

Equality Impact Assessment / Equality Analysis

(Updated December 2022)

| Item name | Details |
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| Title of service or policy | Youth Justice Service |
| Name of directorate and service | Children's Services and Education, Youth Justice Service |
| Name and role of officers completing the EIA | Carla Cooper, Interim Head of Service Young People's Prevention |
| Date of assessment | 14 th June 2024 – refreshed on 1 st May 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 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 |
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| <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>The Youth Justice Service (YJS) works with children aged 10-17 who have come to attention of the Police due to their behaviour or who are assessed as being at risk of offending. Services are delivered by a multi-agency team including Police, Probation, Health, Social Care and Education staff. These and other agencies work together to address the needs of children in the youth justice system, many of whom have had difficult childhood experiences within or beyond their homes and some of whom have been traumatised by these experiences. The YJS has a statutory duty to prevent youth offending by 10-17 year olds, measured by reducing first time entrants, reduced re-offending and reduced use of custodial sentences. The YJS actively works to support children to engage in education, training and employment, as this is a positive protective factor against offending. It also works for other positive outcomes. The YJS also works with parents/carers and offers restorative services to those harmed by children's offending.</p> |
| <p>1.2 Provide brief details of the scope of the policy or service being reviewed, for example:</p> | <p>The YJS was established in 2000, under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The same legislation introduced a requirement to produce an</p> |

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| <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? | annual Youth Justice Plan. The YJB publishes annual guidance for the Plan. |
| 1.3 Do the aims of this policy link to or conflict with any other policies of the Council? | The aim to prevent offending links well with the Children and Young People's Plan ambitions for children to be safe, be healthy, have fair life chances and become engaged citizens in their community. The YJS wants to see children thrive and works to support a wide range of positive outcomes. |

2. Consideration of available data, research and information

| Key questions | Data, research and information that you can refer to |
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| 2.1 What equalities training have staff received to enable them to understand the needs of our diverse community? | <p>In 2023, we held an all staff 2-day training on Diversity, Cultural Competence and Unconscious Bias. This training was delivered by Stand Against Racism and Inequality (SARI)</p> <p>In 2024, Practitioners attended 2 half day workshops with SARI. One about having conversation with children about identity and the other about how to respond to a child who is showing discriminatory views. The second workshop was delivered in response to the racist violence seen in the summer of 2024.</p> <p>All staff are required to complete the B&NES Equalities training as part of their induction.</p> <p>Staff can also access the monthly reflective practice sessions delivered by SARI.</p> |
| 2.2 What is the equalities profile of service users? | Service users are predominantly male (approx. 80% to 85%). There is disproportionality and over representation of children from minority ethnic backgrounds and children with special |

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| | <p>education needs and disabilities (SEND). This percentages fluctuate due to small numbers but consistently over the years, this over-representation can be clearly seen.</p> |
| <p>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?</p> | <p>There is an annual report presented to the Partnership Board which gathers feedback from services – both parents / carers and children.</p> <p>In the year 2024, we have reviewed how we collect feedback and have just started using a QR code. We have also included a new question about diversity and identity asking service users if they felt their individual needs has been recognised and responded to.</p> <p>The satisfaction levels are generally excellent. There have not been any particular themes from service users about areas for improvement and most service users report feeling listened to, respected and that the service has been helpful.</p> |
| <p>2.4 What engagement or consultation has been undertaken as part of this EIA and with whom? What were the results?</p> | <p>We have created a good practice guide for staff, to be used in induction, to ensure there are clear expectations when working with children from minority ethnic groups, so that we tackle disproportionality where we can. This practice guide was developed in consultation with children and young people who attend the supplementary school with Black Families Education Support Group. The consultation saw advice to staff about how to communicate with children about their identity and recognising the discrimination they have likely experienced.</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>The Youth Justice Plan includes an action to refresh participation practice. We are in the process of setting up a focus group with parents / carers.</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 |
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| 3.1 Issues relating to all groups and protected characteristics | <p>The YJS holds regular reflective practice meetings. As it moves towards becoming a more systemic service, it is using Burnham's 'social graces' to remind staff to consider the individual and equalities characteristics of those worked with.</p> <p>Equalities is a standing item on all team meetings' agendas and in most individual staff Supervision.</p> <p>One of the YJS key priorities is 'Embedding Child First Principles'. This is to ensure children are seen as children and not through the label as being 'offenders'.</p> | <p>Children known to the YJS are potentially stigmatised as young offenders although they are regarded as children first by our service.</p> <p>The YJS promotes this perspective amongst other criminal justice partners.</p> |
| 3.2 Sex – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on women and men. | <p>There is a smaller proportion of girls in the youth justice system than the general population and we are curious about why this is, although it is a national picture.</p> | <p>The children's workforce has expressed concern about girls and offending based on what they are seeing and what children and others tell them.</p> |

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| | <p>Due to small numbers, we need to ensure the service meets the needs of girls. We do this by ensuring all our interventions are individually tailored rather than 'off the peg programmes' that are used for everyone.</p> | <p>There have been examples where girls have been arrested for offences that are clearly linked to mental health needs and self harming. The Out of Court Resolution Panel has sought to divert them from the formal justice system where possible.</p> |
| <p>3.3 Pregnancy and maternity</p> | <p>No data is reported to show the proportion of pregnant children known to the YJS although anecdotally, the number would be very low. Work with pregnant girls would be based on their full assessment, and the service would be delivered in a very bespoke way and kept under careful review as the pregnancy progresses.</p> <p>There is a school nurse in the YJS, so we would ensure strong links with her to offer the most appropriate service to any children who are pregnant while working with the YJS.</p> | |
| <p>3.4 Gender reassignment – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on transgender people</p> | <p>All children working with the YJS are asked to self-identify their gender. Any children who are questioning their gender or considering a transition can be referred to partner agencies such as Off the Record.</p> | <p>The YJS does not have a depth of experience working with transgender children, so we are aware that there could be a lack of knowledge, bias and struggle to keep up to date. Staff can access consultation from CAMHS and SARI about the issue as required.</p> |

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| <p>3.5 Disability – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on disabled people (ensure consideration both physical, sensory and mental impairments and mental health)</p> | <p>The greatest disproportionality in the YJS is children with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP's) and there are a number of concerns about these, including practice and participation in annual reviews.</p> <p>The service is promoting equality in this area by working with our Speech and Language Therapist to create communication profiles for children in court (and sometimes also used in schools) so that the professionals around them do not misinterpret their behaviour and they know the best way to communicate with them so they understand and can engage with the process. Children are asked questions about their sensory and emotional health needs and plans are devised on an individual basis to remove any barriers to engagement.</p> <p>The service undertakes regular training and consultation with CAMHS and Speech and Language Therapy to ensure we are working in the best way with children with neuro-diversity and additional needs to ensure we remove any barriers to engagement and completion of their programmes with YJS.</p> | <p>One of the issues for children with SEND in the justice system is ensuring they understand what is happening and the courts and police are informed on how to best communicate with them to ensure best outcomes.</p> <p>The delays in EHCP's being issued and waiting lists for diagnoses can exacerbate the problem faced by these children. YJS advocates on behalf of children and families in these situations.</p> |
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| | <p>The YJS has worked together with Inclusion and SEN teams to create an enhanced offer, similar to that offered to children on CP Plans, for children in the YJS with SEN.</p> <p>Children have been profoundly impacted during the pandemic and the YJS approaches its work with an understanding that emotional and mental health issues will be present for all the children it works with to some extent.</p> <p>If children working with the YJS have sight or hearing issues, we would contact the relevant teams through the School Nurse or the Disabled Children's Team for advice and the most appropriate support for these children and to ensure they can fully access our service.</p> | |
| 3.6 Age – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on different age groups | <p>The whole Plan is written about the YJS's work with children aged 8-17 in the preventative Compass service and aged 10-17 in the statutory part of the service.</p> <p>We are aware of the importance of good transitions to adult services and hold regular transitions meeting with our Probation colleagues, so that any children who are approaching adulthood</p> | <p>B&NES has identified that the strategy for transitioning young people from children to adult services is a priority action.</p> <p>We are planning Adulthood training for staff in 2025/26 as part of our strategic priority to be child first in our approach.</p> <p>B&NES council has passed a motion for Care experienced to be a protected characteristic.</p> |

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| | and who may be transferred are prepared in the best way possible. | |
| 3.7 Race – identify the impact/potential impact on across different ethnic groups | <p>Nationally and locally, children from minority ethnic groups are over-represented in the justice system. This is particularly seen in the levels of custody rates for black and mixed heritage boys.</p> <p>The YJS is participating in work at an Avon and Somerset level Tackling Disproportionality.</p> <p>We have an Anti-Racism action plan which is reviewed and updated on an annual basis. The work in this plan is strategic and at an operational level. The work includes collaborating with education colleagues to address inequalities in exclusion and suspensions, with police to ensure diversions from the formal justice system are offered fairly across all ethnicities and at a team level regarding monitoring good practice, training and participation work with children.</p> <p>YJS uses translation and interpretation services for any children or parents and carers where English is not their first language.</p> | <p>The adverse impacts here are that the vulnerabilities of minority ethnic children are missed, they are not offered preventative services and can be suspended and excluded from school at higher rates than their white counterparts, leaving them vulnerable to exploitation and offending.</p> <p>B&NES has a Race Equality Task Force, which is promoting the Race Equality Charter Mark for schools to tackle this issue.</p> <p>The Virtual school is also leading on a strategic group looking at issues such as school exclusions and suspensions and aiming to reduce disproportionality.</p> |

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| <p>3.8 Sexual orientation – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual people</p> | <p>The service is aware of issues of discrimination faced by children who identify as LGBTQ+. All children are asked about their identity, and we aim to ensure that at every point of the service we offer, we take the child's individual and diverse needs into account.</p> <p>YJS can refer children to Off the Record for support around sexual orientation.</p> | |
| <p>3.9 Marriage and civil partnership – does the policy/strategy treat married and civil partnered people equally?</p> | <p>No data is reported and numbers would be very low in this service for children.</p> | <p>We do not anticipate there would be any adverse impact due to marriage or civil partnership.</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>All children and their parents / carers are asked about their religion and beliefs to ensure that the service we offer takes any particular requirements into account.</p> | <p>YJS staff are trained in and aware of any issues relating to radicalisation and the Prevent agenda.</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>There is not data on this issue, but the YJS routinely works with children from disadvantaged backgrounds.</p> | <p>These disadvantages can make children more vulnerable to exploitation and offending and to poor outcomes in education and future employment opportunities.</p> |
| <p>3.12 Rural communities* identify the impact / potential impact on people living in rural communities</p> | <p>Many of the children the YJS works with live in rural communities.</p> | |

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| | <p>We need to ensure they are supported to access services and that they can access our service without any disadvantage.</p> <p>One example of this is to ensure that Referral Order Panel Meetings are held in children's local communities or if that is not possible, the YJS will provide suitable transport for them to attend.</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>No data is reported to show the proportion of Armed Forces children known to the YJS although anecdotally, the number would be very low.</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.

4. Bath and North East Somerset Council & NHS B&NES

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 |
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| Over-representation of children from minority ethnic groups – in particular those from a mixed heritage. | Implementation of recommendations in the Tackling Disproportionality report. Undertake Adulthood training Ensure all policies refer to equity, inclusion and diversity. See Anti-Racism Action Plan | Seeing fewer children from minority ethnic backgrounds in the youth justice system | Head of Service | |
| Over-representation of children with EHCPs and wider SEND needs in the youth justice system | Speech and language therapy and SEND processes training to be delivered to all staff as part of the induction package. Education Psychology Service is offering time to YJS to offer consultation and assessments for children to ensure their needs do not go unidentified. | Seeing children with SEN in suitable education Hearing the practitioners feel more confident in meeting the needs of children with neuro-diversity | Head of Service | |

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 and/or NHS B&NES' website. Keep a copy for your own records.

Signed off by: Christopher Wilford, Interim Director Children's Services.

Date: 1st May 2025