

PART B – Equality Analysis Form

1. Title	
Equality Analysis title: Early Help Strategy 2024 - 2029	
Date of Equality Analysis (EA): 29 January 2024	
Directorate: CYPS	Service area: Early Help
Lead Manager: Kelly White: Interim Assistant Director, Early Help	Contact number: 01709 822318
Is this a:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strategy / Policy	<input type="checkbox"/> Service / Function
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
If other, please specify	

2. Names of those involved in the Equality Analysis (Should include minimum of three people) - see page 7 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance		
Name	Organisation	Role (eg service user, managers, service specialist)
Helen Sweaton	RMBC/ South Yorks NHS	Assistant Director, Commissioning
Anne Hawke	RMBC	Head of Service, Performance
Laura Gough	RMBC	Head of Service Safeguarding

3. What is already known? - see page 10 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance
<p>Aim/Scope (who the Policy/Service affects and intended outcomes if known) <i>This may include a group/s identified by a protected characteristic, others groups or stakeholder/s e.g. service users, employees, partners, members, suppliers etc.)</i></p> <p>The Early Help Service is an essential component of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council's (RMBC) delivery model for Children's Services.</p> <p>The Early Help Strategy 2024-2029 describes the local authority's responsibility to promote inter-agency co-operation to improve the welfare of all children under section 10 of the Children Act 2004.</p>

Early Help spans a wide age range; 0-19 years and up to 25 years if there is a disability or special educational need. It incorporates pre-birth, early years, adolescence through to early adulthood. Early Help has a critical role to play at the key transition points in a child's journey from dependence to independence. The service brings together a range of statutory and non-statutory functions including Family Support Services, Education Support Services, Youth Justice Services.

The previous Rotherham Early Help Strategy 2016-2019 was launched in January 2016 and was primarily focussed on the resources, staffing and services within the local authority. The Early Help Strategy 2024-2029 builds on the strong foundations and vision of the previous strategy and sets the priorities for prevention and early identification and intervention in Rotherham.

The five-year Early Help Strategy 2024-2029 is a partnership strategy that has been developed through partner and stakeholder consultation and coproduction through the multi-agency Early Help Partnership Group (EHPG).

The Early Help Vision, *"All agencies working together to ensure that children, young people, and families have their needs identified early so that they can receive swift access to targeted help and support,"* was developed and agreed by partners, stakeholders, children, young people, and families.

What equality information is available? (Include any engagement undertaken)

Quality information is already captured and used to shape priorities and deliver existing services across the Local Authority, health and education sectors.

Equality information is available through the following sources:

- Performance Practice and Learning
- CYPS performance reporting – Scorecards and Dashboards (Insight)
- Audit and QA activity
- Section 11
- DfE reporting
- Department for Health & Social Care
- Ofsted

A work plan will sit alongside the strategy with includes the capturing of data, including diversity and equality, and feedback form different children and groups which will continue to be used to monitor, scrutinise and inform the plan. This work plan is owned and delivered on by the Early Help Partnership Group, a multi-agency group offering cross partnership challenge and co working.

Rotherham is a large minster town in South Yorkshire, England which along with its nearby settlements form the Metropolitan Borough of Rotherham, with a population of 265,800 (ONS, 2021).

There are 61,600 0-19 year old children living in the Borough (23.1% of the local population – ONS, 2021). 122 Schools provide education to 45676 Pupils on Roll.

26% of children living in Rotherham are in low-income families (England 19% - 2021). Our Free School Meal (FSM) entitlement rate is above national average, 21.8% compared to 20.2% at Primary phase and 20.7% compared to 18.2% at Secondary phase (DfE 2020/21).

Rotherham is a relatively deprived local authority, ranking 44th of 317 local authorities according to the 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation score (a slight relative increase from 52nd in 2017). Deprivation is linked to a wide variety of poor health and educational outcomes for children. As such, Rotherham often fares significantly worse than the national average when considering markers of 'good health' throughout this document. Comparisons have also been made with statistical 'nearest neighbours' to compare how well Rotherham is doing relatively to similar local authorities.

20.1% of our school age population is from BME background (England 36.1%) (DfE 2021/22).

- The population of Rotherham is 265,800 (Census data, 2021)
- There are 125 schools in Rotherham
- The percentage of children and young people who are eligible for free school meals is 11,621 — or 68% (Data as of July 2022)
- Rotherham ranks as the 35th most deprived upper tier local authority in England out of a total of 151 upper-tier local authorities (Index of multiple deprivation 2019 by LSOA)
- The prevalence of children in reception class who were at a healthy weight was 73.6% (2,275 children in total), in comparison to the national figure of 76.5% (National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) data from 2021 to 2022)
- At the end of March 2023, 89% of children aged 0-5-years-old were registered with a Children's Centre and of those living in the 30% most deprived areas of Rotherham, 92% were registered. During the same period, the proportion of children aged 0-5-years-old who had accessed Children's centre activities was 73% overall and 78% for those children living in the 30% most deprived communities.
- In Rotherham there are 21.9% of children aged 0-15 years in absolute low-income families and 25.7% of children in relative low-income families, for comparison, the percentage rate for England is 15.1% and 18.7% respectively. The number of Children aged under 16, living in relative low-income families, financial year ending 2021 was 13,193 (Index of multiple deprivation 2019 by LSOA)
- 20.4% of pupils in Rotherham (9,325) have identified SEND needs compared to 17.1% nationally (Spring School Census 2023)
- 3,192 Children and young people aged 0-25 yrs have a EHCP (44% increase in EHCP over last 3 years) (EHCP data July 2023)
- As of 31 December 2023, we had 505 children in care, 382 were in family-based placements.
- There are currently 323 care leavers in Rotherham (As of November 2023)

Of the children open to the service 1537 are male or identify as male, 1388 are female or identify as female and 20 are unborn (5 have not disclosed gender).

Ethnicity	Count
A1 - White British	2387
A5 - Gypsy / Roma	114
A3 - Any other White background	74
E2 - Any other ethnic group	62
C2 - Pakistani	56
B3 - White and Asian	54
B4 - Any other mixed background	41
B1 - White and Black Caribbean	34
D2 - African	32
E4 - Information not yet obtained	31
B2 - White and Black African	27
C4 - Any other Asian background	21
C1 - Indian	6
E1 - Chinese	5
D3 - Any other Black background	3
E3 - Refused	2
A2 - White Irish	1
Rotherham Total	2950

Recruitment to staff roles considers the need for the workforce to reflect the communities in which they work.

Information regarding protected characteristics is captured in the Early Help Assessment and informs the Plan that is coproduced with the family members.

Translation services are utilised as a range of bespoke provision is in place including specific targeted support groups for LGBT young people, BAME young people, Girls and young women, faith-based groups and provision, support for Ukraine and Afghanistan families and young people with autism.

Are there any gaps in the information that you are aware of?

Not that we're aware of, we have rich cross organisational data available however we will continue to develop our reporting mechanisms as part of the Early Help delivery plan to ensure Diversity and Equality remains a key consideration.

What monitoring arrangements have you made to monitor the impact of the policy

or service on communities/groups according to their protected characteristics?

A range of approaches will be used to ensure that children, young people and families play a key part in the evaluation of the strategy and that their individual needs and protected characteristics are considered.

Existing data and established methodology across the children’s workforce will continue to be used to monitor impact on those groups with protected characteristics.

Service users have been involved with the development of the strategy and influence decision making and delivery as well as frontline staff, partner agencies.

- Continue engagement with the Early Help Partnership Group
- Continue to ensure that consultation and engagement with the service users is embedded in all Early Help Assessments and plans.

Engagement undertaken with customers. (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)

To inform the Early Help Strategy a consultation and engagement activity was undertaken with partners and delivery groups which report to The Rotherham Children’s Safeguarding Partnership.

An on-line consultation survey was also shared with partners and stakeholders. 83 organisations responded to the consultation survey.

In September 2022 the Improving Lives Select Commission held a workshop to identify the key challenges facing children, young people, and families in the borough and to shape and influence the priorities, principles, and themes of the Strategy. The recommendations made have been incorporated into the development of the Strategy and associated governance arrangements.

Engagement undertaken with staff (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)

The Early Help Partnership Group have been engaged and will be pivotal in the implementation of the Strategy Deliver Plan.

4. The Analysis - of the actual or likely effect of the Policy or Service (Identify by protected characteristics)

How does the Policy/Service meet the needs of different communities and groups?
(Protected characteristics of Age, Disability, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion or Belief, Sexual Orientation, Civil Partnerships and Marriage, Pregnancy and Maternity) - see glossary on page 14 of the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance)

How do you think the Policy/Service meets the needs of different communities and groups?

The Early Help Service covers a wide range of need and includes working directly with different communities and groups. However, some need is universal and not unique to protected characteristics (e.g., parenting). Delivery of the proposed Strategy will support the service to take account of cultural differences and strengths, and the unique circumstances of some young people and families in Rotherham.

The Early Help Assessment (EHA) process and Signs of Safety (SoS) model ensure an assessment and case planning format that integrates professional knowledge with local family and cultural knowledge, to identify and implement interventions that will benefit children, young people and families avoiding the need for further costly interventions. Early indications of its use with Early Help families are positive.

The impact of changes across the protected characteristics groups that Early Help works with is detailed below and is most likely to be initially experienced in the form of less frequent interventions or different models of engagement.

As the service moves towards more evidenced based, outcome focussed, and targeted forms of delivery, those individuals from protected groups are likely to experience a more enhanced service.

It is of particular importance that the service is agile enough and has tools that are flexible to respond to future need and changing demographics such as the population becoming more culturally diverse.

As well as responding to need as illustrated in the snapshot, the Strategy also takes account of the fact that those most likely to require help and support are located in areas of multiple deprivation.

Does your Policy/Service present any problems or barriers to communities or Groups?

The strategy proposes continuation of the delivery of a continuum of early help support including a more targeted service for those in need of early help, it is not envisaged that the service will present any barriers to communities and groups.

Accessibility, physical and geographical will continue to be carefully monitored by the Early Help Partnership Group.

Does the Service/Policy provide any positive impact/s including improvements or remove barriers?

Early Help services are not delivered in isolation and the Early Help Strategy 2024-2029 emphasises the importance of developing the Early Help System, the Early Help Offer and the Early Help Workforce.

The strategy proposes continuation of the delivery of a continuum of early help support including a more targeted service for those in need of early help, it is not envisaged that the service will present any barriers to communities and groups.

What affect will the Policy/Service have on community relations? *(may also need to consider activity which may be perceived as benefiting one group at the expense of another)*

The Early Help Strategy 2024-2029 will ensure that the service continues to work with the specific specified groups identified through the Protected Characteristics and does not differentiate between different groups.

5. Summary of findings and Equality Analysis Action Plan

If the analysis is done at the right time, i.e. early before decisions are made, changes should be built in before the policy or change is signed off. This will remove the need for remedial actions. Where this is achieved, the only action required will be to monitor the impact of the policy/service/change on communities or groups according to their protected characteristic - See page 11 of the Equality Screening and Analysis guidance.

Title of analysis: Early Help Strategy 2024-2029
Directorate and service area: CYPS, Early Help
Lead Manager: Kelly White: Interim Assistant Director, Early Help
Summary of findings:
<p>The Early Help Strategy 2024-2029 will ensure that the service continues to work with the specific specified groups identified through the Protected Characteristics. Anticipated Impact will be low.</p> <p>Early Help services in Rotherham will continue to develop through the delivery of this strategy which will improve the accessibility of the Early Help offer, the way the system works together and workforce.</p>

Action/Target	State Protected Characteristics as listed below	Target date (MM/YY)
Complete and submit EH Strategy	A, D, S, RE, RoB, PM, C, O	March 2024
Cabinet Paper Approval	As Above	March 2024
Implementation of the 5 Year Delivery Plan	As Above	April 2024 to March 2029

*A = Age, D= Disability, S = Sex, GR Gender Reassignment, RE= Race/ Ethnicity, RoB= Religion or Belief, SO= Sexual Orientation, PM= Pregnancy/Maternity, CPM = Civil Partnership or Marriage. C= Carers, O= other groups

6. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state those that have approved the Equality Analysis. Approval should be obtained by the Director and approval sought from DLT and the relevant Cabinet Member.

Name	Job title	Date
Nicola Curley	Director Children’s Services	TBC
Kelly White	Interim Assistant Director, Early Help	01/02/24
Cllr Cusworth	Cabinet Member	TBC

7. Publishing

The Equality Analysis will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given.

If this Equality Analysis relates to a **Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision** a copy of the completed document should be attached as an appendix and published alongside the relevant report.

A copy should also be sent to equality@rotherham.gov.uk For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council’s Equality and Diversity Internet page.

Date Equality Analysis completed	29/01/2024
Report title and date	Early Help Strategy 2024-2029, Cabinet March 2024
Date report sent for publication	
Date Equality Analysis sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	