

Title of proposed EIA	This proposal seeks approval for the establishment of the Birmingham Inclusion Strategy as outlined in the March 2023 Cabinet Report/Papers
Reference No	EQUA1064
EA is in support of	New Strategy
Review Frequency	Two Years
Date of first review	30/04/2024
Directorate	Education and Skills
Division	Children and Families Directorate
Service Area	Send and Inclusion
Responsible Officer(s)	Julie Tisbury
Quality Control Officer(s)	Jo Sullivan-Lyons
Accountable Officer(s)	Helen Ellis
Purpose of proposal	To conduct an EIA for the updated Birmingham Inclusion Strategy
Data sources	Survey(s); Consultation Results; relevant reports/strategies; Statistical Database (please specify); relevant research
Please include any other sources of data	
ASSESS THE IMPACT AGAINST THE PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS	
Protected characteristic: Age	Service Users / Stakeholders; Wider Community
Age details:	<p>The Inclusion Strategy will positively impact on the lives of children, young people and young adults and their families, especially those that are vulnerable or at risk of vulnerability, at all ages and stages. The strategy has been developed to ensure system wide improved inclusion across the partnership.</p> <p>Inclusion is the conscious and deliberate act of embracing diversity. It is the value we place on creating an environment where everyone is welcome and included and therefore feels that they belong and fully participate. It is reflected in our desire to enable</p>

reflected in our desire to enable everyone to thrive and succeed. Inclusion is fundamental to ensure that all children, young people, young adults and their families, regardless of their needs, get the opportunity to the best life chances.

The Inclusion Strategy aligns with the SEND Strategy and the Children and Young People's Plan, where we aim for children to thrive across Birmingham. The Inclusion Strategy puts children at the heart of everything we do and we aim to be ambitious for our children. Partners are committed to working together as one partnership, from a strengths and relationship based approach, with shared priorities and principles. Ensuring a person and family centred holistic approach, especially for our most vulnerable children and young people, wrapping around them with the right support, at the right place and at the right time.

It is important to look across the whole life course for children, young people and young adults, providing the solid foundations for them to move through education into participation, employment and training opportunities, to enable them to play an active role in their community, and promoting achievable independence for all our young people and young adults.

Children, young people and young adults have a right to 'belonging' to their school, their college, their place of

employment, their community. Vulnerability can develop at any time, so whatever adversity children, young people and young adults face, they need to know they are supported and belong as part of our community. We need to prepare for key transition points earlier to ensure a smooth and informed process. This needs to be at each transition point across a child's journey from childhood into adulthood and beyond to provide enrichment of opportunity and prevent risk to developing vulnerabilities and issues later in life.

Through our action plan, which will accompany the Inclusion Strategy, co-produced with our partners, we will target support at all key points of transition within a child/young persons life and into adulthood to reduce the risk of vulnerability, ensuring transition planning at an earlier stage, at each stage, e.g. home to early years, early years to primary and so through to post 16 and 18, into adult services. This will be a multi-agency approach to address these issues.

Co-production and voice: We all need to actively listen to the voices of lived experience. Children, young people and young adults have a voice that should be heard and they should be partners in decision making. We will actively engage children, young people and young adults in matters that affect them 'nothing about us without us'.

Under the review process, impact

Under the review process, impact on vulnerable groups, including protected characteristics will be monitored.

Protected characteristic: Disability

Service Users / Stakeholders; Wider Community

Disability details:

The strategy will positively impact on the lives of children, young people and young adults and their families, especially those that are vulnerable or at risk of vulnerability with regards to SEND. The strategy has been developed to ensure system wide improved inclusion across the partnership. The strategy has been developed alongside the SEND Strategy and so links closely with the priorities therein.

SEND is a common theme that has run through the development of the Inclusion Strategy and the accompanying action plan, illuminating barriers that result in inequalities and reduced opportunities for children and young people. In line with the refreshed SEND Strategy 2023-2028 (see section 2 of the SEND Strategy), support will be delivered via a Graduated Approach and can

be given without the need for a diagnosis or an EHCP. Need can often be met locally with reasonable adjustments within our settings and within our communities to enable our children, young people and young adults with SEND to fully participate and engage, in order to fulfil their aspirations.

The Strategy identified a number of contextual factors that have been identified through the co-production and development of the Inclusion Strategy and accompanying action plan, which included SEND. These factors commonly feature amongst our vulnerable cohorts and where combined with each other and other prevailing issues, this can result in an increased risk of vulnerability for our children, young people and young adults. For example, 'Everyone's Battle, Everyone's Business' highlighted that whilst inequalities e.g. due to race, social class, gender, or disability, were already present, Covid-19 has exacerbated these.

We have identified three vulnerable cohorts the action plan will focus on, within this area, these are:

- Developing better partnership responses to girls with autistic spectrum conditions
- Improving partnership universal services and early intervention for CYPYA with Mental Health difficulties to reduce number of children escalating to Tier 4 services.
- Partnership approaches across the life course to address the fact that people

with learning difficulties die younger from preventable diseases

The action plan will develop a multi-agency response to address these issues.

Under the reporting and review process, impact on vulnerable groups, including protected characteristics will be monitored.

Protected characteristic: Sex

Service Users / Stakeholders; Wider Community

Gender details:

The strategy will positively impact on the lives of children, young people and young adults and their families, especially those that are vulnerable or at risk of vulnerability with regards to gender. The strategy has been developed to ensure system wide improved inclusion across the partnership.

Gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, transgender (LGBTQ+) can often be limiting factors in opportunities and presented as a common theme that has run through the development of the Inclusion Strategy and the accompanying action plan. There has been increasing awareness of LGBTQ+ issues and rights in society and amongst children, young people and young adults and we need to be aware of this when providing support and addressing inequalities. Through understanding our vulnerable cohorts, it has also been highlighted that we need to be

aware of gender biases within communities which may discriminate against girls, with some reference to girls in particular ethnic communities which may reduce their access to education and opportunities to access other universal or specialist services where they might be required. We will ensure as a partnership that regardless of gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment (LGBTQ+) access to participation and to opportunities is supported and unhindered.

We have identified a particular cohort of girls with autistic spectrum conditions, within the development of the action plan. This group of girls tend to often be undiagnosed or mask the symptoms. We aim to develop better partnership responses to girls with autistic spectrum conditions, through the action plan, to ensure they have access and receive the appropriate support required, this is currently under development. This will also be addressed under the SEND Strategy under the graduated approach.

Under the reporting and review process impact on vulnerable groups including protected characteristics will be monitored.

Protected characteristics: Gender Reassignment

Service Users / Stakeholders; Wider Community

Gender reassignment details:

The strategy will positively impact on the lives of children, young people and young adults and their families, especially those that are vulnerable or at risk of vulnerability with regards to gender reassignment. The strategy has been developed to ensure system wide improved inclusion across the partnership.

Gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, transgender (LGBTQ+) can often be limiting factors in opportunities and presented as a common theme that has run through the development of the Inclusion Strategy and the accompanying action plan. There has been increasing awareness of LGBTQ+ issues and rights in society and amongst children, young people and young adults and we need to be aware of this when providing support and addressing inequalities. We will ensure as a partnership that regardless of gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment (LGBTQ+) access to participation and to opportunities is supported and unhindered.

Under the reporting and review process, impact on vulnerable groups, including protected characteristics will be monitored.

Protected characteristics: Marriage and Civil Partnership

Not Applicable

Marriage and civil partnership details:

Protected characteristics: Pregnancy and Maternity

Not Applicable

Pregnancy and maternity details:

Protected characteristics: Race

Service Users / Stakeholders; Wider

Race details:

Community

The strategy will positively impact on the lives of children, young people and young adults and their families, especially those that are vulnerable or at risk of vulnerability with regards to ethnicity and race. The strategy has been developed to ensure system wide improved inclusion across the partnership.

People from ethnic minority backgrounds can experience additional barriers and challenges. These challenges can often include discrimination, structural biases & cultural barriers that can result in difficulty accessing services

Race and ethnicity have been identified as a contextual factor amongst some groups. Through understanding our vulnerable cohorts, it has been highlighted that services may not be accessible for some ethnic minority groups, through language or cultural issues. There may be increased risk for some groups to criminal behaviour or exploitation, as a result of lack of presence / participation within school /college etc. We need to ensure that presence, participation and a sense of belonging is engendered within our educational settings and community to reduce the risk of vulnerability and support access to services and opportunities. We will ensure that our approaches implemented are non-discriminatory and provided through a person centred, holistic family centred and

nonistic family centred and relationship based approach. We will endeavour to ensure that the best outcomes can be achieved for our children, young people and young adults.

Under the reporting and review process impact on vulnerable groups including protected characteristics will be monitored.

Protected characteristics: Religion or Beliefs

Service Users / Stakeholders; Wider Community

Religion or beliefs details:

The strategy will positively impact on the lives of children, young people and young adults and their families, especially those that are vulnerable or at risk of vulnerability with regards to religion or belief. The strategy has been developed to ensure system wide improved inclusion across the partnership.

There may be situations where support for children, young people and young adults may conflict with a religion or religious beliefs. Through a person centred, family centred and relationship based approach we will endeavour to diplomatically ensure that collectively with the family the best outcomes can be achieved.

Under the reporting and review process impact on vulnerable groups including protected characteristics will be monitored.

Protected characteristics: Sexual Orientation

Service Users / Stakeholders; Wider Community

Sexual orientation details:

The strategy will positively impact on the lives of children, young people and young adults and their families, especially those that are

vulnerable or at risk of vulnerability with regards to sexual orientation. The strategy has been developed to ensure system wide improved inclusion across the partnership.

Gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, transgender (LGBTQ+) can often be limiting factors in opportunities and presented as a common theme that has run through the development of the Inclusion Strategy and the accompanying action plan. There has been increasing awareness of LGBTQ+ issues and rights in society and amongst children, young people and young adults and we need to be aware of this when providing support and addressing inequalities. We will ensure as a partnership that regardless of gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment (LGBTQ+) access to participation and to opportunities is supported and unhindered.

Under the reporting and review process impact on vulnerable groups including protected characteristics will be monitored.

Socio-economic impacts

Poverty and disadvantage can result in reduced opportunities for children and young people. In the economic situation during winter 2022 in Britain, with the cost-of-living crisis, difficult situations are likely to be exacerbated with increased financial stress within households, which can impact on mental and physical well-being, and could continue into the following years.

Combined with other contextual factors (i.e. gender, SEND, ethnicity, attendance and exclusions) again this can heighten vulnerability. This is a factor that will be carefully monitored and considered when working with our most vulnerable cohorts.

There are many circumstances where families are reaching crisis point before seeking or receiving support. This can be down to being unable to travel and/or because they have not been accessing services early enough. There are localities where families may not be receiving the same level of support as their equal counterparts from/in other wards.

It is well evidenced that crisis intervention is more costly than a preventative approach, for example the Department of Health and Social Care state that a review of international studies suggests around £14 of social benefit can be achieved for every £1 invested in prevention across a broad range of areas.

Development and implementation of an Inclusion Strategy requires cultural shifts and whole system change and working together as one partnership, with shared priorities and principles. We face growing demand and pressures on our services and recognise that we must make sure that we collectively understand the needs of our city, combining resources and sharing data to plan how we

meet our children and family's needs most effectively, creating a positive impact for our children and families.

In collaboration with the SEND Strategy and supporting through the Inclusion Strategy, delivering through a locality/district model we can:

- Improve outcomes by tackling the root causes of entrenched issues and providing accessible and inclusive support
- Facilitate access to support in the universal, targeted and specialist ways, for example proactively identifying needs before crisis and providing holistic, relationship based support
- Identify the additional needs of a child early through improved capacity in education settings (at all ages) and ensure access to support is much more effective for all children and young people
- Support individuals through a person centred approach with integrated teams working collaboratively in settings local to the child/young person

Please indicate any actions arising from completing this screening exercise.

Data analysis, cross referencing and development of a dedicated team to draw upon all of the different data sources across the Children and Families Directorate is a priority for the future.

Please indicate whether a full impact assessment is recommended

NO

What data has been collected to facilitate the assessment of this policy/proposal?	Data from SEND dashboard, Children and Families Directorate Data Dashboard and service level data. Birmingham Observatory data on population of Birmingham
Consultation analysis	<p>1.1 The Inclusion Strategy was a comprehensively co-produced document. It involved robust methodological triangulation of information, which included initial fact finding, series of engagement events and information from surveys.</p> <p>1.2 There were refinements via consultation and a working group with approval through the APP Progress Plan (APP) and SEND Management Groups and Birmingham CLT.</p> <p>1.3 Schools, local school leaders and different levels of staff have been involved in the development of the Inclusion Strategy.</p> <p>1.4 The Birmingham Parent Carer Forum have been a key partner in the development of the Inclusion Strategy and have endorsed the process followed and the content of the Strategy.</p> <p>1.5 The Inclusion Strategy has been developed to ensure system wide improved inclusion across the partnership. This Inclusion Strategy is an area wide strategy requiring partnership cooperation from a range of local stakeholders. The final draft is currently with partners for final acceptance and will be going through the governance process for Birmingham Children's Trust and Birmingham and Solihull ICB/S.</p>
Adverse impact on any people with protected characteristics.	None
Could the policy/proposal be modified to reduce or eliminate any adverse impact?	There are no adverse impacts identified as a result of this strategy
How will the effect(s) of this policy/proposal on equality be monitored?	Under the reporting and review

process impact on vulnerable groups including protected characteristics will be monitored. Baseline data will be used for the monitoring of groups.

What data is required in the future?

Greater capacity with increased alignment for the data teams within the C&F Directorate will deliver more accurate and timely reports so monitoring can be undertaken more effectively. Greater sharing of data across the partnership is required.

Are there any adverse impacts on any particular group(s)

No

If yes, please explain your reasons for going ahead.

N/A - no adverse impacts on particular groups

Initial equality impact assessment of your proposal

Consulted People or Groups

Informed People or Groups

Summary and evidence of findings from your EIA

There are no adverse/negative impacts anticipated as a result of the Inclusion Strategy.

The Inclusion Strategy aligns with the SEND Strategy and the Children and Young People's Plan, where we aim for children to thrive across Birmingham. The Inclusion Strategy puts children at the heart of everything we do and we aim to be ambitious for our children. Partners are committed to working together as one partnership, from a strengths and relationship based approach, with shared priorities and principles. Ensuring a person and family centred holistic approach, especially for our most vulnerable children and young people.

children and young people, wrapping around them with the right support, at the right place and at the right time.

The strategy aims to work across the whole life course for children, young people and young adults (and their families). Contextual factors of vulnerability (gender, ethnicity, SEND, poverty & disadvantage and attendance and exclusions) have been highlighted and will weave as golden threads through all our work.

A partnership developed action plan is being developed, tackling identified priority vulnerable cohorts, that are not supported by other strategies or programmes of work, this is being developed over the coming months and will be delivered as multi-agency responses to the areas of work / cohorts identified. This will include a co-produced Inclusion Charter and inclusion pathways.

Under the reporting and review process, impact on vulnerable groups including protected characteristics will be monitored.

QUALITY CONTROL SECTION

Submit to the Quality Control Officer for reviewing?

No

Quality Control Officer comments

The document has been approved by the Quality Control Officer and by the Accountable Officer - although the answer above says 'no' this EQUA has been approved and finalised as per answers below.

Decision by Quality Control Officer

Proceed for final approval

Submit draft to Accountable Officer?

Yes

Decision by Accountable Officer

Approve

Date approved / rejected by the Accountable Officer

Reasons for approval or rejection

Please print and save a PDF copy for your records

Yes

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