

Equality Impact Assessment / Equality Analysis

(Version 4)

Item name	Details
Title of service or policy	Children's Social Care
Name of directorate and service	Children's Services
Name and role of officers completing the EqlA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jean Kelly, Director of Children's Services• Felicity Groves, Service Development Manager
Date of assessment	29/09/2025

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 people and different groups within our community. The main aim is to identify any adverse impacts (i.e. discriminatory or negative consequences for a particular group or sector of the community, and to identify areas where equality can be better promoted). Equality impact Assessments (EqIAs) 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 (EqIA) or Equality Analysis. **Not all sections will be relevant – so mark N/A 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 following relevant service lead approval.

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>This analysis is being completed in relation to our Ofsted ILACS Report (June 2025) and it’s presentation for scrutiny on 13th October 2025.</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?). • How much room for review is there? 	<p>We are not currently proposing changes to our service. We will however be looking to implement a Service Improvement Plan, from November 2025, as a result of this report. This will be scrutinised on a quarterly basis at our Service Improvement Board.</p>
<p>1.3 Do the aims of this policy link to or conflict with any other policies of the Council?</p>	<p>This Ofsted report describes how we are meeting our overall goal, to improve the lives of children and families in our area. Our continual improvement</p>

journey, resulting from this report, will be carried out in line with existing council policies.

2. Consideration of available data, research and information

Key questions	Data, research and information that you can refer to
<p>2.1 What equality focussed training have staff received to enable them to understand the needs of our diverse community?</p>	<p>As well as Corporate Equalities Training, Children’s Service staff have access to themed training, carried out by Stand Against Racism and Inequality (SARI). This covers a wide range of topics, with the below planned for the 2024/25 financial year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working with Asylum seeking and Refugee Families - Exploitation and Modern Slavery - Educational Disparities for those young people with a Social Worker - Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities - Men, Fathers and Boys - Working with LGBTQ+ Communities <p>Additionally, an emergency reflective session was held in September 2025, following the rise of the far-right anti-immigration agenda, for staff to reflect on how this has been impacting our communities.</p> <p>Social Workers can also book 1:1s and group supervisions with SARI, to gain insight into how to improve our work, relating to protected characteristics.</p>
<p>2.2 What is the equality profile of service users?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is a strong social gradient linked to intervention from children’s services, with research showing that those from more deprived areas are more likely to have social care intervention. In Bath and North East Somerset, the majority of the families we are

	<p>working with under Child Protection are disproportionately from our most deprived areas of Twerton, Whiteway, Midsomer Norton and Radstock.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National and local data shows that children of parents with learning differences and disabilities are more likely to be supported through child in need and child protection. - Research suggests that children from Black and some Mixed or multiple ethnic groups are most likely to be subject to Child Protection Planning and to come into care. - Research suggest that the children of care experienced young people are more likely to come into care.
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?	Parents and young people are spoken to during audit activity. This has not identified any themes relating to inequality at this time.
2.4 What engagement or consultation has been undertaken as part of this EIA and with whom? What were the results?	Ofsted inspectors spoke to a number of parents and care experienced young people. Their views helped to inform the ILACS report.
2.5 If you are planning to undertake any consultation in the future regarding this service or policy, how will you include equality considerations within this?	We will be looking to drive improvement work via our Families First Transformation. Part of the governance structure for this work includes consultation with a lived experience group, which includes members with relevant protected characteristics.

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 equality 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
<p>3.1 Issues relating to all groups and protected characteristics</p>	<p>Our practice model is based on systemic social work practice. This model encourages us to reflect on the wider impact of our work with families and to consider their presenting needs within their unique context, which includes all protected characteristics.</p> <p>Ofsted commented on how well embedded our practice model is and the training that has been invested in for our workforce. Through reflective supervision, social workers are invited to reflect on what they bring to their work with families and its impact. This helps to create an anti-racist approach to our work, which promotes equality.</p>	<p>Without reflective practice, practitioners are more likely to treat service users with a different background as an 'other'. This could lead to them receiving a lesser service and being directly or indirectly discriminated against.</p> <p>Systemic social work aims to tackle discrimination and inequality head on, and encourages social workers to consider the family's needs as a whole, rather than seeing their presenting needs in isolation.</p>
<p>3.2 Sex – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on women and men.</p>	<p>Sex was not directly mentioned within the Ofsted report. However, our work with families around Domestic Abuse, a gendered crime, was highlighted as a strength.</p> <p>Over the past year, we have:</p>	<p>Social workers need to understand the impact of domestic abuse and recognise the signs, including coercive control. Not doing so can lead to victim blaming, due to not understanding complex dynamics within families.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planned a Domestic Abuse Stakeholder Event for November 2025. - Implemented new Practice Guidance on working with men and fathers was finalised in 2024. - Planned a SARI Training session on working with Men and Fathers scheduled for this financial year. - Continued to offer our 'Caring Dad's' Group. This is an evidence based approach, aimed at helping fathers to form positive relationships and reduce harm causing behaviour within the home. 	It is important that our staff work with fathers, seeing them as equally important as mothers within their work. To not do this reduces our services ability to highlight strengths and reduce risks, within households.
3.3 Pregnancy and maternity	In 2024, we launched our Care Experienced Parents Policy, aimed at reducing the number of care experienced parents whose own children are subject to child protection planning and court proceedings. This policy means that we work with care experienced parents at an earlier stage in their pregnancy and support is planned between family support and care experienced teams.	Where we do not provide early support to pregnant mothers, this can increase the likelihood of children entering care.
3.4 Gender reassignment – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on transgender people	Gender is discussed as part of the social work assessment policy. Social workers ensure that they work sensitively around	Nationally, trans people have statistically worse outcomes across different

	<p>this subject and can seek a 1:1 consultation with SARI if required.</p>	<p>measures, and this is linked to discrimination and loneliness.</p> <p>We aim to work inclusively with families, promote connectivity and always work proactively to counter discrimination.</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>If a parent or child has a disability, then they are more likely to receive a social work service.</p> <p>Ofsted highlighted our work with Disabled children as a strength.</p> <p>We aim to identify any disabilities and additional needs early on when working with families and ensure we are offering the right support. This occurs through the social work assessment process.</p> <p>Over the past year, we have implemented the below measures, aimed at reducing inequality for this cohort:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recruited a DSCO, to help to coordinate social work input into education and health care planning for our children with disabilities - Trained many of our social workers in the Cubas parenting assessment model in August 2025, to allow the majority of our 	<p>We need to ensure that we are proactive in providing bespoke support to parents and young people with disabilities. If we do not do this, then needs will increase and the number of children coming into care is likely to rise.</p>

	<p>staff to now complete parenting assessments suited to parents with learning differences and disabilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trained many of our staff in Non-Violent Resistance, to enable them to offer this intervention to parents and help to increase positive interactions with their children who have SEND or trauma needs that can lead to violence or risk-taking behaviour. - Increased our Parental Advocacy offer to all parents receiving a child protection service, meaning that parents do not need to have a diagnosed learning difference to receive advocacy. - We provide hands on support to parents with disabilities impacting on their ability to parent their children. This includes long term support through our Fostering Families service. 	
3.6 Age – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on different age groups	The Ofsted report discusses how our service carry out life story work and permanence planning in a timely way, across different ages. Young people in care across different ages are supported to increase their connectivity and	It is important to ensure that we have the correct service to match need for each cohort, to reduce escalation of need.

	<p>relationships, with our Lifelong Links service.</p> <p>The report identifies that some young people under 10 are not in the correct placement and we need to do more to increase placement sufficiency for this cohort. This will form part of our improvement planning.</p>	
<p>3.7 Race – identify the impact/potential impact on across different ethnic groups</p>	<p>Race was not specifically mentioned within our Ofsted Report. However, the service offered to unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people was highlighted as a strengths.</p> <p>Specific work linked to reducing inequalities linked to race includes the below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In 2024, we moved to a new, specialist company for our hair strand testing during court proceedings, after learning that standard hair strand testing can potentially be racially biased. - We are convening a Conference in November 2025 across the directorate, to help to further embed an anti-racist stance to our work. - We are developing an Anti-Racist Policy for Children's Services. This 	<p>We know that children from the global majority are more likely to come into care. If we did not question our decision making and encourage reflection around race, then we may continue to increase this trend, doing a disservice to our communities and adding to intergenerational trauma.</p> <p>We need to ensure we consider the needs of different communities when designing our services and implementing change.</p>

	will include input from colleagues and families with lived experience.	
3.8 Sexual orientation – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual, questioning people	<p>This was not discussed within our Ofsted report.</p> <p>Sexual orientation and its potential implications should be considered as part of social work assessment and planning. Where further support is required, staff should seek a 1:1 from SARI.</p>	If we did not consider the impact of sexual orientation then we might indirectly discriminate against a parent or young person we were working with, due to not considering their needs.
3.9 Marriage and civil partnership – does the policy/strategy treat married and civil partnered people equally?	<p>This was not discussed within the Ofsted Report.</p> <p>Social Work assessments should consider who is within a household and what their needs and strengths are, regardless of marital status.</p>	If we did not take marriage/civil partnership into consideration and reflect on its impact within our work, then this could lead to discrimination against single mothers of other groups, for example.
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>This was not discussed within the Ofsted report.</p> <p>The below forms part of our service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We offer and encourage 1:1 and group sessions with SARI, where expert advice can be sought around working with different faith groups. - In 2024, we held a SARI session for staff from members of the Jewish and Muslim communities, to deepen staff understanding 	We need to ensure that we are considering religion within our social work assessments and planning. Not doing this could mean misinterpreting religious customs or practices and not drawing on religious communities for support.

	regarding the current conflict in Gaza/Israel and deepen understanding.	
<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>We recognise the need to reduce inequalities relating to socio-economic disadvantage as a priority. The best way to do this is to ensure that we offer high quality, preventative services.</p> <p>Ofsted Inspectors commented during their visit to us that we are working creatively to “really change intergenerational patterns and reduce the number of children coming into our care”. Initiative such as Fostering Families and our Building Bridges Advocacy service aim to reduce barriers to the families using our service and consequently, reduce the number of children coming into care in our area.</p> <p>We are holding a SARI workshop relating to educational attainment in November 2025.</p>	<p>We know that many of our children and families are living in poverty. If we do not factor this into our planning and decision making, then we risk mislabelling disadvantage as neglect, for example.</p> <p>We need to ensure families are being signposted to the correct resources to meet their basic needs. Our staff need to be proactive in working with families to increase opportunities for education, training, employment and advocate on their behalf.</p>
<p>3.12 Rural communities* identify the impact / potential impact on people living in rural communities</p>	<p>This was not mentioned within our Ofsted report.</p> <p>We aim to offer services across the local authority and consider transport links and the impact of living within a rural community to access services within our social work assessments. This then</p>	<p>Without consideration of the unique needs of our rural communities, we risk further isolating families and offering them a poorer service than families in our towns and cities. This could lead to more children from these communities being subject to child protection planning, or coming into care.</p>

	allows plans to be put in place to reduce barriers, based on individual need.	
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).	This was not mentioned within our Ofsted report. Being a member of the Armed Forces Community would be considered as part of the social work assessment process and services put in place to meet individual need. This would include referrals/signposting to any relevant Armed Forces Support Services.	We know that we need to provide trauma informed services, that meet the needs of armed forces families. Without the provision of such services, risk factors such as domestic abuse and drug and alcohol addiction are more likely.
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.	Our Ofsted report highlighted many strengths within our care experienced service. Personal Assistants are strong advocates for those they work with. However, we need to do more to ensure that we are offering an outstanding service to our young people. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring young people in our care consistently receive a needs assessment by their 16th birthday and are allocated a PA before turning 17. - Improving the consistency of therapeutic support offered to our Care Experienced young people with enhanced needs. 	We need to ensure that we continue to promote the wellbeing of our care experienced young people, to increase their wellbeing, connectivity. Happiness and outcomes. We know that if we are not proactive in our services and support for this cohort, then the outcomes for this cohort are more likely to be adverse.

	- Ensuring young people over the age of 21 receive support when they need/ask for this.	
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*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
Ensure the service offered to our Care Experienced young people aims to combat systemic inequality	Care Experienced working group established to help us to understand what improvements may be required and feed this	Next meeting on 30/09/2025 This work will be finalised in February 2025.	Felicity Groves	February 2025

and takes a proactive approach in promoting this groups needs.	into our Families First Transformation			

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 Equality Team (equality@bathnes.gov.uk), who will publish it on the Council’s website. Keep a copy for your own records.



Signed off by:

Jean Kelly

(Divisional Director or nominated senior officer)

Date: 30th September 2025