Appendix 3

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: Rotherham Local SEND Reform Plan 2026-2029	
Directorate: CYPS	**Service area:** Education & Inclusion
Lead person: Niall Devlin	**Contact:** niall.devlin@rotherham.gov.uk
Is this a: [X] **Strategy / Policy** [ ] **Service / Function** [ ] **Other** **If other, please specify**	

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening
The Rotherham Local SEND Reform Plan 2026-2029 is a borough-wide strategic framework to improve outcomes for children and young people aged 0-25 with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The Plan seeks to strengthen early identification and intervention, increase mainstream inclusion, expand local provision, improve access to specialist advice through the Experts at Hand model, and ensure services are delivered as close to home as possible. The Plan also aims to address increasing demand for Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) while improving educational, health and social outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

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?	x	
Could the proposal affect service users?	x	
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics?	x	
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal?	x	
Could the proposal affect how the Council's services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom?	x	
Could the proposal affect the Council's workforce or employment practices?	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?**

Equality and diversity considerations are central to the SEND Reform Plan. The Plan has been developed through extensive co-production and engagement with parents, carers, children and young people, schools, education providers, health partners and the voluntary and community sector. Feedback from 2,391 parent engagements through the Rotherham Parent Carer Forum has informed priorities including access to therapies, EHCP processes, waiting times and placements. The Plan seeks to improve equity of access by delivering a more consistent and inclusive SEND system across the borough.

The Plan specifically focuses on improving outcomes for children and young people with disabilities and special educational needs, a group protected under the Equality Act 2010. Proposed actions include expanded inclusion-base provision, accessibility improvements, consistent pathways for support, strengthened mainstream inclusion, earlier intervention and equitable access to specialist support through the Experts at Hand model.

- **Key findings**

- The Plan directly impacts children and young people with SEND, many of whom have disabilities and other protected characteristics.
- The reform programme aims to reduce inequalities in access to support and address variations in provision between settings and geographical areas.
- Increased mainstream inclusion and accessibility investment should improve participation and access to education for children and young people with SEND.
- Earlier intervention and local provision may reduce barriers experienced by families and improve educational and social outcomes.
- Ongoing co-production arrangements, parental confidence measures and child experience measures will help monitor any unintended equality impacts throughout implementation.
- There is potential for positive impacts on vulnerable families, carers and children by improving access to support and reducing reliance on distant placements.

Actions

- Complete a full Equality Analysis (Part B) to assess impacts in detail across protected characteristics and vulnerable groups.
- Continue engagement and co-production with children and young people, parents, carers and partner organisations throughout implementation.
- Monitor parental confidence, child experience and access to services through programme governance arrangements.
- Ensure accessibility and inclusion considerations are incorporated into all service redesign, capital investment and commissioning activity.
- Monitor data relating to SEND outcomes, attendance, exclusions, placement patterns and participation to identify any differential impacts on protected groups.

Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	November 2026
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	Prior to implementation of significant service changes arising from the Reform Plan.

Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	Niall Devlin Service Director - Education & Inclusion

5. Governance, ownership and approval		
Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening:		
Name	**Job title**	**Date**
Niall Devlin	Service Director - Education & Inclusion	30/09/2026
Nicola Curley	Executive Director, Children and Young People's Services	05/10/2026
Cllr Victoria Cusworth	Cabinet Member for Children's Services	07/10/2026

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	30th September 2026
Report title and date	Rotherham Local SEND Reform Plan 2026-2029
If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication	Cabinet Report - 16 November 2026
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	05/10/2026