

## Equality Impact Report

<b>Title of proposal</b>	<b>Equality Impact Report for Children Looked After and Care Leavers' Strategy</b>
<b>Date of implementation</b>	December 2020
<b>EIR completed by</b>	<b>Barry Kirwan, Improvement Manager</b>

**Decide whether this report is needed and, if so, describe how you have assessed the impact of the proposal.**

### **The Equality Act**

The Equality Act (2010) mandates a duty within public bodies to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it.

To meet the equalities duty set by the Equality Act (2010), authorities are required to analyse the impact of proposed policies, strategies and action plans across all of the protected groups.

As Corporate Parents we have responsibility for the welfare and wellbeing of our children in care and care leavers and it is our duty to treat our children in care and care leavers as we would our own children regardless of their characteristics.

In this Equality Impact Assessment, we evaluate the impact of the Children Looked After & Care Leavers' Strategy to anticipate and avoid any discriminatory or negative consequences for this group, on the grounds of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (including, ethnic origin, nationality)
- Religion or belief (including lack of belief)
- Sex/Gender
- Sexual orientation

This Impact report refers to children in care and care leavers up to the age of 25 years and the aim of this report is to ensure West Sussex County Council meets its responsibilities to these children and care leavers. It is anticipated that this impact report will not have any negative effect on any of our children and young people's protected characteristics, due to the intention of the Children Looked After & Care Leavers Strategy being to continue to promote fairness and opportunities to all.

### **Information and data used to carry out this report**

The information used has been obtained from West Sussex Mosaic data base and there are currently:

860 children in our care;  
583 care leavers.

Regarding the protected characteristics there are:

Ethnicity:

Ethnic Group	Children Looked After (CLA) – 860	Care Leavers (CL) - 583
Asian/Asian British	CLA: 35 = 4%	CL: 55 = 10%
Black/African/Caribbean/British	CLA: 50 = 6%	CL: 83 = 14%
Chinese or other ethnic group	CLA: 22 = 3%	CL: 61 = 10%
Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Group	CLA: 62 = 7%	CL: 40 = 7%
White	CLA: 662 = 77%	CL: 341 = 58%
Not stated	CLA: 29 = 3%	CL: 3 = 1%

Age: Children Looked After

0-5	204 = 23%
6-10	153 = 18%
11-15	260 = 30%
16+	243 = 29%

Disability: Children Looked After - 52 of 860 (= 6.5%); Care leavers - 25 of 583 (= 4.3%)

Males: Children Looked After - 503 (= 58%); Care leavers - 338 (= 58%)

Females: Children Looked After – 357 (42%); Care leavers – 245 (= 42%)

Young parents: 30 (= 5%) in Leaving Care

Expectant Mothers/Fathers: 6 expectant mothers and 1 expectant father (= 1.2%)

Information relating to sexual orientation, gender identity, marriage/civil partnership and carer's responsibilities is not recorded on Mosaic for this cohort. Religion is recorded on Mosaic but is not included as part of the councils monthly reporting to teams

To ensure all groups are equal in terms of data gathering the council need to include the groups above when providing data to the service and its users.

## **2. Describe any negative impact for customers or residents.**

## **3. Describe any positive effects which may offset any negative impact.**

- Age - High positive impact as this strategy effects all the children in care and care leavers regardless of how they came into care. They will all continue to have the same level of care, support and services available to them and in accordance to their needs and not based on their route of entry.
- We will also work with adult services to ensure a smooth transition between Children looked after teams and the Leaving Care service
- Disability - This strategy sets out which part of social care will provide appropriate care leavers support dependant on current needs. Care Leavers with a disability could be supported within adult disability services or 'Lifelong services' up to the age of 25 years old.

- Gender reassignment - This strategy does not impact on gender identify/transgender as it does not differentiate on this. Where gender identity/transgender is a characteristic they would be equally entitled and supported to access the service. All staff in the service provide a service to meet the needs of all individuals regardless of their gender base.
- Pregnancy and maternity - This strategy does not adversely impact on pregnancy and maternity however health assessments are completed on all children up to the age of 18 on a yearly basis. Those identified as pregnant will be identified and any additional support assessed.
- Race - Social Workers and Personal Advisors will consider the challenges and potential discrimination faced by this group when completing their needs assessment and plans and will ensure their protected characteristics are not compromised in anyway. This will include young people who are seeking asylum where for example their need for education takes into account that their first language is not English.
- Religion – The service will ensure all children placed with carers who do not hold any religious beliefs are provided with the opportunity to practice their religious beliefs particularly UASC
- Sex/Gender - This strategy does not impact on sex as it does not differentiate, both female and males are afforded equal opportunity through the Children Looked After teams and the Leaving Care service
- Sexual Orientation - This strategy does not impact on sexual orientation as it does not differentiate on sexual orientation. All young people regardless of their sexual orientation are equally entitled and encouraged to access the services.

**4. Describe whether and how the proposal helps to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.**

The aim of the strategy is not to discriminate or prejudice any group in the cohort outlined in the strategy ie Children Looked After and Care Leavers.

The strategy takes in to account any potential forms of discrimination but must ensure open lines of communication are promoted with groups like UASC who require a strong voice in any strategy

**5. Describe whether and how the proposal helps to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.**

Although the strategy does not provide an overt description of how it ensures equality for all young people the document does infer and make reference to equal opportunity for all children and young people in our care.

**6. Describe whether and how the proposal helps to foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.**

The Corporate Parenting panel will ensure council officers forge positive relations with all young people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. The Corporate Parenting panel will also ensure these young people have a voice in what services are provided

**7. What changes were made to the proposal as a result? If none, explain why.**

None as no negative impact was identified.

**8. Explain how the impact will be monitored to make sure it continues to meet the equality duty owed to customers and say who will be responsible for this.**

The strategy sets the direction and framework for Children Looked After and Care Leavers who are the responsibility of West Sussex County Council. The Corporate Parenting panel will monitor all aspects of the strategy and hold council officers to account in terms of providing an equitable service to all its young people

**To be signed by a Director or Head of Service to confirm that they have read and approved the content.**

Name Louise Warren Date 21.09.2020

Your Position Interim Assistant Director, Corporate Parenting