks of inequalities identified capable of being justified because there is a:

- (i) *Genuine Reason* for implementation
- (ii) The activity represents a *Proportionate Means* of achieving a *Legitimate Council Aim*
- (iii) There is a *Genuine Occupational Requirement* for the council to implement this activity

✓

✓
✓

Section 5.0: Conclusion

Before answering the next question, please note that there are generally only two reasons a full Equality Impact Analysis is not required. These are:



5.1 The policy, activity or proposal is likely to have **no or minimal impact** on the groups listed in section three of this document.

5.2 Any discrimination or disadvantage identified is **capable of being justified** for one or more of the reasons detailed in the previous section of this document.

5.3 Conclusion Details:

5.4 Do you recommend a fully Equality Impact Analysis is performed ?

5.5 Reasons a full Equality Impact Analysis is not required:

Yes

No

If you have answered **YES** to this question, please proceed to section 6.0 Sign Off.

If you have answered **NO** to this question, please detail your reasons in section 5.5 (across) before proceeding to section 6.0 Sign Off.

On a day-to-day basis very, little will change for pupils as there will be no need for any to move to another school under this proposal. The care and importance given to each individual child, which is a strength of both schools, will always remain paramount. As a result, the impact on pupils with protected characteristics will not be significant, with no one group more adversely affected than others.

Very little change is anticipated for staff on a day-to-day basis under the proposal. All staff employed at the Federation (at the time of the proposed amalgamation) would automatically continue their employment in the amalgamated school, and their rights would be preserved under TUPE. If the amalgamation progresses, there will be a full HR consultation following processes agreed with the unions, to maximise staff strengths and build on their expertise and good will. Where there are duplicates of posts, creative solutions will be sought to retain staff. As a result, the impact on staff with protected characteristics will not be significant, with no one group more adversely affected than others.

Based on the initial findings of this equalities assessment, the proposal is robust. It ensures increased equality of opportunity for the sustainability of catholic school provision in the borough and improved educational outcomes for all Bishop Challoner pupils. This includes ensuring that pupils will have the opportunity to participate in enriching extra-curricular activities. It is anticipated that the amalgamation will further strengthen and develop the School's catholic and other community links, with shared resources and outreach strategies that build upon the existing successful programme of activities.

Section 6.0: Sign Off:

Signed Terry Bryan **Date:** 21/10/2022.

Position: Service Head (Pupil Access and School Sufficiency)