

Equality Impact Assessment / Equality Analysis

(Updated Nov 2024)

Item name	Details
Title of service or policy	Budget Growth and Demographics
Name of directorate and service	Childrens Services
Name and role of officers completing the EIA	Mary Kearney-Knowles, Director of Children's Services and Education (DCS)
Date of assessment	25/11/2024

Equality Impact Assessment (or ‘Equality Analysis’) is a process of systematically analysing a new or existing policy or service to identify what impact or likely impact it will have on different groups within the community. The main aim is to identify any discriminatory or negative consequences for a particular group or sector of the community, and also to identify areas where equality can be better promoted. Equality impact Assessments (EIAs) can be carried out in relation to services provided to customers and residents as well as employment policies/strategies that relate to staffing matters.

This toolkit has been developed to use as a framework when carrying out an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) or Equality Analysis. **Not all sections will be relevant – so leave blank any that are not applicable.** It is intended that this is used as a working document throughout the process, and a final version will be published on the Council’s website.

1.1 Identify the aims of the policy or service and how it is implemented

Key questions	Answers / notes
<p>1.1 Briefly describe purpose of the service/policy e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How the service/policy is delivered and by whom ● If responsibility for its implementation is shared with other departments or organisations ● Intended outcomes 	<p>Local authorities, under Section 10 of the Children Act 2004, have a responsibility to promote inter-agency co-operation to improve the welfare of all children through identifying children and families who would benefit from early help</p> <p>Children’s Services are responsible and accountable for delivering a range of statutory responsibilities on behalf of the council: these include a range of statutory education and children’s social care services for children 0-19 and up to 25 for a child with a disability or SEND. The Local Authority signed up to the Care Leaver Pledge in 2023 and recognised Care Experienced as a protected characteristic in 2024. The budget growth request recognizing the additional growth required to ensure that the Local Authority has sufficient funding to ensure they can effectively deliver services to vulnerable children and young people .</p>
<p>1.2 Provide brief details of the scope of the policy or service being reviewed, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Is it a new service/policy or review of an existing one? ● Is it a national requirement?). 	<p>Children’s Services have accessed the indicated budget growth and demographics request as the minimal amount required to meet the costs of increased demand, increased costs in the market and national policy directives. We have seen an increase in the need and complexity of the children and young people who need to be accommodated and the</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How much room for review is there? 	<p>increase cost of care in the market. These increased costs have been recognised as a regional and national issue by ADCS (The association of Directors of Children’s Service) https://www.adcs.org.uk/safeguarding-pressures/ and the DFE (Department of Education) Keeping Children Safe, Helping Families Thrive Breaking down barriers to opportunity https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-helping-families-thrive ; the statement sets out ambitions to fix the broken care market, and ensure the system is working effectively for vulnerable children and families. Children and young have protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010</p>
<p>1.3 Do the aims of this policy link to or conflict with any other policies of the Council?</p>	<p>Children’s Services contribute towards the B&NES Corporate Strategy ambition to “improve people’s lives” and the key priority “focusing on prevention” .</p> <p>The Children Services report to Children’s Services Service Improvement Board, and Children and Young People’s Plan (CYPP) Sub-group which reports to the Health and Wellbeing Board Children.</p>

2. Consideration of available data, research and information

Key questions	Data, research and information that you can refer to
<p>2.1 What equalities training have staff received to enable them to understand the needs of our diverse community?</p>	<p>Staff across children’s services are required to undertake regular and up to date Equalities Training. This template author is a member of B&NES Corporate Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Steering Group. Author completed her updated Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Training on 13/11/2024.</p>

2.2 What is the equalities profile of service users?

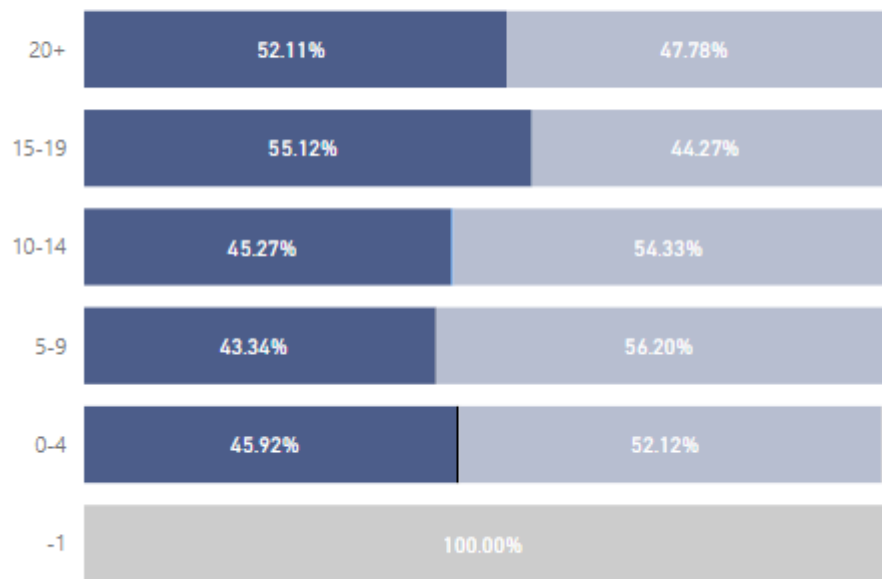
Children's Services support all children and young people across B&NES.

The B&NES Strategic Evidence Base <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/strategic-evidence> : some key points:

- We have seen an increase of 10% in people aged 15-64 years and an increase of 7% in children under 15 years.
- There has been a small but notable increase in persons aged under 16 self-reporting as disabled (either limited a little or limited a lot) from 2011 (3%) to 2021 (7%).
- A larger increase in self-reported disability can be seen among the 16- 49 age group, from 7% in 2011 to 13% in 2021.
- Gaps in education attainment are present for the Free School Meal (FSM) cohort and Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) cohort at all stages and between boys and girls.
- Key Stage 2 (KS2) attainment in the FSM cohort is the worst in the country and Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFS) attainment in the FSM cohort is the 3rd worst in the country (2022/23).
- Estimates suggest 4,000 people in B&NES (including 1,500 children) will fall into absolute poverty in 2022/23. • 13% of households in B&NES are estimated to be in Fuel Poverty. • Increases in residents sometimes/often worried that food would run out (from 13% in 2022 to 18% in 2023).
- Rates of hospitalisation (2020/21) are increasing and comparatively high for
 - Under 18 mental health
 - Under 18 alcohol conditions
 - Eating disorders
 - Self-harm particularly for young women and girls.
- Profile of contacts by age/sex (see below) to children social care

Contacts by Age/Sex

Gender ● Female ● Gender Flui... ● Gender Ne... ● Indetermin... ● Male ● Non-Binary



2.3 Are there any recent customer satisfaction surveys to refer to? What were the results? Are there any gaps? Or differences in experience/outcomes?

The most recent staff survey was in 2022, link attached below.
<https://intranet.bathnes.gov.uk/staff-survey>

<p>2.4 What engagement or consultation has been undertaken as part of this EIA and with whom? What were the results?</p>	<p>Engagement has taken place in Children's Services, with finance colleagues, equalities lead and business intelligence. The proposal will be shared with 3 SG (third sector), CAHW and parish councils.</p>
<p>2.5 If you are planning to undertake any consultation in the future regarding this service or policy, how will you include equalities considerations within this?</p>	<p>As above</p>

3. Assessment of impact: 'Equality analysis'

Based upon any data you have considered, or the results of consultation or research, use the spaces below to demonstrate you have analysed how the service or policy:

- Meets any particular needs of equalities groups or could help promote equality in some way.
- Could have a negative or adverse impact for any of the equalities groups

<p>Key questions</p>	<p>Examples of what the service has done to promote equality</p>	<p>Examples of actual or potential negative or adverse impact and what steps have been or could be taken to address this</p>
<p>3.1 Issues relating to all groups and protected characteristics</p>	<p>All Children Services work to ensure all children, young people and families including those with protected characteristics are supported and encouraged to access services. Initial and ongoing assessments aim to identify protected characteristics of all family members (where relevant).</p>	<p>No known adverse impact based on this budget growth</p>

<p>3.2 Sex – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on women and men.</p>	<p>All services are aware of the need to engage with fathers and best practice on engagement has been shared.</p>	<p>No known adverse impact based on this budget growth</p>
<p>3.3 Pregnancy and maternity</p>	<p>Children’s Services are members of the Best Start in Life group and/or associated sub-groups to ensure their services are accessible</p>	<p>No known adverse impact based on this budget growth</p>
<p>3.4 Gender reassignment – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on transgender people</p>	<p>Children’s Services ensure they consider the impact of the support provide for those who have undergone gender reassignment. Children/young people are signposted to partner agencies such as Off the Record who provide commissioned LGBTQ+ support services.</p> <p>B&NES commission SARI to provide training and practice reflective sessions for staff. Individuals and families are supported to access SARI for LGBTQ+ related issues or incidents.</p>	<p>No known adverse impact based on this budget growth</p>
<p>3.5 Disability – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on disabled people (ensure consideration of physical, sensory and mental health needs/differences)</p>	<p>Accessibility to services for children, young people and families is monitored through the Children’s Services Quality Assurance Framework. Parents/carers have access to free independent support and advice through SENDIAS: https://livewell.bathnes.gov.uk/special-educational-need-or-disability-send/sendias-bathnes</p>	<p>No known adverse impact based on this budget growth</p>

<p>3.6 Age – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on different age groups</p>	<p>The impact of Children’s Service provision and support provided for different age groups is monitored through the Children’s Services Quality Assurance Framework.</p>	<p>No known adverse impact based on this budget growth</p>
<p>3.7 Race – identify the impact/potential impact on across different ethnic groups</p>	<p>The impact of Children’s Service provision and support provided for different ethnic groups is monitored through the Children’s Services Quality Assurance Framework. Translation services are used on request or where a need has been identified.</p> <p>B&NES commission SARI to provide training and practice reflective sessions for staff. Individuals and families are supported to access SARI for Race related issues or incidents.</p> <p>B&NES Traveller families can be signposted to the following services: Traveller Education Health and wellbeing Housing Dedicated Outreach Officer A regular multi-agency meeting ensures that all professionals work together for a coordinated approach for the Traveller Community.</p>	<p>No known adverse impact based on this budget growth</p>
<p>3.8 Sexual orientation – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on</p>	<p>The impact of Childrens Service provision and support provided for lesbian, gay,</p>	<p>No known adverse impact based on this budget growth</p>

<p>lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual, questioning people</p>	<p>bisexual, heterosexual people is monitored through the Children's Services Quality Assurance Framework. Children/young people are signposted to partner agencies such as Off the Record who provide commissioned LGBTQ+ support services.</p> <p>B&NES commission SARI to provide training and practice reflective sessions for staff. Individuals and families are supported to access SARI for LGBTQ+ related issues or incidents.</p>	
<p>3.9 Marriage and civil partnership – does the policy/strategy treat married and civil partnered people equally?</p>	<p>Childrens Services treat all people equally and this is monitored through the Children's Services Quality Assurance Framework.</p>	<p>No known adverse impact based on this budget growth</p>
<p>3.10 Religion/belief – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on people of different religious/faith groups and also upon those with no religion.</p>	<p>Children's Services treat all people, regardless of their religion/belief equally and this is monitored through the Children's Services Quality Assurance Framework.</p>	<p>No known adverse impact based on this budget growth</p>
<p>3.11 Socio-economically disadvantaged* – identify the impact on people who are disadvantaged due to factors like family background, educational attainment, neighbourhood, employment status can influence life chances (this is not a legal requirement, but is a local priority).</p>	<p>Children's Services support and intervention is aimed at providing support to those affected by socio-economic disadvantage.</p>	<p>No known adverse impact based on this budget growth</p>

<p>3.12 Rural communities* identify the impact / potential impact on people living in rural communities</p>	<p>Children’s Services work to ensure people living in rural communities are considered when planning support and have access to services.</p>	<p>No known adverse impact based on this budget growth</p>
<p>3.13 Armed Forces Community ** serving members; reservists; veterans and their families, including the bereaved. Public services are required by law to pay due regard to the Armed Forces Community when developing policy, procedures and making decisions, particularly in the areas of public housing, education and healthcare (to remove disadvantage and consider special provision).</p>	<p>Children’s Services respond to community needs and are pragmatic in ensuring their offer is appropriate to all families including armed forces community if needed. Learning from colleagues working across B&NES and Wiltshire is drawn upon when required.</p>	<p>No known adverse impact based on this budget growth</p>
<p>3.14 Care Experienced *** This working definition is currently under review and therefore subject to change: In B&NES, you are ‘care-experienced’ if you spent any time in your childhood in Local Authority care, living away from your parent(s) for example, you were adopted, lived in residential, foster care, kinship care, or a special guardianship arrangement.</p>	<p>Children’s Services have been actively involved in the development of the Care Leavers Pledge, and the move towards care experienced as a protected characteristic. The service are actively involved in a cross council group to monitor implementation.</p>	<p>No known adverse impact based on this budget growth</p>

*There is no requirement within the public sector duty of the Equality Act to consider groups who may be disadvantaged due to socio economic status, or because of living in a rural area. However, these are significant issues within B&NES and have therefore been included here.

** The Equality Act does not cover armed forces community. However, the Armed Forces Bill (which came in on 22 Nov 2022) introduces a requirement to pay 'due regard' to make sure the Armed Forces Community are not disadvantaged when accessing public services.

***The Equality Act does not cover care experienced people. B&NES adopted this group as a protected characteristic in March 2024 alongside over 80 other Local Authorities. Although we have data for care leavers and children/young people who are currently in the care of B&NES we do not have wider data on disadvantage experienced through being in care.

4. Bath and North East Somerset Council Equality Impact Assessment Improvement Plan

Please list actions that you plan to take as a result of this assessment/analysis. These actions should be based upon the analysis of data and engagement, any gaps in the data you have identified, and any steps you will be taking to address any negative impacts or remove barriers. The actions need to be built into your service planning framework. Actions/targets should be measurable, achievable, realistic and time framed.

Issues identified	Actions required	Progress milestones	Officer responsible	By when

5. Sign off and publishing

Once you have completed this form, it needs to be 'approved' by your Divisional Director or their nominated officer. Following this sign off, send a copy to the Equalities Team (equality@bathnes.gov.uk), who will publish it on the Council's website. Keep a copy for your own records.

Signed off by: Mary Kearney-Knowles
(nominated senior officer)

(Divisional Director or

Date: 26/11/2024