

Title: Europa School UK
Author: Department of Education (DfE)

Impact Assessment Section 9 Academies Act Duty

1. Section 9 of the Academies Act 2010 places a duty upon the Secretary of State to take into account what the impact of establishing the additional school would be likely to be on maintained schools, Academies, institutions within the further education sector and alternative provision in the area in which the additional school is (or is proposed to be) situated.

Background

2. The Europa School will be a two-form-entry 4–19, non-faith all through school. It plans to open with an intake of two classes in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, with 28 in each class. The aim of the Free School will be to build to full capacity by 2017/2018. At full capacity the school will have 784 pupils. The school will open on the site currently occupied by the European School which will close in 2017. Europa School UK will occupy the premises fully at that stage, after entering into an option to call for a lease. The school will specialise in Modern European Languages and Sciences, with a particular emphasis on teaching a significant proportion of the curriculum through the medium of two or more European languages.

3. The proposer group largely comprises of a parent and community group - the Culham European School Parents Association (CESPA). This proposal has been put together after the original plan to retain the European School by converting it to an Academy collapsed last year.

Catchment Area, its Characteristics and Admissions

Admissions

4. The school's admissions policy includes three temporary derogations to the Admissions Code,
- a. to give priority to siblings of children at the European School;
 - b. to allow for the transfer to the Free School of the remaining pupils at the European School when it closes in 2017; and
 - c. to enable priority to be given to specific founders' children.

Oversubscription criteria

5. When the school is over subscribed, after the admission of pupils with Special Educational Needs where Europa School UK is named in the Statement, priority will be given to those children who meet the following criteria:

- a) Looked after children;
- b) children with siblings at Europa School UK;
- c) children with siblings at the European School Culham;
- d) children of founders (for the first year only)

e) Children who live closest to the four nodal points (each nodal point has a different weighting).

6. In the case of a tiebreak being necessary within criteria b to d, children of multiple births (twins, triplets etc) will be given priority and then, if a further tiebreak is necessary, random allocation will be used.

Post 16 admissions:

7. As well as admission to reception, Europa School UK will also admit pupils at the age of 16. In 2017, most of these pupils will come from the European School. The criteria includes:

a) Strong academic potential, through their Y11 exams or GCSE equivalents with a minimum entry requirement of 5+A*-C.

b) Linguistic capabilities in at least 2 of the school's languages, a short test (including oral performance) may be applied for children from outside the school.

Local Authority View

10. **Oxfordshire County Council:** The geographic spread of 4 nodal points will mean that the majority of pupils will be from the Oxfordshire area. A couple of the nodal points are close to both West Berkshire and Reading. Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) remains supportive of this project as they had backed the initial proposal to convert the European School to an Academy.

11. The authority supports the development of this new free school as they regard it as becoming a centre of excellence for European modern languages as well as providing diversity of provision to the local community. The LA confirms that there is a growing need for places as the population is forecast to increase further, in fact, OCC suggests that the addition of the new school may be have an "overall benefit due to the pressure on school places".

12. OCC have indicated that this school is likely to attract a fairly narrow range of parents, those who would be interested in the unique delivery of the curriculum through French or German and who would have applied/sent their children to the existing European School in any event. It is also likely to attract post 16 pupils who are looking to strengthen their modern languages before continuing their studies at university. Even in the case of post-16 applications, the LA considers the impact to be minimal as many of the post 16 places are likely to be taken up by Europa School pupils who stay on. The LA also notes that the Free School will provide wider opportunities for post 16 students who are considering studying Modern Foreign Languages at University.

13. **Reading:** The local authority has indicated that the impact on it of the Free School will be minimal, as it is 20 miles away.

14. **West Berkshire:** The LA did not have any specific comments to make but asked to be kept in touch with developments as Europa School UK moves forward.

Representations

15. Representations have been made to the Department these include issues around the admissions policy and the view that the school may become exclusive to those families who already have existing links to the closing European School or those children who are already bilingual.

16. The proposer group undertook a comprehensive consultation, which included the main stakeholders through a variety of means, including letters, website, central meetings, and discussions with primary and secondary schools. The Free School proposal received press coverage too. Of the 270 responses, 87% were in favour of the Secretary of State entering in to a funding agreement with the Europa School Trust. A wide range of comments and issues were raised within the consultation, many relating to the provisions with the admissions policy and process. Although there were mixed comments relating to the 10% selection by aptitude these comments actually reflected a desire amongst respondents for more selection not less. The next major grouping of comments related to the perceived arbitrary nature of the admission nodes.

Forecast of Pupil Projections

Number of pupils and projections in South Oxfordshire District and neighbouring districts 2011/12 – 2015/16

LA District	Academic year 2011 -12			2011/12 – 2015/16
	Number of places in 2010/11	No of pupils	Surplus %	Projected % increase in population
Primary school pupil population				
South Oxfordshire	11,144	10,034	10.0	0.4
Cherwell	11,926	10,714	10.2	8.5
Oxford	9,079	8,741	3.7	10.2
Vale of White Horse	9,057	8,529	5.8	10.3
West Oxfordshire	8,750	7,764	11.3	8.4
Secondary school pupil population				
South Oxfordshire	11,334	9,774	13.8	5.3
Cherwell	9,073	7,269	19.9	7.7
Oxford	7,321	6,110	16.5	12.4
Vale of White Horse	7,532	6,767	10.2	13.5
West Oxfordshire	8,455	7,367	12.9	4.3

Impact on other schools

17. As the school does not have a self-defined catchment area we have created a proxy catchment area based on the distance travelled to school by a significant majority (80%) of pupils in Oxfordshire. We have included all primary schools within a two and a half mile radius of the Free School and all secondary schools within a four miles radius. The new school may have impact on:

- 15 Primary Schools: minimal impact on 12, moderate on 2 and moderate/high on 1;
- 3 Secondary Schools: moderately on 3, Moderate/high on 1 and high on 1.

A list of all the schools in the catchment area is below:

Summary of the potential impact on primary schools located within 2.5 miles from the Europa School

School name	Distance from Free School	Impact rating
Schools with a minimal rating		
St Edmund's Catholic Primary School	1.48 miles	Minimal
Thomas Reade Primary School	1.54 miles	Minimal
Carswell Community Primary School	1.69 miles	Minimal
Rush Common School	1.77 miles	Minimal
St Nicolas Church of England Primary School, Abingdon	1.84 miles	Minimal
Dunmore Primary School	2.01 miles	Minimal
Clifton Hampden Church of England Primary School	2.05 miles	Minimal
Sutton Courtenay CofE Primary School	2.05 miles	Minimal
Long Wittenham (Church of England) Primary School	2.37 miles	Minimal
Long Furlong Primary School	2.38 miles	Minimal
Drayton Community Primary School	2.42 miles	Minimal
Radley Church of England Primary School	2.50 miles	Minimal
Schools with a moderate rating		
Culham Parochial Church of England School	0.45 miles	Moderate
Caldecott Primary School	1.61 miles	Moderate
Schools with a moderate/high rating		
Thameside Primary School	1.54 miles	Moderate/high

Summary of the potential impact on secondary schools located within four miles of the Europa School

School name	Distance from Free School	Impact rating
Schools with a moderate rating		
John Mason School	1.93 miles	Moderate
Didcot Girls' School	3.36 miles	Moderate
St Birinus School	3.82 miles	Moderate
Schools with a moderate/high or high rating		

School name	Distance from Free School	Impact rating
Larkmead School	2.32 miles	Moderate/High
Fitzharrys School	2.10 miles	High

Impact on schools where impact is moderate and High

We have focused on those schools where there is likely to be a moderate and high impact of opening the Free School. These schools are:

Primary

Moderate Impact

1. Culham Parochial Church of England School (0.45 miles from proposed site) – Ofsted rating - SATISFACTORY

This is the closest primary school to the proposed Free School site so, in principle, could lose more potential pupils to the Free School than schools further away. However, the school has above average attainment and was oversubscribed for entry in 2011/12. The school has a relatively small number of places on offer each year and should still be able to fill most or all of its places. The school is a Church of England school therefore some parents may only be interested in a schools which share the same ethos. The opening of the Free School should not affect the long term viability of the school.

The Directors of Europa School UK have had regular meetings with Culham Parochial School and this school has been reassured about the impact Europa School UK will have.

2. Caldecott Primary School (community 1.61 miles from proposed site) Ofsted rated: GOOD

The school has below average attainment so parents may be attracted to an alternative. However, the school has a good Ofsted rating and was oversubscribed for entry in 2011/12. Therefore, the potential loss of pupils should be negligible as the school should be able to fill all or most of its places. Additionally, any loss of pupils to the new Free School may be mitigated by the increased demand for primary places over the next few years. We do not anticipate that opening the Free School will affect this school's long term financial viability.

Moderate/high rating

The following section summarises the potential impact for the schools in Table 2 with a moderate/high rating.

Moderate:

3. Thameside Primary School (1.54 miles from proposed site). Ofsted rating: INADEQUATE

This school has attainment below the national average, 57% (compared to the national average of 74%) in Maths and English and progress has been volatile over the last 5 years.

It has been rated by Ofsted as inadequate and is in special measures, therefore parents may be attracted to an alternative. The school is also carrying a relatively large number of surplus places and was undersubscribed for entry in 2011/2. Opening of the free school could exacerbate this issue. Therefore, the loss of pupils to the Free School could have a negative affect on the long-term viability of the school especially those in the higher ability range as the school may not be able to sustain improvements demonstrated in recent monitoring visits.

However, the school is located over one and a half miles from the proposed site. That is beyond the average distance travelled to primary school in Oxfordshire (0.9 miles). In this regard it might be expected to lose fewer pupils than those schools nearer to the school. Additionally the LA has not raised this as a concern for them, on the contrary they do not feel that opening Europa will have a long term negative impact on any of its schools.

Secondary

4. John Mason School (1.93 miles from the proposed site). Ofsted: SATISFACTORY.

This will be the closest secondary school to the Free school and in principle could lose more pupils to the Free School than schools further away. However, the school has above average attainment and was oversubscribed for entry in 2011/12 so, even if it does lose some potential pupils, it should still be able to fill most or all of its places. The opening of the Free School should not affect the long-term financial viability of the school.

5. Didcot Girls' School (3.36 miles from the proposed site). Ofsted: SATISFACTORY.

Didcot Girls' School currently has surplus places and did not fill all of its places in 2011/12, so any loss of potential pupils to the Free School could exacerbate the surplus places issue. However, the school is located a mile further from the Free School site than the average distance travelled to secondary school in Oxfordshire, and it has attainment above the national level (65% achieving 5+ A*-C in English and Maths). In the circumstances, we would expect the number of pupils to the new school to be relatively small and unlikely to affect the long term financial viability of the school. In addition, parents who prefer their daughters to be educated in an all-girls school may not be attracted to the co-educational Free School.

6. St Birinus School (3.84 miles from the proposed site). Ofsted: Good

The school currently has surplus capacity and was undersubscribed for entry in 2011/12 so a loss of potential pupils could exacerbate the situation. However, the school is rated as good by Ofsted and has attainment above the national level (61% GCSE 5+ A*-C including English and Maths). It is also a mile and a half further than the average distance travelled to secondary school in Oxfordshire so the loss of potential pupils should not be significant enough to affect the long term viability of the school.

Moderate/High

7. Larkmead School (2.32 miles from the proposed site). Ofsted: SATISFACTORY.

Moderate/high – The school is located at an average distance travelled to secondary

school in Oxfordshire (2.3 miles). It is rated as satisfactory by Ofsted and has attainment below the national level (49% GCSE A*-C including English and Maths). The school's results had improved by 22% between 2007 and 2010, but attainment fell again by 7% in 2011. Parents may be tempted by an alternative. Although the school has been at full capacity, they were unable to fill all of their places for the year; therefore the Free School could have a negative effect on the long term viability of the school.

High Impact

8. Fitzharrys School (2.10 miles from the proposed site). Ofsted rating: SATISFACTORY

The school has a satisfactory Ofsted rating and attainment below the national average, 53% of pupils achieved 5+ A*-C grades including English and Maths, a 5% fall from 2010/11. This may mean that some parents may be attracted to an alternative. The school currently has surplus places and was undersubscribed for entry in 2011/12, so the opening of the Free School could further exacerbate the existing surplus places issue and potentially have a negative impact on longer term improvement if higher ability pupils leave.

Conclusion

The primary school population in South Oxfordshire is projected to remain fairly stable over the next four years, but the populations in neighbouring districts are projected to grow. In the districts of Oxford and Vale of White Horse, if no new primary places were added, there would be a shortfall of places by 2015/16 which could put pressure on South Oxfordshire. It is therefore possible that any potential negative impact on local schools could be mitigated by increased demand for primary places in neighbouring districts.

The secondary school population in South Oxfordshire is projected to rise by over 5% over the next six years. This projection is replicated across the neighbouring districts. Due to the large amount of surplus capacity in these districts at secondary school level, even with the expected rise in the population, there will still be a projected surplus of places in 2017/18 except in the Vale of White Horse District. However, Oxfordshire local authority has indicated that the impact is likely to be limited overall as the children remaining in the secondary age range at the proposed school will be those transferring in from the European School Culham in order to continue with the European focused education.