

Equality Impact Assessment / Equality Analysis

(Version 4)

Item name	Details
Title of service or policy	Early years & education performance 2024/25 and whole systems work to address inequalities in attainment
Name of directorate and service	Education & Public Health
Name and role of officers completing the EqIA	Chris Wilford & Amy McCullough
Date of assessment	25th February 2026

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 is a report on education performance in B&NES early years settings & schools and the whole systems work to address inequalities in attainment.</p> <p>The report is informed by the Local Authorities (LA) Business Intelligence (BI) Team's Strategic Evidence Base (SEB) on educational attainment, and the public health led research on the attainment gap. SEB: https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/strategic-evidence-base-education</p> <p>The report aims to inform Policy Development & Scrutiny (PDS) of the academic progress and attainment of children and young people in our schools, and work underway to address inequalities in attainment. The report is used to assist Cllrs and Officers in understanding where children do well, where attainment could be improved, and work underway to support this.</p> <p>An intended outcome of the work on education inequality is to reduce the attainment gap experienced by children and young people in B&NES that are defined as disadvantaged.</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>This report is produced annually. It is not a statutory requirement. However, it is of significant interest to the Council to understand the performance of early years and education settings by key stage, and to focus on where performance for certain groups of children and young people is an area of concern.</p>
<p>1.3 Do the aims of this policy link to or conflict with any other policies of the Council?</p>	<p>There is alignment with a number of other programmes and including Best Start in Life Strategy, Best Start Family Hubs, the Family First Partnership Programme and wider system work on neighbourhood health, prevention, and child poverty.</p>

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>Cllrs received mandatory equalities training in 2023, and Council Officer’s undertake equalities training. The Business Intelligence (BI) team produces the Strategic Evidence Base (SEB). In line with the Council's priorities around equality and supporting disadvantage, the BI team has focused on areas/groups of children and young people who do not perform as well in our early years settings and schools. The public health team led work included a focus on understanding the needs of diverse groups. The equalities officer has provided advice and support on this assessment.</p>
<p>2.2 What is the equality profile of service users?</p>	<p>The SEB has a section on the demography of our population in B&NES. The school performance results in B&NES apply to all children attending a B&NES early-years or school setting. A breakdown of the profile by gender/special educational needs & disabilities (SEND), ethnicity and free school meals (FSM) is available on our published SEB.</p> <p>https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/strategic-evidence-base-education</p>
<p>2.3 Are there any recent customer satisfaction surveys to refer to? What were the results? Are there</p>	<p>No surveys have been undertaken to inform this EIA specifically, though in-depth qualitative work was undertaken with professionals and young people in B&NES to inform the attainment inequalities work and this was reported on at PDS Panel in 2025.</p>

any gaps? Or differences in experience/outcomes?	
2.4 What engagement or consultation has been undertaken as part of this EIA and with whom? What were the results?	None undertaken for this EIA specifically, though as above, the work programme is informed by qualitative work with professionals and young people as reported to PDS Panel in 2025.
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?	Not for this report or EIA, though engagement activities will continue take place as part of the wider programme of work on education inequalities and equality considerations will inform the approach and methodology used.

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
3.1 Issues relating to all groups and protected characteristics	The LA provides a range of early help and preventative services to support all children and young people in engaging in their early years and educational establishments from the earliest opportunity.	

	<p>All education settings have access to a form where they can report all Serious Equality Incidents and request additional advice from Equalities Officers in B&NES: https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/report-serious-equalities-incident-service-staff</p> <p>The education attainment inequalities work has a focus on reducing inequalities for those children and young people that are defined as disadvantaged, which includes pupils eligible for free school meals in the last 6 years and care experienced children. Equity and intersectionality are important considerations within this work.</p> <p>.</p>	
3.2 Sex – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on women and men.	The LA works alongside MATs and DFE Regions groups to develop strategies to improve outcomes in focused areas. A future focus will be boys performance in Maths at KS2.	The data show that girls outperform boys in educational outcomes across key stages. This is a national picture. Overall, boys' and girls' educational outcomes in B&NES are better than the regional and national averages.
3.3 Pregnancy and maternity	We have no data in this area. However, when the LA is notified of teenage pregnancies, the LA/School nursing provides advice, support and guidance to schools on their legal duties.	No current local data is available in this area.
3.4 Gender reassignment – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on transgender people	No data on the educational outcomes from this group is available from our SEB. Nor does the Department for Education (DFE) produce this data.	No data on the educational outcomes from this group is available from our SEB. Nor does the DFE produce this data.
3.5 Disability – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on disabled people (ensure consideration of	The LA provides additional resources through Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) funding/inclusion support funding, the provision of SEND services, Education	The performance of children and young people with SEND is broadly in line with regional and national averages.

physical, sensory and mental health needs/differences)	Psychology, Early Years Area Special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs)/Portage, and Children's centres to assist children with SEND in their Education. B&NES special schools are rated as Good by OFSTED	The Local Authority is investing additional capital to develop additional resource bases to ensure that we have enough specialist placements for children with SEND.
3.6 Age – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on different age groups	The LA is engaged in several initiatives to support schools to develop strategies to improve outcomes for children in the early years and in primary school. E.g. Primary Empowerment Project & Language for Life and Improving Disadvantage Educational Outcomes Project	The educational outcomes are broken down into relevant key stages and examinations. Outcomes in B&NES for FSM Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) & Key Stage 2 children are below national averages.
3.7 Race – identify the impact/potential impact on across different ethnic groups	The Council undertakes several work streams to support the improvement of educational outcomes of Ethnic minority children and young people in B&NES schools; this includes commissioning the Black Families Education Support Group, Stand Against Racism & Inequalities (SARI) and the promotion of the Race Equality Charter Mark. A focus of the education attainment inequality work going forward will be race as specific ethnic groups (whilst low numbers) do less well and this has been an ongoing trend.	Education outcomes for children from ethnic minority groups in B&NES schools are below those of their peers regionally and nationally.
3.8 Sexual orientation – identify the impact/potential impact of the policy on lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual, questioning people	No data on educational outcomes by sexual orientation is available in the SEB. Nor does the DFE produce this data	No data on educational outcomes by sexual orientation is available in the SEB. Nor does the DFE produce this data
3.9 Marriage and civil partnership – does the policy/strategy treat married and civil partnered people equally?	NA	NA

<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>No data on educational outcomes by religious belief is available in the SEB. Nor does the DFE produce this data</p>	<p>No data on educational outcomes by religious belief is available in the SEB. Nor does the DFE produce this data</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>The LA is engaged in several initiatives to support schools in developing strategies to improve outcomes for children in the early years and in primary school. E.g., the Primary Empowerment Project & Language for Life and Improving Disadvantaged Educational Outcomes Project.</p> <p>The education attainment inequalities work has a focus on reducing inequalities for those children and young people that are defined as disadvantaged, which includes pupils eligible for free school meals.</p>	<p>Educational outcomes in B&NES for FSM EYFS & KS2 children have improved this year, they still remain below national averages. However, FSM outcomes improve in KS4, and attainment is broadly in line with the national average.</p>
<p>3.12 Rural communities* identify the impact / potential impact on people living in rural communities</p>	<p>The SEB does not break down education performance by geographical location</p> <p>The education inequalities has ensured a focus on attainment in rural as well as urban areas to better understand barriers related to place. The qualitative work included engagement with professionals and young people in rural settings/areas.</p>	<p>The SEB does not break down education performance by geographical location.</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</p>	<p>No education data is available for this group.</p>	<p>No education data is available for this group.</p>

<p>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>3.14 Care Experienced *** This working definition is currently under review and therefore subject to change:</p> <p>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>The educational performance of our care-experienced cohort is reported separately as part of our virtual school annual report to corporate parenting.</p> <p>The education attainment inequality work includes a focus on those that are care experienced as well as those on free school meals.</p>	<p>The educational performance of our care-experienced cohort is reported separately in our virtual school annual report to corporate parenting.</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
<p>This broad and complex issue requires the collaboration of several partners, including the Southwest Regions group and trust leads.</p> <p>The LA continues to support initiatives to help schools and multi-academy trusts develop strategies to narrow the FSM attainment Gap in the Early Years & KS2.</p> <p>There are broader socio-economic factors that drive educational disadvantage, which the Council can influence.</p>	<p>Continued delivery of targeted interventions to support early years settings and schools. Including Early Years support, Targeted CPD and Support for 7 schools through St Johns</p> <p>The Council has developed a council-wide action plan to tackle educational disadvantage, led by Public Health. Work with system partners to mobilise collective capacity is planned for 2026/27.</p>	<p>Schools and early years settings are engaged in all available initiatives supported by the LA and the South West Regions Group.</p> <p>The B&NES Council Action Plan is being implemented.</p>	<p>Chris Wilford</p> <p>Amy McCullough, Consultant in Public Health</p>	<p>On-going</p> <p>Ongoing (Action Plan is for 2 years initially)</p>

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:

Chris Wilford

(Divisional Director or nominated senior officer)

Date: