

PART B – Equality Analysis Form

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.

This form:

- Can be used to prompt discussions, ensure that due regard has been given and remove or minimise disadvantage for an individual or group with a protected characteristic
- Involves looking at what steps can be taken to advance and maximise equality as well as eliminate discrimination and negative consequences
- Should be completed before decisions are made, this will remove the need for remedial actions.

Note – An Initial Equality Screening Assessment (Part A) should be completed prior to this form.

When completing this form consider the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics 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. – see page 11 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance.

1. Title	
Equality Analysis title: Children's Playgrounds Programme	
Date of Equality Analysis (EA): 30/01/2025	
Directorate: Regeneration & Environment Services	Service area: Culture, Sport & Tourism
Lead Manager: Jon Hinchliffe	Contact number: 01709 212147
<p>Is this a:</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Strategy / Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Service / Function <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other </p> <p>If other, please specify: Delivery Programme</p>	

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)
Jon Hinchliffe	RMBC	Urban Parks & Open Spaces Manager
Hannah Jackson	RMBC	Senior Ranger
Brent McKeiver	RMBC	Play Inspector

3. What is already known? - see page 10 of Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance

Aim/Scope (who the Policy/Service affects and intended outcomes if known)

The Green Spaces service manages 37 play areas, and 4 skate parks across the borough which incorporates everything from Multi-Use Games Areas (MUGAs), traditional play equipment such as swings, roundabouts and slides, infant cycle courses, large scale bespoke adventure playgrounds and outdoor gym equipment. This provision provides free, accessible and inclusive resources for communities and families local to where they live. Alongside this the service also offers a chargeable service to Parish Council's to support the maintenance of Parish-owned play areas.

The Rotherham Cultural Strategy has an overarching mission to: *'Get more people, more active, creative and outdoors, more often'* in recognition that levels of participation and physical activity generally track at 10% below the national average. Data from the 2017 Active Lives Survey shows:

- 51.3% of people locally compared to 61.8% nationally engaged in more than 150 minutes of physical activity weekly
- 37% of people in Rotherham are inactive (less than 30 mins pw) against the national average of 25.7%.

More recent data from the Active Lives Survey in 2021 shows:

- Only half of children in Rotherham (51.1%) are active outside of school for 30 minutes or more

However recent public health data shows that:

- Borough wide child obesity in reception year is 11%, slightly higher than the national average of 10.4%

In order to address historically low levels of physical activity and participation, reduce childhood obesity and respond to the identified priorities of children and young people across the borough, the Council's Green Spaces Strategy highlights the need for every child to live within 400m (5 minutes' walk) of a good-quality, equipped play area. The Children's Playgrounds Programme seeks to ensure that the borough's play areas are fit for purpose, inclusive and accessible to all children and young people.

The programme will see more accessible play equipment across the borough including such things as British sign language panels or accessible swings.

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

Very little data is available regarding the use of play areas as they are open facilities located in parks and recreation grounds across the borough. The play areas themselves are unstaffed and do not have the ability to remotely monitor usage and/or footfall. Equally the service does not have capacity to undertake regular polls during busy periods to capture this information.

The service does not hold data on the users of play equipment and has no way of monitoring usage by age, gender, ethnicity or physical ability. However, as Rotherham works towards becoming the world's first Children's Capital of Culture in 2025 the wider Culture, Sport & Tourism service does hold data from recent engagement programmes with children which suggest that parks, green spaces, sport and physical activity are all important venues and activities for children and young people in Rotherham.

A recent evaluation report 'Children's Capital of Culture 2025: Starting the Conversation' found that:

- Almost a quarter of children and young people surveyed (24%) wanted to see programmes of activity that celebrate and encourage engagement with Rotherham's existing Green Spaces
 - Entertainment and activities were also rated highly in terms of what children and young people wanted to see with 23% voting for this. Further interrogation of what this could include revealed a strong desire for improved Play Areas
 - Ensuring that activities and environments in Rotherham are safe and accessible is important to young people who wanted to see a particular focus on inclusion for young people with varying additionalities
 - Access to a wide range of sports and/or physical activities is highly valued by young people, examples of which included Astroturf pitches, skate parks and parkour sites
- In addition, the recent 'Voice of the Child Lifestyle Survey' which surveys Year 7 and Year 10 students from schools across the borough showed that:
- Of the 2,476 Year 7 pupils surveyed 79% wanted to see more play equipment in green spaces including play parks, MUGAs and gym equipment
 - Of the 2,062 Year 10 pupils surveyed 69% wanted to see more play equipment in green spaces including play parks, MUGAs and gym equipment

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

The service does not hold data on the users of play equipment and currently has no way of monitoring usage by age, gender, ethnicity or physical ability.

What monitoring arrangements have you made to monitor the impact of the policy or service on communities/groups according to their protected characteristics?

In order to provide a basic baseline of play area usage, targeted surveys will be undertaken during busy school holiday periods to capture the age range, ethnicity and physical abilities of play area users and better inform future provision. The service accepts that as this cannot be undertaken at all play areas and all times of the year it will not give a full picture but will start to build some knowledge of the existing user base and incorporate questions that can inform future needs-based provision in specific localities. The EIA Action Plan will be monitored via:

- Quarterly reports to the Green Spaces Management Team

• Personal Development Reviews with Green Spaces staff

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

Consultation is undertaken with Ward Members at the start of each project in the Children's Playgrounds Programme to ensure that the improvements suggested meet local need.

Through these consultations Elected Members have highlighted a desire for consideration to be given to accessible play equipment where physically possible and appropriate.

Consultation will also take place with residents in close proximity of a play area/those who visit the site prior to a new play scheme being developed in order to understand local need.

In addition to the area-based consultation, the Children's Capital of Culture Programme consulted with 1,330 children, young people and adults in their lives between August 2021 and September 2022 to inform the future programme for this initiative and key areas of interest for children and young people which included play. Key findings include:

- Almost a quarter of children and young people surveyed (24%) wanted to see programmes of activity that celebrate and encourage engagement with Rotherham's existing Green Spaces

- Entertainment and activities were also rated highly in terms of what children and young people wanted to see with 23% voting for this. Further interrogation of what this could include revealed a strong desire for improved Play Areas

- Ensuring that activities and environments in Rotherham are safe and accessible is important to young people who wanted to see a particular focus on inclusion for young people with varying additionalities

- Access to a wide range of sports and/or physical activities is highly valued by young people, examples of which included Astroturf pitches, skate parks and parkour sites

The 'Voice of the Child Lifestyle Survey 2022' consulted with 2,476 Year 7 pupils and 2,062 Year 10 pupils from across the borough with specific questions relating to Green Spaces. Key findings include:

- Of the 2,476 Year 7 pupils surveyed 79% wanted to see more play equipment in green

	<p>spaces including play parks, MUGAs and gym equipment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Of the 2,062 Year 10 pupils surveyed 69% wanted to see more play equipment in green spaces including play parks, MUGAs and gym equipment
Engagement undertaken with staff (date and group(s) consulted and key findings)	<p>Engagement has been undertaken with staff who have responsibility for the management and maintenance of play equipment across the borough.</p> <p>Much of the programme is also undertaken by the Landscape Design service who have also been consulted on proposed improvements outlined in the plan.</p> <p>Neighbourhood Co-ordinators have also been consulted.</p> <p>Key findings from these discussions have been practical in nature and have informed the detail of the proposed Children's Playgrounds Programme in the body of the report.</p>

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)

The Children's Playgrounds Programme aims to create a universal play offer that every child can access within a five-minute walk from their home. This commitment seeks to reduce geographic and economic barriers to accessing high quality play provision and improving the physical and mental health and wellbeing of children and young people through play.

However, the service is mindful that play is a physical activity and in order to ensure that its offer is as inclusive and accessible as possible is seeking to include accessible play equipment in as many schemes within the programme as possible, where space allows.

<p>Does your Policy/Service present any problems or barriers to communities or Groups?</p> <p>The greatest challenge for the programme is in not holding any data on the users of play areas across the borough. Without this data it is challenging to ascertain which groups face additional barriers to engagement and participation and how these could be addressed.</p> <p>Broad consultation with children and young people through the Children's Capital of Culture is starting to provide more evidence of the importance of play to children and young people but more work needs to be done to better understand what specific provision is missing and ensure youth voice and influence in the development of this provision.</p>
<p>Does the Service/Policy provide any positive impact/s including improvements or remove barriers?</p> <p>The Children's Playgrounds Programme will see accessible play equipment including such things as British Sign Language Panels and Accessible Swings.</p>
<p>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)</p> <p>The intention with the Play Improvement Programme is to ensure that the borough has a play provision that is accessible, inclusive and fit for purpose which will help to build better integration of communities from an early age, building empathy and celebrating difference.</p>

Please list any **actions and targets** that need to be taken as a consequence of this assessment on the action plan below and ensure that they are added into your service plan for monitoring purposes – see page 12 of the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance.

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: Playground Improvement Programme
Directorate and service area: Green Spaces; Creative Programming & Engagement; Culture Sport & Tourism; Regeneration & Environment
Lead Manager: Jon Hinchliffe, Urban Parks & Open Spaces Manager
Summary of findings: The Green Spaces service has a clear commitment to ensuring that high quality play provision is available for all children and young people across the borough regardless of geography or economic means. The Green Spaces Strategy sets out the intention to ensure that every child in Rotherham will live within a five-minute walk of a play area and the Children's Play Programme includes accessible provision such as British sign language panels and accessible swings. Whilst the intention to create an inclusive and accessible offer is clearly present, the ability to understand the current user base and the potential barriers and opportunities to further support existing and new users is not currently available to the service, which could provide barriers to inclusion. The Equalities Action Plan sets out a series of measures for improving equalities across play areas through three key areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the delivery of the proposed Children's Playgrounds Programme• implementation of learnings and equalities considerations for future iterative improvements as funding becomes available• strategic development and understanding of audiences and their needs

Action/Target	State Protected Characteristics as listed below	Target date (MM/YY)
Proposed Children's Playgrounds Programme		
Implementation of accessible play provision across seven play areas to include British Sign Language Panels and Accessible Play Equipment such as spinning dishes and springys	Disability Age (Children & Young People)	April 2025
Future Play Area Improvements		
Undertake an access audit for each new improvement to identify possible accessible options Disability Age (Children & Young People) Ongoing	Disability Age (Children & Young People)	Ongoing
Ensure that all new play areas feature at least one accessible piece of play equipment Disability Age (Children & Young People) Ongoing	Disability Age (Children & Young People)	Ongoing
Strategic Development & Needs Analysis		
Usage polls and collection of demographic data at key times over a 12-month period to better understand current usage, potential barriers and future opportunities for improvements	All	January 2026
Borough-wide consultation with Children and Young People about play provision in response to play being highlighted as a key priority for the Children's Capital of Culture programme	Age (Children & Young People)	January 2026
Identification of possible funding sources to develop a dedicated Play Strategy for Rotherham with an emphasis on ensuring access and inclusion	All	January 2026

***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
Zoe Oxley	Head of Operations & Business Transformation	30/01/25
Polly Hamilton	Assistant Director for Culture, Sport & Tourism	16/05/25
Andrew Bramidge	Strategic Director for Regeneration & Environment	
Cllr Chris Read	Leader	

7. Publishing	
<p>The Equality Analysis will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	
Date Equality Analysis completed	30 th January 2025
Report title and date	Children's Playground Improvement Programme
Date report sent for publication	
Date Equality Analysis sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	