

**Bath and North East Somerset Council
Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit
Virtual School for Children in Care**

This toolkit or worksheet has been developed to use as a guide when conducting an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) on a policy, service or function *. It includes questions that need to be answered by the person/team conducting the EIA, plus questions that could be asked of key stakeholders during consultation phases. It is intended that this is used as a working document throughout the EIA process: the final written report of the EIA should follow the same format and cover each of the sections within it.

It is important to consider all available information that could help determine both whether the policy could have any potential adverse impact and whether it meets the particular needs of different equalities groups. Please attach examples of any monitoring information, research and consultation reports that you have used to assess the potential impact upon the six equalities strands.

* Throughout the document the term 'policy' has been used to include service, function or strategy.

NB - Only fill in the sections that are relevant

Title of policy being assessed	Virtual School for Children in Care (referred to in this document as VS)
Name of directorate and service	Children's Service
Name and role of officers completing the EIA	Michael Gorman, headteacher of Virtual School

Contact telephone number	01225 477000
Date of assessment period	May 2011

1. Identify the aims of the policy and how it is implemented.			
	Key questions	Answers / Notes	Actions required
1.1	Is this a new a new policy or a review of an existing one?	The VS was set up in September 2009 building on existing work to support the education of children in care	
1.2	What is its aim?	Improve educational for all children and young people in and moving on from care.	
1.3	Whose needs is it designed to meet?	Children and young people in and moving on from care.	
1.4	Who defines or defined the policy? (e.g is it a national requirement?). How much room for review is there?	This is a local implementation plan arising from national Care Matters programme.	
1.5	Who implements the policy?	Managers, staff and partners of B&NES Children's Service including schools.	
1.6	Are there any areas of the policy where those carrying it out can exercise discretion? If so is	The strategy sets out plans for service development. There is	Review of policies, procedures and guidance as part of the strategy.

	there clear guidance on this?	significant room for discretion of staff, managers and partners in carrying out the plans at the point of service delivery for individual young people. There is a framework of written policies, procedures and guidance which is regularly updated and will be reviewed as part of the strategy. These can be viewed on the VS webpage at www.bathnes.gov.uk – Virtual School can be found under V in the A-Z	
1.7	What could stop the policy from meeting its aims? (see 1.2)	Outcomes for children and young people in and moving on from care will be affected by a number of factors including the level and complexity of all of the children’s needs, the range and quality of services provided to meet those needs and the opportunities available to young people generally amongst other factors. The impact of the strategy will depend on the extent to which the services provided/ improved under the strategy are able to improve long term outcomes including achievements and participation in education, employment and training.	Monitoring and review of outcomes achieved, feeding into future updates of the policy.

1.8	Do the aims of this policy link to or conflict with any other policies of the Council?	The VS is linked particularly to the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP), and sets out in more detail how the aims of the CYPP will be achieved for children and young people in and moving on from care. It should not conflict with other strategies or policies of the Council.	
1.9	Is responsibility for the implementation of this policy shared with other bodies?	Yes – the VS is owned by all partners in the CYPP including the Council, schools and other partners acting together as the corporate parent.	

2. Consideration of available data, research and information

	Key questions	Answers / Notes	Actions required
2.1	What do you already know about people who use and deliver the policy?	We have extensive knowledge of children and young people in and moving on from care.	
2.2	What quantitative data do you already have? (e.g census data, staff data, customer profile data etc)	There is considerable quantitative data about this group of young people held on Carefirst and EMS in particular.	
2.3	What qualitative data do you already have? (e.g results of customer satisfaction surveys, results of previous consultations, staff survey findings etc).	Children and young people have been consulted in a number of ways over the last few years including the in care council.	
2.4	What additional information is needed to check	There is a continuing needs to	Systematic collection and use of the

	that all equality groups' needs are met? (see section 4). Do you need to collect more data, carry out consultation at this stage?	collect accurate data on educational outcomes.	education outcome and progress data.
2.5	How are you going to go about getting the extra information that is required?	Ensure qualitative data through links with schools and Personal; Education Plans	See above

3. Formal consultation (include within this section any consultation you are planning along with the results of any consultation you undertake)			
	Key questions	Answers/notes	Actions required
3.1	Who do you need to consult with?	Children and young people in and moving on from care, staff, partners, elected Members.	
3.2	What method of consultation can be used?	A range of methods.	Work with the in care council to consult with young people. Continue to consult partners through Children in Care Quality Assurance and Strategy Group (CCQASG) and Virtual School Strategic Board Continue to consult elected Members through Corporate Parenting Members Group and

			Overview and Scrutiny Panel. Identify mechanism for consulting staff on this strategy.
3.3	What consultation was actually carried out as part of this EIA and with which groups?	None specifically on the EIA.	
3.4	What were the main issues arising from the consultation?	None.	

4. Assessment of impact			
	Based upon any data you have analysed, or the results of consultation or research, use the spaces below to list how the policy will or does actually work in practice for each equalities strand: 1. Consider whether the policy meets any particular needs of each of the six equalities groups. 2. Identify any differential impact (positive or adverse) for each of the six equalities groups 3. Include any examples of how the policy or service helps to promote race, disability and gender equality.		
		Impact or potential impact (negative, positive or neutral)	
4.1	Gender – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on women, men and transgender people	In March 2007 56% of children in care nationally were male, 44% female. In B&NES 58% children in care were male, 42% female – broadly in line with the national figures. Boys are more likely than girls both locally and nationally to be in residential placements – although the number of children in residential placements from B&NES is lower than the national level. More work is required both locally and nationally to analyse educational attainment and other outcome measures for children in care by gender.	
4.2	Disability - identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on disabled people (ensure	Children with statements of special educational need are over-represented in care both locally and nationally. 3% of all children nationally have	

	consideration of a range of impairments including visual and hearing impairments, mobility impairments, learning disability etc)	statements. 28% of children in care nationally have a statement, while locally the level is 27% (May 2011). Effective planning to support the education of children with SEN statements is essential to raising aspirations and standards.	
4.3	Age – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on different age groups	The VS is intended to benefit children and young people in care (0-18).	
4.4	Race – identify the impact/potential impact on different black and minority ethnic groups	Black and minority children are over-represented in care both nationally and locally. Nationally a quarter of children in care were from a BME background in March 2007. In March 2008 18% of children in care in B&NES were from BME groups.	
4.5	Sexual orientation - identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on lesbians, gay men, bisexual and heterosexual people	There are no data about the extent to which young people in and moving on from care in B&NES are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender and no reason to believe this is different from the wider population of young people.	
4.6	Religion/belief – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on people of different religious/faith groups and also upon those with no religion.	There is no evidence either nationally or locally about the number of children in care of different religions.	
	Key questions	Answers/notes	Actions required
4.7	Have you identified any areas in which the policy is discriminatory? If you answer yes to this please refer to legal services on whether this is justifiable within legislation.	None	
4.8	If you have identified any adverse impact(s) can it be avoided, can we make changes, can we lessen it etc? (NB: If you have identified a differential or adverse impact that amounts to unlawful discrimination, then you are duty bound to act to ensure that the Council acts lawfully by changing the policy)	None identified	

	or proposal in question).		
4.9	Is there any additional action you can take to meet the needs of the six equalities groups above?	Improve monitoring of outcomes by equalities groups as far as achievable.	

5.	Internal processes for the organisation – to be explored at the end of the EIA process.		
Making a decision in the light of data, alternatives and consultations			
	Key questions	Answers/notes	Actions required
5.1	How will the organisation’s decision making process be used to take this forward?	This EIA will feed into the monitoring and review of the VS development plan.	Systematic monitoring and analysis of outcomes by equalities group and feed into future updates of this strategy.
Monitoring for adverse impact in the future			
	Key questions	Answers/notes	Actions required
5.2	What have we found out in completing this EIA? What can we learn for the future?	Equalities impact appears largely as expected – i.e. this strategy, by improving outcomes for all children in care particularly through improved personalisation should improve outcomes for all equalities groups amongst these children and young	Continue systematic monitoring.

		people.	
5.3	Who will carry out monitoring?	Head of the VS together with management information colleagues, CCQASG and VSSB (Virtual School Strategic Board) panel	
5.4	What needs to be monitored?	All education outcome measures against gender, SEN/disability status, ethnicity. Young people's views.	
5.5	What method(s) of monitoring will be used?	Quantitative – through analysis of data. Quantitative – through children in care council when established.	
5.6	Will the monitoring information be published?	Annual report by the VS (October)	Publish annual report.
Publication of results of the equality impact assessment			
	Key questions	Answers/notes	Actions required
5.7	Who will write up the EIA report?	Michael Gorman, headteacher of Virtual School	
5.8	How will the results of the EIA be published?		

6. 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 (continue on separate sheets as necessary). These actions need to be built into the service planning framework and targets should be measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound.

Title of service/function or policy being assessed: Virtual School

Name and role of officers completing assessment: Michael Gorman, headteacher of Virtual School

Date assessment completed: 31/5/11

Issues identified	Actions required	Progress milestones	Officer responsible	By when
<p>Monitoring and review of outcomes achieved, feeding into development plan and report of the VS.</p> <p>Please see development plan for more detail</p>	<p>Publish development plan and annual report.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development plan based on financial year • Report each October 	<p>Michael Gorman</p>	<p>See column 3</p>

Once you have completed this form, use it as a basis for writing a report of the Equality Impact Assessment. Keep a copy of the form and report as a record of the processes you have been through in carrying out the EIA. Email one copy to the Equalities Team (equality@bathnes.gov.uk), and post a copy on the shared drive [J:\Keynsham_S_Drive\Corporate Equality Group](#)