

Equality Impact Assessment Record

Date of EIA 17th January 2009
 Directorate Social Care & Learning

Initial Screening Record	
Activity to be assessed	The Pledge for Looked after Children & Care Leavers
What is the activity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy/strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Function/procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Review <input type="checkbox"/> Service <input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change
Is it a new or existing activity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Existing
Aim / objective / purpose of the activity – who is the activity designed to benefit/target?	The purpose of the activity is to: set out the offer of services and support to children and young people who are looked after or who have left the care of Bracknell Forest Council.
Who is responsible for the activity?	The person/section/team responsible for this policy/function is: Head of Service for Looked After Children – Sheila McKeand
Did Step 1: Initial Screening indicate that a full EIA was necessary?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes – full EIA completed and recorded below. <input type="checkbox"/> No – full EIA not completed therefore record ends here.
Full EIA Record	
Who are the members of the EIA team?	Penny Reuter, Chief Officer: Children's Social Care, Sheila McKeand, Head of Service- Looked After Children,
What evidence has been found to indicate that the activity might need to be amended? (Include any consultation undertaken)	<p>The evidence used for this EIA has been drawn from national evidence about poor outcomes for looked after children and care leavers (see 'Care Matters: Transforming the Lives of Children and Young People in Care' 2006) and local performance indicators (see Annual Performance Assessment Data Set). Alongside this, discussion with looked after children and care leavers through consultation events and the Children in Care Council, and information from a range of stakeholders in the Care Matters Steering Group has provided additional qualitative information and ideas about how services need to improve.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The numbers of looked after children in Bracknell Forest average between 70 and 75, which is a rate of 28 per 10,000. This compares with a national rate of 54 per 10,000. The lower rate reflects the relatively low indices of deprivation in Bracknell Forest and also the range of preventive services to support children and young people remaining at home with their families. • The majority (79% at December 2008) of looked after children in Bracknell Forest are in the 10+ age range and when they come into the looked after system, they are likely to remain looked after until they reach independence. Younger children are more likely to leave the care system through adoption or other form of permanence. • A number of looked after children (42%) and care leavers live outside the Council geographical area, often because this is where the placement is that best meets their needs. However, this distances the child from their family and community and is not the ideal. • There is no longer a reported performance measure on the ethnicity of looked after children, but in December 2008,

	<p>children from black and minority ethnic groups were over-represented in the looked after system in Bracknell Forest, with a ratio of 2.7 compared to all England figures of 1.6 in 2006. This may indicate that families from some BME groups are not accessing preventive services early enough, but because of our small numbers, this figure needs to be treated with caution. The figure is also expressed as a ratio compared to the 2001 Census figure, and the BME population in Bracknell Forest has changed since then.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looked after children are less likely than children who have never been looked after to achieve well at GCSE. In 2007-08, no looked after children in Bracknell Forest achieved 5 or more GCSE grades A* - C, compared with 10.7% for all England. • Children and young people who have been looked after or have left care are more likely to be out of education training or employment. The figures for Bracknell Forest are 0.76 compared to 0.78 for all England. • Young people who have been looked after or have left care are over-represented in the criminal justice system; figures for 07-08 were lower than previous years at 2.9, but figures have recently risen. Small numbers mean that performance can be skewed by just minor changes, but this is an area of concern. • A high proportion of our looked after children have a statement of special educational need (28% at December 2008) and a number of these are also disabled. These particular needs may have been part of the reason for the child or young person needing to become looked after, but also requires particular provision to be made to meet these needs, often outside the Borough. • There is currently no data available to be able to compare sexual orientation or religion or belief between looked after children and the general child population. The numbers of male and female looked after children are fairly equally distributed across the age range. 	
<p>With regard to the equalities themes, which groups might be impacted by the activity? Might any of these groups be impacted adversely?</p>	<p>Groups Impacted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓Race and ethnicity ✓Disability Gender ✓Age Sexual Orientation Religion or belief 	<p>Groups impacted adversely</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Race and ethnicity <input type="checkbox"/> Disability <input type="checkbox"/> Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Age <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Orientation <input type="checkbox"/> Religion or belief Potentially race & ethnicity, disability and age.
<p>What evidence is there to suggest an impact/adverse impact?</p>	<p>See section 3/4</p>	
<p>On what grounds can impact or adverse impact be justified?</p>	<p>The Pledge for Looked After Children and Care Leavers is designed to improve the type and quality of services offered and provided to this group, in order to overcome some of the disadvantages they face.</p>	
<p>Is there any current action that addresses issues for any of the groups impacted/adversely impacted?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Care Matters Steering Group is overseeing the implementation of the Care Matters initiative (Care Matters Implementation Plan 2008) • The Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel scrutinises performance, raises issues about practice and advises the Executive Member for Children & Young People about areas 	

	<p>for improved service delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Children in Care Council identifies areas where they want services and practice to be improved • The Education of Looked After Children Support Team has increased its capacity in order to address the needs of 16+ aged looked after children and care leavers.
What changes will you make to the activity reduce or remove any differential/adverse impact?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise the 2007 Commissioning Strategy for Looked After Children and associated Action Plan • Strengthen the capacity of local foster carers to meet the needs of looked after children with more challenging behaviour • Review the Pledge in consultation with partners and stakeholders on an annual basis
Into which action plan/s will these actions be incorporated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Care & Learning Service Plan • Children & Young People's Plan

Who is responsible for the action plan?	Sheila McKeand, Head of Service – Looked After Children
Have any examples of good practise been identified as part of the EIA?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All looked after children have a qualified social worker allocated to them • The health of looked after children service provided by the PCT offers a range of services and follows up individual health issues • Involvement of partners in the Care Matters Steering Group • Establishment of the Children in Care Council • Simplifying and strengthening the allowances rates for substitute family carers
Has the EIA been published on the Council website?	Yes
Who is the relevant Chief Officer and have they signed off the EIA?	<p>Penny Reuter, Chief Officer: Children's Social Care</p> <p>Signature.....</p>
Which PMR will this EIA be reported in?	<u>Quarter 1 2009-10, SC&L</u>