

# **Equality Impact Assessment / Equality Analysis**

(Updated December 2022)

| <b>Item name</b>                                    | <b>Details</b>  |
|---|---|
| <b>Title of service or policy</b>                   | SEND Staffing growth                                  |
| <b>Name of directorate and service</b>              | Children's Services & Education                       |
| <b>Name and role of officers completing the EIA</b> | Chris Wilford, Director of Education and Safeguarding |
| <b>Date of assessment</b>                           | 26th November 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

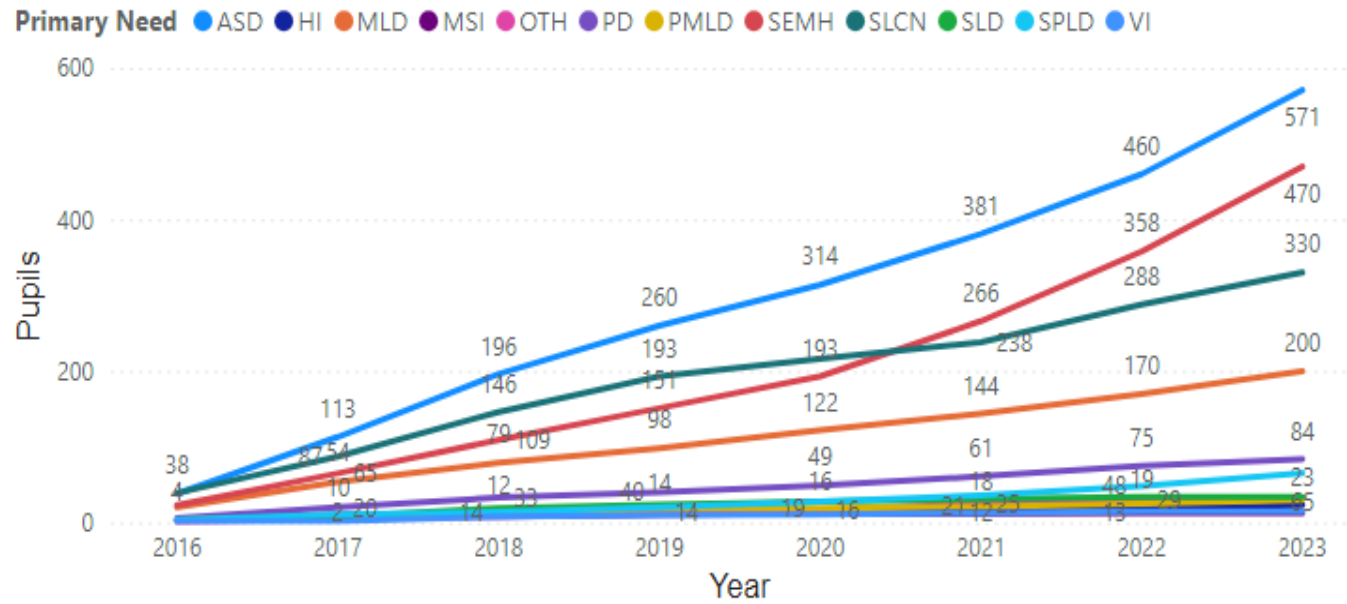
| Key questions   | Answers / notes   |
|---|---|
| <p>1.1 Briefly describe purpose of the service/policy e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How the service/policy is delivered and by whom</li> <li>● If responsibility for its implementation is shared with other departments or organisations</li> <li>● Intended outcomes</li> </ul>     | <p>This growth request is to increase the staffing in the statutory SEND team. The council is responsible for the statutory assessment of all children who may have special educational needs and disabilities.</p> <p>The outcome intended is to increase capacity and increase the council's compliance with the timescale for the completion of these assessments.</p> <p>Currently, the council only completes 24% of all assessments within the set timescale of 20 weeks. Increased staffing should improve our compliance.</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"> <li>● Is it a new service/policy or review of an existing one?</li> <li>● Is it a national requirement?).</li> <li>● How much room for review is there?</li> </ul> | <p>The statutory SEND team is being reviewed to ensure it is staffed to meet its statutory duties to carry out Education Health Care Plan assessments in a timely way. This has included a full Business Change review and implementation of new processes and IT systems. Additional staffing is required to support this work.</p> <p>Assessment timescales are a legal duty.</p>   |

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|--|--|
| 1.3 Do the aims of this policy link to or conflict with any other policies of the Council? | The increase in staffing will ensure that children receive access to support in a timely way. It will also support the Council's implementation of our safety valve plans. |
|--|--|

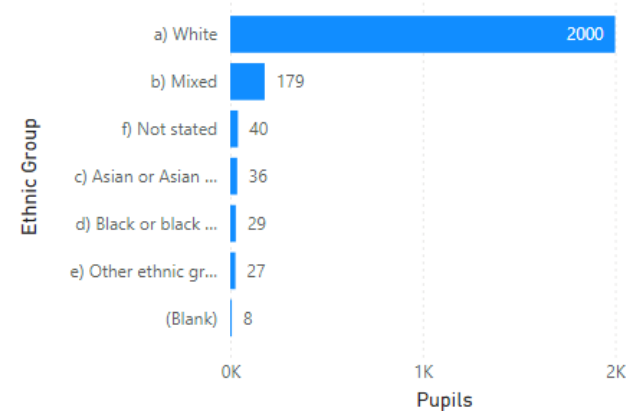
## 2. Consideration of available data, research and information

| <b>Key questions</b>   | <b>Data, research and information that you can refer to</b>   |
|--|---|
| <b>2.1</b> What equalities training have staff received to enable them to understand the needs of our diverse community? | All council staff have mandatory equality training provided by the Council annually. Children's services and Education staff have access to additional training provided by SARI. |
| <b>2.2</b> What is the equalities profile of service users?  | The equalities profile at the time of writing of the current cohort of children and young people who have an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) is as follows:                 |

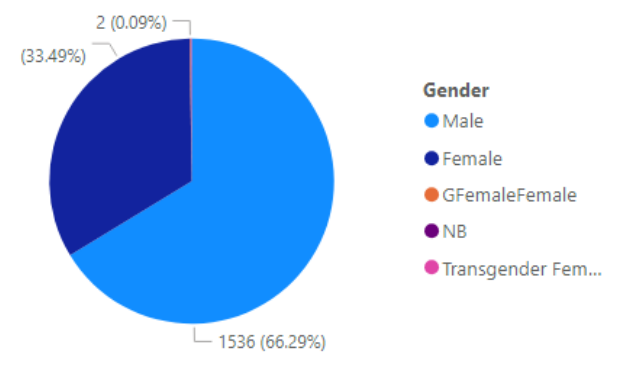
Primary Need for pupils with an EHCP as at the SEN2 Survey date



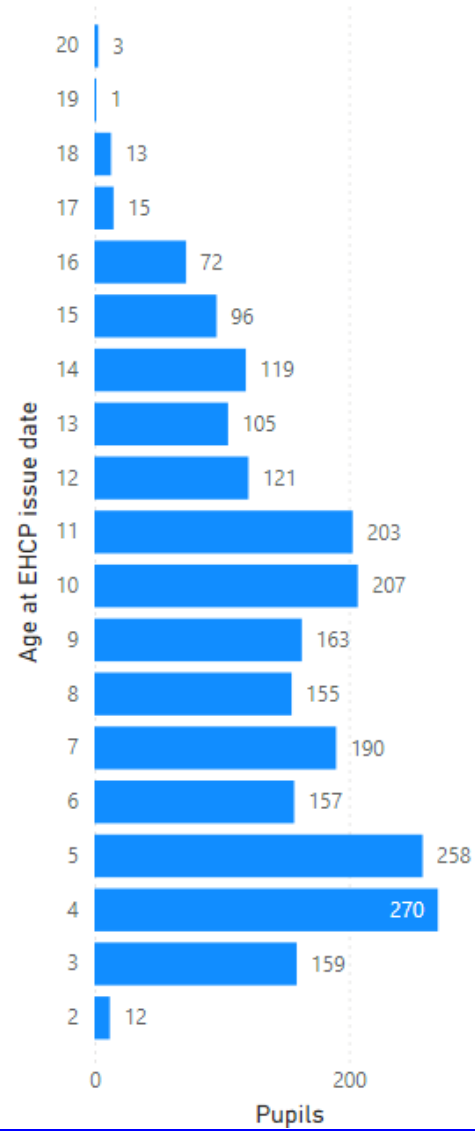
### Ethnicity



### Gender



### Age at EHCP issue date



|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>2.3</b> Are there any recent customer satisfaction surveys to refer to? What were the results? Are there any gaps? Or differences in experience/outcomes?</p>             | <p>The Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) Team has plans to reinstate the annual EHCP survey following recruitment to the team.</p> <p>Complaints relating to service delivery have risen over the last 12 months, particularly complaints relating to timeliness and the team's ability to respond to emails and telephone correspondence.</p>   |
| <p><b>2.4</b> What engagement or consultation has been undertaken as part of this EIA and with whom? What were the results?</p>   | <p>Parents, carers, and young people have told us via formal complaints channels that responsiveness needs to improve. Our schools have also complained about the capacity of council services to respond to enquiries and deal with matters of urgency. The statutory SEND team manager also engages with our parent carer forum on a regular basis to support relationships with parents using our services. They understand our demand pressures but want better communication services with us. They also want access to better IT services (portal) to communicate with us.</p> |
| <p><b>2.5</b> 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>The service area will carry out an annual survey with parents to test user satisfaction.</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

| Key questions   | Examples of what the service has done to promote equality  | Examples of actual or potential negative or adverse impact and what steps have been or could be taken to address this                     |
|---|--|---|
| <b>3.1 Issues relating to all groups</b> and protected characteristics  | The increased staffing should in particular, improve the delivery of services for children & young people with SEND.   | The plans are not intended to discriminate based on any protected characteristics, but some individuals may be more impacted than others. |
| <b>3.2 Sex</b> – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on women and men.   | It is noted that B&NES have a higher ratio of males with SEND 66.29%   | There are not anticipated to be any adverse or negative impacts on this protected characteristic.   |
| <b>3.3 Pregnancy and maternity</b>  | Increased staffing levels should speed up access to support services for all children and young people with SEND   | There are not anticipated to be any adverse or negative impacts on this protected characteristic.   |
| <b>3.4 Gender reassignment</b> – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on transgender people   | All children with SEND and should benefit from improved staffing in the SEND team and will receive an equitable service but will also be signposted to other specialist services such as Off the Record who provide groups and support for LGBTQ+ YP.  | There are not anticipated to be any adverse or negative impacts on this protected characteristic.   |
| <b>3.5 Disability</b> – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on disabled people (ensure consideration both physical, sensory and mental health needs) | The majority of children/yp with SEND in BA&NES have autism, followed by Social Emotional and Mental Health. Increased staffing levels should provide a better service for all children with a disability. The Live Well webpage provides a detailed directory of all services available to children/yp<br><a href="https://livewell.bathnes.gov.uk/">https://livewell.bathnes.gov.uk/</a> |   |



| Key questions   | Examples of what the service has done to promote equality   | Examples of actual or potential negative or adverse impact and what steps have been or could be taken to address this |
|---|---|---|
|   | SENDIAS provides free impartial advice to children/yp with SEND and their parents/carers.   |   |
| <b>3.6 Age</b> – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on different age groups                                       | The staffing increase should improve the support available for young adults to help them remain within the local area. It is noted that there is a spike in EHCPs during key school transition times. This informs us that a focus on moving from school to college and into adulthood requires careful consideration to ensure a continuity of care and support. Better staffing levels should improve our focus on preparing for adulthood and should help some groups of young people be better prepared for managing key transitions in their lives | These plans will only impact children and young people up to the age of 25.   |
| <b>3.7 Race</b> – identify the impact/potential impact on across different ethnic groups  | Children from ethnic minority groups in B&NES can have lower educational outcomes and greater exclusion rates. Increased staffing levels within the SEND team should help us advocate for specific groups of children and challenge disproportionality when observed.   | There are not anticipated to be any adverse or negative impacts on this protected characteristic.                     |
| <b>3.8 Sexual orientation</b> – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual people |   | There are not anticipated to be any adverse or negative impacts on this protected characteristic.                     |

| Key questions  | Examples of what the service has done to promote equality  | Examples of actual or potential negative or adverse impact and what steps have been or could be taken to address this |
|--|--|---|
| <p><b>3.9 Marriage and civil partnership</b> – does the policy/strategy treat married and civil partnered people equally?</p>  |  | <p>There are not anticipated to be any adverse or negative impacts on this protected characteristic.</p>              |
| <p><b>3.10 Religion/belief</b> – 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. Consideration of individual needs based on their faith will be considered during initial and ongoing assessments.</p>                      | <p>There are not anticipated to be any adverse or negative impacts on this protected characteristic.</p>              |
| <p><b>3.11 Socio-economically disadvantaged*</b> – identify the impact on people who are disadvantaged due to factors like family background, educational attainment, neighbourhood, employment status can influence life chances<br/><b>(this is not a legal requirement, but is a local priority).</b></p> | <p>Children on free school meals are more likely to have SEND, and the improvement of support to children with SEND through these staffing plans should improve the life chances of these children in the long term.</p> |   |
| <p><b>3.12 Rural communities*</b> identify the impact / potential impact on people living in rural communities</p>   | <p>Rurality is a concern for families and young people. Transport services post-16 and the use of public transport in our rural communities do not provide easy access to ETE opportunities post-16.</p>                 | <p>There are not anticipated to be any adverse or negative impacts on this protected characteristic.</p>              |

| Key questions  | Examples of what the service has done to promote equality  | Examples of actual or potential negative or adverse impact and what steps have been or could be taken to address this |
|--|--|---|
| <p><b>3.13 Armed Forces Community **</b><br/>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>The Armed Forces community can experience discrimination and inconsistency in access to services, including education.<br/>During equalities training, people are reminded to be considerate of the impact that children/yp experience.</p>   | <p>There are not anticipated to be any adverse or negative impacts on this protected characteristic.</p>              |
| <p><b>3.14 Care Experienced ***</b><br/>This working definition is currently under review and therefore subject to change:<br/><br/>In B&amp;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>Applications for needs assessments for children and young people who are care experienced are expedited and special attention is given to ensure there are no delays in the process.<br/><br/>The service has a dedicated SEND Practitioner working with our Children who are Looked after and has a reduced workload to ensure these cases are supported adequately.</p> | <p>There are not anticipated to be any adverse or negative impacts on this protected characteristic.</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.

| <b>Issues identified</b> | <b>Actions required</b> | <b>Progress milestones</b> | <b>Officer responsible</b> | <b>By when</b> |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|
|                          |                         |                            |                            |                |
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#### **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](mailto:equality@bathnes.gov.uk)), who will publish it on the Council's website. Keep a copy for your own records.

**Signed off by:** Chris Wilford  
senior officer)

(Divisional Director or nominated

**Date: 26<sup>th</sup> November 2024**