

Wirral Children and Young People's Plan 2012 – 2013

Equality Impact Assessment



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Introduction

Wirral Children's Trust has a commitment to contributing to a fairer society by ensuring that unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation is eliminated, equality of opportunity is advanced and good relations are fostered between different groups.

It has therefore undertaken an equality impact assessment of the Children and Young People's Plan for 2012- 13, that builds on the previous equality impact assessment and equality action plan published for the Children and Young People's Plan for 2011-2012. As many of the priorities are the same or similar to the previous plan, an equality impact assessment has only been undertaken for new priorities. For existing priorities any outstanding actions are continued into the new equality plan. An assumption has been made that the lead organisation for delivery of the individual projects will undertake their own equality impact assessments.

The equality analysis has been undertaken in consultation with partners through the multi-agency strategy groups for the five Every Child Matters outcome areas.

Legislative framework

The equality impact assessment has been undertaken in line with the Equality Act 2010 which defines the requirement to protect people with 'protected characteristics' from discrimination.

The protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership (only a requirement for eliminating unlawful discrimination)

In addition to the above Wirral includes the impact of socio-economic status in their assessment.

The Equality Act also places a **general duty** on public authorities when carrying out their functions to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.

- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

In order to advance equality, this should involve:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

In addition to the general equality duty, public authorities currently have a **specific equality duty** to analyse the effect of policies and practices and how they further the equality aims and to publish the results of that analysis which includes the information used and the engagement that took place.

Relevance of the plan on the general equality duty

A main aim of the plan is to ensure all children in Wirral achieve their full potential, whilst focusing on the most disadvantaged children to find ways of improving their life chances. These include reducing health inequalities, improving the outcomes of children in care, those in need of protection and other children, targeted intervention to those young people and families that are especially vulnerable who need additional support, improving access to early intervention services, improving the engagement of young people in community and democratic decision making processes, and tackling child poverty.

All of the priorities demonstrate the Children's Trust commitment to advancing equality through minimizing disadvantage, meeting the needs of people from the protected groups, and encouraging participation in public life as required in the general equality duties as defined above. Some of the priorities are also about eliminating discrimination, harassment and fostering good relations between groups such as tackling anti-social behaviour and risk taking behaviour, supporting anti-bullying programmes, supporting victims of domestic violence, and support for disabled children and young people.

Relevance of the plan to protected groups

There are parts of the plan that specifically address the areas of the protected characteristics and these are detailed below

Age

- Addressing the housing needs of vulnerable young people
- Assessing the travel and transport needs of young people
- Delivering an Integrated Youth Support Strategy to improve outcomes for vulnerable children and young people
- Developing a menu of services that provide appropriate targeted interventions for young people at risk of offending

Disability

- Improving provision, choice and outcomes for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and or disabilities in schools
- Developing a funding system for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities aged 16 to 25
- Child care sufficiency assessment to focus on parents of children with disabilities.
- Closer working relationships between GPs and Children's Centres to be explored to ensure access for families with children with disabilities
- Improvement in the positive mental health outcomes for children and young people through a variety of projects
- Reviewing the delivery of targeted and evidence based CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) interventions
- Devising programmes to continually increase the number of children with a disability accessing short breaks, increasing the take up of personalized budgets and jointly reviewing with Adult Social Services the work plan for Transition Services.

Gender reassignment

- No specific priorities or actions other than the continued commissioning of 'BullyBusters'.

Pregnancy and maternity

- Further developing the Families Information Service website
- Promoting healthy start vitamins
- Promoting healthy weight and non smoking amongst pregnant women
- Implementation of the Teenage Pregnancy Strategic Action Plan
- Delivery of the breastfeeding strategic action plan
- Improve the uptake of vitamin D supplements to pregnant and breastfeeding women

Race

- Building the capacity of schools to support children with English as an Additional Language and from Black and Minority Ethnic groups and to improve their attainment.

- Records of assessments, plans and reviews in children's social care reflect a focus on the cultural and identity needs of children and families.
- ; there are continuing programmes of international links between schools

Religion or belief

- Records of assessments, plans and reviews in children's social care reflect a focus on the cultural and identity needs of children and families.
- There is a 5-year statutory review of SACRE
- There is continued support for Holocaust memorial day

Sex

- Programmes for young women around healthy lifestyles, alcohol, drugs, and sexual health
- Continuing to support victims of domestic violence through the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) process
- Targeted intervention for 16 to 18 year olds that are at risk of or are victims of relationship abuse

Sexual orientation

- Continue to commission services from 'Bully Busters' to provide support for young people being bullied

Socio-economic disadvantage

- Reducing the attainment gap between children eligible for free school meals and those not eligible
- Involvement of primary schools in the Liverpool City Region child poverty strategy school readiness pilot
- Focusing Lifelong and Family Learning provision to engage and motivate disadvantaged families
- Develop child care provision in areas of economic disadvantage.

Areas for improvement

Whilst the focus of the plan is addressing inequalities there are some specific areas that have been identified that require further work on equality and diversity. Some of these have been carried forward from the previous equality action plan for the Children and Young People's Plan for 2011 to 2012 and others are new areas for development. More detailed information will be contained in the equality impact assessment for the individual projects.

Being Healthy

- There are no specific services targeted at black and ethnic minority communities. Therefore the uptake of services from BME population to be delivered as part of the plan will be monitored.

- Some of the key actions surrounding sexual health could be in conflict with certain religious/faith groups. A 'Faith and Values Framework' is to be agreed and circulated across Wirral to foster good relationships between groups of people.

Staying Safe

- Improvements to be made in the representation and diversity on the Children in Care Council

Enjoy and Achieve

- There is the potential for children and young people from protected groups to be excluded from certain activities as a result of schools not 'buying into' activities that are provided through Education Quality (Wirral's school improvement traded services). This can only be addressed through promoting the traded services with Head Teachers.
- The development of new criteria for nursery provision for the most vulnerable 2 year olds could potentially exclude children from protected groups. This will be addressed through an equality impact assessment of the criteria and monitoring post implementation.

Positive Contribution

- Although there has been some progress in improvements in the representation from minority groups in decision making processes, this is to be maintained as an action in the 2012-13 Plan and more work undertaken in this area

Achieve Economic Well Being

- The newly commissioned targeted Careers, Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) service may not have sufficient access to vulnerable groups. Therefore the delivery of the new service will be monitored for any negative impact on children Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), teenage mothers, care leavers, young offenders, teenage parents, and those with learning difficulties and disabilities

In addition agencies continue to develop their workforces understanding around equality and diversity. For example the Children and Young People's Department have an equality and diversity reference group which will be holding a development day with managers in July 2012.

Children and Young People's Plan 2012/13 Equality Action Plan

Priority	Equality analysis positive impact	Equality analysis negative impact	Further action required	Lead	Timescale
Being healthy					
Promote wellbeing through health promotion and behaviour change approaches	All services are accessible to and meet the needs of people from protected groups. Commissioned services are required to monitor complaints or service dissatisfaction and service users should be encouraged to use this feedback facility	However none explicitly target BME service users which could potentially result in a negative impact.	Monitor uptake of services from BME population	Anne Tattersall	March 2013
Reduce the harmful consequences of risk taking behaviour including substance misuse and sexual activity resulting in unplanned conceptions and sexually transmitted infections	As above	Some of the key actions surrounding sexual health could be in conflict with certain religious/faith groups.	Faith and Values Framework to be agreed and circulated across Wirral to foster good relationships between groups of people	Anne Tattersall	September 2012
Encourage and support all children and families to achieve and maintain a healthy weight and lifestyle	Children and families are encouraged to achieve and maintain a healthy weight and lifestyle to prevent future disability and children with disability are encouraged to engage in specialist weight management services				
Improve positive mental health outcomes for children and young people	As above				
Staying Safe					
Ensure vulnerable children, young people and families receive targeted, early intervention and support which meets their needs and improves their life chances.	No requirement for new EIA as priority the same as previous year.		No carry forward Actions completed from previous years EIA.		

Children and Young People's Plan 2012/13 Equality Action Plan

Priority	Equality analysis positive impact	Equality analysis negative impact	Further action required	Lead	Timescale
Improve outcomes for children in care and care leavers	Carry forward action from previous equality action plan		Carry forward action: Improvements to be made in the representation and diversity on the Children in Care Council	Fiona O'Shaughnessy	Ongoing
Improve outcomes for children and young people in need of protection.	No requirement for new EIA as priority the same as previous year.		No carry forward Actions completed from previous years EIA.		
Ensure children live in communities where they feel safe, and where harmful behaviour is actively addressed and reduced.	No requirement for new EIA as priority the same as previous year.		No carry forward Actions completed from previous years EIA.		
Enjoying and achieving					
Implement and evaluate the new school improvement strategy ensuring we meet our statutory duties	Improvements to be made in early language development through the implementation or a revised strategy for speech and language.	Potential for children and young people from protected groups to be excluded from certain activities as a result of schools not 'buying into' activities that are provided through Education Quality (Wirral's school improvement traded services)	Promoting the value of Education Quality with Head Teachers.		Ongoing
Improve the educational outcomes for children and young people affected by poverty and disadvantage including children in care	Reducing attainment gap for children eligible for free school meals and looked after children Continuing to support children with English as an additional language and from BME groups				

Children and Young People's Plan 2012/13 Equality Action Plan

Priority	Equality analysis positive impact	Equality analysis negative impact	Further action required	Lead	Timescale
Improve provision, choice and outcomes for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or disabilities	Continuing support and focus for disabled children and young people with special educational needs and disability, including those with Autistic Spectrum Disorder.				
Review the provision of behaviour support and reduce school exclusion.	Further supports children and young people from various protected groups who may exhibit behaviour problems resulting in exclusions arising from issues as a consequence of their context/protected group				
Ensure that services provided through our Sure Start and Children's Centres deliver effective support based on the needs of our local residents and communities.	Improving access for all to Children's Centres especially those most vulnerable.	New nursery provision criteria for the most vulnerable 2 year olds could potentially exclude children from protected groups. .	An equality impact assessment during the development of the criteria and monitoring post implementation	Kath Lloyd	
Making a Positive Contribution					
Reduce the number of children and young people involved in offending and anti-social behaviour	No requirement for new EIA as priority the same as previous year				
Ensure children and young people have access to a range of appropriate play and developmental opportunities which meet their needs.	No requirement for new EIA as priority the same as previous year				
Provide opportunities for children and young people to be actively engaged in community and democratic decision making processes.	No requirement for new EIA as priority the same as previous year		Carry forward action: Improvements to be made in the representation from minority groups in decision making processes	Maureen McDaid	Ongoing

Children and Young People's Plan 2012/13 Equality Action Plan

Priority	Equality analysis positive impact	Equality analysis negative impact	Further action required	Lead	Timescale
Social and economic well being					
Ensure that all young people aged 16 to 18 particularly those in vulnerable groups are effectively supported to access the education, employment and training opportunities available	Identifying barriers for participation. Focus on identifying funding system for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities ages 16 to 25	The newly commissioned targeted Careers, Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) service may not have sufficient access to vulnerable groups.	Delivery of the new service will be monitored for any negative impact on children Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), teenage mothers, care leavers, young offenders, teenage parents, and those with learning difficulties and disabilities.	Vivian Stafford	
Minimise the impact of poverty on children	Focus on disadvantaged families for Lifelong and Family Learning. Improving the rates of child care places in areas of greatest disadvantage and for parents of children with disabilities		No carry forward Actions completed from previous years EIA		
Support vulnerable young people and children with additional housing needs to access suitable housing options	Addressing the housing needs of vulnerable children and young people		No carry forward Actions completed from previous years EIA		
Ensure that our young people have excellent skills and opportunities into employment, including through Wirral's Apprenticeship programme	Improving skills of young people including access to transport.		No carry forward Actions completed from previous years EIA		