

## Equality Impact Assessment Form

*(Equality target groups are those which cover the 9 protected characteristics under the Equality act 2010: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion/belief, sex (as in male or female) and sexual orientation)*

*When completing the equality impact assessment, please remove wording not applicable to what you are assessing e.g. service, policy, procedure, practice or project*

### **Part 1 Aims & implementation of the service, policy, procedure, practice or project**

This section is the title of what is being assessed, responsible officers, purpose, where it fits within the council's wider aims and how it supports the legislation to eliminate unlawful discrimination and the promotion of equal opportunities. *(Please refer to the guidance for additional information)*

#### **1.1 What is being assessed**

Isle of Wight Children and Young people's access to services as contained within the revised 'Threshold document'.

#### **1.2 Officer(s) and section or service responsible for completing the assessment**

Ali Matthews – Deputy Director – Children's Safeguarding and Family Services and Rosie Barnard (Equalities and Diversity officer) ADD PAM ROBINSON

#### **1.3 What is the main purpose or aims of the policy**

To provide a framework for professionals who come into regular or daily contact with children or families and may have a concern about a child, young person or unborn child. The aim of the policy is to clarify whether a child has **additional needs** that require a Team around the family approach to ensure that these needs are met or whether the child has **complex needs** ie is a 'child in need' as defined in the Children Act '89 and requires a statutory social work assessment. The policy provides information on support and guidance on who to contact, decision-making guidance in relation to referrals, children in need, significant harm, government guidance on information sharing and levels of need indicators/threshold guidance.

#### **1.4 Who is affected by the policy? Who is it intended to benefit and how?**

All children and young people resident on the Island. Professionals who work with children, young people and/or their families; and members of the public who may wish to make a referral. The benefits are to ensure that common practices are promoted and adhered to, roles and responsibilities are understood by the professionals working in this area to enhance partnership and inter-agency working for the benefit of those who need to use our services; and that there is clarity around statutory responsibilities of the local authority working with children.

#### **1.5 Has the policy been promoted or explained to those it might affect directly or indirectly?**

3 months consultation on the policy has been undertaken with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and feedback incorporated into the policy development. The draft was co-written by the Deputy Director, the Commissioners for short term and long term services and all Group Managers. The draft policy has also been subject to consultation with the council's Safeguarding Champions and the statutory Director of Children's Services and staff within the First Response

unit.

The policy will be placed on the council's Family Information Zone website for consultation with families.

**1.6 How does the policy contribute to better community cohesion?**

The policy promotes a 'Team around the Family' approach ie children and families having their needs met by people who know them well and are best placed to respond, rather than a short-term and intrusive statutory response from a social worker that is disproportionate to the family's needs.

**1.7 How does the policy fit in with the council's wider aims?**

Supports the council's corporate plan priorities of – Keeping Children Safe

**1.8 What is the relevance of the aims of the policy to the equality target group and the council's duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote equality of opportunity?**

To provide a framework of support for staff and children, young people and their families irrespective of their protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 – age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/belief, sex or sexual orientation. It also provides a transparency of response that does not rely on individual relationships or misrepresentation of the family's circumstances to engender a response. Wherever possible and appropriate it recognises that children are best placed within their families and without unnecessary statutory interference within their lives (Right to Family life).

**1.9 How is, or how will the policy be put into practice and who is responsible for it?**

Professionals are responsible for adherence to the policy. The policy development, promotion and review lies with the – Deputy Director – Children's Safeguarding and family Services and the LSCB. The First Response unit will be responsible for providing consultation and advice and support to partners in order to develop common practices. The authority's Schools Safeguarding Lead is responsible for promoting a shared ownership and common practices between schools.

## **Part 2 Consideration of data and research**

To conduct the assessment, you will need information about service users and staff that provide the service. This section is to help you identify the sort of information that will be needed to help you assess whether there may be barriers to different equality groups who access your service, policy, procedure, practice or project. *(Please refer to the guidance for additional information)*

### **2.1 List all examples of quantitative and qualitative data or any consultation information available that will enable the impact assessment to be undertaken**

Evidence of the number of number of referrals that lead to an Initial Assessment and are then closed down with no further services being provided suggests the high proportion of inappropriate referrals – where families have been subject to an intrusive statutory interference for no longer term benefit to them. By promoting an approach (CAF) where the Lead Professional is someone consistent and known to the family, families should feel more comfortable with an intervention that is low-key and proportionate to their needs. The number of CAFs undertaken on the island is low, whereas the number of referrals to children’s social care is comparatively high.

### **2.2 Equalities profile of users and beneficiaries**

The proportion of BME users of social care services is broadly in line with the demography of the island. Most of the other protected characteristics are not captured within our recording systems. Children who have an identified disability are offered an assessment in line with statutory guidance.

### **2.3 Evidence of complaints against the policy on the grounds of discrimination**

No evidence to date as the policy has not yet been implemented

### **2.4 What does the consultation, research and/or data indicate about the negative impact on the policy**

As above

### **2.5 What does the consultation, research and/or data indicate about the positive impact on the policy**

As above

**Part 3 Assessment of impact**

Now that you have looked at the purpose etc of the service, policy, procedure, practice or project (part 1) and looked at the research (part 2), this section asks you to assess the impact, positive and negative, of the service, policy, procedure, practice or project on each of the protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010.

**3.1 Complete this section with the following information – relating to all of the identified groups Equality Act 2010 (protected characteristics)  
(please refer to the guidance for additional information)**

Protected Characteristics – Equality Act 2010	Negative	Neutral	Positive	Comments
Age		X		
Disability		X		Some children with mild or moderate disabilities may not receive a statutory service; and may be supported by a CAF. Conversely, the capacity this will create will mean that children and families with greater needs may receive a more proportionate service than currently.
Gender Reassignment		X		
Marriage & Civil Partnership		X		
Pregnancy & Maternity			X	By routinely considering the CAF as a means of accessing additional support for vulnerable parents, this will better suit the needs of parents who do not require a social work service.
Race		X		
Religion / Belief		X		
Sex (male / female)		X		
Sexual Orientation (LGB&T)		X		

**Part 4 Measures to mitigate disproportionate or adverse impact or improve on neutral or positive impacts: (Please refer to the guidance for additional information)**

**4.1 If there is any negative impact on any target equality group identified in part 3, is the impact intended or legal?**

By providing a more transparent offer, what may be perceived negatively by families with lower levels of need will be offset by the level of service that can be offered to families whose needs are greater.

**4.2 Specify measures that can be taken to remove or minimize the disproportionate or adverse effect identified in part 3. If none were identified, identify how disproportionate or adverse effect could be avoided in the future.**

Promoting the CAF and direct payments as ways in which families may take responsibility for their own package of support or where community-based services are encouraged to provide equality of access and support.

**4.3 If there is no evidence that the policy promotes equality, equal opportunities or improves relations within equality target groups, what amendments can be made to achieve this?**

There is evidence that a consistency applied policy will promote equality rather than families enjoying a level of service for historic reasons.

**4.4 If a neutral or positive impact has been identified, can that impact be improved upon (continuous improvement)?**

By regular consultation with service users and other professionals

**4.5 How will the policy be implemented?**

Following the completion of the consultation phase and sign-off by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board, the policy will be circulated to all staff and will form part of the ongoing CAF and Safeguarding training. It will be posted on the council's website and circulated to the Safeguarding Champions.

**4.6 As 4.5 above please identify training requirements.**

Safeguarding and CAF training is regularly delivered via a rolling programme. The CAF coordinators regularly visit schools and other partners' team meetings to embed a consistent approach across the island. Members' training is planned at the end of the year by the Deputy Director.

## **Part 5 Conclusions & recommendations**

This section ensures that what ever we are impact assessing, whether it be a service, policy, procedure, practice or project that ensure that we abide by the general and specific duties to promote race, disability and gender equality. *(Please refer to guidance for additional information)*

### **5.1 Does the policy comply with equalities legislation?**

Yes. The policy provides a more consistently applied approach in line with statutory guidance.

### **5.2 What are the main areas requiring further attention?**

Further consultation with parents

### **5.3 Summary of recommendations for improvement**

To be identified following consultation

### **5.4 What equality monitoring, evaluation, review systems have been set up to carry out regular checks?**

The LSCB will review the policy on an annual basis

### **5.5 When will the policy be reviewed?**

December 2012

## Part 6 Action / improvement plan

The table below should be completed using the information from the equality impact assessment to produce an action plan for the implementation of the proposals to:

1. Lower the negative impact, and/or
2. Ensure that the negative impact is legal under anti-discriminatory law, and/or
3. Provide an opportunity to promote equality, equal opportunity and improve relations within equality target groups, i.e. increase the positive impact

**Please ensure that you update your service/business plan within the equality objectives/targets and actions identified below:**

Area of impact	Is there any potential for (negative, neutral or positive) differential impact?	Could this lead to adverse impact and if so why?	Can this adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group or any other reason?	Please detail what measures or changes you will put in place to remedy any identified impact (NB: please make sure that you include actions to improve all areas of impact whether negative, neutral or positive)
Age	No			
Disability	Currently, service access is not always transparent so there is potential for inequality of access. Consistent decision-making should lead to better equality of opportunity for families	Some families have currently been accessing services where the criteria are not met. In the future there will be greater consistency and families will be supported through the CAF where a statutory threshold is not met.	Yes. By allocating capacity to families who are below a statutory threshold, other families are unable to access the service they need.	Where a family does not require a social work service, they will be signposted to other community supports more appropriate to their needs.
Gender Reassignment	No			
Marriage & Civil Partnership	No			

Area of impact	Is there any potential for (negative, neutral or positive) differential impact?	Could this lead to adverse impact and if so why?	Can this adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group or any other reason?	Please detail what measures or changes you will put in place to remedy any identified impact (NB: please make sure that you include actions to improve all areas of impact whether negative, neutral or positive)
Pregnancy & Maternity	Promotion of the CAF as a means of support to parents, rather than a statutory social work assessment is positive as research shows that families value the input of other professionals such as Health Visitors more than a social worker	If professionals refuse to undertake a CAF then there is potential for parents not to be offered the support they need	No	Consultancy, advice and support will be offered by CAF coordinators. The Teenage pregnancy protocol supports this approach.
Race	No			
Religion / Belief	No			
Sex (male or female)	No			
Sexual Orientation	No			
Geographical location	No			
All of the above				



**Part 6 continued – Equality Impact Assessment – Summary report**

The results of equality impact assessments must be published. Please complete this summary, which will be used to publish the results of your impact assessment on the council’s website. Please access the Work tab of the council’s intranet and follow the instructions to upload your completed equality impact assessment on to the website.

**Date of assessment**

<b>Officer’s name</b>	Ali Matthews	<b>Role</b>	Deputy Director – Children’s Safeguarding and Family Services
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**Policy that was impact assessed**

**Summary of findings**

**Summary of recommendations and key points of action plan**

**Groups that this policy will impact upon**

<b>Age</b>	X	
<b>Disability</b>	X	
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>		
<b>Marriage &amp; Civil Partnership</b>		
<b>Pregnancy &amp; Maternity</b>	X	
<b>Race</b>		
<b>Religion / Belief</b>		
<b>Sex (male/female)</b>		
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>		