

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: Early Help Strategy: Family Help in Rotherham Year 1 Update

Directorate: Children and Young People's Services

Service area: Early Help

Lead person:
Kelly White

Contact number:
01709 822318

Is this a:

Strategy / Policy

 Service / Function

 Other

If other, please specify

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

The Early Help Strategy 2024-2029 describes the responsibility of agencies to work together and safeguard children in line with the refreshed statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023. 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 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 these strong foundations as well as the vision of the previous strategy and sets the priorities for prevention and early identification and intervention in Rotherham.

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The Multi-Agency Early Help Partnership Group will oversee the implementation of the delivery plan reporting into the Rotherham Safeguarding Children's Partnership and the Place Board.

This is a Year 1 update.

An original Part B analysis form was carried out at the very start of the strategy. The equalities implications have not changed since the start of the strategy.

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	

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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 1,149 Early Help episodes open.

Number of Children in all episodes
2386

The Insight data dashboard breaks down equality and diversity information into locality, gender, age, ethnicity, and primary need.

To inform Year 1, consultation and engagement activity with partners has been undertaken.

The Early Help Partnership Group has met regularly to develop the priorities and themes for the strategy and Head Teacher briefings were held. An on-line consultation survey was also shared with partners and stakeholders.

Feedback from 1326 families who have received help and support from Early Help between January and October 2024 highlights that 94% of families feel that things had improved and 95% of families felt that the positive changes made can be maintained long term.

Focused consultation has been undertaken with families to gain feedback about how we can further help children and families get the right help at the right time in an easy way. A survey was completed by 92 families.

An analysis of feedback highlighted clear themes. When families have needed help and support from services in the past, being able to contact them when they needed to

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(timeliness), signposting to services (help and support) and being helped to access services (easy access) was what they considered made the most difference.

Families have told us that they would like to be able to easily access services at a time that is convenient to them and through digital methods (24/7 and out of office working hours). Families would like clear, helpful and up to date information. This includes information about who to approach at the first point of contact (to get the right help) and that they only have to tell their story once.

Timely services are important to families including no waiting lists and quicker processes for accessing the right help and support. Families would like to know what to expect in terms of the timeliness of services such as how long support is likely to last, being informed and updated of any changes, particularly any likely delays.

New parents fed back that they would like timely interventions, with earlier signposting to services and pre-pregnancy support. Parents have a real appetite for increased baby, toddler and parent groups, classes and programmes to support them with caring for their child. They would also like to be able to access informal/peer support groups to increase their network of support and friends.

An analysis of the annual Rotherham School Student's Survey 2024 completed by 4,641 young people highlights that Year 7 and Year 10 students would like to see more safe spaces to chat with other young people, increased online support and resources on accessing support which is important for improving mental wellbeing.

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.

Key findings

Rotherham's Early Help Offer supports some of the most vulnerable children, young people and families in Rotherham.

The five-year Early Help Strategy 2024-2029 is a partnership approach to prevention, early identification, and family help and support in Rotherham. It aims to deliver better outcomes for babies, children, young people, and families across Rotherham by ensuring that support is provided to all parents and carers, including those who are hardest to reach and/or most in need of help and support.

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Actions	
Further Equality Impact Analysis will be completed as required as part of the delivery associated with the Strategy.	
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.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued 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. 	
Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	29 January 2025
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	29 January 2025
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	Kelly White, Acting Assistant Director, Early Help

5. Governance, ownership and approval

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

Name	Job title	Date
Nicola Curley	Director of Children's Services	29/01/2025

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	29 January 2025
Report title and date	Early Help Strategy: Family Help in Rotherham Year 1 Update
If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication	17 March 2025
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	30 January 2025