

Equality analysis is a valuable tool to help embed equality into everything we do

Evidence based equality analysis – can include documents, quotes, and web links for photos and videos

Policy / procedure / function / project / decision: Children in Care

Main aims, purpose and outcomes and how does it fit in with the wider aims of the organisation:

Cheshire West and Chester Council aim to support the majority of its children and young people within their own families and communities. However for a small number this is not possible and they require alternative care.

Corporate Parenting is the term used for the collective responsibility of the Council and its partners to ensure safe, meaningful and effective protection of children and young people in care, and care leavers. The Council as a Corporate Parent ensures that their experience of being in care is a positive and supportive one and maximises their full potential.

Further to this it is the ethos of Cheshire Children in Care & Care Leavers service to ensure that all children and young people are afforded a level of care and the same opportunities that any other child may have in order that they can achieve good outcomes as a child and into adulthood.

This screening and impact assessment has been up dated to reflect the change in the Structure and staffing composition in CYPS in CWAC. It will explore the potential for an adverse impact on particular groups of service users and or communities.

Lead officer: Liz Davenport Senior Manager Children in Care and Care Leavers (Carolyn Connor and Judith Griffith)

Stakeholders: Children in care, their Carers and their families. Corporate Parenting Board , Children in Care Council, Virtual Head Teacher, Local Safeguarding Children Board, Children’s Trust Board and Corporate Parenting Board

While process is important, equality analysis is essentially about **outcomes**.

Lack of evidence of discrimination is not evidence of a lack of discrimination.

It is not acceptable to say that a policy is applied uniformly to all groups and is therefore fair and equal. Applying a policy or procedure consistently may result in differential outcomes for different groups.

For each of the areas overleaf, an assessment needs to be made on whether the policy has a **positive, negative or neutral impact**, and brief details of why this decision was made and notes of any mitigation should be included. Where the impact is negative, this needs to be given a **high, medium or low assessment**. It is important to rate the impact of the policy based on the current situation (i.e. disregarding any actions planned to be carried out in future).

High impact – a significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place etc.

Medium impact –some potential impact exists, some mitigating measures are in place, poor evidence

Low impact – almost no relevancy to the process, e.g. an area that is very much legislation led and where the Council has very little discretion

	Neutral	Positive	Negative impact/Areas for Development
Target group / area			
Race and Ethnicity (Including Gypsies and Travellers; migrant workers, asylum seekers etc.)	<p>It is acknowledged that with 99% of the local population being of a white British ethnicity, those from diverse groups may feel more isolated and their needs may need proactive consideration.</p> <p>Context within which diversity needs to be considered: Of approximately 364 (96%) children in care, as of May 2012 347 are white British; 16 are from diverse groups</p>	<p>Initial assessment by social worker ensures that aware of child's needs and how best to realise those needs, examples as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate training given to carers to meet specific needs of child, • Have regard to the profile of children when recruiting carers from more diverse ethnic origin as appropriate, 	<p>Foster carers</p> <p>Medium Impact</p> <p>Look to recruit foster carers from a wide range of cultures and religious backgrounds within the Cheshire West Boundary. Also further training to be offered to current carers and NWSW</p>

	<p>Must reflect diversity without having to only reflect home background.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provision of translation services or linking those with specific needs with other carers networks from specific groups e.g. Polish speakers and young people seeking asylum. A young person who is seeking asylum has been provided with a laptop, broadband and money for telephone calls to his parents in Iran, as well as weekly funding for him to visit his Mosque – all of the above was identified and agreed as part of his pathway plan. Further to this a Policy has been developed to assist unaccompanied Asylum Seeking children to meet their care needs• Children who are from Gypsy Roma Traveller backgrounds who have been made subject to care orders (and with whom we share parental responsibility) all have work undertaken with them to ensure they are aware of their cultural heritage and also have bi-monthly contact with their family.• Afro Caribbean and	
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		<p>Portuguese children who were 'Looked After' as part of their care planning process were encouraged and helped to make links with their respective communities within Liverpool.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Parenting Strategy Board has a duty to actively safeguard and promote the welfare of the children they look after and prepare them for adult life. • Overview and Scrutiny Committee has undertaken major consultation with children and young people in care and made a number of recommendations for improvement. 	
<p>Disability (as defined by the Equality Act - a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities)</p>	<p>Those with disability may be underrepresented within this service and their involvement may need to be promoted</p> <p>37 children in care are registered as having a disability.</p>	<p>The Children with Disabilities Team provide a range of specialist and bespoke services to meet the needs of the child, including residential provision for short breaks and a ring fenced service</p> <p>Access to aids and adaptations.</p> <p>Additional support for carer of children with a disability is provided to support them in meeting all the</p>	

		<p>child needs.</p> <p>Funding has also been provided for additional personal needs to meet individual requirements.</p> <p>Communication – staff trained appropriately. Where not able to provide in-house will commission services e.g. Service Level Agreement with Deafness Support Network to access translation services, there are also many different aids that are used to communicate such as Makaton, and a software tool</p> <p>A Pupil Premium Allowance is available to provide additional support e.g. additional tuition, confidence building</p> <p>Designated staff have received specialist training to undertake PAMS (Parent Assessment Manual Software) in respect of working with and assessing parents with a specific learning disability.</p>	
<p>Gender/Gender Reassignment</p>	<p>Male carers are not discriminated against</p> <p>Single applicants are not discriminated against</p>	<p>Assessment by Social Worker to determine the individual needs of the child and how best to achieve them – in-house or external specialist support.</p>	<p>Training</p> <p>Low Impact</p> <p>A directory could be developed to incorporate all available training, resources and organisations that can provide support.</p>

	<p>Those children trying to determine identity require carers that can support them</p>	<p>Ensure that all children have care plans in place that identify their individuality, needs and actions required to support them and challenge any discrimination that they may feel is inhibiting them in reaching their full potential.</p> <p>In the case of a young person who was experiencing gender confusion, work was commissioned by the Tavistock Unit to support and enable this young person through this time.</p>	
<p>Religion and Belief</p>	<p>Service does not discriminate against people with different religions or faith (including those who do not have a religion or faith)</p> <p>Have regard to the faith needs of children and try to match with carer. Likewise seek carers to provide and promote culture and religious beliefs of children.</p> <p>Need to reflect children and young people's choices.</p>	<p>Assessment process will look how carer can meet the needs of a particular child</p> <p>Any worship needs will be addressed and monitored via the care planning and placement information record process.</p> <p>Carers take children to their respective place of worship and when it is considered that a young person may travel alone to their place of worship funding is provided to cover their travel costs. This is all agreed during the care planning process and is subject to regular review and is further recorded in the placement information record</p> <p>The cultural needs of all children in care are respected and promoted – see section on Race</p>	

<p>Sexual Orientation (including heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual)</p>	<p>Gay and Lesbian people can be carers and the marketing campaign for recruitment does not exclude the promotion of this.</p>	<p>Training programme includes sexual orientation issues as does the Peer Education Programme.</p> <p>Initial Assessment of child or young person is key to determining appropriate care package to meet their needs.</p> <p>As a service no one has been refused the opportunity to become a carer on the grounds of sexual orientation.</p> <p>Young people have been supported and enabled to access support services in the Manchester area for young gay and lesbian people</p>	<p>Directory <u>Low Impact</u> A directory could be developed to incorporate all available training, resources and organisations that can provide support.</p> <p>Commissioning Services Medium Impact Commissioning should be considered for creating a support group within Cheshire West and Chester for young gay and lesbian people. Consideration should also be given to the production of leaflets /advertisements to educate young people and ensure that they are correctly signposted to support if they feel that they are unable to raise this issue with an adult and promote services available.</p> <p>Recruitment High Impact The Placement Service need to actively encourage and recruit gay and lesbian carers</p> <p>Education High Impact Improve education of children who are 'Cared For' to ensure that children enter adolescence and</p>
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			adulthood with an understanding of adult same sex relationships and remove potential for prejudice
<p>Age (children and young people aged 0 – 24, adults aged 25 – 50, younger older people aged 51 – 75/80; older older people 81+. The age categories are for illustration only as overriding consideration should be given to needs).</p>	<p>Less chance of a positive outcome for older children entering care.</p> <p>Age is not a barrier to becoming a carer</p>	<p>All assessments of CIC and their care plan are reflective of their age, and needs accordingly.</p> <p>Pathway Plan assessments aim to address the distinct and varied needs of older children.</p> <p>Pathway plans ensure that older young people receive comprehensive independence training. These plans ensure that there are contingencies for older young people in place due to the ever changing needs of this age group (age 16-21). Children are signposted to appropriate services.</p> <p>Rigorous care planning to ensure that case doesn't drift and children enter care appropriately and in a timely manner.</p>	<p>Future needs of older young people</p> <p>High Impact</p> <p>Young people in care do not have their employment and future needs fully addressed. The introduction of the Carers Advice Service appears to have too much of a broad remit and work needs to be identified to reduce the NEET (Not in Employment Education or Training) figures. This needs to feed into the review of Youth Provision to ensure that the education, training and employment needs of young people in care are not overlooked and are enabled to reach their full potential.</p> <p>Housing</p> <p>High Impact</p> <p>Housing for young people leaving care needs to be targeted and the accommodation needs to be made available through Registered Social Landlords through a service level agreement in order to provide a broad range of housing provision not just in hard to let areas.</p>
Rural communities	Very small number of children from	Service has regard to child's own	Recruitment

	<p>rural communities in care.</p> <p>Transport may be an issue.</p>	<p>community when considering placement.</p> <p>A service that ensures (where appropriate) that all children maintain links with their home locality if placed out of area.</p>	<p>Medium Impact Recruitment of a diverse group of carers will assist in ensuring a child can be placed in their rural community (where appropriate)</p> <p>Transport High Impact Revision of the Transport Policy specific for Children in Care will ensure that they do not lose their links with their community/family and provide opportunities to engage with other activities, and continued registration at the school they attended prior to entering care</p>
Areas of deprivation	<p>Majority of children and young people in care come from poor socio-economic groups, with the exception of adoptive placements that have broken down.</p> <p>Lack of carers from poorer socio-economic backgrounds.</p> <p>Although statistically children who are Looked After leave care earlier than children who are not cared for the provision of Staying Put Initiative (remaining with their foster carers post 18) is seen as a positive for care leavers and needs to be better linked to the outcomes for young people.</p>	<p>Effective care planning to ensure that placements are matched to the child's needs and that carers are of similar backgrounds to the child.</p> <p>The child's social economic experience will be acknowledged by experienced carers who will respect their heritage and experiences</p> <p>Council provide on-going support through care leaving service (age 20+) to promote independent living skills and economic wellbeing – package exceeds national legislation requirements</p>	
Human Rights	Legislation governs the practice`	The rights of Children in Care	

		and Care leavers are promoted and they receive a service that respects their right to a normal family life, dignity and offers the same opportunities as their peers	
Health and Wellbeing (consider both the wider determinants of health such as education, housing, employment, environment, crime and transport, as well as the possible impacts on lifestyles and the effect there may be on health and care services)	<p>Care Planning, health assessments, screening and action plans in place to promote the health needs of Children in Care and Care leavers</p> <p>The health needs of Children in Care are monitored on an on-going basis including medicals, dentist and immunisation.</p> <p>Caring to Care (CAMHS) service available for all Children in Care to access support.</p> <p>Children in Care specialist nurses 'hot desk' across each of the CIC locality teams work with s/w to promote the health needs of Children in Care and Care leavers</p>	<p>Leisure passes provided to all Children in Care and Care leavers within the Borough to promote healthy lifestyles and fitness.</p> <p>Children in Care and Care leavers emotional and mental health is given priority.</p>	<p>Policy Medium Impact The policy on Staying Put needs to be reviewed and revised to ensure that it meets the needs of individual children</p> <p>Accommodation/Housing High Impact Consideration to be given to an accommodation project for 16-21 year olds in which young people can move into semi-independent accommodation in line with the recommendations of their pathway plan</p> <p>Retainer Medium Impact Retainer to be paid to foster carers for a child away at university/college so a child has somewhere to come back to in the holidays</p>
Procurement/Partnership (if project due to be carried out by contractors/partners etc, identify	Commissioning Service via the Resource Panel support, advise and lead on any procurement or	Equality, due and fair processes, value for money ensured in services for Children in Care and Care leavers	

steps taken to ensure equality compliance)	commissioning of services for Children in Care and Care leavers		
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Evidence (see guidance note for details of what to include here):

- Post of Children’s Rights and Participation Officer
- Inspection Framework by Ofsted considers the impact of services on the rights of the child
- Corporate Parenting Strategy is mindful of Human Rights
- Children in Care Strategy ensures equality of services and provisions do not leave the Children in Care and Care leavers at a disadvantage.
- Scrutiny process provides challenge on service provision and rights of the child
- Every Looked After child is part of the process undertaken by Independent Reviewing Officers
- Every child has a Care Plan
- Every Children in Care and Care leavers is offered an Independent Visitor/Advocate, procedures clearly available for social worker to access.

Action plan:

Actions required	Key activity	Priority	Outcomes required	Officer responsible	Review date
Establish the Leaving Care Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restructure of FSW, • New job description and person specification for role of Young Peoples Advisor • Interview and identification of Young People’s Advisor for 	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a service for the specific needs of Children and Young people leaving care and subject to transition to independent living. • Improve outcomes and life opportunities 	Liz Davenport. Jeff Hay	

	<p>service 4 to 22June 2012.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment to s/w post within service • Recruitment to TM post within service. • Office location identified and moves of staff to occupy. • Engagement with multi agency partners to engage and deliver services. 		<p>to young people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve health and well being of Children and Young People • Improve the employability and educational needs of YP 		
Develop and embed the Transition and Pathway Planning for Care leavers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of policy and procedures. • Practice guidance for the completion of pathway planning and assessment • Embed policies and procedures into practice • Provide specific briefings and training to staff in service area. 	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive pathway plans • Clear analysis of need and service delivery to meet and promote needs • Improved transitional arrangements • Competent and trained workforce, able to deliver appropriate services to Children and Young People Service 	Liz Davenport. Jeff Hay, Judith Griffiths, Carolyn Connor, Fon Roberts	
Complete Sufficiency Review, to support the identification and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analytical profile on needs of Children and Young People in Care 	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the benefits of effective commissioning 	Liz Davenport	June 2012

profile of CIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of gaps in service provision to meet increased demands • Supports the local authority in meeting their duties by ensuring Children in Care needs are fully assessed and effective matching to placement takes place 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater choice of placement options • Better integration between Children in Care Universal and specialist services • Reduces risk of placement breakdown 		
Complete Placement Strategy to support future recruitment of carers and better matching of placement choice for CIC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide a commissioned, flexible and high quality choice of placements for Children in Care • Ensure Children in Care have a clear plan on their journey through care • Identify foster cares based on needs profile of Children in Care. • Bespoke recruitment campaigns and training to meet the needs of the Children in Care profile 	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support all Children having positive experiences in care whatever their needs. • Placement requests are defined in terms of the child's need • Placement choice given following due consideration to child wishes and feelings 	Liz Davenport, Provider Services	June 2012
Revise School Transport Policy specific to CIC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure Policy promotes the needs of Children in Care 	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all Children in Care get a good 	Liz Davenport, Jackie Speakman, Vicki Williams, Judith	August 2012

	Children in Care educational needs remain prioritised and service are designed to meet their needs		education. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children in Care are supported to remain in their preferred/current school 	Griffiths	
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Sign off	
Lead Officer:	Liz Davenport
Approved by Head of Service:	
Moderation and/or Scrutiny	
Date:	
Date analysis to be reviewed based on rating (high impact – review in 1 year, medium impact - review in 2 years, low impact in 3 years)	

Please forward the completed Equality Analysis to the Equality and Diversity Managers for publishing on the Council’s website