

PART A - Initial Equality Screening Assessment

As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality and diversity.

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provide a record of both the process and decision. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions.

Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality and diversity
- whether or not equality and diversity is being/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an Equality Analysis (Part B).

Further information is available in the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance – see page 9.

1. Title

Title: Child Exploitation Strategy 2024-2029

Directorate: Children and Young People's Services

Service area: Safeguarding

Lead person:

Laura Gough

Contact number:

07920037934

Is this a:

Strategy / Policy

 Service / Function

 Other

If other, please specify

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening

The Child Exploitation Strategy 2024-2029 describes the responsibility of agencies to work together and safeguard children under Working together 2023.

Please provide a summary of all impacts and mitigation/monitoring measures:

The Child Exploitation Strategy 2024-2029 is aligned to legislation, Children Act 1989 and 2004 and guidance under Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 which provide the framework for safeguarding children. The strategy describes the local authority's responsibility to promote inter-agency partnership working to improve the welfare of all children under section 10 of the Children Act 2004.

The Exploitation Strategy is owned by the Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership and is driven by the Partnership's Child Exploitation Delivery Group (CEDG), with alignment to the Safer Rotherham Partnership. Updates and monitoring of the progress of the workplan are provided through these governance arrangements.

The Child Exploitation Strategy 2024-2029 builds on the strong foundations and established partnership arrangements in place from the previous strategy and local safeguarding arrangements in Rotherham.

3. Relevance to equality and diversity

All the Council's strategies/policies, services/functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – borough wide or more local. These will also have a greater/lesser relevance to equality and diversity.

The following questions will help you to identify how relevant your proposals are.

When considering these questions think about age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, civil partnerships and marriage, pregnancy and maternity and other socio-economic groups e.g. parents, single parents and guardians, carers, looked after children, unemployed and people on low incomes, ex-offenders, victims of domestic violence, homeless people etc.

Questions	Yes	No
Could the proposal have implications regarding the accessibility of services to the whole or wider community? <i>(Be mindful that this is not just about numbers. A potential to affect a small number of people in a significant way is as important)</i>	x	
Could the proposal affect service users? <i>(Be mindful that this is not just about numbers. A potential to affect a small number of people in a significant way is as important)</i>	x	
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics? <i>(Consider potential discrimination, harassment or victimisation of individuals with protected characteristics)</i>	x	
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal? <i>(It is important that the Council is transparent and consultation is carried out with members of the public to help mitigate future challenge)</i>	x	
Could the proposal affect how the Council's services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom? <i>(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from commissioning or procurement)</i>	x	
Could the proposal affect the Council's workforce or employment practices? <i>(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from your HR business partner)</i>	x	

If you have answered no to all the questions above, please explain the reason

If you have answered **no** to all the questions above please complete **sections 5 and 6**.

If you have answered **yes** to any of the above please complete **section 4**.

4. Considering the impact on equality and diversity

If you have not already done so, the impact on equality and diversity should be considered within your proposals before decisions are made.

Considering equality and diversity will help to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and take active steps to create a discrimination free society by meeting a group or individual's needs and encouraging participation.

Please provide specific details for all three areas below using the prompts for guidance and complete an Equality Analysis (Part B).

- **How have you considered equality and diversity?**

There are approximately 4,700 children open to children's service, from Early Help, Child in Need, Child Protection, looked after children and leaving care (as of 31st March 2024). Of these the Evolve Service work with approximately 80 children each month. These numbers of children do fluctuate daily and so are an approximation based on 31st March 2024 data.

Of the children open to the evolve service at the end of March 2024, 22% are from BME backgrounds, 78% white British and 12% not recorded. 35% are female and 65% male.

To inform the Child Exploitation Strategy a consultation and engagement activity with partners was undertaken. The development of the revised Strategy has involved collaborative working across Rotherham's key stakeholders:

- A stake holder event held on the 9th June 2022 and included representatives from RMBC, SY Police, NHS and wider Health colleagues, Probation, Youth Justice Service, Voluntary consortium, Community Safety.
- It has been presented to the CEDG
- It has been presented to the Council CYPS DLT and SMT
- Evolve service and Steering group, and Youth Justice Service

We understand that the strategy needs to reflect the communities that it serves. A glossary of terminology is added to the strategy to support engagement. Where risk of exploitation is identified, information regarding protected characteristics is captured in Assessment and informs the Plan that is co-produced with the family members.

Translation services are utilised and 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.

- **Key findings**

Rotherham’s Child Exploitation Offer supports some of the most vulnerable children, young people and families in Rotherham.

The draft five-year Child Exploitation Strategy 2024-2029 is a partnership approach to raising awareness, coordinating partnership response, training, identification, prevention and safeguarding, prosecution of offenders, and support for victims both current and historical.

It aims to ensure communities, and services, both voluntary and statutory are empowered through information sharing and training to spot the signs of exploitation and abuse and are equipped with knowledge what to do where they have concerns about groups or individual children.

The Strategy aims to build on the solid partnership foundations, and support agencies in working together to safeguard children.

- **Actions**

An Equality Impact Analysis has been completed and is also an appendix to the Cabinet report.

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.

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

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	Completed
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	June 2024
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	Laura Gough, Head of Service, Safeguarding, Quality and Learning

5. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening:

Name	Job title	Date
Helen Sweaton	Assistant Director Joint Assistant Director Commissioning, Quality and Performance, CYPS	January 2023

6. Publishing

This screening document will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given.

If this screening 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 of **all** screenings 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 screening completed	10 January 2023
Report title and date	Child Exploitation Strategy 2024-2029
If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication	3 June 2024
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	