

Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)

Please refer to the Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) Guidance when completing this form.

Basic Details

1. Title of proposal (include budget reference if applicable)

Proposal to clarify the catchment area of St David's Roman Catholic High School and to vary the Admissions Arrangements to Denominational Secondary Education.

2. Service(s)

Education – Children, Young People and Partnerships

3. Lead officer (name, job title and date of IIA training)

Mary Noone, Business Support Officer. Date of IIA training 06 May 2026

4. Other officers/partners involved (name, job title and date of IIA training)

Katy Johnstone, Learning Estate Resource Officer. Date of IIA training 17 April 2024
Rachel Tulloch, Principal Officer (Acting) Date of IIA training 4 February 2026

5. Date IIA completed

26/05/2026

6. Nature of proposal(s)

Enhancement of an existing service or function

Review of an existing strategy or policy

Other (please specify)

N/A

7. Brief description of proposal

What are its main aims and objectives? What, if anything, will change as a result of this proposal?

Proposal 1 is to clarify the catchment area of St. David's Roman Catholic (RC) High School to cover all addresses in the Midlothian Council area only. During the disaggregation of Lothian Regional Council in 1996 and the subsequent formation of Midlothian Council, extensive research has failed to evidence that the catchment area of St. David's RC High School was formally established. The proposed clarification will provide certainty in catchment to St David's RC High School and ensure compliance with legal obligations.

If approved by Council/elected members in September 2026, the clarified St David's RC High School catchment area will take effect for the August 2027 pupil intake.

Proposal 2 is to vary the admission arrangements to denominational secondary education. The variation will see a change to the admissions priority order and how places are allocated to ensure Midlothian catchment children and young people are given the highest priority.

If approved by Council/elected members in September 2026, the new school admission policy will take effect for the August 2027 intake or as soon as possible thereafter.

Equality and Rights

8. Could the proposal have an impact on any of the following groups with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010? (select all that apply)

Protected characteristics	
Age (older people, young people and children)	☒
Disability (people with disabilities)	☒
Gender reassignment (trans people, anyone whose gender identity differs from their sex assigned at birth)	☒
Marriage and civil partnership (people who are married or in a civil partnership)	☐
Pregnancy and maternity (women who are pregnant and/or on maternity leave)	☒
Race (people defined by their colour, ethnicity or nationality – e.g. Asian and black people)	☒
Religion and belief (people with different religions and beliefs, including no belief)	☒
Sex (men or women)	☒
Sexual orientation (lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual/straight)	☒

9. Could the proposal have an impact on children and young people under the age of 18?

Yes

10. Could the proposal have an impact on [human rights](#)?

See pages 14-15 of the IIA Guidance.

Yes

11. Is the proposal a 'strategic decision' under the [Fairer Scotland Duty](#) to actively consider how to reduce socio-economic disadvantage (i.e. poverty)?

Please select from the list below. The proposal is strategic if it falls under any of the headings.

Choose an item.

Yes ☒

No ☐

Don't know ☐

If you answered yes to any of questions 8-11, you must also answer questions 12-15.

If you were unsure about any of questions 8-11, it is advised that you answer questions 12-15.

If you answered no to all of questions 8-11, please advance to **question 16 (Environment)**.

Equality and Rights

12. What kind of impact could the proposal have on groups with protected characteristics under the Equality Act? (please explain your answers)

Protected characteristic	Potential impact	Explanation
Age	Neutral	The proposed clarification of the catchment area of St David's Roman Catholic High School and the variation to the Admissions Arrangements to Denominational Secondary Education will afford appropriate priority to pupils transitioning to their catchment secondary school. The proposal promotes a smooth, inclusive and well-supported transition, enabling continuity of education. The proposals will ensure that local children attend their local catchment school and continue to grow up as part of their community. Local children will be prioritised for local schools, keeping young people close to their parents, carers, and local healthcare facilities. Loretto RC Primary School will not form part of the St David's RC High School catchment area. This could cause uncertainty and anxiety for baptised Loretto RC Primary School pupils about their opportunities for continuing their faith-based education. The proposal to include children from Loretto RC Primary School within the priority groups for transition into S1 at St. David's RC High School provides families with assurance that their preference to continue a denominational education is formally recognised. Children from Loretto RC Primary School who wish to attend a Midlothian denominational secondary school will be required to submit a placing request. This will equalise the placing request process and feed into a fair system for all children who reside outside of Midlothian and wish to attend a Midlothian denominational secondary school.
Disability	Positive	While the proposal will not impact the process for allocating places to children with ASN, it will continue the practice of providing appropriate priority to children and young people with ASN and/or exceptional circumstances.
Gender reassignment	Neutral	The proposal does not specifically address gender reassignment but aims to ensure a fair admissions process. The focus is on prioritising catchment children and young people and managing placing requests effectively. This should benefit all children and young people regardless of gender identify.

Protected characteristic	Potential impact	Explanation
Marriage and civil partnership	Choose an item.	N/A
Pregnancy and maternity	Neutral	The proposals do not directly address pregnancy and maternity but aim to ensure a fair admissions process and catchment area for St David's RC High School. Prioritising local children and young people who wish to attend their denominational catchment school can indirectly support parents and carers, including those who are pregnant or on maternity leave.
Race	Neutral	The proposals do not specifically address race but aim to ensure a clear and fair admissions process to denominational schools. By prioritising catchment children and young people, the policy seeks to provide equitable access to denominational education for all children and young people, regardless of their racial or ethnic background.
Religion or belief	Neutral	The proposal to clarify the catchment area of St David's RC HS, the sole denominational secondary school in Midlothian, will provide certainty to Roman Catholic children, and their parent's, of their catchment denominational secondary school. The proposal to vary the admissions policy aims to prioritise Roman Catholic children and young people in denominational schools, which supports and strengthens religious education within the community. This prioritisation can create a cohesive religious environment that enriches the faith-based experiences of Roman Catholic pupils. Non-Roman Catholic children and young people who have not been baptised may still obtain a place within a Roman Catholic school, but only after all baptised Roman Catholic children and young people have been placed. While this approach ensures that the religious needs of Roman Catholic families are met, it may also limit the diversity of religious perspectives and experiences of all pupils. This could affect the educational opportunities and sense of inclusion for non-Roman Catholic children and young people. Additionally, the proposal may raise concerns about equitable treatment and the balance between supporting religious education and ensuring fair access for pupils of all faiths or none. Children who attend non-denominational schools do, though, receive Religious and Moral Education (RME), as subscribed by the Curriculum for Excellence. Education about faith and belief in non-denominational and denominational schools contribute to the development of the whole person. Through increasing awareness and appreciation of the value of individuals within a diverse society,

Protected characteristic	Potential impact	Explanation
		children and young people can develop responsible attitudes to other people. Loretto RC Primary School in East Lothian will not form part of the St David's RC High School catchment area and will be required to submit a placing request to apply for attendance at St David's RC High School. This could cause uncertainty and anxiety for baptised Loretto RC Primary School pupils about their opportunities for continuing their faith-based education. The proposal to include children from Loretto RC Primary School within the priority groups for transition into S1 at St. David's RC High School provides families with assurance that their preference to continue a denominational education is formally recognised.
Sex	Neutral	The proposal does not specifically address sex but aims to ensure a fair admissions process. The focus on catchment children and young people and managing placing requests should benefit all children and young people regardless of sex.
Sexual orientation	Neutral	The proposal does not specifically address sexual orientation but aims to ensure a fair admissions process. Ensuring equitable access to education for all children and young people should benefit all children and young people regardless of sexual orientation.

Equality and Rights

13. What kind of impact could the proposal have on children and young people in terms of the requirements of the [UNCRC \(Scotland\) \(Incorporation\) Act 2023?](#)

A full list of the UNCRC Articles can be found on pages 12-13 of the IIA Guidance.

UNCRC Article	Particular groups of children affected	Potential impact	Explanation
Article 3 (<u>best interests of the child</u>)	All children and young people	Positive	The proposal ensures that the best interests of the child and young person are a primary consideration in all decisions regarding admissions, aligning with the statutory guidance's emphasis on the best interest's principle.
Article 6 (<u>life, survival and development</u>)	All children and young people	Positive	By varying admissions arrangements, the council aims to provide an environment conducive to the development of all children and young people, ensuring their right to life, survival, and development is upheld.
Article 12 (<u>respect for the views of the child</u>)	All children and young people	Positive	The proposal includes mechanisms for children and young people to express their views on admissions, ensuring their voices are heard and considered in decision-making.
Article 19 (<u>protection from violence, abuse and neglect</u>)	All children and young people	Positive	All Midlothian Schools offer a secure and structured environment, staffed by trained professionals. Comprehensive policies and procedures are in place to ensure safety and order.
Article 23 (<u>children with a disability</u>)	All children and young people	Positive	The proposal includes provisions to ensure that children and young people with disabilities have equal access to education, aligning with the statutory guidance's emphasis on non-discrimination and inclusion.
Article 27 (<u>adequate standard of living</u>)	All children and young people	Positive	By ensuring fair admissions processes, the council can help children and young people from low-income family's access quality education, contributing to an adequate standard of living.
Article 29 (<u>goals of education</u>)	All children and young people	Positive	The proposal supports the development of the child's and young person's personality, talents, and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential, in line with the

			goals of education outlined in the statutory guidance.
Article 31 (leisure, play and culture)	All children and young people	Neutral	By providing equitable access to education, the proposal ensures that all children and young people have opportunities for leisure, play, and cultural activities, which are essential for their holistic development.
Other (please specify)		Choose an item.	N/A

Equality and Rights

14. What kind of impact could the proposal have in terms of the Articles of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)?

See pages 14-15 of the IIA Guidance.

Article of ECHR	Particular groups of people affected	Potential impact	Explanation
Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination)	Children from low-income families Children with additional support needs Children from single-parent households Families with multiple children Children and families from an ethnic minority	Positive	The proposal ensures non-discrimination by including all Midlothian children and young people within the catchment area, including those from low-income families, with additional support needs, from single-parent households, and ethnic minorities. This aligns with Article 14's prohibition of discrimination, promoting equality and inclusion.
Article 2 (right to education)	Children from low-income families Children with additional support needs Children from single-parent households Families with multiple children Children and families from an ethnic minority	Positive	The proposal supports the right to education by ensuring that all Midlothian children and young people within their catchment area have access to quality education. This aligns with Article 2, which guarantees the right to education for all children, promoting equal educational opportunities.
Article 8 (respect for private and family life)	All children and young people, especially those from vulnerable backgrounds	Positive	By ensuring that Midlothian children and young people can attend their local schools, the proposal supports family life and community ties. This aligns with Article 8, which protects the right to respect for private and family life, fostering a stable and supportive environment for children and young people.

15. What kind of impact could the proposal have on people experiencing or vulnerable to socio-economic disadvantage (i.e. poverty)?

An explanation of the different features of socio-economic disadvantage and information on vulnerable population groups can be found on page 18 of the IIA Guidance.

Socio-economic disadvantage	Potential impact	Explanation
Low income	Positive	Ensures local Midlothian children and young people from low-income families have access to local education. The proposal aims to provide equitable access to education for all children and young people, including those from low-income families.
Low and/or no wealth	Positive	Supports equitable access to education for children and young people from low-wealth backgrounds. The proposal prioritises Midlothian catchment children and young people, ensuring they have access to local schools.
Material deprivation	Positive	Ensures children and young people from deprived backgrounds have access to local schools, reducing the need for additional expenses related to education and supporting their overall wellbeing.
Area deprivation	Positive	By prioritising children and young people from the catchment area, the proposal supports those living in historically deprived areas, ensuring they have equal access to quality education and opportunities for social mobility.
Socio-economic background	Positive	The proposal helps mitigate the effects of socio-economic disadvantage by ensuring that children and young people from various vulnerable groups, including those from low-income families, single-parent households, and ethnic minorities, have equal access to education.
Other	Choose an item.	

Environment

16. What impact could the proposal have on the environment?

Considerations relating to the environment, climate change and sustainability are described on pages 19-20 of the IIA Guidance.

Potential impact	Affected populations	Explanation
Not applicable		

If the proposal is likely to have a significant impact on the environment (positive or negative), it is advised that you undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). Further information on when an SEA is required can be found on page 19 of the IIA Guidance and on the [Scottish Government website](#).

If you have identified any impact (positive, negative or neutral) on protected characteristic groups, children and young people, human rights, socio-economic disadvantage or the environment, you must complete all of the remaining sections.

If you have not identified any potential impact on protected characteristic groups, children and young people, human rights, socio-economic disadvantage or the environment, please advance directly to **question 29 (Recommendation)**.

Evidence

17. What data, research and other evidence informed the proposal?

Evidence can include, for instance, surveys, databases, census and population figures, focus groups, in-depth interviews, pilot projects, reviews of complaints, user feedback, academic publication and consulting reports.

Evidence source	Explanation (what does the evidence tell us about nature and scale of the potential impact?)
Research / Council Reports and pupil rolls	Midlothian Council is recognised as one of Scotland's fastest-growing local authorities. This rapid growth has brought significant challenges, particularly for education. This growth has led to heightened pressures on schools which includes applying intake limits at several schools to safeguard places for Midlothian pupils to be able to attend their catchment school. The increasing population and housing developments within Midlothian continue to generate growth in pupil numbers. There is a significant risk that Midlothian Council will not have a place for every pupil at their catchment school and Midlothian Council's Learning Estate Strategy considers this from a strategic perspective. In the short term this risk is mitigated by the application of limits on pupil intake, reviews of placing requests, and, in the case of denominational schools, by giving priority to those with exceptional circumstance followed by those who are baptised Roman Catholic. Pupil enrolment for the 2026/27 school session has concluded, with 1440 Midlothian primary and 1271 Midlothian secondary pupils registered. This is an 8.3% increase in P1 entry and a 4.8% increase in S1 entry on 2025/2026. This includes 270 pupils who intend to defer entry to primary school.

Consultation and Engagement

18. How has the proposal been informed by consultation and engagement?

Please explain who was consulted/engaged during the development of the proposal, the extent of their involvement, what their views were and how these have been taken into account.

A statutory consultation is currently underway to consider clarifying the catchment area of St David's RC High School and varying the admission arrangements for denominational secondary education. This process is informed by various data, research and evidence, and allows stakeholders to provide their input based on the information within the proposal document.

To facilitate community engagement and gather diverse perspectives, public meetings and virtual drop-in sessions are taking place.

Midlothian Council is conducting a survey to gather views from a wide range of stakeholders, including parents/careers, staff, pupils, community councils, trade unions, professional associations, and the broader community. The feedback collected will help deepen understanding of the impact of the proposal and will be included in the final consultation report.

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Education Scotland (HMIES) will undertake their own consultation, over a period of no longer than three weeks, with various stakeholders, on the proposed changes. As part of the statutory consultation process required under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, Education Scotland will review the proposal and provide an independent report on its educational aspects.

After the consultation period, HMIES will provide a report to Midlothian Council summarising their findings and recommendations. This report will be made available to the public as part of the decision-making process and included in the final consultation report. Should the proposal be approved at a meeting of Council and require the consent of Ministers, Midlothian Council will submit an application for consent prior to implementation.

Mitigating Actions

19. Could the proposal, in its current form, discriminate against people in a protected characteristic group? No
20. Could the proposal, in its current form, violate the rights of children and young people under the UNCRC Act? No
21. Could the proposal, in its current form, violate human rights under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)? No
22. Could the proposal, in its current form, entrench or increase inequality of outcome due to poverty? No
23. If applicable, please describe any actions which could be taken to remove or mitigate the potential negative impact of the proposal.

Please provide estimates of the resource implications of adopting these actions.

N/A

24. If you have identified any potential negative impact which cannot be removed or mitigated, please clearly state your justification for continuing with the proposal.

N/A

NOTE: If the proposal could be deemed discriminatory under the Equality Act, UNCRC or ECHR, you must revise the proposal to ensure that the Council acts lawfully.

Monitoring and Review

25. How will the implementation and impact of the proposal be monitored? How frequently and by whom?

The implementation and impact of the proposal to clarify the catchment area of St David's Roman Catholic High School and to vary the admissions arrangements to denominational secondary education will be monitored through a structured and systematic process. This will involve collecting and analysing data on various aspects of the admissions policy to ensure it achieves its intended goals and addresses any emerging issues.

26. How will the results of this monitoring be used to develop future proposals?

The findings of the monitoring process will feed into future proposals to ensure they continue to be effective, equitable and responsive to the needs of children, young people and their families. This approach ensures that the admissions policy continuously improves and evolves to better serve the community.

27. When will the proposal be reviewed?

Consultation feedback and HMIES assessments are used to refine and finalise the final report for consideration by Council/elected members.

The final report will be presented to Council/elected members for approval in September 2026. If approved, the proposals will take effect from August 2027 or as soon as possible thereafter.

28. If the proposal is to be delivered wholly or partly by contractors, what arrangements are in place to ensure equality, human rights and environmental issues are properly considered?

N/A

Recommendation

29. What is your recommendation for the proposal?

- Adopt proposal with no amendments ☒
- Adopt proposal with mitigating actions (outlined above) ☐
- Reject proposal due to disproportionately negative impact on equality, human rights or the environment ☐

30. Please give the reasoning behind your recommendation

- Include reference to any potential impact you have identified during the IIA process.
- **If you have not conducted a full impact assessment by completing all sections of this form, please explain why.**

The proposal to clarify the catchment area of St David's Roman Catholic High School and to vary the admissions arrangements to denominational secondary education is recommended for adoption with no amendments. This proposal ensures equitable access to education by prioritising children and young people, living within a designated Midlothian catchment area, addressing socio-economic disadvantage, and supporting children and young people with disabilities. It promotes religious inclusivity by prioritising Roman Catholic children and young people in denominational secondary schools while maintaining fairness for non-Roman Catholic pupils. The proposal aligns with key articles of the UNCRC and ECHR, supporting the best interests and rights of children and young people.

Extensive consultation with stakeholders, including parents, carers, children, young people, school staff, and community representatives, will inform the outcome and decision of this proposal, ensuring it is responsive to community needs. The identified impacts during the IIA process, such as positive effects on age, disability, and socio-economic disadvantage, and neutral effects on other protected characteristics, further support the recommendation.

Authorisation by Director/Chief Officer/Head of Service

Name and job title

Michelle Strong, Chief Education Officer

Date

21/08/2026

Signature

