

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) for Policies, Procedures and Services

Proposal name	Early Help Community Activity Reducing Exploitation (CARE) Programme		
Directorate	Childrens Services		
Service	Early Help		
Responsible Officer	Julie Jones		
Proposal planning start	08/04/2022	Proposal start date (due or actual date)	01/06/2022 (TBC by DfE)

1	What is the purpose of the proposal?	Yes / No	New / revision
	Show which category the proposal is and whether it is new or a revision.		
	Policy	?	
	Procedure		
	Guidance		
	Is this a service to customers/staff/public?	Yes	
	If yes, is it contracted or commissioned?	Yes	
	Other - give details		
2	What is the business case for this proposal? Please provide the main purpose of the service, intended outcomes and reasons for change?		
	<p>Respite care/short breaks allow young people to develop skills, wider social networks and independence, it creates an environment to improve health, education and well-being outcomes for young people. Whilst Walsall have a short break offer that includes resources for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) there is no provision or bespoke package of short breaks for young people aged 11 plus who may be at risk of exploitation.</p> <p>Many of these young people experience difficulties with communication and interaction, as well as social, emotional, mental health and/or physical needs and difficulties, leaving them struggling to understand, form and maintain social relationships. Their desire for friendship combined with poor social understanding can mean that these young people are easier to engage in inappropriate behaviour. Many do not access universal youth provision due to their additional needs and become isolated and vulnerable, this can lead to bullying, abuse and risks of exploitation and, their needs if left unmet, result in an escalation of severity, leading to disruption to the young person's educational placement (for example, placement breakdown, exclusion or unplanned move), health and social inequalities</p> <p>The aim of the programme is to provide innovative short break opportunities in each of the 4 localities of Walsall for young people on the edges of exploitation. The service will deliver the short-break model specifically for young people in Year 6 and above with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) who are showing early signs of</p>		



potential vulnerabilities to exploitation but are below Children’s social care or Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) threshold.

The service will operate in each of the 4 localities and will be shaped around the needs of each area.

The programme of positive activities will comprise a range of opportunities including, for example, sports, arts, cooking/life skills, ICT and other diversionary activities designed to develop positive health, wellbeing and resilience.

3 Who is the proposal likely to affect?

People in Walsall	Yes / No	Detail
All		<p>The programme is aimed at young people across the borough who have disabilities and/or additional needs (diagnosed and undiagnosed) who are showing signs of risk to low level exploitation.</p> <p>The families of these young people will also be supported to understand, risk and vulnerabilities, how to support reducing these risks, keep young people safe and have ambition for their future.</p>
Specific group/s		
Council employees		
Other (identify)		

4 Please provide service data relating to this proposal on your customer’s protected characteristics.

Walsall is seeing a significant rise in the referrals to children’s social care and Early Help of young people that are exposed to criminal and sexual exploitation and professionals involved have limited resources at their disposal in which to support these young people and their families at an earlier stage, evidence shows that early identification and intervention for young people and their families significantly improves their long term outcomes, decreases emotional behavioural problems and adolescent mental health.

The demand and complexity of the children, young people and families referred to Early Help continues to increase:

- Early Help assessments have increased by 53% (592) in 2021 compared to 2019 (281)
- Approximately 900 children and young people are being supported by Early Help 0-19 service at any one time, of which
- 89% (801) are supported by our own Early Help locality teams

Early Help is starting to see and feel this impact; a recent review of the children and young people referred and supported since April 2021, the main areas of need were associated with challenging behaviour, domestic abuse, emotional health & wellbeing, mental health concerns of the parents/carers, education and housing

The review also identified that

- 62%(558) of children, young people and their families had 3 or more of the presenting needs
- 25% (140) of these have complex needs of between 5 and 9 presenting

needs, this is a 48% increase compared to 2019 where less than 4% of all contacts had 5 plus presenting needs, evidencing the complexity

Recent school inclusion data showed that

- 78% of young people permanently excluded from secondary in Walsall have additional needs.

5 Please provide details of all engagement and consultation undertaken for this proposal. (Please use a separate box for each engagement/consultation).

Consultation Activity

Consultation has taken place with key stakeholders and partners, young people their parents/carers prior to a bid being placed to fund this programme from the Department for Education (DfE) to understand what type of early intervention, activities and whole family support would be beneficial.

The feedback was used to support the bid and develop the programme

Type of engagement/consultation	Children's Services DMT	Date	24/02/22
Who attended/participated?	Executive Director of Children's Social Care, Director of Early Help & Partnerships, Director of Access & Inclusion		
Protected characteristics of participants			
Feedback			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The feedback received has supported the bid for this programme to provide a safe service to protect vulnerable young people who otherwise 'fall through the net' of specialist and statutory services. 			

Type of engagement/consultation	Key stakeholders	Date	25/02/22
Who attended/participated?	Children's Social care, Early Help, Commissioning, Procurement, Voluntary & Community Sector, Business Development, Public Health, Children's Performance Team, Children's Finance Team.		
Protected characteristics of participants	A cross section of staff, including, age, gender, ethnicity		
Feedback			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The feedback received has supported the bid for this programme to provide a safe service to protect vulnerable young people who otherwise 'fall through the net' of specialist and statutory services. 			

Type of engagement/consultation	FACE Group	Date	15/02/22
Who attended/participated?	Parents and carers of children and young people with SEND needs		
Protected characteristics of participants			
Feedback <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The feedback received has supported the bid for this short break programme to provide a range of local activities that they feel would engage young people with SEND to support and protect vulnerable young people who otherwise 'fall through the net' of specialist and statutory services. 			
6 Concise overview of all evidence, engagement and consultation			
Following the consultation activities the programme will			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support 50 young people and their family, offering a programme of regular weekly activities after school and at the weekend. These programmes will engage individual young people in a bespoke programme of activities and mentoring. 			
Including			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 x after-school club per week (term-time only) 1 x weekend activity per week (term-time only) 121 mentor/trusted adult (throughout the programme) 			
<p>The 121 mentor will support the YP both term-time & holidays, providing a positive role-model and supporting YP to access the HAF programme. Skills/knowledge required by the 121 mentor include: trauma-informed practice, restorative practice and AMBIT practice; using diversionary activities to prevent exploitation, getting YP engaged in positive activities, risks of exploitation, risks of school exclusion, linkages between school refusal and poor mental health. The 121 mentor will link to the Exploitation Hub, and will develop bespoke YP centred plans taking into account the individual SEND needs of each YP.</p>			
<p>A consultation event was held with FACE, a group of parents and cares whose children have a range of disabilities and/or additional needs to understand from them the type of activities they felt would be beneficial and engaging.</p>			
<p>Following consultation with former YP, parents/carers, the programme will include:</p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sports Arts Cooking/life skills 			

- ICT
- Other diversionary activities designed to develop positive health, wellbeing and resilience.

The combination of diversionary activities and 121 mentors will provide targeted, bespoke interventions for each YP as part of the SEND Local Offer, reducing isolation and increasing understanding of the dangers of exploitation.

7 How may the proposal affect each protected characteristic or group? The effect may be positive, negative, neutral or not known. Give reasons and if action is needed.

Characteristic	Affect	Reason	Action needed Yes / No
Age	Positive	The programme will support young people aged 11 to 19yrs, this age group are known to be the most at risk of exploitation and are often excluded due to their disabilities and/or additional needs from accessing universal services	No
Disability	Positive	The programme offers services to young people with a disability and/or additional need specifically	No
Gender reassignment	Positive	Access to the programme is open to all	No
Marriage and civil partnership	Neutral	The programme is for young people aged 11 – 19 yrs	No
Pregnancy and maternity	Neutral	The programme is for young people aged 11 – 19 yrs	No
Race	Positive	The programme will support all young people	No

			and services will be commissioned to ensure taking consideration key to race, religion, cultural and disability	
	Religion or belief	Neutral	The service is available to all young people who are at risk of exploitation	
	Sex	Positive	Services are available to all, evidence suggests that males predominately are the highest group at risk of low level exploitation	
	Sexual orientation	Positive	Many young people being supported currently are being exploited or at risk of exploitation and social isolation due to their sexual orientation	No
	Other (give detail)			
	Further information			
8	Does your proposal link with other proposals to have a cumulative effect on particular equality groups? If yes, give details.			(Delete one) No
9	Which justifiable action does the evidence, engagement and consultation feedback suggest you take?			
	A	No major change required		
	B	Adjustments needed to remove barriers or to better promote equality		

	C	Continue despite possible adverse impact
	D	Stop and rethink your proposal

Action and monitoring plan				
Action Date	Action	Responsibility	Outcome Date	Outcome

Update to EqIA	
Date	Detail
<p>Use this section for updates following the commencement of your proposal.</p>	

Contact us

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